



CHANGE, STABILITY AND CONTEXT: PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS

DEĞİŞİM, DURAĞANLIK VE BAĞLAM: ÖĞRETMEN ADAYLARININ ALGILARI

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ABSTRACT: This study aims to explore and compare first-year and fourth-year prospective teachers' perceptions of good teaching, a good teacher, and a good student. A questionnaire with close- and open-ended questions was administered to 142 first-year and 138 fourth-year prospective teachers enrolled in the Faculty of Education at Pamukkale University. Findings suggest that first-year prospective teachers demonstrate a more teacher- and subject-oriented perception in general than fourth-year prospective teachers do. Prospective teachers' perceptions of good teaching move from uniform toward holistic, their perceptions of a good teacher move from professional and affective toward personal, and their perceptions of a good student move from academic toward social. The results disclose evidence to assert a clash in the program changing the teacher-oriented perceptions. The results also give an impression that some of the embedded legacies go unchallenged.

Keywords: teacher education, perceptions, prospective teachers, turkey, teaching.

ÖZET: Bu çalışmanın amacı birinci ve dördüncü sınıftaki öğretmen adaylarının iyi öğretim, iyi öğretmen ve iyi öğrenci hakkındaki algılarını saptamak ve karşılaştırmaktır. Kapalı- ve açık-uçlu sorulardan oluşan bir anket, Pamukkale Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesinde kayıtlı 142 birinci ve 138 dördüncü sınıf öğretmen adayına uygulanmıştır. Bulgular, birinci sınıftaki öğretmen adaylarının dördüncü sınıftakilere göre daha öğretmen ve konu merkezli bir algıya sahip olduklarını göstermektedir. Öğretmen adaylarının iyi öğretime yönelik algıları tek boyutludan daha bütüncül bir anlayışa doğru, iyi öğretmene yönelik algıları profesyonel ve duyuşaldan kişisel boyuta doğru ve iyi öğrenciye yönelik algıları akademik boyuttan sosyal boyuta doğru değişmektedir. Bulgular öğretmen yetiştirme programında öğretmen merkezli algıların değişime uğradığını göstermekle birlikte, bazı yerleşik inançların da devam ettiği izlenimini vermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: öğretmen yetiştirme, algı, öğretmen adayı, türkiye, öğretim.

1. INTRODUCTION

How do prospective teachers perceive effective teaching? How do they perceive their roles as future teachers? What are the student characteristics they deem important? And more importantly, do their perceptions change as they go through their teacher education programs? Those are critical questions to be answered if the intention is to improve a teacher education program to the point that it could respond to prospective teachers' well-established perceptions of teaching, learning, and their roles as learners or teachers. Investigating their perceptions is indeed central to determining the extent to which teacher education programs can positively influence their subsequent classroom practices (Witcher, Onwuegbuzie, & Minor, 2001). By this influence, teacher education programs might also respond to pressures for the transformation of the traditional schooling practices.

Previous studies (*e.g.*, Goodlad, 1990; Kagan, 1992; Duatepe-Paksu, 2008; Wilson & Cameron, 1996) report that prospective teachers begin teacher education programs with established perceptions based on their earlier schooling experiences. As they join in as prospective teachers, they tend to bring with them a set of preconceptions about what counts as quality education, which are formed as a result of their socialization into existing norms of instruction over the years as students (Bramald, Hardman & Leat, 1995; Goodlad, 1990; Holt-Reynolds, 1992; Shor, 1992; Su, 1997; Wubbels, 1992). Similarly Clark (1988) pointed out that these preconceptions are shaped through thousands hours of observation of teachers before joining a teacher education program. If their learning context is traditional, then learners are "trained to memorize rules, facts, and definitions for short-answer exams, leading them to conclude that education is a ritual of responses to questions for which the teacher already has the answer" (Shor, 1992, p. 219). Students then start to construct mental stereotypes about teaching and

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their roles as learners or future instructors. A qualitative research by van Rossum and Taylor (1987) also demonstrated that students' conceptions of learning influence their descriptions of good teaching and a good teacher. Students with reproductive conceptions of learning viewed good teaching as ensuring that facts were absorbed. As their conceptions of learning moved from reproductive towards reconstruction of meaning, a good teacher was defined as a facilitator of learning.

