

Evaluation of Elementary School Teachers in terms of Professional Values*

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Abstract

The purpose of the current study is to determine the extent to which elementary school teachers possess professional values. The current research is a qualitative study of survey model. The universe of the study is comprised of Science and Technology, Classroom, Social Studies, Turkish and Math teachers working at elementary schools in 2011-2012 school year. In the determination of the sampling size for the current study, "Sampling Size Table" developed by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2005) was used and it was found that 384 people would be enough to represent the universe with 5% error margin. In order to determine the distribution of 384 people across the cities and branches "Stratified Sampling Method" was employed. In the collection of data, The Teacher Professional Values Scale (TPVS) developed by Tunca (2012) was used. Descriptive statistics were used to elicit the extent to which the teachers possess professional values. In paired comparisons, t-test and in the comparisons having more than three dimensions, Kruskal Wallis H test were conducted. In the values found to be significant, Mann Whitney U Test was used to determine the source of the difference in paired comparisons. At the end of the study, it was found that the teachers' perceptions of their possession of professional values are high. On the other hand, the sub-dimensions in which the teachers see themselves the least adequate in comparison to the other sub-dimensions is "Being against violence" and the most adequate is "Respect for diversity". When the teachers' levels of possessing professional values were compared according to their genders, only the score they took from the sub-dimension of "Being open to cooperation" was found to be significantly different in favor of the female teachers. When the teachers' levels of possessing professional values were compared according to their branches, while it was found that their scores taken from the sub-dimensions of "Respect for diversity" and "Being against violence" did not vary significantly depending on the branch, the scores taken from the sub-dimensions of "Personal and social responsibility" and "Being open to cooperation" varied significantly depending on the branch.

Keywords: professional values, the scale of teacher professional values, respect for diversity, being against violence, personal and social responsibility

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İlköğretim Öğretmenlerinin Mesleki Değerler Açısından Değerlendirilmesi

Öz

Bu araştırmada, ilköğretim öğretmenlerinin mesleki değerlere sahip olma düzeylerinin belirlenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Araştırma tarama modelinde nicel bir çalışmadır. Araştırmanın evrenini, 2011-2012 eğitim-öğretim yılında, Türkiye’de resmi ilköğretim okullarında görev yapan Fen ve Teknoloji, Sınıf, Sosyal Bilgiler, Türkçe ve Matematik öğretmenleri oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmada örneklem büyüklüğünün belirlenmesinde Cohen, Manion ve Morrison’un (2005) “Örneklem Büyüklüğü Tablosu”ndan yararlanılmış ve 96.966 kişilik bir hedef kitleyi, %5’lik hata payıyla 384 kişinin temsil edeceği varsayılmıştır. 384 kişinin illere ve branşlara göre dağılımını belirlemek için “Tabakalı Örnekleme Yöntemi” kullanılmıştır. Araştırmada veri toplama aracı olarak Tunca (2012) tarafından geliştirilen “Öğretmen Mesleki Değerler Ölçeği (ÖMDÖ)” kullanılmıştır. Araştırmada öğretmenlerin mesleki değerlere sahip olma düzeylerini belirlemek amacıyla betimsel istatistikler kullanılmıştır. Araştırmada ikili karşılaştırmalarda t-testi, üçten daha fazla boyutu olan karşılaştırmada ise Kruskal Wallis H testi yapılmıştır. Anlamli çıkan değerlerde, farkın kaynağını belirlemek üzere ikili karşılaştırmalarda Mann Whitney U Testi kullanılmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda öğretmenlerin; mesleki değerlere sahip olma konusunda kendilerini yüksek düzeyde algıladıkları, bununla birlikte kendilerini görece en yetersiz gördükleri alt boyutun “Şiddete karşı olma”, en yeterli gördükleri alt boyutun ise “Farklılıklara saygı duyma” olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Öğretmenlerin mesleki değer düzeyleri cinsiyetlerine göre karşılaştırıldığında ise yalnızca “İşbirliğine açık olma” alt boyutundan aldıkları puanlara ilişkin farklılığın kadınlar lehine anlamlı olduğu belirlenmiştir. Öğretmenlerin mesleki değer düzeyleri branşlarına göre karşılaştırıldığında; “Farklılıklara saygı duyma” ve “Şiddete karşı olma” alt boyutlarından aldıkları puanların branşa göre farklılaşmadığı, buna karşın “Kişisel ve toplumsal duyarlılık”, “İşbirliğine açık olma” alt boyutlarından ve ölçekten aldıkları toplam puanların farklılaştığı görülmüştür.

