

The Relationship between Prospective Teachers' Love for Children and "Gender Roles and Some Demographic Qualities"

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ABSTRACT The present research primarily aims to analyze the concept of "love for children" within the context of education. It also aims to investigate the personal and academic conditions in favor of or against love for children among prospective teachers and propose solutions within the context of teacher training. The research has been designed as a descriptive study based on associational model. The sample comprised 248 prospective teachers selected with purposive sampling, studying at the Faculty of Education during 2010-2011 academic years. The results indicated a significant positive relationship between prospective teachers' femininity gender roles and love for children scores. Besides, it was found that masculine participants' love for children scores were significantly lower than those of participants classified as feminine and androgen. No significant relationship was observed between love for children and the participants' gender, the department they study, their grade levels, the number of siblings, the place they live and educational level of their parents.

INTRODUCTION

Love is the best thing we learn and teach. It is part of our life instincts and it completes our lives. We as adults can choose or shape our needs to love and belong to; however, love experiences of children are determined by chance according to the conditions in which they are born. Modern societies have to ensure that the child gets to know about love first in the family and at home and then during their educational and school lives.

The present research aims to discuss the concept of love for children in an educational context and reach findings and suggestions concerning love for children among prospective teachers and create awareness. For the child to love school and being a student, he/she needs to love the teacher. A child's liking his/her school and being a student depends upon whether he/she likes the teacher; if there is not such a bond in teacher-student communication, this is an educational issue that needs to be paid attention and resolved.

Several educational scientists have stated opinions about love for children and love for children integrated with the child's education. Buscaglia (2010) states that love is not something spontaneous but it is something taught firstly by parents and then teachers and, a teacher cannot teach something he/she does not know. Pestalozzi defines love for children as directly moving on when the child's care and edu-

cation are at stake, mentions of a love that combines the brain and heart (as cited in Tonguc 1960). In "Children of Barbiana", a critical pedagogy book, the lessons are defined as fear and lost time in the letters by "teacher students" who criticize their teachers because of lack of love. Besides, classic book of educational literature, De Amicis' Child Heart is also set upon teacher-student communication. Concerning this, Onur (2005) states that love for children is not only a natural/instinctual feeling and the scientific/developmental knowledge of this manner should also exist. Pointing out to the fragile distinction among these three concepts, he says "what needs to be discussed is not the existence of childhood feeling but the content" (p. 529). In other words, he wants to imply that we have "a binary understanding of childhood". However, we are adults who love children but do not take care of them, feed and educate them well. Ariés (1973), who is the pioneer of historical researches of childhood, accepts that, the feeling of childhood is not love for children, but is a consciousness implying that the child is different. Then, loving a child on the part of the parents and the teacher is taking care of the child/paying attention to him/her, protect/guide him/her, having the insights of empathy and establishing communication and educational and developmental knowledge and turning these into attitudes.

The period of childhood legally expresses the individuals who are not yet eighteen. National

and international child rights contracts agree upon the same age limit. The concept of child/childhood was not seen a specific period of human life up until the 16th century; children were qualified as weak beings needing protection (Ariés 1973). The author summarizes this case as not knowing the qualities of childhood, not setting up equipment and atmosphere specific to them and briefly as “the lack of the feeling of childhood”. The understanding of “child= miniature adult” changed in the 16th century. In this century, in Rousseau’s *Emil* love and affection towards children are mentioned of.

In the 20th century which Ellen Key calls “century of the child” child began to be regarded as the most important value that shapes future. There is the indirect effect of two catastrophic world wars in this change. At the end of the wars that left millions of children without families, radical reforms of education were made in Europe. Trends of thought like rationalism/enlightenment that started with the effect of Rousseau through Pestalozzi “child villages”, Ellen Key’s “child-centered approach”, Montessori “child houses”, Makarenko’s “collective education” trends. Among these trends, particularly Pestalozzi School posed a model for the new education/new school model in Turkey. Village Institutions that began to be established in 1946 are the education homes of the village children with new lives. Another pioneer I. H. Baltacıoğlu’s “open air school model” with the same approach is told in his writing named “schools in my dream” (Tonguc 1960). However, child and childhood were not understood in humanist terms due to the fact that these education models were essentially based on social development and bringing up good citizens, caused by the historical conditions of the era.

