

Investigation of the Relationship Between Professional Interests and Professional Performance of Teachers

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Purpose of this study is to determine the professional interest and professional performance levels of teachers and to make a comparison between these two phenomena. Teachers have an important influence on societies to keep up with the times and, if necessary, to reshape them. For this reason, it is very important to determine the interests and performances of this profession group in their profession. In this context, it also reveals the importance of the study. The sampling method of the study is random sampling and this method was selected in accordance with the purpose. The sample consists of 368 teachers from different branches working in public secondary schools in the Küçükçekmece district of Istanbul. In this study which was carried out by adopting quantitative research approaches, the relational survey model was used to determine the relationship between teachers' professional interest and professional performance. "Vocational Interest Scale" and "Teacher Performance Evaluation Scale" were used as data collection tools. Results of the research is that there is a positive and significant relationship between teachers' professional interest levels and their professional performance. Some of the suggestions made based on the results obtained are as follows: teacher training institutions can plan studies that will increase the professional interests of teacher candidates. Studies that are evaluated by administrators and parents can be carried out, and finally, this study can be applied to other education levels in various districts of Istanbul.

Keywords: Professional interest, professional performance, teacher performance

INTRODUCTION

Every individual faces the question "What will you be when you grow up?" during childhood. Even if the answer to this question for the child in that period is the professions of the people he/she observes around him/her or adopts as role models, it is actually very difficult for the individual to answer this question in the following periods without knowing himself/herself (Bozgedik, 2017). Since career choice is considered to be the individual's preference for the profession that is most suitable for his/her own characteristics among the alternatives that he/she has the right to choose, that he/she believes he/she can do in the best way and that he/she thinks he/she can provide the highest level of job satisfaction while performing the profession he/she has chosen in the long term, it would be insufficient to consider this process only as a job choice (Karagülle, 2007). In this context, since occupational choice has an important effect on shaping the future plans of individuals and determining their living standards, this process in a way affects the whole future of the individual. In other words, since choosing a profession means choosing one's future lifestyle, carrying out this process effectively in line with interests will pave the way for the individual to be happier and more successful (Pekkaya & Çolak, 2013). The choice of profession can be made depending on many different variables, but it is a necessity for both the individual and the society to choose a profession in accordance with the individual's individual goals and personal characteristics as well as the areas of interest. At this point, it is extremely important to determine the professional interest perceptions of teachers, who have a great influence on the shaping of society in the long term.

MEB Board of Inspection (2006) defines performance appraisal as measuring and analysing the performance of employees according to predetermined criteria and then giving feedback. As in every sector, the purpose of performance appraisal for educational institutions is to determine the personal competencies of the employees in the institution and their contribution to the institution they are affiliated with. In the light of these definitions, as mentioned before, teachers, who are the professional group with which children, i.e. students, who can reconstruct the society, are in the closest contact, have a great power to influence societies, and in this context, teacher performance also reveals its importance. The teaching profession is one of the professions of strategic importance for societies. This profession is one of the few professions that can influence and direct the future of individuals. Since it is accepted that the development of individuals must first be supported in order to ensure social change and development, it has become one of the most fundamental educational problems for countries to train prospective teachers and then to support their development in their professional life. Today, the power of countries is explained by their education systems and the effectiveness of education systems is explained by the quality of schools and therefore the quality of teachers (Deniz & Görgeç, 2019). In an environment where teacher quality is so important, the importance of teacher performance is clearly seen. Since teacher performance is defined as all the activities carried out by

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the teacher in the learning environment, teacher performance cannot be considered independently from professional interest. In this context, teachers' professional interests are important in terms of their performance and achievements during their professional lives. This importance has been one of the starting points of the research and from this point of view, determining the relationship between teachers' perceptions of professional interest and professional performance constitutes the aim of the research.

In these contexts, the main purpose of the study is to examine the relationship between teachers' professional interest and professional performance. In order to do this, the question investigated in this study is 'Is there a significant relationship between teachers' professional interest and professional performance?'

