Investigation of Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Professional Self-Perceptions of Preschool Teachers

Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerinin Öz-Yeterlik İnançları ve Mesleki Benlik Algılarının İncelenmesi

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Abstract: The research aims to investigate the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs of the teachers working in preschool education institutions and their professional self-esteem. Survey model was used in this study. Research group consisted of 110 preschool teachers who work in independent kindergartens, nursery schools and private kindergartens located in the city center of Niğde. At the end of research, it is seen that there is no significant difference between the preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and professional self-esteem according to their age, marital status, the institution of employment, acquired academic degree, and attendance to in-service training programs. While there is a significant difference among the teachers' professional self-esteem according to the duration of service; no significant difference is found between their self-efficacy belief scores. It is found that there is a low level of positive relationship between the preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and professional self-esteem. It is a well-known fact that self-efficacy perception of individuals is affected by the verbal assessments of other people. Therefore, the positive aspects of teachers can be appreciated by the school administrators and the teachers' participation in the decision-making process of the schools can be ensured. Teachers may be provided with the opportunity to excel in the profession and to improve themselves. In order to improve teachers' self-efficacy and professional self-esteem, participation in in-service training courses and activities can be ensured.

Structured Abstract: Introduction Profession is critical in both individual and social aspects. The teaching profession is one of those areas of activities. It is an undeniable fact that the teachers performing this profession are one of the most strategic components of the education system. The teacher, as a crucial element of the education teaching process, is both a part of the learning environment and the organizer (Tasdemir, 2007). The teacher's ability to fulfill the competencies required by his/her profession depends on his/her good education, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and belief in fulfilling the duties and responsibilities (Aslan & Ulucinar Sagır, 2008; Gercek, Koseoglu, Soran & Yılmaz, 2005). Teachers' competencies are of great importance in keeping up with continuously advancing science and developing technology, raising the level of education and

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providing quality education in educational institutions. As an important element of the education process, the teacher is both a part of the learning environment and the organizer. The teacher's fulfillment of the competencies required by his profession depends on his knowledge, skills and attitudes, as well as his belief that he can fulfill his duties and responsibilities. As self-efficacy beliefs are important for teachers to be successful in their professions, care and respect for their professions and respect for their professions are also important. Professional self-esteem is regarded as a prerequisite for professional harmony and satisfaction (Arıcak, 1999; Arıcak & Dilmac, 2003). In this context, it can be thought that professional self-esteem, which is utterly crucial for individuals to successfully and harmoniously perform their occupations, is closely related to self-efficacy belief perceived by an individual about his / her profession. High level of self-esteem can also affirmatively influence professional self-esteem.

Preschool education is the first step of the formal education process and involves the most important and the most critical years of an individual's life. The qualifications of the preschool teachers who work in such a critical period are expected to be at high levels. Several research studies proved that teachers have a positive relationship between their self-efficacy beliefs and their accomplishments, they try to conclude the situation successfully, they patiently and persistently struggle with the difficulties they face, and they behave consistently in their decisions (Akbas & Celikkaleli 2006; Dastan, 2016; Keskin & Orgun, 2006). Moreover, it is well-known that teachers who have higher levels of self-efficacy beliefs tend to acquire higher motivation and performances to provide solutions to encountered problems and to apply the methods that would make children successful compared to those with lower self-efficacy beliefs (Rimm-Kaufman & Sawyer, 2004). In this context, preschool teachers who have particularly higher levels of self-efficacy belief can help children to exhibit more positive behaviors, can improve their academic achievement by setting high targets they can reach, and, in short, can make them more successful individuals in society. The research aims to investigate the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs of the teachers working in preschool education institutions and their professional self-esteem.

Research Design

Survey model was used in this study. Research group consisted of 110 preschool teachers who work in independent kindergartens, nursery schools and private kindergartens located in the city center of Nigde. In the research, variables such as gender, age, marital status, institution, graduation type, in-service training, school of employment and year of service were also taken into consideration. In the research study; "Personal Information Form", "Preschool Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs Scale", and "Professional Self-Esteem Scale" are filled out by the participant teachers in order to obtain the personal information of preschool teachers to measure the level of their self-efficacy beliefs, and to measure the level of their professional self-esteem. The related data were analyzed using SPSS 24.00 computer software. The data set is explicated regarding loss and extreme values before the analyses are performed. No loss value was found. Normality, as another assumption, was also examined. For this purpose, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is performed since the sample size exceeds 50.