Anahtar Sözcükler: mesleki değerler, öğretmen mesleki değerler ölçeği, farklılıklara saygı duyma, şiddete karşı olma, kişisel ve toplumsal duyarlılık

Introduction

In the information age in which conflicts, contradictions and sudden changes have been widely experienced, it seems to be inevitable for education not to be affected from the waves of changes and transformations brought about by globalization. What is expected from education today is to serve as an institution investing great efforts to keep up with technological developments and to find solutions to the problems caused by globalization. That is, the role expected to be fulfilled by education is to educate individuals in such a way as to optimize their cognitive, social, psychological, ethical and affective development. If this role is to be fulfilled, educational programs developed on the basis of “modern conception of education” should emphasize the development of behaviors of affective domain as much as the development of behaviors of cognitive domain (Kenan, 2009).

Particularly in an age in which problems such as individualization, social alienation, lack of empathy, inadequacy in using social life skills, not taking responsibility and introvert lifestyles (Mehmedoğlu & Mehmedoğlu, 2006, p. 209) have been widely experienced, it is of great importance to design our lives to include the elements of affective domain that are believed to be indispensable for personal and social life. For finding solutions to the problems of our age, people need to think about the possible answers to such questions as “What is humanity?”, “What are the limits of our responsibilities?”, “What are the ethical dimensions of our experiences?” (Dilmaç, 2002, p. 5) “How can people be happy?” Such answers can be found by activating values that are parts of the affective domain.

Values playing an important role in shaping people’s lives are not inherited characteristics rather they come into being through learning. Children learn the worldview, affective tendencies, political views, beliefs and culture of the society in which they are living (Gözütok, 2008), in short, its values, first from their parents (Halstead & Taylor, 2000; Fyffe et al., 2004; Sabatier et al., 2005; Çelik & Güven, 2011) and then from the media, peers, pre-school education institutions and local communities (Halstead & Taylor, 2000; Fyffe et al., 2004; Çelik & Güven, 2011). The family is of special importance among these institutions as it is the first institution where the child observes social roles and starts to acquire values.

After the family, the most important institution is the school for the personal development and socialization of an individual. Lickona (1988) expresses that due to three main reasons, values should be developed at schools. First one of them is that over time the family institution loses its efficiency in inculcating values in children. Some of the reasons for the family losing its efficiency are that depending on the changing social structure, extended families turn to nucleus families, the number of children in families decreases, the mother enters into the working life, the number of single-parent families and the rate of divorces increase. The second one is that badly behaving members in families, friends having bad habits, exposure to the incidences of violence in daily life and through media and other environmental conditions adversely affect children. The third one is the necessity of conveyance of common values essential for the survival of the society to future generations in a systematic

manner (Cheek & Lynn, 1994). Another reason for giving values education at schools is that when compared to schools, the effect of the family and the society on the development of children's value systems occurs more haphazardly and informally.

Regardless of whether value education is given through formal education programs or informal programs, if the teacher responsible for imparting values to students by conducting some in-class activities is not professionally and personally qualified enough to accomplish the program objectives; then even the most perfect program cannot be effective in imparting the target values to children. In this connection, teachers; as the implementers of the programs, seem to have a vital role in the inculcation and development of values in children.

The pedagogical and subject-area knowledge and competencies possessed by the teacher while implementing the formal program affect the quality of the values education (Dale 1994; Veugelers, 1996) because teachers are responsible for imparting the values set in the program by conducting the necessary activities and providing guidance required to conduct these activities. In other words, teachers demonstrate and become role models for the values to be imparted through the examples they set and activities they conduct. During this process, teachers interact with students and encourage them to develop their own values (Veugelers, 2000).

For teachers to be successful in imparting the target values set in the program, to guide their students in turning these values into behaviors, to set good examples for their students and to avoid exhibiting behaviors that can be viewed as negative for the profession of teaching, they need to have and internalize the values that make a good teacher and distinguish the profession of teaching from other professions and to make these values as an indispensable part of their professional lives. This requires the investigation of the extent to which teachers have the required competencies.

