The Correlation Between Life-Long Learning Tendencies of Students of Turkish Teaching and Turkish Language and Literature Departments and Their Attitudes Toward Profession

Berna ÜRUN KARAHAN  
Kafkas University, Turkey  
e-posta: urunkarahan@gmail.com


Extended Summary

Introduction: Life-long learning is actually resembles learning by doing-experiencing. This is because individual does not know where and how learning will take place. Learning occurs faster and permanently for individual who learns by doing-experiencing, and this means success. “The understating of Life-long learning signifies that learning is not classified by the time and space and it is possible to learn at every age and every place” (Yılmaz, 2016:254).

The person who will teach this skill to individuals is teachers. Continuously changing and renewed programs, fast developing technology, and the power to access the information may lead to problems for individuals concerning acquiring or using skills. Therefore, emotions and thoughts of teachers regarding these skills are the issues needed to be studied. “It is crucial to ensure employment of teachers with qualification to properly accomplish the profession of teaching, which requires numerous duties and responsibilities, in the system of education” (Ayra and Kösterelioğlu, 2015:19).

It is required to put emphasis on teachers, who constitute the basis of the present study and raise people by making their presence felt in every field, and the profession of teaching more sensitively. Special skill areas and professional attitudes and perceptions of these individuals, who raise the future of a country and whose job is working on human, and their life-long learning tendencies which are considerably necessary in today’s world should be investigated carefully. According to Başbay, Ünver and Bümnen (2009), ones of the most important goals of teacher training programs is that teachers develop positive attitudes towards this profession. Because, as also stated by Gürbüz and Kışoğlu (2007), positive attitude developed towards the profession is an important indicator of the success in that field. For this purpose, life-long learning tendencies of teacher candidates and students of pedagogic formation group and their attitudestowards the profession, and whether or not these concepts differed depending on several variables were investigated in the present study.

Method: The present study was conducted in survey model to compare studying approaches of students from Turkish teaching department and students from Turkish Language and Literature department. “Survey models are research approaches aiming to describe a previously or currently existing situation in the way it exists” (Karasar, 2010:77). The sample of the study consisted of the fourth-year students studying at Kafkas University Faculty of Education Department of Social Sciences and Turkish Education and the fourth-year students studying at Faculty of Arts and Sciences Department of Turkish Language Literatureand receiving pedagogical formation in the academic year of 2016-2017.

Results: It is possible to say that while mean scores of teacher candidates were at good level in “interest inprofession” subscale of the attitude scale, interest of TLL students on the profession was higher with a slight difference. Mean scores of teacher candidates studying at both departments were high for “commitment to the profession” subscale of the attitude scale but commitment to profession was asserted to be higher again in TLL students with a slight difference. Mean scores of teacher candidates studying at both departments were at moderate level in “liking the profession” subscale but TLL students were asserted to like their profession more with a slight difference. Mean scores of teacher candidates studying at both departments were at good levelin “believing in necessity of the profession” subscale of the scale, but it could be asserted that the status of TLL
students to believe in necessity of the profession was higher with a slight difference. Mean scores of teacher candidates studying at both departments were at moderate level in “professional competency level” subscale, but professional competency of TLL students was higher with a slight difference. It can be told that mean scores of teacher candidates studying at both departments were at moderate level in “Scale of Life-long Learning Tendencies” but life-long learning tendencies of Turkish students were better with a slight difference.

When correlation coefficients were examined, the highest positive correlation was observed to be between liking the profession and believing in necessity of the profession \((r = .711**\)) subscales of the attitude scale. On the other hand, there was also a moderate positive correlation between the subscales of the attitudes scale. It was remarkable that these were between interest in profession and believing in necessity of the profession \((r = .630**\)) between interest in profession and commitment to the profession \((r = .586**\)), and between interest in profession and liking the profession \((r = .547**\)). It can be asserted that feelings and thoughts about the profession positively supported each other and if one increased, the other one also increased positively. In addition, the weakest negative correlation was observed to be between the commitment to the profession subscale of the attitude scale and life-long learning tendencies \((r = -.048\)).