The official definition of teaching profession is that it is an area of specialty in which the teachers undertake educational, instructional and related administrative duties of the state. (National Education Basic Law: 1739, 43rd Item). Academic literature defines teacher as somebody who transfers knowledge/skill, is teaching, a guide, quality person and technician, does assessment and measurement, the architect of future, and man of duty. Willingham (2009:162) defines teaching as the profession of persuasion and says “factual knowledge is important for teaching. Yet, though as important as this, pedagogical ability is ignored”. Oguzkan (1988)

summarizes these three qualities of teaching in three fields which are general culture, knowledge of the profession and field knowledge.

It is discussed that the teachers are selected only through the university entrance exams. Kuru and Uzun (2008) criticizes the fact that preference is not made according to “suitable character” in teaching profession. Can (1989) states that the teacher should not be the person who only transfers knowledge, conducts exams and assesses through grades but should also be concerned with the students’ social and psychological development, behave his/her students friendly and respect the students’ individuality. Jersild (1975: 133) stresses that “the teacher should be a psychologist in his own respect”. In Onur’s (2005) views, it is maintained that the indirect indication of love in the shape of “loving of children after they sleep” also affects teachers’ behaviors. In Tan’s (2007) study, interviews with people who had their childhood times during the first years of republic are given. The outstanding aspect of the research is that Turkey’s idealistic teachers usually have positive personality and professional traits. They attributed high values to themselves and their professions on account of the value given to them by society and with this positive perception of the self they behave their students well and indicate their love sincerely.

It is difficult to allege that there is a curriculum that makes pre-service teachers acquire the feeling of love for children and childhood in teacher training policies and programmers in Turkey. The feeling of love for children in teachers which is perceived like an extra or natural quality is an attitude that can be acquired besides being inherent. Besides, it should take place in teacher training systems.

Literature Review

As stated earlier, the number of studies concerning love for children in teachers is quite limited. The analysis of “Teacher images” in Dockett and Perry (2010) research reflected to the illustrated child books in popular culture. A finding of the study was that, the positive image particularly for the female teacher was a “smiling one”, “When our teacher smiles and speaks to us, our fear completely disappears” (p. 36). The child’s positive relation with his/her teacher is an important factor for the child’s commit-

ment to school and therefore, his/her academic achievement. Patrick, Mantzicopoulos, Samarapungavan and French (2008) recorded the lesson activities of teachers and found supporting and not supporting communication between teachers and students. At the end of the research, ideal communication involves relations that do not turn into dependence and has the highest support/least conflict is important in terms of the teacher's positive relation with the student. Tekisik's (2010) suggestion to the teachers is that they show love and respect to children. "The essence of teaching profession is love; Teaching is the profession of heart, Love your profession, children and human beings" (p.173). Ergin and Ozdas (1999) reached these findings in their study in which they evaluated teaching practice reports: Teaching is a profession that requires idealism; and this idealism requires that the teacher love and be concerned with children. Secondly, the findings indicate that students do not like their teachers and some teachers do not like children and their profession.

The pioneering studies of love for children researches in Turkey are Duyan-Gelbal's studies. They adapted in 2008, Barnett Liking of Children Scale for Turkey which was developed by Barnett and Sinisi in 1990. In their study named "Variables that effect primary school teachers' liking of children", Gelbal and Duyan (2010: 128) stress this: "In literature review, studies have not been come across that look through socio-demographic qualities that may affect liking of children qualities and their relation with teaching primary school teachers' state concerning liking of children should be determined". The conclusions of the research are thus: The gender of the teacher, whether he/she has children and years of professional service affect their score of liking of children. The score of liking of children in middle aged teachers is high; it is the lowest in teachers aged 20-25. The score of love for children in married teachers is high and is lower in single/divorced teachers. Classroom teachers' level of liking of children is higher when compared to other fields. It has also been observed that there is positive relation between teachers' reading child books, knowing/playing games and being a volunteer teacher. The conclusions of the research support the hypothesis that "On the basis of knowledge and values the teacher has, there is a very special and important place of liking of children" (p.130).