Findings and Results

At the end of research, it is seen that there is no significant difference between the preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and professional self-esteem according to their age, marital status, the institution of employment, acquired academic degree, and attendance to in-service training programs. While there is a significant difference among the teachers' professional self-esteem according to the duration of service; no significant difference is found between their self-efficacy belief scores. It is found that there is a low level of positive relationship between the preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and professional self-esteem.

It is a well-known fact that self-efficacy perception of individuals is affected by the verbal assessments of other people. Therefore, the positive aspects of teachers can be appreciated by the school administrators and the teachers' participation in the decision-making process of the schools can be ensured. The working conditions and wages of teachers can be improved. The more important the self-efficacy beliefs are in the success of teachers in their professions, the more important they care about their professions, the more they respect their professions.

Keywords: Preschool, preschool teacher, teacher self-efficacy belief, professional self-esteem

Öz: Bu araştırmada, okul öncesi eğitim kurumlarında çalışan öğretmenlerin öz yeterlilik inançları ile mesleki benlik saygıları arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesi ve etkili olabilecek etmenlerin ortaya çıkartılması amaçlanmıştır. Araştırma, tarama modelinin kullanıldığı betimsel bir araştırmadır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu 2017-2018 öğretim yılında Niğde il merkezindeki bağımsız anaokulları, anasınıfları ve özel anaokullarında görev yapan 110 okul öncesi öğretmeni oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmada öğretmenlerin cinsiyet, yaş, medeni durum, çalıştığı kurum, mezuniyet türü, hizmet içi alma durumu ve hizmet yılı gibi değişkenler de göz önünde bulundurulmuştur. Araştırmanın sonunda okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin yaş, medeni durum, çalıştığı kurum, mezuniyet türü, hizmet içi alma durumuna göre öz yeterlilik inançları ve mesleki benlik saygıları arasında anlamlı farklılaşma olmadığı görülmüştür. Öğretmenlerin mesleki kıdemlerine göre mesleki benlik saygıları arasında anlamlı farklılaşma olduğu görüldükçe; öz yeterlilik inanç puanları arasında anlamlı bir farklılaşma bulunmamıştır. Okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin benlik saygısı ile öğretmen disiplin anlayışı arasında pozitif yönde anlamlı bir ilişki olduğu, öğretmenlerin öz yeterlik inançları ile mesleki öz saygı düzeyleri arasında düşük düzeyde pozitif ilişki olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Bireylerin öz yeterlik algısının diğer kişilerin sözlü değerlendirmelerinden etkilendiği bilinen bir gerçektir. Bu nedenle, öğretmenlerin olumlu yönleri okul yöneticileri tarafından takdir edilebilir ve öğretmenlerin okulların karar alma sürecine katılımı sağlanabilir. Öğretmenlere mesleklerinde üstün olma ve kendilerini geliştirme fırsatı sağlanabilir. Öğretmenlerin öz yeterliliklerini ve mesleki öz saygılarını arttırmak için hizmet içi eğitim kurslarına ve etkinliklerine katılım sağlanabilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Okul öncesi öğretmen, öğretmen öz yeterlik inancı, mesleki benlik saygısı

1. Introduction

Profession is critical in both individual and social aspects. Therefore, it is a phenomenon that needs to be considered in both contexts. Upon considering from an individual point of view; profession is a vital area of activities which determine the individual's status along with the assumed roles within the division of labor, social class, earned income, ability to improve the hidden powers, psychological satisfaction and quality of life (Gunduz, 2004). The teaching profession is one of those areas of activities. It is an undeniable fact that the teachers performing this profession are one of the most strategic components of the education system. The teacher, as a crucial element of the education teaching process, is both a part of the learning environment and the organizer (Tasdemir, 2007). The teacher's ability to fulfill the competencies required by his/her profession depends on his/her good education, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and belief in fulfilling the duties and responsibilities (Aslan & Ulucinar Sagır, 2008; Gercek, Koseoglu, Soran & Yılmaz, 2005). Therefore, the competencies of teachers are of great importance in order to keep up with the advancing science and developing technology, to raise the level of education and to provide quality education in educational institutions. Kacar & Beycioglu (2017) defined self-efficacy as the individual's self-awareness of his/her own potential, while Arseven (2016) referred to the individual's belief or judgment toward himself/herself as to be able to carry out a certain performance successfully. Bandura (1977) described self-efficacy as the confidence in the individual's own ability to plan and implement the actions that the individual needs to realize his/her future goals; however, the teacher's self-efficacy perception was expressed as his/her belief that the desired results could be obtained in the students' learning even when they were not motivated enough.