Life-long learning tendencies and attitudes towards the profession of Turkish teacher candidates and Turkish Language and Literature teacher candidates were determined to differ significantly in some subscales of the attitudes scale in terms of the variable of gender. The significant difference in the subscale of interest in profession was in favor of Turkish teacher candidates; and when mean scores were examined, this difference was in favor of female students. A significant difference was observed in favor of teacher candidates of both groups in the subscale of commitment to the profession. As mean scores were examined, it was remarkable that TLL students had higher mean scores compared to Turkish students. Furthermore, the significant difference in this subscale was in favor of female students in both groups. It was established that there was also a significant difference in the subscales of liking the profession and believing in necessity of the profession and this difference was in favor of Turkish students in both subscales. When mean scores were examined, the difference was in favor of female students. In addition, any significant difference was not also found in terms of other subscales of the attitude scale and life-long learning tendencies scale.

A significant difference was determined in favor of the variable of department in interest in profession, commitment to the profession, and professional competency subscales of the attitude scale. This difference was observed to be in favor of TLL students. There was no significant difference in terms of the variable of department in other subscales of the attitude scale and the scale of life-long learning tendencies.

Significant difference was determined for the variable of age in commitment to the profession subscale of the attitude scale and scale of life-long learning tendencies. It can be asserted that while there was a significant difference in favor of Turkish students in commitment to the profession subscale, there was a significant difference in favor of TLL students in scale of life-long learning tendencies, and mean scores were in favor of 4th \((27,28,29)\) group in both fields.

A significant difference was observed in favor of the variable of type of high school graduated in interest in profession, commitment to the profession, liking the profession, and professional competency subscales of the attitude scale. When mean scores were examined, this difference was detected to be in favor of general high school graduates for Turkish students in the subscale of interest in profession, again in favor of general high school graduates for Turkish students and Anatolian high school graduates for TLL students in the subscale of commitment to the profession. There was a significant difference only in favor of TLL students in the subscale of liking the profession. As mean scores evaluated, this difference was found to be in favor of Anatolian high school graduates. In the subscale of professional competency, a significant difference was also determined only in favor of TLL students. When mean scores were examined, this difference was again in favor of Anatolian high school graduates. In addition, there was no significant difference in favor of believing in necessity of the profession subscale of the attitude scale and for life-long learning tendencies.

**Conclusion And Discussion:** According to the results obtained from the present study, it is possible to assert that attitude levels of teacher candidates towards teaching profession are positive and well. Some studies supporting this result of the present study have been found (Çetinkaya, 2009; Terzi and Tezci, 2007; Özder, Konedrali, and Zeki, 2010; Can, 2013). Their life-long learning tendencies were also determined to be at moderate level. However, contrary to this, literature involves studies indicating the results as “high level” (Ergün and Özata, 2016; Yılmaz, 2016; Oral and Yazar, 2015; Kılıç and Tunçel, 2015; Erdamar, Demirkar, Saracoğlu and Alpan, 2017) and “low level” (Diker Coşkun and Demirel, 2012; Tunca, Şahin and AYdin, 2015) in terms of life-long learning tendencies. This result showed that TLL teacher candidates had a more positive attitude about the profession compared to Turkish teacher candidates. This situation may be explained by the opinion that TLL students might have developed a more positive professional approach because they receive pedagogical formation in the fourth year and just get engaged in internship applications. It is also can be explained by the fact that they are hardly appointed compared to Turkish teacher candidates. The fact that Turkish teacher candidates had better levels of life-long learning tendencies can be explained by constant and renewed applied and
constructivist education in Faculties of Education. This is also associated with the opinion that Turkish teacher candidates know they will be a teacher from the moment they start the first year and they develop themselves accordingly.

Another result obtained from the study was whether or not there was a correlation between subscales (mid, mb, ms, mg, mid) of the attitude scale and life-long learning tendencies. According to results of the correlation analysis, there was a highly positive correlation between “liking the profession and believing in necessity of the profession” subscales of the attitude scale. On the other hand, a moderate positive correlation was also determined between “interest in profession and believing in necessity of the profession”, between “interest in profession and commitment to the job”, and between “interest in profession and liking the profession”. It is possible to say that feelings and thoughts about the profession positively supported each other and if one increased, the other one also increased positively. In other words, positive attitude towards the profession might have provided the profession to be loved in all aspects and students to develop a positive perspective. The weakest negative correlation was found between “commitment to the job” subscale of the attitude scale and “life-long learning tendencies”. Accordingly, attitudes of teacher candidates towards the profession might be asserted to increase as their life-long learning tendencies decreased. Besides, any significant difference was not determined between life-long learning tendencies and professional attitudes of teacher candidates in terms of other subscales. In contrast to the present finding, the study by Çağ and Üstün (2016) revealed a moderately positive correlation between professional attitudes and life-long learning tendencies of teachers. In their study, Ayra and Kösterelioğlu (2015) determined a low positive significant correlation between life-long learning tendencies and professional competency perceptions of teachers. In the study by Özyüz (2016) it was found that there was a significant, positive, and moderate correlation between competencies of teacher candidates in life-long learning and self-efficacy of information literacy.