Profession and Vocational Interest

When the literature on the concept of profession is analysed, it is possible to come across many different definitions. Profession is an activity that has various dimensions and has emerged as a result of a compulsory task sharing in terms of both society and the individual's life (Ünal & Ada, 1999). According to Telman (2002), human beings tend to do work by nature and generally no education and training is required for these jobs, but a profession is acquired after a regular education. Although earning money is one of the main purposes of daily life for people, people's orientation towards a profession is not only for the purpose of earning money. In this context, a profession is a tool for realising and using one's own capacity and for self-realisation (Kuzgun, 2003). In undeveloped societies, profession is transmitted from generation to generation as a reflection of culture, while in underdeveloped societies it is carried out in the form of master-apprentice relationship. In modern societies, on the other hand, profession is acquired as a result of a planned education and requires a diploma at the end of the process, and in this context, it is considered as a professional occupation.

Vocational interest is defined as the positive behaviour that a person shows towards a profession and the activities included in that profession or the attention, he/she shows in the process of choosing a profession (Deniz, 2009). Çelik (2019) defines this concept as the degree of the individual's tendency towards the activities related to the profession or profession, taking into account other studies in the relevant literature. Due to the change and development in the personality of the individual during adolescence, his/her professional interest also changes from time to time. In this period, the formation of the individual's identity, changes in social areas, psychological changes and developments, physiological changes, and role changes experienced by peers among themselves, in the family environment or in social environments such as school are among the factors that closely affect the process of vocational development (Low & Rounds, 2006).

Choosing the right profession is very important both for individuals to be successful by planning their careers and to be beneficial for the society. The person who chooses the right profession for himself/herself will make a great contribution to the organisation and thus to the society since he/she will fulfil his/her duties with great devotion. Choosing a profession is a long-term process that is also related to the life story of the person rather than instant preferences. In order to carry out this process in the most accurate way, the personal characteristics, abilities, wishes, needs and interests of individuals must be taken into consideration.

Teacher Performance

Teacher performance is defined as all of a teacher's behaviours towards teaching depending on the teaching environment and changing conditions (Medley, 1982; as cited in Battal, 2022). In other words, teacher performance is the sum of the knowledge and skills that teachers use to perform their profession and the behaviours they demonstrate. What should be noted in all definitions of teacher performance is that the concept of behaviour used to express teacher performance includes organisational behaviours rather than individual behaviours (Özdemir & Gören, 2017). Teacher performance has a critical importance for schools, which are organisations, to achieve their goals. In addition, teacher performance is also very effective on the efficiency of the school (Bostancı & Kayaalp, 2011).

The relationship between teacher performance and student achievement is one of the factors that clearly reveal the importance of teacher performance (Akşit, 2006). In this context, it is possible to say that there is a positive relationship between teacher performance and student achievement. Research suggests that teacher performance is much more effective on student achievement than the social environment of the school and the socio-economic status of the student (Sanders & Horn, 1998). In addition, as one of the indicators of teacher performance, students' scores in the central exams applied in the country are considered (Buyruk,

2014). Although student achievement is accepted as an indicator of teacher performance, limiting student achievement only to the scores obtained from central exams is to partially ignore the efforts of teachers in learning processes. By making one-way inferences in this way, other variables affecting learning processes are ignored. While teacher performance is evaluated only on the basis of students' scores on standardised tests, it is not taken into account that the organisation and working environment in which teachers work, whether central exams are reliable because they evaluate the result rather than the process-oriented, and that the methods used are still far away from the educational philosophy required by the modern world. In this context, teacher performance includes not only classroom processes but also behaviours outside the boundaries of the classroom (Battal, 2022).

Teachers' raising students in a way that they can exist in the society, making them individuals who question, criticise and have problem solving skills are the results expected by the education system. In order to fulfil all of these expectations, the level of teachers' achievement of the goals and their work should be evaluated and they should be guided where necessary (Gündüz, 2012). The evaluation of teachers' performances is of great importance not only for the system but also for the society. Because both the input and output of the education system are human beings, and for this reason, the luxury of making mistakes is almost non-existent (Kaçar, 2018).