Preschool education is the first step of the formal education process and involves the most important and the most critical years of an individual's life. The qualifications of the preschool teachers who work in such a critical period are expected to be at high levels. It is stated that the most important qualification of teachers is self-efficacy belief (Ertan, 2016). Several research studies proved that teachers have a positive relationship between their self-efficacy beliefs and their accomplishments, they try to conclude the situation successfully, they patiently and persistently struggle with the difficulties they face, and they behave consistently in their decisions (Akbas & Celikkaleli 2006; Dastan, 2016; Keskin & Orgun, 2006). Moreover, it is well-known that teachers who have higher levels of self-efficacy beliefs tend to acquire higher motivation and performances to provide solutions to encountered problems and to apply the methods that would make children

successful compared to those with lower self-efficacy beliefs (Rimm-Kaufman & Sawyer, 2004). In this context, preschool teachers who have particularly higher levels of self-efficacy belief can help children to exhibit more positive behaviors, can improve their academic achievement by setting high targets they can reach, and, in short, can make them more successful individuals in society.

The more important the self-efficacy beliefs are in the success of teachers in their professions, the more important they care about their professions, the more they respect their professions. The value set on an effective teacher's profession can be explained by his/her professional self-esteem. Carmel (1997) described professional self-esteem as a positive or negative personal attitude of an individual regarding his professional competence, performance, and value. According to Arıcak (1999); Arıcak & Dilmac (2003) and Sayın (2003), professional self-esteem is defined as the individual's judgment of value toward the profession of his/her choice. Professional self-esteem is regarded as a prerequisite for professional harmony and satisfaction (Arıcak, 1999; Arıcak & Dilmac, 2003). In this context, it can be thought that professional self-esteem, which is utterly crucial for individuals to successfully and harmoniously perform their occupations, is closely related to self-efficacy belief perceived by an individual about his / her profession. High level of self-esteem can also affirmatively influence professional self-esteem.

Efficiency, productivity, and success of the preschool teachers who take part throughout the period during which the foundations of personality are laid, the development of the individual is the fastest, and many knowledge and skills are gained, can be based on their sense of professional valency and competence. High self-esteem may affect professional self-esteem positively. According to Bandura's Social Learning Theory, individual behaviors are shaped not only by the psychological effects of the individual, but also by the social environment. Personal and cognitive factors and environmental factors of the individual are in interaction. Thus, the research was carried out to examine the relationship between the self-efficacy beliefs of pre-school teachers and their professional self-esteem and to reveal the factors that might influence this relationship. This research study is planned to examine the relationship between self-efficacy and professional self-esteem of preschool teachers and to reveal the factors that might be effective in such a relationship. In this respect, answers to the following research questions are sought.

1. Is there a significant difference between the mean scores of preschool teachers' self-efficacy and professional self-esteem according to the age variable?
2. Is there a significant difference between the self-efficacy and professional self-esteem mean scores of preschool teachers according to their marital status variable?
3. Is there a significant difference between the mean scores of preschool teachers' self-efficacy and professional self-esteem according to the graduation level variable?
4. Is there a significant difference between the mean scores of preschool teachers' self-efficacy and professional self-esteem according to the school of employment variable?
5. Is there a significant difference between the mean scores of preschool teachers' self-efficacy and professional self-esteem according to the in-service training variable?
6. Is there a significant difference between the mean scores of preschool teachers' self-efficacy and professional self-esteem according to the years of service variable?

2. Method

Survey model was used in this study. Survey model is a research approach aiming to describe a situation as it existed in the past or exists in the present state (Büyükoztürk, Çakmak Kılıç, Akgün, Karadeniz & Demirel, 2010; Karasar, 2012).

2.1. Study Group

Research group consisted of 110 preschool teachers who work in independent kindergartens, nursery schools and private kindergartens located in the city center of Nigde province during the 2017-2018 academic year.