Other studies (e.g., Kember, 2001; Robertson, 2006; Wilson & Cameron, 1996) focused on prospective teachers' perception of effective teaching. First-year prospective teachers view effective teaching as in such ways that learners perform the roles expected from them in settled and quiet classrooms, that the teacher must be teaching, and that learners should be passive entities who are quiet, on task, and usually sitting at desks (Wilson & Cameron, 1996). Likewise, Joram and Gabriele (1998) report that more than half of prospective teachers in their study exhibited an understanding which defines teaching as delivery of knowledge and a learner as the object of education. Kember (2001) found evidence of students holding a trinity of beliefs about teaching, learning, and knowledge. In fact, students held either didactic/reproductive/absolute or facilitative/understanding/transformativ set. Unlike those mentioned, Robertson (2006) found that relational aspects of teaching are highlighted as participants demonstrate a desire for intelligent, creative and empathetic teachers who create trustworthy and respectful learning atmospheres.

Prospective teachers generally perceived a good teacher to have sufficient subject knowledge (Fajet, Bello, Leftwich, Mesler & Shaver, 2005; Minor, Onwuegbuzie, Witcher, & James, 2002; Witcher *et al.*, 2001), ability to use teaching methods (Aagaard & Skidmore, 2002; Witcher *et al.*, 2001), classroom management skills (Fajet *et al.*, 2005; Minor *et al.*, 2002; Witcher *et al.*, 2001), and affective characteristics (Fajet *et al.*, 2005). Studies indicate that prospective teachers attach greater importance to affective characteristics and thus define a teacher as caring, patient, engaging, fair, nice, honest, understanding, friendly, and sociable person (Fajet *et al.*, 2005). A good teacher is also thought to be student-centered (Aagaard & Skidmore, 2002; Minor *et al.*, 2002; Witcher *et al.*, 2001), exhibiting enthusiasm for the profession (Fajet *et al.*, 2005; Minor *et al.*, 2002; Witcher *et al.*, 2001), supportive, demonstrating high expectation for students (Weinstein, 1990), and personable (Fajet *et al.*, 2005; Minor *et al.*, 2002; Weinstein, 1990). Besides all those, a good teacher is assumed to be available for students, approachable (Fajet *et al.*, 2005), and ethical, which means they are fair, honest, trustworthy, impartial, dependable, and reliable (Minor *et al.*, 2002).

Furthermore, studies reveal that teacher education programs can change perceptions and beliefs (Doyle, 1997; Joram & Gabriele, 1998; Wilson & Cameron, 1996). Prospective teachers move from a teacher-centered to a student-centered view of instruction, from a personal to professional view of relationships with students, and from a control to a holistic view of classroom management (Wilson & Cameron, 1996). The pursuits to figure out what prospective teachers bring with them as their perceptions and how those are challenged in teacher education programs might yield invaluable information (Arnon & Reichel, 2007). Consequently, this study seeks to examine and compare the first- and fourth-year prospective teachers' perceptions. It is then attempted to answer the following specific questions. (1) What are the participants' background characteristics? (2) What are the first- and fourth-year prospective teachers' perceptions of good teaching, a good teacher, and a good student¹? (3) In what ways perceptions of both groups change? (4) What could be learned from a comparison between the first- and fourth-year prospective teachers' perceptions regarding the impact of teacher education program?

2. METHOD

2.1. Participants and Context

This study was conducted at Pamukkale University, Faculty of Education, Primary School Teaching Program (1-5) of Elementary Education Department. The participants included a total of 280

¹ The expression "good student" is merely used to reveal the perceptions of the participants and must not be adopted by practitioners as a labeling discourse.