Factors such as personality traits, motivation level, competences, social environment affect the performance of teachers, who are the group that students have the most contact with in the education system, as in other sector employees. In this context, it is an accepted reality that every human being is different from each other in terms of creation, and for this reason, these individual differences should be taken into consideration when conducting teacher performance evaluation. In addition, since the teaching profession is a specialised field that requires having personality traits such as being open to different ideas, being innovative and keeping up with change, being patient and tolerant, having a high sense of empathy and communication skills, taking into account personality traits while evaluating teacher performance will make the evaluation more effective.

METHOD

Research Design

In this study, which aims to examine the relationship between teachers' professional interests and professional performance, relational survey design, which is one of the quantitative research approaches, was preferred in data collection, analysis and interpretation in order to develop a broad and in-depth understanding of the research topic. In researches designed by adopting this design, the relationships between phenomena are generally expressed by using statistical measurements and methods (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014).

Population and Sample

The population of the study consists of 6,720 teachers who are actually working in official secondary schools in Küçükçekmece district in the 2021-2022 academic year (MoNE Statistics, 2022). The sample of the study consists of 368 teachers who are actually working in official secondary schools in Küçükçekmece district of Istanbul province. While selecting the sample, simple random sampling method was used, taking into account the aims and characteristics required by the research. The teachers who would participate in the aforementioned research were required to work in official secondary schools in Küçükçekmece district. The purpose of selecting Küçükçekmece district was to determine that it can represent the universe well since it shows similar characteristics with the universe in terms of socio-economic characteristics and the number of students per class, while the reason for selecting teachers working in official secondary schools is that most of the teachers at this level are graduates of the faculty of education.

The distribution of the research sample according to gender, graduated faculty, professional experience and age is given in the table below.

Of the 368 teachers who participated in the study, 71,5% (f= 263) were female and 28,5% (f=105) were male. When the type of faculty the participating teachers graduated from was analysed, 83,4% (f= 307) were graduates of the faculty of education and 16,6% (f=61) were graduates of the faculty of science and literature. When the professional experience is analysed, it is seen that the professional experience between 1-5 years is intensive and constitutes 35,3 % (f= 130) of the participants, while between 6-10 years constitutes 24,7 % (f= 91), between 11-15 years 16,8 % (f= 62), between 16-20 years 9,5 % (f= 35), 21 years and more 13,6 % (f= 50).

When age is analysed, it is seen that 38.0% (f=140), 36.4% (f=134), 16.8% (f=62) and 8.7% (f=32) of the participants are between the ages of 20-29, 30-39, 40-49 and 50 and over respectively.

Data Collection Tools

"Professional Interest Scale" developed by Kaysi (2021) and "Teacher Performance Evaluation Scale" developed by Özgenel (2019) were used as data collection tools in the study. Permission to use the scales was obtained.

Vocational Interest Scale

In the first part of the study titled "Development and Application of Vocational Interest Scale", the Vocational Interest Scale developed by Feyzi Kaysi (2021) was used. Kaysi (2021) formed the scale with 4 factors and 19 items as a result of his exploratory factor analysis (EFA). These factors were categorised as vocational readiness, self-development, awareness of vocational choice, and recommending the profession to others.

In terms of the reliability of the scale, Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficient was examined by Kaysi (2021). When Cronbach's Alpha values for the sub-dimensions of the vocational interest scale were examined, it was determined that the value of vocational readiness was .872, the value of self-development was .878, the value of vocational choice awareness was .779, the value of recommending the profession to others was .783, and the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of all variables in the scale was .923. Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.7 and above indicate that all variable index dimensions show acceptable internal consistency (Adeniran, 2019). In this context, it was determined that the reliability coefficient was sufficient for the application of the scale. In this study, in addition to determining the value of vocational readiness as .734, the value of self-development as .736, the value of vocational choice awareness as .718, and the value of recommending the profession to others as .727, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of all variables in the scale was determined as .887.