Table 1. Distribution of the Teachers' Descriptive Characteristics

Variables	Groups	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age	20-25	19	17.3
	26-30	8	7.3
	31-35	34	30.9
	36-40	30	27.3
	40 and older	19	17.3
	Total	100	100
Marital Status	Married	84	76.4
	Single	26	23.6
	Total	110	100
Acquired Academic Degree	Associate Degree	21	19.1
	Open Education Degree	36	32.7
	Undergraduate Degree	49	44.5
	Graduate Degree	4	3.6
	Total	110	100
Institution of Employment	Independent kindergarten	45	40.9
	Kindergarten in primary school	50	45.5
	Private kindergarten	15	13.6
	Total	110	100
Attendance to In-House Training Programs	I attended	81	73.6
	I did not attend	29	26.4
	Total	110	100
Duration of Service	1-5	22	20.0
	6-10	34	30.9
	11-15	31	28.2
	16-20	19	17.3
	21 and above	4	3.6
	Total	110	100

Upon examining Table 1, it is seen that 31% of the teachers who participate in the survey are within the age range of 31-35 years ($n = 34$), while 7% ($n = 8$) are between the age range of 26-30; 76% of the teachers ($n = 84$) are married and 24% ($n = 26$) are single; 45% ($n = 49$) acquire an undergraduate degree, 4% ($n = 4$) have a graduate degree; 46% ($n = 50$) are employed at within a primary school, while 14% ($n = 15$) work at a private kindergarten; 74% ($n = 81$) of the teachers attended to in-house training programs, while 26% ($n = 29$) did not attend; 31% ($n = 34$) have duration of service between 6-10 years and 4% ($n = 4$) served for 21 years and above.

2.2. Data Collection

In the research study; "Personal Information Form", "Preschool Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs Scale", and "Professional Self-Esteem Scale" are filled out by the participant teachers in order to obtain the personal information of preschool teachers to measure the level of their self-efficacy beliefs, and to measure the level of their professional self-esteem.

Personal Information Form: Personal information form includes questions related to gender, age, marital status, the institution of employment, acquired academic degree, attendance to in-service training, and duration of service.

Preschool Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs Scale: A five-point Likert-type scale, namely "Preschool Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs Scale," developed by Tepe & Demir (2012) was utilized. The scale includes six factors and consists of 37 items. These factors are identified as a learning-teaching process (LTP), communication skills (CS), family participation (FP), planning (P), the organization of learning environments (OLE) and classroom management (CM).

Professional Self-Esteem Scale: The Professional Self-Esteem Scale developed by Arıca (1999) in order to determine the teachers' self-esteem which is a five-point Likert-type scale consisting of thirty items. Fourteen of those items (2, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14, 16, 18, 20, 24, 26, 28, 30) include positive expressions while the remaining sixteen items (1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29) include negative expressions. In positive items, the given responses are scored as follows: "I Strongly Agree" 5, "I Agree" 4, "Undecided" 3, "I Disagree" 2, and "I Strongly Disagree" 1. It is vice versa in negative items. The scores attained each item is summed up. Hence the total score is obtained. The scale scores range between 30 and 150 points.

2.3. Data Analysis

The related data were analyzed using SPSS 24.00 computer software. The data set is explicated regarding loss and extreme values before the analyses are performed. No loss value was found. Normality, as another assumption, was also examined. For this purpose, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is performed since the sample size exceeds 50. Nonetheless, the measures of skewness and kurtosis of the distribution are also investigated (George & Mallery, 2003). Upon considering the homogeneity and the scores of the answers given by the teachers, it is determined that the values are greater than 0.05 and the assumption of homogeneity is accepted to be sufficient for the analysis of variance. One-way ANOVA, T test and Correlation Coefficient Significance Tests are used to evaluate the data.

3. Findings

In this study, the forms related to 110 preschool teachers are filled out analyzed and the findings are represented in tables. Gender variable is also taken into consideration in the study, but it is excluded from the analysis due to the anticipation that inclusion of the variable would not be statistically significant since that the majority of the preschool teachers who participate in the study are female.