Another result of the study was whether or not life-long learning tendencies and professional attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates and Turkish Language and Literature teacher candidates differed by the variable of gender. Life-long learning tendencies and professional attitudes of Turkish and Turkish Language and Literature teacher candidates showed a significant difference in some subscales of the attitude scale in terms of the variable of gender. Similar to Çağ and Üstün, 2016; Oral and Yazar, 2015; Yaman and Yazar, 2015; Tunca, Şahin and Aydn, 2015) and different (Özçiftçi and Çankır, 2015; Dikmen, Yuvaci and Erol, 2017; Kılıç and Tuncel, 2015; Erdamar, Demirkiran, Saracoğlu and Alpan, 2017) results were found in studies on life-long learning tendencies. The results (Çapa and Çil, 2000; Pehlivan, 2008; Üstün, Demirtaş, and,Cömert, 2010; Erdem, 2012; Çetinkaya, 2009; Terzi and Tezci, 2007; Aydn and Sağlam, 2012; Polat, 2013) supporting the result obtained in terms of attitude towards the profession were found.

In the light of results obtained in the study regarding whether or not life-long learning tendencies and professional attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates and Turkish Language and Literature teacher candidates differed in terms of the variable of department; there was a significant difference in interest in profession, commitment to the profession, and professional competency subscales of the attitude scale. This difference was observed to be in favor of TLL students. Literature review indicated the similar results (Polat, 2013). Any significant difference was not found in other subscales of the attitude scale and in the variable of department on behalf of scale of life-long learning tendencies. Some studies supporting the result obtained about life-long learning tendencies were encountered (Oral and Yazar, 2015; Kılıç, 2014).

According to the results obtained in the study concerning whether or not life-long learning tendencies and professional attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates and Turkish Language and Literature teacher candidates differed in terms of the variable of age, a significant difference was determined in commitment to the profession subscale of the attitude scale and in scale of life-long learning tendencies. It can be asserted that there was a significant difference in the behalf of Turkish students in commitment to the profession subscale and in the behalf of TLL students in life-long learning tendencies subscale and mean scores were in favor of 4%(27,28,29) group in both fields. According to the result, it was asserted that positive thoughts towards the profession increased for Turkish teacher candidates and positive thoughts about learning increased for TLL teacher candidates as their age increased. There are some studies with similar results (Erdem, 2012; Can, 2013; Kılıç, 2014; Ergün, and Cömert Özata, 2016). A study revealing a different result was found in the literature (Çam and Üstün, 2016).

According to the results obtained in the study about whether or not life-long learning tendencies and professional attitudes of Turkish teacher candidates and Turkish Language and Literature teacher candidates differed in terms of the variable of type of high school graduated; a significant difference was observed in interest in profession, commitment to the profession, liking the profession, and professional competency subscales of the attitude scale. Literature involves results on the contrary of this result (Cetinkaya, 2009; Terzi and Tezci, 2007; Polat, 2013; Can, 2010). This difference was determined to be in favor of general high school graduates for Turkish students and Anatolian high school graduates for TLL students in the subscale of interest in
profession. In the subscale commitment to the profession, it was also in favor of general high school graduates for Turkish students and in favor of Anatolian high school graduates for TLL students. A significant difference was observed only in favor of TLL students in the subscale of liking the profession. This difference was determined to be also in favor of Anatolian high school graduates. In subscale professional competency, there was a significant difference only for TLL students. This difference was in favor of Anatolian high school graduates. Moreover, any significant difference was not found in favor of believing in necessity of the profession subscale of the attitude scale and life-long learning tendencies. In the literature, some studies supporting the result about life-long learning tendencies have been found (Yaman and Yazar, 2015; Dikmen, Yuvaci and Erol, 2017; Yılmaz, 2016).