Teacher Performance Evaluation Scale

In the second part of the study, "Development of Teacher Performance Evaluation Scale: Validity and Reliability Study", the "Teacher Performance Evaluation Scale" developed by Özgenel (2019) was used. Özgenel (2019) first measured whether the sample size was suitable for factor analysis, and then, as a result of the determined values, exploratory factor analysis was started and data were collected from 856 teachers for this analysis. As a result of the exploratory factor analysis, it was decided that a scale with 5 sub-dimensions and 34 items was appropriate. These sub-dimensions were determined as field knowledge, preparation of learning-teaching process, communication, execution of learning-teaching process and professional development and professional attitudes and values.

The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of all variables in the Teacher Performance Evaluation Scale was found to be .960. Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.7 and above indicate that all variable index dimensions show acceptable internal consistency (Adeniran, 2019). In this context, it was determined that the reliability coefficient was sufficient for the application of the scale. In this study, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of all variables in the scale was determined as .892 in addition to determining the value of field knowledge as .816, the value of preparing the learning-teaching process as .898, the value of communication as .850, the value of conducting the learning-teaching process and professional development as .922, and the value of professional attitudes and values as .896.

Data Collection

In the data collection process, first of all permission was obtained from the scale owners. Afterwards, the necessary permissions were obtained from Istanbul Provincial Directorate of National Education in order to be applied in public secondary schools in Küçükçekmece district of Istanbul province. Data collection tools were distributed to the teachers who were willing to participate in 19 secondary schools in Küçükçekmece district of Istanbul province.

Analysing the Data

The data collected through the scales applied were analysed with IBM SPSS AMOS Version 28. The analysis process was carried out by entering and editing the data into the SPSS programme, taking into account the sub-objectives of the research and the characteristics of the collected data. Frequency, percentage, minimum and maximum values, mean and standard deviation were used to evaluate descriptive findings.

In order to analyze the collected data in the SPSS program, it was first checked whether the data showed a normal distribution. In the study, normality tests on the sub-dimensions of the scales were examined

separately and, in this context, parametric tests were used in the sub-dimensions that met the normality condition, while nonparametric tests were used in the sub-dimensions that did not meet the normality condition.

Normality Analyses

One of the methods used to examine whether the data are normally distributed is the examination of skewness and kurtosis coefficients, and in this research, it is accepted that the skewness and kurtosis coefficients should be in the range of ± 2 so that the scores do not show a significant deviation from normal (George & Mallery, 2010).

In this section, normality tests are given under 2 headings: Normality Tests in the Subscales of Professional Interest Scale and Normality Tests in the Subscales of Teacher Performance Evaluation Scale. Examining the normality of the data for each title provides preliminary information for the tests to be performed in the findings.

Since Skewness and Kurtosis values are accepted to be in the range of ± 2 in the research, it is said that all of the sub-dimensions of the Professional Interest scale show a normal distribution. In the same way, while it is said that the sub-dimensions of the Teacher Performance Evaluation Scale, field knowledge, preparing the learning-teaching process, communication, conducting the learning-teaching process and professional development are normally distributed, the kurtosis value of the professional attitudes and values sub-dimension is not within the range of ± 2 (2.919), so this sub-dimension is not normally distributed.

Since significant positive relationships were found between the sub-dimensions in the study, it is stated that there is a significant relationship between teachers' professional interest and their professional performance. Accordingly, as teachers' professional interest increases, their performance also increases. According to this finding, a teacher's interest in his/her profession positively affects his/her performance. In the study, a bidirectional correlation was examined and it was also found that as teachers' performance increased, their interest in the teaching profession also increased. It is thought that the success achieved as a result of high performance increases teachers' professional interest. Otherwise, it is thought that continuous failure or being faced with unsolvable problems in professional life may cause a teacher to cool down from his/her profession and decrease his/her interest in his/her profession.

RESULTS

In this section, the findings related to the sub-problem "Is there a significant relationship between teachers' professional interests and their professional performances?" are presented. In order to determine whether there is a significant relationship between teachers' professional interests and their performances, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was performed between the sub-dimensions of the Professional Interest Scale and the sub-dimensions of the Teacher Performance Evaluation Scale, all of the sub-dimensions of which are normally distributed, while Spearman Rank Differences Correlation calculation was performed between the sub-dimensions of the Professional Attitudes and Values sub-dimension and the sub-dimensions of the Professional Interest Scale, which do not show normal distribution, and the results are given below (Can, 2020).