When the relevant literature is reviewed, it is seen that there are studies investigating value preferences by using "Schwartz Values List", "Lussier's Values Scale", "Rokeach's Values List", "Values Order Scale" developed by Sezgin (2006) (Kuşdil & Kağıtçıbaşı, 2000; Sarı, 2005; Sezgin, 2006; Dönmez & Cömert, 2007; Fırat & Açıkgöz, 2012; Yılmaz, 2009; Dilmaç, Bozgeyikli & Çakılı 2008; Taşdan, 2008; Aktepe & Yel, 2009; Yılmaz & Dilmaç, 2011; Dilmaç, Bozgeyikli & Çıkılı, 2008; Taşdan, 2008; Dilmaç et al., 2009; Memiş & Gedik, 2010; Kolaç & Karadağ, 2012); studies focusing on the determination of teachers' attitudes towards values by using Schwartz Values Scale (Çankaya & Seçkin, 2004; Gürşimşek & Göregenli, 2004, Karadağ et al., 2006; Aşkan, 2010); studies aiming to determine teachers' levels of democratic values by using Democratic Values Scale for Classroom Teachers developed by Selvi (2007) (Karadağ, Baloğlu & Yalçınkayalar, 2006; Yılmaz, 2011; Yazıcı, 2011; Oğuz, 2011; Akın & Özdemir, 2009). When these studies are examined, it is seen that teachers have not been evaluated in terms of their professional values related to how they plan, organize and implement their instruction, how they make their students learn and go on learning, how they

establish in-class discipline and in terms of the professional values directing their thoughts, emotions and behaviors while carrying out their duties and responsibilities. On the basis of this paucity in the literature, the current study aims to determine the extent to which elementary school teachers possess professional values. To this end, answers to the following questions were sought:

1. What is the extent to which elementary school teachers possess professional values?
2. Does the extent to which elementary school teachers possess professional values vary significantly depending on their gender, branch, length of service, educational background and the last graduated school?

Method

Research Model

The study is a descriptive study employing the survey model. In the current study, it is intended to describe the existing state of the extent to which elementary school teachers possess professional values.

Universe and Sampling

The universe of the study is comprised of Science and Technology, Classroom, Social Studies, Turkish and Math teachers working in the official elementary schools in Turkey in 2011-2012 school year. Determination of the sampling of the study was conducted on the basis of The Statistical Regional Units Classification (İBBS) developed by The State Planning Organization (DPT) with the support of The Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK). According to this classification, there are 12 Statistical Regional Units in the “Level 1” group (DPT, 2002). Within the context of the present study, first, one city was selected from each unit through simple random sampling.

On the basis of the statistical data attained from the Directorate of National Education, the total number of the Science and Technology, Classroom, Social Studies, Turkish and Math teachers working in the elementary schools located in the selected cities was found to be 96,966. In the determination of the sampling size in the current study, “The Sampling Size Table” proposed by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2005) was used and thus it was concluded that the target population can be represented by 384 teachers with 5% error margin. In order to determine the distribution of 384 teachers across the cities and branches, “Stratified Sampling Method” was employed.

In order to serve the purposes of the current study, “city” and “branch” variables were taken as criteria in the construction of the strata and the numbers of teachers to be taken from each of the “12 cities” and “5 strata” were calculated. Thus, 42.2% of the participants were constituted by the male teachers and 57.8% by the female

teachers. Of the participating teachers, 6.8% were Science and Technology teachers, 6.8% were Math teachers, 70.8% were Classroom teachers, 6.3% were Social Studies teachers and 9.4% were Turkish teachers. Of the participating teachers, 47.4% have a length of service ranging from 1 to 10 years, 35.9% have a length of service ranging from 11 to 20 years, 10.2% have a length of service ranging from 21 years to 30 years and 6% have a length of service that is 31 years or more. In terms of their educational background, 9.4% of the teachers hold an associate's degree, 84.1% hold a bachelor's degree and 6.5% hold a graduate degree. When their last graduated schools are examined, it is seen that 74.8% graduated from education faculties and 25.2% graduated from other educational institutions.

When the cities where the participating teachers are working are examined, it is seen that 6.8% are working in Adana, 15.1% are working in Ankara, 2.9% are working in Balıkesir, 7.8% are working in Bursa, 2.9% are working in Erzurum, 6.3% are working in Gaziantep, 34.1% are working in İstanbul, 11.2% are working in İzmir, 4.4% are working in Kayseri, 3.4% are working in Samsun, 2.3% are working in Trabzon and 2.9% are working in Van.

Data Collection Tool

In the current study, as the data collection tool, "The Teacher Professional Values Scale (TPVS)" developed by Tunca (2012) was used. The TPVS is comprised of four sub-dimensions being "Respect for Diversity", "Personal and Social Responsibility" "Being against Violence" and "Being Open to Cooperation" and 24 items. All the items involved in the sub-dimension of "Being against Violence" are reversely scored. The scale items are scored ranging from "1-Not reflects me at all" to "5-Reflects me a lot". A total score can be taken from the whole scale. The score to be taken from the scale varies between 24 and 120. Higher scores taken from the scale indicate higher levels of possessing professional values. The four sub-dimensions in the scale explain 46.57% of the total variance. Confirmatory factor analysis was applied to the 24-item structure subsumed under four factors obtained as a result of exploratory factor analysis. By means of the confirmatory factor analysis, chi-square (χ^2) statistical significance levels ($\chi^2/df=2.29$) suitable for the model constructed for the scale were calculated. Moreover, the other goodness-of-fit indices calculated for the model (GFI=0.88, AGFI=0.86, RMSEA=0.06, SRMR, CFI, NFI and NNFI=0.92) showed that the proposed model is suitable. The Cronbach's Alpha value calculated for the reliability of TPVS was found to be ranging from 0.70 to 0.78 for the sub-dimensions. For the whole scale, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was calculated to be 0.82 (Tunca, 2012).