(142 first-year and 138 fourth-year) elementary level prospective teachers who are specialized in the Primary School Teaching Program. Each category (first-year or fourth-year) belongs to only one end of teacher education process, the beginning or the end. The participants represent about 40 percent of the population in this particular specialization. Five sections out of the total ten were randomly selected in each level. The fourth-year participants responded to the questionnaire after completing their coursework and the student teaching. The first-year participants completed the questionnaire when they were already taking their very first pedagogical domain course requirement. It is also important to note that prospective teachers come from a subject- and textbook-driven system. Though the curricula in Turkey were predicated upon the pragmatic philosophy, their practice has constantly turned into an essentialist or perennialist (Sönmez, 2003). Standardized tests have long been a key instrument to select and sort students who want to move forward. The tests, accompanied by an immense pressure of crowded classes resulting from the avalanche of some fifteen million school-age children, eventually foster banking concept of education (Freire, 1970) and “McDonaldization” (Ritzer, 1996) which offers, by an ever increasing private sectors, the opportunity to buy a package of education that better prepares learners for the test. A recent report stated that, in 2005, families paid the sector one and half billion dollars (YÖK, 2006).

2.2. Instrument

This study employed a data collection instrument consisting of close- and open-ended questions in two sections. The former includes questions to compile participants’ demographic characteristics (gender, age, mother’s education, father’s education, mother’s occupation, and father’s occupation). The latter section of the instrument asked participants to write down three basic features of *good teaching*, a *good teacher*, and a *good student*. Open-ended questions, not presuming a pre-set answer, allow participants to take any direction they want in an established territory (Seidman, 1998). A question in this section was: “In your understanding what are the three important features that describe *good teaching*?” The same question was used for a *good teacher* and a *good student*.

2.3. Data Analysis

The participants’ background characteristics have been analyzed by using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) and documented as frequencies and percentages. For the open-ended data, content analysis technique was employed to reveal the leading codes and themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994) for the characteristics of *good teaching*, a *good teacher*, and a *good student*. At the first stage, emerging statements for the features of *teaching*, *teacher*, and *student* have been recorded on separate files for both grade levels in order to identify the frequencies of the repeating characteristics (Tashakkori & Tedlie, 1998) for each particular question. In each of those two files were three categories of responses given by the participants. At the second stage, responses to each question were classified based on similar content. The classified characteristics formed basic categories depending on the respondents’ own statements. At the third stage, these basic categories were organized into categories, called ‘characteristics for a good ...’. At the final stage, the emerged characteristics were gathered into three or four core themes for each question (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Both researchers carried out the whole process in collaboration. For the reliability of the results, interrater agreement was calculated on the basis of a specialist’s ratings on a quarter of participants’ responses to each question. The specialist’s ratings in all categories, above 82 percent agreement, corresponded to the results found by the researchers.

3. RESULTS

Results reported in this section are based on the data derived from the close- and open-ended questions. The first of those is the demographic characteristics of the participants. Then the other findings are presented respectively.

3.1. Demographic Characteristics

The participants included 142 first-year and 138 fourth-year prospective teachers. The gender profile of the participants indicates that approximately two-thirds are females. This is in line with

Saban's (2003) findings in a Turkish context and with a cultural belief that teaching profession is more appropriate for women than for men (Hatch, 1999). The status of age indicates that a majority of the participants gain admission into teacher training immediately upon or soon after completing their secondary education. The socioeconomic background of the participants reveals that more than 70 percent of the mothers as well as about 40 percent of fathers have primary level of education or less, and that the majority of the participants have one-parent working families (See Table 1). Except for age, the first-year and fourth-year participants demonstrate similar characteristics, which gives a reasonable ground for a comparison. The following sections report the open-ended data.