Table 1. Correlation Test Results for the Relationship between the Subscales of Professional Interest Scale and the Subscales of Teacher Performance Evaluation Scale

		Professional Readiness	Self- development	Vocational Choice Awareness	Recommending your profession to others
Field Knowledge	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	.575	.600	.571	.263
Preparing- Learning- Teaching Process	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	.624	.686	.613	.359
Contact	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	.559	.534	.582	.161
Execution of Learning- Teaching Process and Professional Development	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	.635	.708	.609	.256
Professional Attitudes and Values	Spearman Correlation Coefficient	.504	.456	.501	.172

When Table 1. is examined, it is seen that the relationships between the sub-dimensions of the Professional Interest Scale and the Teacher Performance Evaluation Scale are included. It is known that the correlation coefficient takes values between -1.00 and +1.00. Values between .00-.30 indicate a low-level relationship, values between .30-.69 indicate a medium level relationship, and values of .70 and above indicate a high-level relationship (Çokluk, Şekercioğlu & Büyüköztürk, 2018). Accordingly, there were positive, low-level significant relationships between the sub-dimension of recommending the profession to others and the sub-dimensions of content knowledge ($r=.263$, $p<.001$), communication ($r=.161$, $p=.002$), conducting the learning-teaching process and professional development ($r=.256$, $p<.001$) and professional attitudes and values ($r=.172$, $p<.001$). There were low significant positive relationships between the sub-dimension of content knowledge and professional readiness ($r=.575$, $p<.001$), self-development ($r=.600$, $p<.001$) and awareness of professional choice ($r=.571$, $p<.001$), and between the sub-dimension of preparing the learning-teaching process and professional readiness ($r=.624$, $p<.001$), self-improvement ($r=.686$, $p<.001$) and awareness of vocational choice ($r=.613$, $p<.001$) and recommending the profession to others ($r=.359$, $p<.001$), communication sub-dimension and vocational readiness ($r=.559$, $p<.001$), self-improvement ($r=.534$, $p<.001$), self-improvement ($r=.534$, $p<.001$) and awareness of professional choice ($r=.582$, $p<.001$), between the sub-dimension of conducting the learning-teaching process and professional development and professional readiness ($r=.635$, $p<.001$) and awareness of professional choice ($r=.609$, $p<.001$) and between the professional attitudes and values sub-dimension and professional readiness ($r=.504$, $p<.001$), self-development ($r=.456$, $p<.001$) and awareness of professional choice ($r=.501$, $p<.001$). A highly significant

positive relationship was found between the sub-dimension of carrying out the learning-teaching process and professional development and self-development ($r=.708, p<.001$).

DISCUSSION

Since there are significant positive relationships between the sub-dimensions in the research, it is stated that there is a significant relationship between teachers' professional interest and their professional performance. Accordingly, as teachers' professional interest increases, their performance also increases. According to this finding, the fact that a teacher is interested in his/her profession positively affects his/her performance. In the study, a bidirectional correlation was analysed and it was also found that as teachers' performance increased, their interest in teaching profession also increased. It is thought that the success obtained as a result of high-performance increases teachers' professional interest. Otherwise, it is thought that continuous failure or being faced with unsolvable problems in professional life may cause a teacher to cool down from his/her profession and decrease his/her interest in his/her profession.