Data Analysis

In the current study, descriptive statistics were used to determine the extent to which the teachers possess professional values. For comparisons, first, means and standard deviations of the teachers' responses given to the scale items in terms of each variable were calculated and normality and homogeneity of the variances were

controlled. On the basis of these analyses, t-test was run for paired comparisons and Kruskal Wallis H test was conducted for comparisons having more than three dimensions. In the values found to be significant, Mann Whitney U test was used to detect the source of the difference.

Findings

In this section, in line with the purposes of the study, first the extents to which the teachers possess professional values and then their comparisons according to different variables are presented. The descriptive statistics concerning the extents to which the teachers possess professional values are given in Table 1.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics Concerning the Extents to which the Teachers Possess Professional Values

TPVS	n	K (The number of items)	The lowest score	The highest score	\bar{X}	S	\bar{X}/K
Respect for diversity	384	8	10	40	34,06	3,70	4,26
Personal and social responsibility	384	8	12	39	27,11	4,64	3,39
Being against violence	384	5	5	24	14,12	3,35	2,82
Being open to cooperation	384	3	5	15	11,88	2,20	3,96
TPVS Total score	384	24	33	112	87,17	8,77	3,63

As can be seen in Table 1, when the arithmetic means related to the scores taken from the sub-dimensions of TPVS were converted into means ranging from 1 to 5, the mean score for the sub-dimension of “Respect for diversity” was found as \bar{X} =4.26; for the sub-dimension of “Personal and social responsibility” as \bar{X} =3.39; for the sub-dimension of “Being against violence” as \bar{X} =2.82; for the sub-dimension of “Being open to cooperation” as \bar{X} =3.96. The mean score for the whole scale was found to be \bar{X} =3.63. These findings show that the teachers view their level of possessing professional values as high and think that they have the value of “Respect for diversity” to the highest degree and it is followed by “Being open to cooperation” and “Being against violence”. In Table 2, independent samples t-test results related to comparisons of the total score and the scores taken from the sub-dimensions depending on the gender variable are presented.

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Table 2

Comparison of the Total Score and the Scores Taken from the Sub-Dimensions of the Teacher Professional Values Scale according to the Gender Variable

Dimensions	Gender	n	\bar{X}	S	sd	t	P																																													
Respect for diversity	Male	162	33,75	3,88	382	1,38	0,17																																													
	Female	222	34,28	3,56				Personal and social responsibility	Male	162	26,84	4,59	382	1,00	0,32	Female	222	27,32	4,69	Being against violence	Male	162	14,18	3,61	382	0,31	0,76	Female	222	14,07	3,15	Being open to cooperation	Male	162	11,59	2,14	382	2,18	0,03	Female	222	12,08	2,22	TPVS	Male	162	86,36	8,67	382	1,54	0,12	Total score
Personal and social responsibility	Male	162	26,84	4,59	382	1,00	0,32																																													
	Female	222	27,32	4,69				Being against violence	Male	162	14,18	3,61	382	0,31	0,76	Female	222	14,07	3,15	Being open to cooperation	Male	162	11,59	2,14	382	2,18	0,03	Female	222	12,08	2,22	TPVS	Male	162	86,36	8,67	382	1,54	0,12	Total score	Female	222	87,75	8,82								
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When the t-test results presented in Table 2 are examined, it is seen that the teachers' mean scores for the sub-dimensions of "Respect for diversity [t(382)= 1,38; p>.05]", "Personal and social responsibility [t(382)=-1,00; p>.05]", "Being against violence [t(382)= 0,31; p>.05]" and the total score for "The Teacher Professional Values Scale" [t(382)= 1,54; p>.05]" do not vary significantly depending on the gender variable. On the other hand, the difference between the mean scores taken from the sub-dimension of "Being open to cooperation [t(382)= 2,18; p<0.05]" was found to be significant. When the means of the groups are considered, it is seen that the mean of the female teachers (\bar{X} =12.08) is higher than that of the male teachers (\bar{X} =11.59). In Table 3, Kruskal Wallis H Test results concerning the comparisons of the total score taken from TPVS and the scores taken from the sub-dimensions according to the branches are presented.