Table 1: Participants' Demographic Information

Characteristics	First-year		Fourth-year		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
<i>Participants</i>	142	50.7	138	49.3	280	100
<i>Gender</i>						
Male	51	35.9	64	46.4	115	41.1
Female	91	64.1	74	53.6	165	58.9
<i>Age</i>						
19 and below	93	65.5	0	0.0	93	33.2
20-23	48	33.8	124	89.9	172	61.4
24 and above	1	0.7	14	10.1	15	5.4
<i>Mother's education</i>						
Uneducated	7	4.9	13	9.4	20	7.1
Primary school	93	65.5	90	65.2	183	65.4
Middle school	14	9.9	12	8.7	26	9.3
High school	20	14.1	17	12.3	37	13.2
Post secondary	8	5.6	6	4.4	14	5.0
<i>Father's education</i>						
Uneducated	1	0.7	1	0.7	2	0.7
Primary school	53	37.3	57	41.4	110	39.3
Middle school	29	20.4	28	20.3	57	20.4
High school	29	20.4	29	21.0	58	20.7
Post secondary	30	21.2	23	16.6	53	18.9
<i>Mother's occupation</i>						
Housewife	118	83.1	115	83.3	233	83.2
Tradeswoman (self-employed)	2	1.4	1	0.7	3	1.1
Farmer	3	2.1	2	1.4	5	1.8
Worker	2	1.4	5	3.6	7	2.5
Public servicewoman (e.g., nurse)	3	2.1	3	2.2	6	2.1
Others (e.g., retired, dead)	14	9.9	12	8.8	26	9.3
<i>Father's occupation</i>						
Trader (self-employed)	24	16.9	26	18.9	50	17.9
Farmer	21	14.8	22	15.9	43	15.5
Worker	30	21.1	16	11.6	46	16.4
Public serviceman (e.g., teacher)	33	23.2	32	23.2	65	23.2
Others (e.g., retired, dead)	34	24.0	42	30.4	76	27.2

3.2. Characteristics for Good Teaching

The data regarding the characteristics of good teaching reveal four major themes: (1) *design of teaching*, (2) *implementation of teaching*, (3) *evaluation*, and (3) *social aspect of teaching* (Table 2). The findings in this section demonstrate that first-year prospective teachers often cited the *implementation of teaching* (59.0%) while having a lower recognition of the dimensions of *design* (24.9%), *evaluation* (4.2%), and *social aspect* (11.8%). A comparison of those results to the findings from the fourth-year prospective teachers demonstrates that the importance given to the *implementation of teaching* (41.9%) declines while the importance given to *the design of teaching* (28.9%), *evaluation* (7.0%), and *the social aspect of teaching* (22.2%) increase. Although the

implementation of teaching for both groups was the most prominent among the other features, fourth-year participants attached less importance to this category than their first-year counterparts did.

Table 2: Emerged Characteristics for Good Teaching

Characteristics	First-year		Fourth-year		Change
	n	%	n	%	%
<i>1. Design of teaching</i>					
Well-structured	17	7.2	31	8.4	+1.2
Selecting appropriate methods	18	7.6	25	6.8	-0.8
Finding contextual elements to topic	16	6.8	21	5.7	-1.1
Designing student-centered activities	8	3.4	30	8.1	+4.7
<i>Subtotal</i>	59	24.9	107	28.9	+4.0
<i>2. Implementation of teaching</i>					
Using multiple methods	20	8.4	30	8.1	-0.3
Delivery of knowledge	41	17.3	13	3.5	-13.8
Repeating the subject	11	4.6	2	0.5	-4.1
Letting students use knowledge	11	4.6	14	3.8	-0.8
Giving challenging tasks	1	0.4	2	0.5	+0.1
Giving cues/feedbacks	0	0.0	24	6.5	+6.5
Encouraging creativity	3	1.3	4	1.1	-0.2
Motivating learners	3	1.3	6	1.6	+0.3
Providing effective learning	16	6.8	25	6.8	+0.0
Doing technology-based activities	2	0.8	9	2.4	+1.6
Providing attendance	8	3.4	2	0.5	-2.9
Giving students enough time	10	4.2	3	0.8	-3.4
Allowing independent study	12	5.1	19	5.1	0.0
Using multiple information sources	2	0.8	2	0.5	-0.3
<i>Subtotal</i>	140	59.0	155	41.9	-17.1
<i>3. Evaluation</i>					
Evaluation of learning	4	1.7	12	3.2	+1.5
Evaluation of performance	5	2.1	7	1.9	-0.2
Evaluation of teaching	1	0.4	7	1.9	+1.5
<i>Subtotal</i>	10	4.2	26	7.0	+2.8
<i>4. Social aspect of teaching</i>					
Active student participation	8	3.4	28	7.6	+4.2
Interaction with others	8	3.4	21	5.7	+2.3
Cooperation with others	2	0.8	15	4.1	+3.3
Love/respect among people	4	1.7	6	1.6	-0.1
Democratic relations	6	2.5	12	3.2	+0.7
<i>Subtotal</i>	28	11.8	82	22.2	+10.4
Total	237	100	370	100	