The concepts of gender roles and sex should be distinguished from one another as they are at stake here thinking their relation with the teacher's personality and its relation with the liking of children. While the concept of sex refers to natural/biological/anatomical qualities, gender is defined through psychological and social/cultural differences and the role of education within this process is utterly important (Giddens 1995; Dokmen 2004). Giddens emphasizes that "gender roles are learnt quality from the effective behavior of parents, fellow groups and the media" (p.163). In the literature, it is seen that the researches as regards gender roles have interdisciplinary quality and belong to close past (Avsar 2008; Kapikiran 2009; Ozkan and Gundogdu 2011; Yilmaz and Zeyneloglu 2009; Gun-gor 2012; Sayilan 2012).

In the literature, there are studies that examine the relation between the variable "gender" and other variables such as teachers' attitude towards the profession, self-efficacy, democratic understanding, critical thinking and communication skills. In some of these studies it is claimed that gender does not affect these variables (Acisli and Kolomuc 2012; Uzuntiryaki and Geban 2004; Seferoglu 2005) and in some studies it is claimed that it does (Inandi 2009; Carrell et al. 2010; Bahar et al. 2009). There are also studies that mention of more complex/binary effects of the gender variable (Antecol et al. 2012; Dee 2007). In studies on education, the number of example researches that involve other variables that can be associated with love for children can be increased; however, there is not a direct study that analyzes the relation between these variables and teacher's liking of child.

The present research, with this approach seeks to answers these questions: Is there a significant relationship between the prospective teachers' levels of love for children and their gender, field of education, gender role scores, number of siblings, and place of living, parents' level of education and gender role identities?

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Research Design

The research is a descriptive one based on associational survey model that tries to establish the relation between the prospec-

tive teachers' level of love for children and gender and some demographic qualities. Associational survey models aim to determine/describe the existence and/or degree of change (Karasar 2003).

Research Group

The research group consisted of 248 prospective teachers from different departments and grades of the Faculty of Education in Cumhuriyet University, in 2012-2013 academic years (Table 1). The research group was selected through purposive sampling. In this kind of sampling, the researcher does the sampling based on knowledge about the population and the objective of the research (Frankel and Wallen 1993). In this sense, the researchers' being in the same education/academy culture with the work group has provided an advantage while selecting samples.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics about the participants/ prospective teachers

Variables	Frequency/ Percent (%) (N=248)	Mean (S)
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	92 (37.1%)	20.54(1.53)
Female	156(62.9%)	
<i>Age</i>		
Program		
Primary School		
Pre-school education	40 (16.1%)	
Classroom Teaching	33 (13.3%)	
Social Sciences	27 (10.9%)	
Sciences	37 (14.9%)	
Maths	36 (14.5%)	
Turkish	37 (14.9%)	
Secondary School		
Maths Education	38 (15.3%)	
<i>Grade</i>		
1 st	67 (27.0%)	
2 nd	60 (24.2%)	
3 rd	66 (26.6%)	
4 th	55 (22.2%)	
Number of Siblings		2.95(.80)

Research Instruments

Barnett's Liking of Children Scale-BLOCS and *Bem-Sex Role Inventory-BSRI* have been used in this research in order to collect data. In the personal information forms, the indi-

viduals were asked their sex, age, the program they study, their classrooms and the number of siblings. BLOCS was developed by Barnett and Sinisi (1990) to measure out attitudes towards children and adapted for Turkey by Duyan and Gelbal (2008). The test-retest reliability of the measurement tool was determined as 0.85 and internal consistency was 0.92. The scale consists of 14 items. The individuals were asked to state their opinions in seven forms ranging from "I completely disagree" to "I completely agree". Four of the items aimed to determine the teachers' level of love for children have negative meanings and ten of them have positive meanings. While the positive items were being scored, the answer "I completely agree" was scored as "7" and the answer "I completely disagree" was scored as "1". While scoring the negative items "the answer "I completely agree" was scored as "1" and the answer "I completely disagree" was scored as "7". The high scores from the scale indicate that people love children more and low scores mean vice versa.