Table 3

Comparison of the Total Score Taken from the Teacher Professional Values Scale and the Scores Taken from its Sub-Dimensions according to the Branches

Dimensions	Branch	n	Mean rank	sd	χ^2	p	Significant difference (U test)
Respect for diversity	1. Science and Technology Teachers	26	169,83	4	8,97	0,06	-
	2. Math teachers	26	156,87				
	3. Classroom teachers	272	200,4				
	4. Social studies teachers	24	213,44				
	5. Turkish teachers	36	160,99				
Personal and social responsibility	1. Science and Technology Teachers	26	183,04	4	11,51	0,02	3-5 4-5
	2. Math teachers	26	161,67				
	3. Classroom teachers	272	202,24				
	4. Social studies teachers	24	199,5				
	5. Turkish teachers	36	143,32				
Being against violence	1. Science and Technology Teachers	26	215,73	4	3,63	0,46	-
	2. Math teachers	26	211,1				
	3. Classroom teachers	272	186,14				
	4. Social studies teachers	24	212,44				
	5. Turkish teachers	36	197,08				
Being open to violence	1. Science and Technology Teachers	26	139,71	4	48,19	0,00	1-3 2-3 3-4 3-5
	2. Math teachers	26	127,77				
	3. Classroom teachers	272	217,28				
	4. Social studies teachers	24	144,96				
	5. Turkish teachers	36	121,88				
TPVS Total score	1. Science and Technology Teachers	26	173,69	4	19,12	0,00	2-3 3-5
	2. Math teachers	26	148,37				
	3. Classroom teachers	272	206,58				
	4. Social studies teachers	24	188				
	5. Turkish teachers	36	134,54				

The results presented in Table 3 show that the teachers' scores taken from the sub-dimensions of "Respect for diversity [$\chi^2_{(4)}= 8.97$; $p>.05$]" and "Being against violence [$\chi^2_{(4)}= 3.63$; $p>.05$]" do not vary significantly depending on the branches. On the other hand, the teachers' scores taken from the sub-dimensions of "Personal and social responsibility [$\chi^2_{(4)}= 11.51$; $p<.05$]", "Being open to cooperation [$\chi^2_{(4)}= 48.19$; $p<.01$]" and the total scores taken from the "Teacher professional values scale [$\chi^2_{(4)}= 19.12$; $p<.01$]" vary significantly depending on the branches.

When paired comparisons were made with Mann Whitney U Test to find the source of the differences, it was found that there is a significant difference between the Classroom teachers and Turkish teachers and between the Social Studies teachers and Turkish teachers in terms of the sub-dimension of “Personal and social responsibility”. When the mean ranks are considered, it is understood that both the Classroom teachers and the Social Studies teachers’ levels of possessing the professional values involved in this sub-dimension are higher than that of the Turkish teachers. In terms of the scores taken from the sub-dimension of “Personal and social responsibility”, there is no significant difference between the levels of possessing the professional values in this dimension between the teachers from the branches apart from the ones mentioned above. In terms of the scores taken from the sub-dimension of “Being open to cooperation”, the differences between the scores of the Science and Technology teachers, Math teachers, Social Studies teachers and Turkish teachers and Classroom teachers were found to be significant.

When the mean ranks are considered, it is seen that the Classroom teachers’ level of possessing the professional values in this sub-dimension is higher than those of the teachers from all the other branches. In terms of the total scores taken from the Teacher Professional Values Scale, the differences between the Math teachers and Classroom teachers and between the Turkish teachers and Classroom teachers were found to be significant. When the mean ranks are considered, it is seen that the Classroom teachers’ level of possessing the values in this dimension is higher than those of the Math and Turkish teachers. Whether it is significant or not, the scores taken by the Classroom teachers from the three dimensions of TPVS were found to be higher than those of the teachers from the other branches. When the results of the analysis conducted to make the comparison of the total score taken from TPVS and the scores taken from its sub-dimensions were examined on the basis of the teachers’ educational background, it was found that both the total score taken from the whole scale and the scores from its sub-dimensions didn’t vary significantly depending on their educational background.