This shift between two groups might give the impression that the fourth-year prospective teachers learn to underestimate the *implementation of teaching*. However, it must be noted that *delivery of knowledge* and *repeating the subject* account for the shift in this category. In particular, *delivery of knowledge* and *repeating the subject* have more currency among the first-year prospective teachers than the fourth-year counterparts. Those differences might be significant because both demonstrate the impact of teacher education program on moving students' perceptions away from a subject-oriented view of teaching. Additionally, the fourth-year participants better adopt the *design of teaching*, *evaluation*, and *social aspect of teaching* than the first-year counterparts do. The positive change in those categories, though moderate, is significant because it demonstrates the movement toward a constructivist view and a more complete image of teaching.

3.3. Characteristics for a Good Teacher

The data regarding teacher characteristics reveal three major themes: (1) *general personal characteristics*, (2) *professional roles in teaching*, and (3) *affective roles toward students* (Table 3).

The findings in this section reveal that first-year participants more often cited *professional roles in teaching* (53.1%) than *general personal characteristics* (16.9%) and *affective roles toward students* (30.0%). A comparison of those results to the data gathered from the fourth-year participants reveals that the fourth-year participants grant less importance to *professional roles in teaching* (46.3%) and *affective roles toward students* (24.4%) while giving more importance to *general personal characteristics* (29.3%). Regarding *general personal characteristics*, the fourth-year participants gave a higher rate to the characteristic of *democratic personality*, *innovative personality*, and *openness to criticism* than the first-year counterparts did.

Noticing the finding that the fourth-year participants gave less emphasis on the *professional roles in teaching* than their first-year counterparts did, one might ask if the teacher education program causes prospective teachers to underestimate the professional roles of a teacher in teaching. The findings, however, reveal that the *narrator* itself accounts for this difference. While a half of the first-year prospective teachers view *narration* as a good-teacher characteristic, only one-seventh of the fourth-year participants state it as a teacher quality. This difference might mean that there is a positive effect of teacher education program on prospective teachers' teacher-centered perceptions. Consistent with the findings of previous studies (e.g., Fajet *et al.*, 2005; Minor *et al.*, 2002; Witcher *et al.*, 2001), the data also manifest that both groups of participants perceive teachers to possess knowledge. This can be taken positively because the inadequacy of subject knowledge can impede quality teaching (Guyton & Farokhi, 1987; Monk, 1994). The fourth-year participants more frequently attributed to the characteristics of *knowledge*, *impartialness*, and *becoming a guide* than the first-year participants did.

Findings also demonstrate that the fourth-year prospective teachers less frequently attributed to the affective roles of a teacher toward students than their first-year counterparts did. Although it is known that prospective teachers attach a great importance to affective roles of a teacher (Fajet *et al.*, 2005), the finding that the fourth-year prospective teachers attributed less importance on affective roles of a teacher raises the questions of what causes this difference.

3.4. Characteristics for a Good Student

Responses to the third question fell under three major themes: (1) *personal characteristics*, (2) *academic characteristics*, and (3) *social characteristics* (Table 4). The findings reveal that first-year participants give primacy to *personal* (36.7%) and *academic characteristics* (43.7%) while demonstrating moderate frequency on *social characteristics* (19.6%). When those results are compared to the data derived from the fourth-year participants, it is seen that the weight given to *personal* (37.1%) and *social characteristics* (26.6%) increases, while the weight of *academic characteristics* (36.3%) declines. In the category of *personal characteristics*, the fourth-year participants gave a slightly higher rate to the characteristic of *curiosity*, *creativity*, *ethics*, *responsibility*, *intelligence*, *innovative personality*, and *self-confidence* than the first-year counterparts did. Additionally emphasis to *diligence*, *being ordered*, *obedience*, and *patience* declined from the first-year to the fourth-year participants.