The other measurement tool used in the study was BSRI developed by Bem (1974) to determine gender roles. The adaptation study for Turkey was done by Kavuncu (1987). The validity and reliability study of the tool was repeated by Dokmen (1999). Kavuncu (1987) found BSRI's Turkish form test-retest reliability coefficient .75 for femininity (F), .89 for masculinity (M) (n=208); whereas Dokmen found F's alpha coefficient .73, split half coefficient .76 (N=989), M's alpha coefficient .75, split half coefficient .75 (N=989). For the proof of the reliability of the scale, the significance of the sex difference in total scores was checked and it was found that the femininity scores of the participants ($t_{(847)} = 14.04, p < .01$) and masculinity scores ($t_{(899)} = 12.84, p < .01$) had significant differences based on sex.

BSRI consists of three sub-scales each of which has 20 items: Femininity (F), Masculinity (M), and Social Desirability. The final part of the scale is rarely used and is not involved in this study. While filling in the scale, the people answer the questions in a way which means "completely suitable" (7) and "completely unsuitable" (1). As per the averages of the scores obtained from measurements, what gender roles the participants have (androgen, masculine, feminine, undistinguished sex) is determined. According to this, if femininity

and masculinity scores are higher than average in the frequency of femininity and masculinity scales, the individual is classified "androgen"; and if the scores are lower than average in both, the individual is classified in the "undistinguished sex" role. If the individual's femininity score is higher than the average in femininity score frequency, masculinity score is lower than the average in masculinity score frequency the individual is qualified as "feminine"; and if masculinity score is higher than the average in the masculinity scale frequency and the femininity score is lower than the average in the femininity scale the individual is qualified as "masculine".

Data Analysis

SPSS 17.00 packet program has been used for data analysis. According to the conclusions of descriptive statistics of the data, the arithmetic average of the data set was found as 79.97 and the median was 82. The minimum value of the series was 47 and the maximum value was 98. At the end of the analysis, there was no lacking data or extreme value and the graphic indicated a normal distribution. The analysis results where the research hypotheses are tested are presented below.

RESULTS

This part is concerned with the findings about the relation between love for children and gender, fields of education, number of siblings, the place where the majority of life has passed, the father's educational level, the mother's educational level, class and gender role. The comments have been obtained within the light of these findings. The first question of the research was arranged as "Is there a relation between the love for children scores of prospective teachers and their gender and educational field?" and findings are given in Table 2.

Table 2: The t-test results of scores obtained from love for children scores according to sex and educational fields

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Variables</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Love for children	Gender						
	Female	156	78.53	12.81	246	1.41	.16
	Male	92	80.81	11.35			
Love for children	Field						
	Social Fields	137	79.88	13.34	246	.12	.91
	Science and Mathematics	111	80.07	10.97			

The statistical findings on Table 2 indicate that, the participants' scores of love for children do not show a significant difference according to sex ($t_{(246)} = 1.41, p > .01$) and field of education ($t_{(246)} = .12, p > .01$). In addition, whether the prospective teachers in the sampling group are males or females does not affect love for children levels. Similarly, no relation is found between love for children levels and the fields the prospective teachers study.

The second question of the research was arranged as "Is there a relation between love for children scores of prospective teachers and number of siblings and gender roles?" and findings concerning this are given on Table 3.

Table 3: Correlation between love for children and number of siblings and gender roles

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Feminine (N=248)</i>	<i>Masculine (N=248)</i>	<i>Number of Siblings (N=248)</i>
Love for children	.499**	.024	.001

** The correlation is significant in the level of 0.01.

It is seen that there is a moderately positive and significant relationship between femininity scores and love for children scores ($r = 0.499, p < .01$) after examining Table 3 in which the sub dimensions of gender roles and the relation between number of siblings and the score obtained from love for children scale are analyzed. According to this, as the femininity scores of participants increase, love for children scores also increase. There is not a significant relation between the masculinity scores of participants and love for children scores ($r = 0.024, p > .01$) and the number of siblings and love for children scores ($r = 0.001, p > .01$). Based on these findings, it can be alleged that love for children is associated with feminine gender roles and the individuals who have feminine qualities (whether male or female) have higher levels of love for children.