The scores taken from “Respect for diversity [$\chi^2_{(2)}= 0,68$; $p>.05$]”, “Personal and social responsibility [$\chi^2_{(2)}= 5,49$; $p>.05$]”, “Being against violence [$\chi^2_{(2)}= 4,38$; $p>.05$]”, “Being open to cooperation [$\chi^2_{(2)}= 4,41$; $p>.05$]” and “Teacher professional values scale [$\chi^2_{(2)}= 1,49$; $p>.05$]” did not vary significantly depending the branch variable. When the results of the independent samples t-test conducted to compare the total score taken from TPVS the scores taken from the sub-dimensions were examined on the basis of the last graduated school, it was found that there is no significant difference between the groups. The scores taken from “Respect for diversity [$t(382)=-1,46$; $p>.05$]”, “Personal and social responsibility [$t(382)=-0,94$; $p>.05$]”, “Being against violence [$t(382)=1,81$; $p>.05$]”, “Being open to cooperation [$t(382)=-0,31$; $p>.05$]”, “The teacher professional values scale [$t(382)=-0,50$; $p>.05$]” did not vary significantly depending on the last graduate school variable. In Table 4, Kruskal Wallis H Test results related to the comparison of the total score taken from TPVS and the scores taken from its sub-dimensions on the basis of the length of service are presented.

Table 4

Comparison of the Total Score Taken from the Teacher Professional Values Scale and the Scores Taken from its Sub-Dimensions on the Basis of the Length of Service

Dimensions	Length of service	n	Mean ranks.	sd	χ^2	p	Significant difference (U Test)
Respect for diversity	1. 1-10 years	182	191,74	3	1,18	0,76	
	2. 11-20 years	138	193,59				
	3. 21-30 years	39	175,53				
	4. 31 and more	23	204,2				
Personal and social responsibility	1. 1-10 years	182	169,48	3	19,53	0,00	1-2
	2. 11-20 years	138	203,81				1-4
	3. 21-30 years	39	208,82				2-4
	4. 31 and more	23	262,52				
Being against violence	1. 1-10 years	182	207,87	3	11,44	0,01	1-2
	2. 11-20 years	138	182,55				1-4
	3. 21-30 years	39	180,04				2-4
	4. 31 and more	23	135,04				
Being open to cooperation	1. 1-10 years	182	182,22	3	7,05	0,07	
	2. 11-20 years	138	193,67				
	3. 21-30 years	39	195,15				
	4. 31 and more	23	245,67				
TPVS Total score	1. 1-10 years	182	185,85	3	2,78	0,43	
	2. 11-20 years	138	194,83				
	3. 21-30 years	39	186,44				
	4. 31 and more	23	224,76				

The analysis results presented in Table 4 revealed that the scores taken from the sub-dimensions of “Respect for diversity [$\chi^2_{(3)}= 1,18; p>.05$]” and “Being open to cooperation [$\chi^2_{(3)}= 7,05; p>.05$]” and the total score taken from the “Teacher professional values scale [$\chi^2_{(3)}= 2,78; p>.05$]” did not vary significantly depending on the length of service. On the other hand, it was found that the scores taken from the sub-dimensions of “Personal and social responsibility [$\chi^2_{(3)}= 19,53; p<.05$]” and “Being against violence [$\chi^2_{(3)}= 11,44; p<.01$]” varied significantly depending on the length of service.

When paired comparisons were made with Mann Whitney U Test to find the source of the difference, in terms of the scores taken from the sub-dimensions of “Personal and social responsibility” and “Being against violence”, significant differences were found between the teachers with 1-10 years of professional experience and the teachers with 11-20 years of professional experience; between the teachers with 1-10 years of professional experience and the teachers with 31 or more years of teaching experience and between the teachers with 11-20 years of professional experience and the teachers with 31 or more years of professional experience.

When the mean ranks related to the sub-dimension of “Personal and social responsibility” are considered, it is understood that the teachers having 11-20 years of professional experience and the teachers having 31 or more years of professional experience possess higher levels of professional values involved in this dimension than the teachers having 1-10 years of professional experience and the teachers having 31 or more years of professional experience have higher levels of the professional values in this dimension than the teachers having 11-20 years of professional experience.

When the means ranks related to the sub-dimension of “Being against violence” are considered, it is seen that the teachers having 1-10 years of professional experience have higher levels of the professional values involved in this dimension than the teachers having 11-20 years of professional experience and the teachers having 31 or more years of professional experience and the teachers with 11-20 years of professional experience have higher levels of these values than the teachers with 31 or more years of professional experience. In terms of the scores taken from the sub-dimensions of “Personal and social responsibility” and “Being against violence” there is no significant difference between the teachers having the other lengths of service.