Seeing the decline on the *academic characteristics*, one might ask if the teacher education program teaches prospective teachers to underrate the academic side of students. A critical investigation of the findings reveals that the *listener* and *repeating the subject* themselves account for the decline in the *academic characteristics*. While more than half of the first-year prospective teachers view *listening* as a good-student characteristic, only about a quarter of the fourth-year participants cited it as a good-student characteristic. This finding might indicate and is attributable to the dominance of listening in their earlier educational lives as students, which eventually shapes their perception of what it means to be a good student. The finding that only a quarter of the fourth-year participants perceive *listening* as a good-student characteristic might indicate an impact of teacher education program on teacher-centered perceptions. Along the same line, *repeating the subject* emerges as a good-student characteristic for the first-year participants and nearly disappeared for the fourth-year participants. Contrary to those, *researcher* and *demonstrating critical approach* are the characteristics increasing from the first-year to fourth-year prospective teachers.

Table 3: Emerged Characteristics for a Good Teacher

Characteristics	First-year		Fourth-year		Change
	n	%	n	%	%
<i>1. General personal characteristics</i>					
Communication skills	15	3.5	13	3.3	-0.2
Democratic personality	18	4.2	52	13.3	+9.1
Innovative personality	11	2.5	29	7.4	+4.9
Diligent/Enthusiastic	14	3.2	12	3.1	-0.1
Open to criticism	8	1.8	9	2.3	+0.5
Self-confident	4	0.9	0	0.0	-0.9
Intelligent	3	0.7	0	0.0	-0.7
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>73</i>	<i>16.9</i>	<i>115</i>	<i>29.3</i>	<i>+12.4</i>
<i>2. Professional roles in teaching</i>					
Effective narrator	70	16.2	18	4.6	-11.6
Effective listener	1	0.2	2	0.5	+0.3
Open to gain new knowledge	10	2.3	12	3.1	+0.8
Knowledgeable of the subject	55	12.7	62	15.8	+3.1
Authority figure	10	2.3	5	1.3	-1.0
Effective classroom manager	18	4.2	2	0.5	-3.7
Impartial toward student	15	3.5	25	6.4	+2.9
Demonstrates passion in teaching	12	2.8	12	3.1	+0.3
Uses student-centered approach	4	0.9	6	1.5	+0.6
Uses proper methods of instruction	7	1.6	5	1.3	-0.3
Considers students' level	5	1.2	2	0.5	-0.7
Asks quality questions	6	1.4	7	1.8	+0.4
Takes responsibility for teaching	3	0.7	3	0.8	+0.1
Becomes a good role model	2	0.5	6	1.5	+1.0
Adopts the role of a guide	7	1.6	14	3.6	+2.0
Encourages critical approach	5	1.2	6	1.5	+0.3
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>230</i>	<i>53.1</i>	<i>182</i>	<i>46.3</i>	<i>-6.8</i>
<i>3. Affective roles toward students</i>					
Shows understanding and tolerance	41	9.5	36	9.2	-0.3
Exhibits love and respect	36	8.3	24	6.1	-2.2
Behaves sociably and personably	26	6.0	12	3.1	-2.9
Relates to students	7	1.6	2	0.5	-1.1
Demonstrates patience	10	2.3	18	4.6	+2.3
Gives students affective support	10	2.3	4	1.0	-1.3
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>130</i>	<i>30.0</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>24.4</i>	<i>-5.6</i>
Total	433	100	393	100	

Finally, the fourth-year participants better adopt most of the emerged *social characteristics* of students than their first-year counterparts do. The increase in this category is significant because it is widely known that traditional or behaviorist approaches, contrary to constructivist ones, overlook social aspect of students. More importantly, it could be asserted that perceptions are moving toward the positive direction. This difference might then be attributable to the emphasis recently given in teacher education programs to constructivist learning theories promoting the social aspect in learning and teaching.