Table 2: Mean Values, Standard Deviations and Analysis of Variance Test Results about Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Professional Self-Esteem Scores According to Ages of the Preschool Teachers Who Participate in the Study

Age	Self-efficacy belief scores				Professional Self-Esteem scores		
	N	X±Std			X±Std		
20-25	19	160.42	16.30		132.11	12.09	
26-30	8	157.63	27.04		122.13	18.06	
31-35	34	166.18	15.92		125.15	17.30	
36-40	30	161.10	16.25		120.03	16.42	
41 and older	19	162.25	16.68		125.63	12.60	
Total	110	162.25	16.68		124.82	15.81	
Variance Analysis Results	df	MS	F	p	MS	F	p
Inter-group	4	209.05	.74	.56	442.51	1.82	.13
Intra-group	105	280.99			242.56		
Total	109						

Upon examining Table 2, it is seen that ages of the preschool teachers who participate in the study have no significant difference in means values of neither their self-efficacy beliefs nor their professional self-esteem scores($p>.05$).

Table 3: Mean Values, Standard Deviations and Analysis of Variance Test Results Pertaining to Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Professional Self-Esteem Scores According to the Marital Status of the Preschool Teachers Who Participate in the Study

Marital Status	Self-efficacy belief scores		Professional Self-Esteem scores	
	N	X±Std	X±Std	
Married	84	162.52 15.52	123.67	16.01
Single	26	161.38 20.31	128.54	14.81
T-test results		t p	t p	
		.30 .76	-1.38 .17	

Upon examining Table 3, it is seen that the marital status of the preschool teachers who participate in the study has no significant difference in means values of neither their self-efficacy beliefs nor their professional self-esteem scores($p>.05$).

Table 4: Mean Values, Standard Deviations and Analysis of Variance Test Results Pertaining to Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Professional Self-Esteem Scores According to Acquired Academic Degrees of the Preschool Teachers Who Participate in the Study

Acquired Academic Degree	Self-efficacy belief scores				Professional Self-Esteem scores		
	N	X±Std			X±Std		
Associate Degree	21	160.67	15.76		129.43	13.18	
Open University Degree	36	162.72	19.37		126.33	16.99	
Undergraduate Degree	49	161.53	14.68		121.82	14.93	
Graduate Degree	4	175.25	19.50		123.75	25.88	
Total	110	162.25	16.68		124.82	15.81	
Variance Analysis Results	df	MS	F	p	MS	F	p
Inter-group	3	254.01	.91	.44	325.04	1.31	.27
Intra-group	106	279.05			247.77		
Total	109						

Upon examining Table 4, it is seen that acquired academic degrees of the preschool teachers who participate in the study have no significant difference in means values of neither their self-efficacy beliefs nor their professional self-esteem scores($p>.05$).

Table 5: Mean Values, Standard Deviations and Analysis of Variance Test Results Pertaining to Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Professional Self-Esteem Scores According to Institution of Employment of the Preschool Teachers Who Participate in the Study

Institution of Employment	Self-efficacy belief scores				Professional Self-Esteem scores		
	n	X±Std			X±Std		
Independent kindergarten	45	161.49	16.04		124.16	16.84	
Kindergarten	50	163.86	14.37		123.10	15.69	
Private kindergarten	15	159.20	24.80		132.53	10.80	
Total	110	162.25	16.68		124.82	15.81	
Variance Analysis Results	df	MS	F	p	MS	F	p
Inter-group	2	147.60	.53	.59	530.11	2.17	.12
Intra-group	107	280.80			240.66		
Total	109						

Upon examining Table 5, it is seen that no statistically significant difference is detected in the mean values of neither self-efficacy beliefs nor professional self-esteem scores according to the results of the analysis of variance which is conducted to determine whether or not there is a significant difference between self-efficacy beliefs and professional self-esteem of totally 110 teachers who are employed by 45 independent kindergartens, 50 nursery schools, and 15 private kindergartens in terms of the type of school at which they work($p>.05$).

Table 6: Mean Values, Standard Deviations and Analysis of Variance Test Results Pertaining to Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Professional Self-Esteem Scores According to the Attendance of the Preschool Teachers Who Participate in the Study to In-Service Training Programs

Attendance to In-Service Training Programs	Self-efficacy belief scores				Professional Self-Esteem scores		
	n	X±Std			X±Std		
I attended	81	162.285	17.34		124.81	14.97	
I did not attend	29	162.17	14.99		124.83	18.23	
T-test results		t	p		t	p	
		.03	.98		.04	.99	

Upon examining Table 6, it is seen that attendance of the preschool teachers who participate in the study to in-service training programs has no significant difference in means values of neither their self-efficacy beliefs nor their professional self-esteem scores($p>.05$).