Results, Discussion and Suggestions

In the current study, it was aimed to determine the extent to which the teachers possess professional values and to reveal whether they vary significantly depending on some variables. First, the extent to which the teachers possess professional values was determined. And it was concluded that the elementary school teachers see their levels of possessing professional values as high. The findings of the research reported on teachers’ levels of possessing professional values in the relevant literature are similar to the findings of the current study. For example, Akın and Özdemir (2009) and Yazıcı (2011) found that pre-service teachers have high levels of democratic values. Yılmaz (2011) also concluded that the teachers have high levels of democratic values. Karacaoğlu (2008) also reported that the teachers see themselves highly adequate in terms of possessing national and universal values. Though the teachers participating in the current study got high scores from the Teacher Professional Values Scale, they see themselves the least adequate in terms of possessing the values involved in the sub-dimension of “Being against violence”. The findings of the studies revealing that teachers resort to physical punishment and violence concur with these findings of the current study. For example, Gözütok (2008) found that nearly half of the teachers participating in the study approved of beating. Moreover, investigating the opinions of teachers about physical punishment, Hatunoğlu and Hatunoğlu (2005) concluded that 74% of the male teachers and 54% of the female teachers resort to physical punishment.

The teachers see themselves most adequate in the sub-dimension of “Respect for diversity”. When the relevant literature is examined, it is seen that there are some studies reporting similar findings. For example, Altinkurt and Yılmaz (2011) pointed

out that the professional ethical behaviors most frequently exhibited by the teachers are related to the values of “Respect for diversity/not discriminating against”. This finding seems to concur with the finding of the current study. Reporting similar findings, Çoban, Karaman and Doğan (2010) concluded that the pre-service teachers’ opinions about cultural differences are positive.

Another remarkable finding of the current study is that on the basis of gender, only significant difference was found in relation to the sub-dimension of “Being open to cooperation”. Akın and Özdemir (2009) investigated the democratic values of the pre-service teachers and found that the female participants have higher level of democratic behaviors in the dimension of “Solidarity”. In the study, it was concluded that in general gender does not lead to significant differences in the professional values of teachers. Though the teaching of profession is seen to be a female job by the society (Koray, 1993; Tan, 1996); professional values are viewed as standards and criteria guiding teachers’ thoughts, feelings and behaviors while performing their profession and regardless of the gender, every teacher wanting to be successful in their profession should have these professional values; thus, the finding of the current study seems to be positive. When other studies looking at the effect of gender on the levels of the values possessed by teachers and pre-service teachers are examined, it is seen that the findings of these studies are parallel to the findings of the current study (Karadağ, Baloğlu & Yalçınkayalar, 2006; Yılmaz, 2011; Yazıcı, 2011; Oğuz, 2011). On the other hand, there are some other studies revealing that gender leads to significant differences in scores taken from different scales and sub-dimensions of these scales used in the literature (Uyan, 2002; Güngör, 1998; Fırat & Açıkgöz, 2012; Yılmaz, 2009; Dilmaç, Bozgeyikli & Çakılı, 2008; Smith & Schwartz, 1997). In this connection, it can be argued that in general there is no consistency between the studies focusing on the effect of gender on the level of adopting values.

The current study also revealed that while the teachers’ scores taken from the sub-dimensions of “Respect for diversity” and “Being against violence” did not vary significantly depending on the branch, their scores taken from the sub-dimensions of “Personal and social responsibility” and “Being open to cooperation” and from the whole scale varied significantly. The most remarkable finding related to the branch variable is that whether it is significant or not, the Classroom teachers have higher scores for the possession of professional values from TPVS and its three sub-dimensions than the teachers of the other branches. After the family, the most important institution for children to learn values is the elementary school, classroom teachers are the first teachers whose behaviors are continuously observed by students; thus, they are taken as role-models, while within the curriculums of Science, Turkish and Math courses, there are objectives stated related to inculcation of values in their general goals, there are objectives directly related to the inculcation of values in the curriculum of the course of life sciences and due to all of these reasons, the responsibility of the classroom teacher for imparting values to students is greater than other teachers, which might increase classroom teachers’ awareness of values and levels of adopting these values.

When the Social Studies and Life Science curriculums developed through different time periods (1968-1998-2004) are examined, it is seen that great emphasis is put on objectives such as inculcation of important social skills in students, promotion of the socialization of students and educating them as good citizens (Güven et al, 2004; Erden, Tarihsiz, cited in Çengelci, 2010; Akpınar & Kaymakçı, 2012). Such objectives load more responsibility on the shoulders of classroom teachers and social studies teachers as the main implementers of the program.