As can be remembered from previous findings, love for children did not indicate a significant change also according to sex besides other variables. Besides, being male or female does not affect the level of love for children. In addition, there is not a considerable difference between number of siblings and love for children scores.

The third question of the research was arranged as "Is there a relation between love for children scores of prospective teachers and the place where people live, maternal and paternal level education, classroom level and gender role" and findings concerning this are given on Table 4.

One Way ANOVA statistics has been used to test the relationship between the participants' love for children, the place they live, parental education level, grade level and gender role because the variances of the variables are homogenous. Further, so as to be able to make a classification concerning gender role identity, the scores the participants got from femininity and masculinity dimensions were applied "cluster analysis technique". In this technique, those who were under the average in terms of femininity and above the average in terms of masculin-

ity were classified as masculine and those under the average in terms of masculinity and above the average in terms of masculinity were classified as feminine and those who got scores above the averages in two aspects were androgen and those who got lower scores than the average were classified as undistinguished. While the analysis results show there is not a considerable difference between the participants' level of love for children and the place where they live ($F_{(2-245)} = .37, p > .01$), maternal education level ($F_{(2-245)} = .92, p > .01$), paternal education level ($F_{(2-245)} = .18, p > .01$) and grade level ($F_{(3-244)} = .37, p > .01$), there is a considerable difference between the participants' level of love for children and gender roles ($F_{(3-244)} = 7.31, p < .01$).

According to the results of Scheffe test which was conducted to find out in which groups the differences concerning love for children scores were, the love for children scores of participants classified masculine ($M = 75.07$) were lower than those classified as feminine ($M = 88.37$) and androgen ($M = 83.17$). The love for children scores of those classified in the undistinguished gender role ($M = 77.45$) did not indicate a considerable difference relative to other groups and this group is in between. In this case,

Table 4: ANOVA results of love for children, the place where people live, maternal level of education, paternal level of education, classroom level and gender role

Dimension	Variables	N	M	SD	F	P	Difference
Love for children	The place of living						
	Village and Town	34	81.56	12.71	.37	.69	
	Township	77	80.05	12.52			
	City Center	137	79.52	12.32			
Love for children	Maternal Level of Education						
	Illiterate- Primary School	184	79.80	12.48	.08	.92	
	Secondary School	56	80.55	12.43			
	Higher Education	8	79.75	7.96			
Love for children	Paternal Level of Education						
	Illiterate- Primary School	112	81.22	12.35	1.70	.18	
	Secondary School	90	78.09	11.73			
	Higher Education	46	80.59	13.14			
Love for children	Grade						
	1 st	67	79.01	12.87	.44	.73	
	2 st	60	79.53	12.64			
	3 st	66	81.36	11.66			
	4 st	55	79.93	12.32			
Love for children	Gender Role						
	Feminine	59	88.37	11.42	7.31*	.00	Masculine Feminine/ Androgen
	Masculine	53	75.07	13.07			
	Androgen	70	83.17	11.36			
	Undistinguished	66	77.45	11.78			

* It is significant if $p < 0.01$

love for children scores can be put into order from lowest to highest as masculine, undistinguished, androgen and feminine.

DISCUSSION

The conclusions concerning the questions for which the research is trying to seek answers are thus: A significant relation was not perceived between love for children levels of prospective teachers and their sex, age, the programs/grades they study, number of siblings and parental education level. The only variable affecting the participants' "love for children" scores is "gender roles". UNICEF (2003), Baba (2007), Yilmaz and Zeyneloglu (2009) studies also maintain that educationalists should be made sensible to gender equality and agree upon the fact that classes in educational programs about this will be effective.

In the research, that feminine gender quality in both sexes are effective in love for children surpassing other demographic qualities and even sex is an original conclusion that can be analyzed from various angles. This conclusion complies with Gunindi's (1997) research which maintains that there is not a considerable difference between women having feminine gender roles and men having feminine gender roles and men have the flexibility to carry the opposite gender role and women internalize traditional roles attributed to them.

The finding that androgenic gender role is as closely effective as femininity in terms of love for children is compliant with the first finding of this research. Chusmir and Koberg (1989) research also supports this. They stated that individuals, who have androgen gender roles (feminine males-masculine females), are more compliant and flexible than those whose biological and social sexes are the same.