Table 7: Mean Values, Standard Deviations and Analysis of Variance Test Results Pertaining to Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Professional Self-Esteem Scores According to the Duration of Service of the Preschool Teachers Who Participate in the Study

Duration of Service	Self-efficacy belief scores				Professional Self-Esteem scores		
	n	X±Std			X±Std		
1-5	22	160.59	16.14		132.14	11.96	
6-10	34	162.32	18.42		125.91	15.88	
11-15	31	167.23	17.19		123.55	17.92	
16-20	19	157.00	12.76		116.95	13.52	
21 and more	4	157.25	11.98		122.50	13.30	
Total	110	162.25	11.98		124.82	15.81	
Variance Analysis Results	df	MS	F	p	MS	F	p
Inter-group	4	362.99	1.32	.27	616.85	2.62	.03*
Intra-group	105	275.13			235.91		
Total	109						

*p<.05

Upon examining Table 7, it is seen that duration of service of the preschool teachers who participate in the study has a significant difference in means values (F_{4-109} : 2.62 $p<.05$) of their professional self-esteem scores; whereas there is no statistically significant difference in their self-efficacy beliefs. As a result of the Scheffe test, it is determined that the significant difference in professional self-esteem scores be caused by the duration of service of the teachers that range between 1-5 and 16-20 years.

Table 8. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient Results Pertaining to Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Professional Self-Esteem Scores Of Preschool Teachers Who Participate in the Study

Professional Self-Esteem		
	R	p
Self-Efficacy Belief	.291	.02*

*p<.05

Upon examining Table 8, it is seen that there is a positive correlation between the self-efficacy beliefs and the professional self-esteem of the preschool teachers as a result of the performed correlation analysis to determine whether or not there is a significant relationship between the self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers and their professional self-esteem ($r = .29$, $p = .02 <.05$). The power of the relationship is considered to be at a low level. In other words, as teachers' self-efficacy beliefs increase, their professional self-esteem also increases.

4. Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations

Research, it is aimed to examine the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs of teachers working at pre-school education institutions and their professional self-esteem and find out the factors that can be effective. The research is a descriptive study using a survey model. The study group consists of 110 preschool teachers who work at independent kindergartens, nursery schools and private kindergartens in the city center of Nigde province during the 2017-2018 academic year. In the study, variables such as gender, age, marital status, the institution of employment, acquired academic degree, attendance to in-service training programs and duration of service are taken into consideration. According to the obtained findings, there is no significant difference between self-efficacy belief and professional self-esteem scores of the preschool teachers' age, marital status, the institution of employment, acquired academic degree, and attendance to in-service training programs.

The conducted studies also support the findings of the research. Guven (2005), Çimen (2007) and Sonmez (2013) found that the age variable does not result in a significant difference in terms of self-efficacy beliefs in their studies. Similarly, Türk (2008) found that teachers' self-efficacy does not indicate a significant difference according to the age variable in the study which examined the self-efficacy and professional satisfaction of primary school teachers. It is observed that the findings of this study coincide with the findings of the research.

In the study by Kesgin (2006) found that preschool teachers' self-efficacy levels do not change according to marital status. Yıldırım, Kırımoglu & Temiz (2010) which examined the level of professional self-esteem of physical education and sports teachers detected no significant difference in terms of marital status. Similarly, Sonmez (2013), in which the impacts of primary and secondary school teachers' professional self-esteem on professional burn out, found that the marital status variable has no significant difference in terms of professional self-esteem. Marital status of teachers cannot be considered as determinant factors on self-efficacy belief and professional self-esteem levels.