When the sub-dimensions of the Professional Interest Scale and the Teacher Performance Evaluation Scale are analysed specifically, firstly, a significant relationship was found between teachers' content knowledge and their professional readiness. It is thought that a teacher's perceiving himself/herself as adequate in terms of content knowledge will reduce his/her concerns about what and how he/she will convey and will make him/her feel ready for his/her profession. Likewise, from the opposite point of view, a teacher's feeling ready for the requirements of his/her profession will also affect his/her content knowledge. In the field, the phenomenon of readiness is generally identified with students. It is possible to encounter this situation frequently in the studies in the literature (Açıkgül, 2019; Ersoy, 2019; Demir & Eren, 2021; Konak, 2021). Generally, school and lesson-subject readiness is emphasised. In studies conducted with teachers, this concept is mostly expressed under the title of teacher competencies. In a study directly addressing the phenomenon of professional readiness, professional readiness was defined as a phenomenon related to how ready a teacher feels to fulfil the requirements of his/her profession, and it was concluded that if the teacher knows who, what, how much and how to teach, that is, if his/her professional readiness level is high, he/she will get rid of unnecessary worries during the lesson and thus achieve his/her goals at a higher rate. At the same time, it was concluded that mathematics teacher candidates studying in the 4th grade did not feel themselves very professionally ready, but their professional readiness levels increased as they gained school experience (Haser & Mehmetlioğlu, 2013). When the necessary literature is examined, it is seen that the concept of content knowledge is generally considered as pedagogical content knowledge (Can, 2019; Aslan & Yıldırım, 2020; Varal & Can, 2020; Yurtyapan & Karataş, 2020). Specifically, it is seen that technological pedagogical content knowledge has been studied. In the study examining the technological pedagogical content knowledge competencies of social studies teachers, it was determined that there was no significant difference in terms of gender and length of service variables (Demirezen & Keleş, 2020). In the study conducted by Topçu and Masal (2020), the self-assessment results of mathematics teachers' technological pedagogical content knowledge were examined and according to this study, it was concluded that mathematics teachers considered themselves sufficient in knowing the subjects of their branches.

When analysed in terms of sub-dimensions, a significant positive relationship was found between the sub-dimension of content knowledge and the sub-dimension of self-development. Within the teaching profession, a teacher's high level of content knowledge means self-development. Since the teacher's content knowledge includes branch-based knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge, the phenomenon of content knowledge is related to what and how the teacher conveys. In this context, it can be concluded that teachers attach importance to self-improvement in order to increase their content knowledge. In the study conducted by Can (2019), the phenomenon of self-development was associated with the professional development of teachers and it was investigated what the obstacles to this development are and what can be done to eliminate these obstacles. It was stated that there are various obstacles such as social, legal and pedagogical obstacles and in order to remove these obstacles, first of all, necessary policies should be established and then teachers should be supported with pre-service and in-service trainings. As a result of the two-way correlation test conducted to determine the relationship between the sub-dimension of content knowledge and the sub-dimension of professional choice awareness, it was determined that there was a significant positive relationship between these two sub-dimensions. In this context, it can be stated that a teacher with high content knowledge is aware of his/her professional choice, while a teacher who is aware of his/her professional choice due to the bidirectional correlation can be said to have high content knowledge.

This situation emphasises the importance of a teacher choosing his/her profession in line with his/her knowledge, skills and competences. Finally, it was determined that there was a positive relationship between the sub-dimension of content knowledge and the sub-dimension of recommending the profession to others. When it is considered that teachers who are more effective than other teachers in recommending their profession to others are satisfied with their professions and fulfil their duties willingly, it can be thought that field knowledge is an important part of their professions and therefore valuable for them.

Preparing the learning-teaching process is the process of a teacher making plans for the subject to be taught and aiming to use time in the most effective way in this context. In this study, it was determined that there was a positive relationship between the sub-dimension of preparing the learning-teaching process and the sub-dimensions of professional readiness, self-improvement, awareness of professional choice and recommending the profession to others. Since the correlation test is bidirectional, all of the sub-dimensions are related to the learning-teaching process preparation sub-dimension. Teachers who can effectively use the preparation of the learning-teaching process can improve themselves, feel more ready for their profession and act more actively in recommending their profession to others because they are satisfied with their profession. In the study conducted by Özden, Önder, Kabapınar (2015), they investigated the effects of reflective thinking on pre-service teachers' skills of preparing the learning-teaching process and concluded that although there was no significant difference between the control and experimental groups in terms of preparing the learning-teaching process at the beginning, a significant difference was observed in favour of the experimental group after reflective thinking practices. They also concluded that this newly acquired knowledge and skill had positive results on the pre-service teachers' interest and performance in their profession. In a study examining teachers' perceptions of competence regarding learning-teaching processes, it was concluded that as the years of seniority increased, the teachers considered themselves more competent in terms of preparing learning-teaching processes, and it was stated that in order to increase the performance of teachers, not only theoretical but also practical in-service training should be provided on material preparation, lesson planning, diversifying teaching by considering differences, time and behaviour management (Bulut, 2014).