Further, the relation between undistinguished gender roles and love for children is not big becomes a predictable conclusion. This conclusion can be explained through Gundogdu and Ozer (2011) research that concludes saying as the individuals' gender roles get clearer, their experiences of learnt helplessness decrease. It can be thought that a teacher who has undistinguished gender roles has a low ability to resolve problems and has several experiences of learnt helplessness and therefore will be far from love for children attitude. Considering that prospec-

tive teachers whose masculine gender roles were dominant were brave, authoritarian and formalistic (Dokmen 1999; Demirtas 2002) it can be understood why their level of love for children is low. In addition to being opposite to feminine qualities, these qualities also conflict with other qualities within the definition of love for children.

The research's conclusion implying that the teacher's sex and his/her attitude of love for children are not related conforms to Gelbal and Duyan (2010) research. In this research it is seen that there was no relation between teachers' sex and the number of children they have and the levels of love for children. These conclusions are in conformity with other research conclusions in the literature (Acisli and Kolomuc 2012; Uzun-tiryaki and Geban 2004) that have the thought that the "sex" variable does not affect teacher qualities such as attitude towards the profession, self-efficacy, democratic understanding. That love for children is not related to the sex variable is a positive conclusion in that sexual inequality may disappear and professional representation differences decrease. Otherwise, a stereotype opinion that love for children depends upon sex may arise.

In terms of the other variables of the research, it is understandable that the prospective teachers' fields and grade levels do not affect their level of love for children. Love for children for prospective teachers should be a common feature of the different fields of education or professional formation. In addition, other conclusion is that the parental education level does not affect love for children in prospective teachers. This finding should be analyzed taking into account the fact that men/women in our country do not have equal educational rights. The conclusion of Pehlivan (2008) research that prospective teachers' professional attitudes do not differ according to maternal educational level but differ according to paternal educational level partially/indirectly back up this approach.

CONCLUSION

The concluding thought of the research can be summarized thus: Teaching profession requires having "love for children attitude" particularly in formal education. In teacher's choosing/training programs, it is a required condition that love for children quality is inquired based on feminine and androgen gender roles and be

acquired through professional/in service education. Concerning this, the contribution of professional formation and guidance services is needed.

The present research is limited to the students from the faculty of education of only one university. It is suggested that the such studies have a wider range of participants. In addition to the theoretical suggestion of the study is research of “love for children in teachers” from the angle of different pedagogical/psychological approaches and variables. The obtained results will constitute the holistic framework that complements the theoretical aspect of this research. An eclectic approach can be formed through these results and can be used in teacher choosing/training programs. Our practical suggestion is to create an awareness and sustainability in teachers as regards love for children through undergraduate/graduate programs.

An approach that plans to focus on inquiring/understanding love for children in teachers should not be bypassed. Thus, qualitative researches should be carried out that complements statistical descriptions obtained through the methodic limitedness of this research. The teacher’s love for children attitudes should also be inquired in terms of its relations with sociocultural conditions such as economic conditions of the teaching profession, living standard and etc. The mentioned variables are factors that affect love for children in teacher in terms of the respectability of the teaching profession, life quality and career opportunities. Further, as psychological conditions such as burn-out syndrome, communicational problems, mobbing etc. can be related to love for children, they also need to be investigated.

The teacher and the student are two elements of pedagogical interaction. It is assumed that a teacher loving his/her students is also loved by the students. So as to confirm this assumption, the students’ perceptions concerning the teacher’s love for children should also be investigated. Such a research will help teachers to get feedback concerning their perceptions of professional identity and the students can, thus, notice their rights and subjectivity within the educational medium.

The subject of love for children should be investigated in different levels of education and different types of school. It can be thought that the student’s and the teacher’s profiles accord-

ing to school types include different variables affecting love for children. The concept of love for children should be compared and contrasted in the sampling of prospective teachers that graduated from an educational faculty and who became teachers later on through formation education. This comparison will yield important conclusions in terms of the effectiveness of teaching profession.

Teachers should be made to acquire child books, child games and creative drama so as to arouse childhood consciousness/feeling. This kind of acquisitions will positively affect teacher-students relations such as problem solving and communicational skills.

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