According to the obtained findings, there is no significant difference between self-efficacy belief and professional self-esteem scores of the preschool teachers' acquired academic degree. Nonetheless, upon considering the mean scores of teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, it is seen that the mean scores of the teachers belonging to the university graduates group are higher. It is possible that the university graduates may have achieved higher mean scores of self-efficacy beliefs since the pre-school teachers, who happen to be university graduates, have been actively involved in education including high school education, and therefore experience is important in increasing the quality of their learning. Upon examining the literature, a variety of results are encountered in the research studies conducted on the issue (Say, 2005; Kesgin, 2006). Kesgin (2006) found that self-efficacy levels of the preschool teachers do not differ according to the acquired academic degree, where as Ertan (2016), which examined the preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs according to the type of graduation, claimed that the levels of self-efficacy beliefs of the preschool teachers have significant differences. Korukcu & Oguz (2011) concluded that there is no significant difference in the professional self-esteem of the preschool teachers based on the acquired academic degree. The results of the research study are similar to the findings of Kesgin (2006) and Korukcu & Oguz (2011). However, it does not coincide with the findings of Ertan (2016).

According to the obtained findings, there is no significant difference between self-efficacy belief and professional self-esteem scores of the preschool teachers' the institution of employment and attendance to in-service training programs. Gomleksiz & Serhatlioglu (2013) concluded that preschool teachers tend to perceive self-efficacy beliefs at higher levels and this view does not differ according to the institution they work for. Ustuner, Demirtas, Comert & Ozer (2009) determined that secondary school teachers' self-efficacy perceptions have significant differences in terms of the school type by which they are employed. Karacaoglu (2008) study conducted on the perceptions of the teachers working in primary and secondary schools, it is concluded that teachers who attended in-service training programs tend to perceive themselves as more sufficient in their relations with their schools, families, colleagues, and communities in comparison to teachers who do not attend to in-service training. It is observed that the findings of this study coincide with the research findings. It is thought that the differences among the results obtained in the studies may stem from the fact that the sample groups are different.

According to another finding of the study, there is no significant difference between self-efficacy belief scores of the teachers in terms of their duration of service; while there is a significant difference between the professional self-esteem scores. According to the findings, professional self-esteem scores of the preschool teachers with 1 to 5 years of service are found to be higher. As the seniority of the teaching profession increases, it is thought that the experience gained by

teachers throughout their professional lives would promote respect, love, acceptance and self-confidence. Nevertheless, such a result may be caused by the fact that fewer teachers are less likely to be employed in the profession and more senior teachers in the profession may experience occupational fatigue and emotional exhaustion as they work for longer years. Upon examining the literature, a variety of results are encountered in the research studies conducted on the issue (Korkut & Babaoglan, 2012; Yildirim et al., 2010). Yildirim et al. (2010) found that there is no significant difference in physical education and sports teachers' professional self-esteem levels according to the duration of professional service variable. On the contrary; Akgul, Ezmeci & Akman (2017) found that there are significant differences among professional self-esteem levels of preschool teachers according to the duration of service. Korkut & Babaoglan (2012), even though not conducted with preschool teachers, also concluded that the self-efficacy beliefs of classroom teachers do not result in a significant difference according to the duration of service year variable. Kesgin (2006) found that teachers' levels of self-efficacy beliefs do not change according to the duration of service. Again, Gomleksiz & Serhatlioglu (2013) asserted that the preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs do not differ according to the duration of service. It is observed that the findings of this study coincide with the research findings.

Finally, it is found that there is a low level of positive relationship between the preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and professional self-esteem. In other words, as teachers' self-efficacy beliefs increase, their professional self-esteem also increases.

Based on the results of the research study, the following suggestions can be made;

- In the study, self-efficacy belief and professional self-esteem scores of the preschool teachers are examined according to various variables. The future studies can be conducted with different variables which are thought to affect self-efficacy beliefs and professional self-esteem.
- The relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and professional self-esteem of the preschool teachers is investigated. In later studies, relationships between self-efficacy beliefs and different variables which would be related to professional self-esteem can also be examined.
- Correlation analysis is performed in the study. In the following studies, a regression analysis would be performed with a larger sample group in order to consider the predictive power of the teachers' professional self-esteem for their self-efficacy beliefs.
- It is a well-known fact that self-efficacy perception of individuals is affected by the verbal assessments of other people. Therefore, the positive aspects of teachers can be appreciated by the school administrators and the teachers' participation in the decision-making process of the schools can be ensured.
- The working conditions and wages of teachers can be improved. Teachers may be provided with the opportunity to excel in the profession and to improve themselves.
- Research studies on how to develop and support the self-efficacy levels of pre-school teachers can be conducted.
- In order to improve teachers' self-efficacy and professional self-esteem, participation in in-service training courses and activities can be ensured.

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