Communication is one of the most important structures of interaction between people and is also an indispensable element of education (Kaya, Çiftçi & Gökdemir, 2019). In this study, it was determined that there was a positive relationship between the communication sub-dimension and the sub-dimensions of professional readiness, self-improvement, awareness of professional choice and recommending the profession to others. Since the correlation test is bidirectional, all of the sub-dimensions are related to the communication sub-dimension. When it is accepted that communication is one of the most important characteristics to be possessed in the teaching profession, it is thought that a teacher with high communication power will be professionally ready, will have a high level of awareness when choosing a profession and will recommend his/her profession to others at a high rate. In the study conducted by Semercioglu and Akçay (2020), in which the metaphorical perceptions of classroom teachers about communication were examined, pre-service teachers stated that they likened the phenomenon of communication to vital objects such as water and air, and in this context, the researchers concluded that pre-service teachers regarded the phenomenon of communication as vitally important.

CONCLUSION

1. A strong, positive and significant relationship was found between teachers' professional interest and performance levels.

2. Between the sub-dimensions of the Professional Interest Scale and the sub-dimensions of the Teacher Performance Evaluation Scale:

a) Positive and low-level significant relationships were found between the sub-dimension of recommending the profession to others and the sub-dimensions of field knowledge, communication, learning-teaching process, professional development, professional attitudes and values.

b) There were significant relationships between the sub-dimension of content knowledge and professional readiness, self-development, and awareness of professional choice, between the sub-dimension of preparing the learning-teaching process and professional readiness, self-development, awareness of professional choice, and recommending the profession to others, and between the sub-dimension of communication and professional readiness, There were positive and moderately significant relationships between the sub-dimension of conducting the learning-teaching process and professional development and

professional readiness and awareness of professional choice, and between the sub-dimension of professional attitudes and values and professional readiness, self-development and awareness of professional choice.

c) A highly significant positive relationship was found between the sub-dimension of conducting the learning-teaching process and professional development and self-development.

SUGGESTIONS

- Based on the finding that there is a positive and significant relationship between teachers' professional interest and professional performance, teacher training institutions can plan courses and activities to increase the professional interest of prospective teachers.

- In order to determine the professional interest perceptions and levels of pre-service teachers and to make improvements in the missing points, the teaching practice course in faculties of education can be organised from the first years of undergraduate education instead of only in the 4th grade.

- In this study, teachers' professional interest and professional performance were evaluated by themselves. The same study can be organised in a way that administrators and parents make the evaluation.

- The current study was conducted with teachers working in secondary schools in Küçükçekmece district of Istanbul province. Similar studies can be conducted in secondary schools in other districts and new findings can be revealed by making comparisons.

- This study conducted in secondary schools can also be adapted to teachers working in other education levels.

- This study was conducted using quantitative data collection methods and techniques. In order to analyse the obtained data more comprehensively, qualitative data collection methods can be used to obtain teachers' opinions on practices to increase professional interest and professional performance.

Declarations

Conflict of Interest

No potential conflicts of interest were disclosed by the author(s) with respect to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

Ethics Approval

The formal ethics approval was granted by the Institute of Social Sciences Academic Ethics Committee of Yıldız Technical University.

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Research and Publication Ethics Statement

The study was approved by the research team's university ethics committee of the Yıldız Technical University (Approval no: 2022.06) Hereby, we as the authors consciously assure that for the manuscript "Investigation of the Relationship Between Professional Interests and Professional Performance of Teachers " the following is fulfilled:

- This material is the authors' own original work, which has not been previously published elsewhere.
- The paper reflects the authors' own research and analysis in a truthful and complete manner.
- The results are appropriately placed in the context of prior and existing research.
- All sources used are properly disclosed.

Contribution Rates of Authors to the Article

The authors provide equal contribution to this work.

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