While it was seen that the scores taken by the teachers from the sub-dimensions of “Respect for diversity” and “Being open to cooperation” and the total score taken from the whole scale did not vary depending on the branch, the scores taken from the sub-dimensions of “Personal and social responsibility” and “Being against violence” varied significantly depending on the branch variable. In terms of the scores taken from the sub-dimensions of “Personal and social responsibility” and “Being against violence”, when paired comparisons were made to find the source of the difference, significant differences were found between the teachers with 1-10 years of professional experience and the teachers with 11-20 years of professional experience; between the teachers with 1-10 years of professional experience and the teachers with 31 years or more teaching experience and between the teachers with 11-20 years of professional experience and the teachers with 31 or more years of professional experience.

When the mean ranks related to the sub-dimension of “Personal and social responsibility” are considered, it is understood that the teachers having 11-20 years of professional experience and the teachers having 31 or more years of professional experience possess higher levels of professional values involved in this dimension than the teachers having 1-10 years of professional experience and the teachers having 31 or more years of professional experience have higher levels of the professional values in this dimension than the teachers having 11-20 years of professional experience.

When the means ranks related to the sub-dimension of “Being against violence” are considered, it is seen that the teachers having 1-10 years of professional experience have higher levels of the professional values involved in this dimension than the teachers having 11-20 years of professional experience and the teachers having 31 or more years of professional experience and the teachers with 11-20 years of professional experience have higher levels of these values than the teachers with 31 or more years of professional experience.

In the literature, there are studies reporting that teachers’ democratic values (Karadağ, Baloğlu & Yalçinkayalar, 2006) and organizational values (Zoba, 2000) do not vary significantly depending on length of service. On the other hand, in the research conducted on teachers (Yılmaz, 2011; Yurtseven, 2003) and school directors (Erçetin, 2000; Genç, 2008), significant differences were observed in different sub-dimensions (e.g. Counseling and freedom, equality, creativity, aesthetics) of different value categories (e.g. democratic values, personal values) depending on the length of

service variable. Thus, it seems to be difficult to reach generalizations on the issue of whether the level of possessing values varies depending on the length of service variable.

Another remarkable finding of the study is that the scores taken from the whole scale and its sub-dimensions don't vary significantly depending on the variables of educational background and the last graduated school. This finding contradicts with the expectation that teacher education institutions should positively affect teachers' levels of possessing professional values. Teachers who are responsible for training individuals having acquired values are expected to experience a transformation in terms of professional values as a result of exposure to the implemented teaching programs and the behaviors of faculty members in teacher training institutions. However, the finding of the current study might indicate; contrary to this expectation, that educational faculties do not serve a functional role in imparting professional values to pre-service teachers. On the other hand, when the web sites of many education faculties responsible for training teachers are examined, it is seen that that have adopted the mission of creating modern, productive, inquisitive, self-confident and tolerant teachers who can adapt to changing situations, have an organizational culture, can use educational technologies, believe that diversity is richness, adopt life learning and self-innovation as their principle in life, serve the interests of the society with their productions in the fields of education and service and internalize ethical values. Yet, these objectives of education faculties seem to have not been achieved in practice. Moreover, this finding can be an indication of the lack of compatibility between the formal program and the hidden curriculum.

Secondly, the finding contradicts with the expectation that graduate education should have positive effect on teachers' levels of professional values. With increasing level of education, teachers are expected to undergo transformations in terms of both cognitive behaviors and affective behaviors depending on their restructuring their adopted educational philosophies and psychologies; that is, they are expected to question the values related to their profession.

Within the context of the findings of the current study, it was revealed that the teachers find themselves the least adequate in the sub-dimension of "Being against violence"; thus, in-service trainings can be offered to the teachers to raise their awareness of how to deal with undesired student behaviors. Moreover, the Ministry of National Education can make contributions to elicitation of the reasons behind the low levels of possessing professional values by administering personality tests in tandem with TPVS at certain intervals. Moreover, psychological supports can be provided by the Ministry of National Education for teachers to deal with students' personal problems determined as the most important reason for the teachers to resort violence in the current study.

In order to help teachers to internalize professional values, "professional values, values education" courses can be incorporated into teacher education programs as elective courses. In addition, through hidden curriculums (e.g. learning-teaching

process activities, course materials, verbal and non-verbal behaviors of faculty members), more emphasis can be put on professional values. Furthermore, in order to raise teachers' awareness of professional values, in-service trainings about the values included in the scale can be provided for elementary school teachers by the Ministry of National Education.

In other research aiming to determine elementary school teachers' levels of professional values, teacher behaviors can be observed in actual classroom environments or the opinions of students and parents about the professional values of teachers can be collected. Moreover, further research can be conducted to elicit the reasons for branch teachers' having lower levels of possessing professional values than classroom teachers. Determination of these reasons can shed light on the measures to be taken for the elimination of the problems encountered in teacher training programs. In addition to this, further research can be conducted to investigate the professional values of teachers in relation to different variables.

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