Table 4: Emerged Characteristics for a Good Student

Characteristics	First-year		Fourth-year		Change
	n	%	n	%	%
<i>1. Personal characteristics</i>					
Diligent	103	23.2	68	17.4	-5.8
Curious	7	1.6	14	3.6	+2.0
Responsible	13	2.9	15	3.8	+0.9
Creative	4	0.9	11	2.8	+1.9
Ethical	13	2.9	17	4.3	+1.4
Thinking	2	0.5	2	0.5	0.0
Obedient	2	0.5	0	0.0	-0.5
Self-confident	4	0.9	5	1.3	+0.4
Patient	2	0.5	0	0.0	-0.5
Innovative	2	0.5	4	1.0	+0.5
Ordered	6	1.4	2	0.5	-0.9
Intelligent	5	1.1	7	1.8	+0.7
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>163</i>	<i>36.7</i>	<i>145</i>	<i>37.1</i>	<i>+0.4</i>
<i>2. Academic characteristics</i>					
Listener	83	18.7	37	9.5	-9.2
Researcher	26	5.8	43	11.0	+5.2
Demonstrating critical approach	17	3.8	29	7.4	+3.6
Coming with preparation	17	3.8	12	3.1	-0.7
Repeating the subject to learn	19	4.3	1	0.3	-4.0
Knowledgeable	4	0.9	1	0.3	-0.6
Using scientific approach	6	1.3	7	1.8	+0.5
Demonstrating interest	14	3.1	6	1.5	-1.6
Reader	3	0.7	1	0.3	-0.4
Using knowledge	5	1.1	5	1.3	+0.2
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>194</i>	<i>43.7</i>	<i>142</i>	<i>36.3</i>	<i>-7.4</i>
<i>3. Social characteristics</i>					
Cooperative	12	2.7	11	2.8	+0.1
Asks good questions	14	3.2	17	4.3	+1.1
Participative	14	3.2	29	7.4	+4.2
Respectful towards others	30	6.8	27	6.9	+0.1
Ablity to express ideas to others	9	2.0	9	2.3	+0.3
Sociable	8	1.8	6	1.5	-0.3
Sharing	0	0.0	5	1.3	+1.3
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>87</i>	<i>19.6</i>	<i>104</i>	<i>26.6</i>	<i>+7.0</i>
Total	444	100	391	100	

4. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Using a Turkish university context, this study investigated the first- and fourth-year prospective teachers' characteristics and perceptions. The analysis of the demographic characteristics of the participants, which reveals that the majority of the prospective teachers come from relatively low-level of educational and socioeconomic backgrounds, draw our attention to the context which has shaped the perceptions of prospective teachers participating in this study. Considering the findings that more than half of the mothers along with more than one-third of the fathers have no more than primary education and that the majority of the prospective teachers come from one-parent working families, it could be reasonable to assert that the most of them come with social, economic, as well as educational shortcomings. Those problems draw attention to the link between their status and perceptions. It is also true to say that the characteristics of prospective teachers in the study are in line with the overall

characteristics of Turkish society. This might then suggest that the children of families from the lower socio-economic segments can reach higher education and that the prospective teachers who will serve for the society will actually be reflecting the overall characteristics of the society.

Findings reveal prospective teachers' perceptions of good teaching, a good teacher, a good student, as well as the change between the first-year and fourth-year participants' perceptions. On the basis of the findings, four generalizations could be made about the transformation of student perceptions of good teaching, a good teacher, and a good student which might contribute to our understanding of teacher education. (1) Prospective teachers, similar to the findings from the previous research (e.g., Doyle, 1997; Joram & Gabriele, 1998; Wilson & Cameron, 1996), demonstrate a development from a teacher-centered to a student-centered view of teaching. The finding that many first-year participants view good teaching as delivery of knowledge overlaps with the other findings that many view a teacher as a narrator and a good student as a listener. Those findings are in parallel with the claims that prospective teachers come to teacher education programs with embedded perceptions (Goodlad, 1990; Kagan, 1992; Wilson & Cameron, 1996) and demonstrate a need for teacher education programs to pay a special attention to the strategies which will help transform them. The good news, however, is that the teacher training process displays a transition in that the fourth-year participants give a lower rate to the aforementioned roles of teaching, a teacher, and a student than their first-year counterparts do. (2) Prospective teachers move from an academic-oriented view toward the direction of a social view of teaching. The participants of both groups are, in fact, concerned with the social aspects of teaching and of students. However, there appears to be a difference between the perceptions of both groups in that the fourth-year participants display a higher rate on social aspect of teaching and of students than their first-year counterparts do. This might be because of the momentum that constructivist theories have recently gained against behaviorist approaches and of the emphasis given to constructivist theories of learning in Turkish teacher education programs. (3) Participants in both groups are concerned with the notion that effective teaching comes with a good design than a mere implementation. Although this is true, there appears to be a difference between the perceptions of both groups. Fourth graders placed more emphasis on the design of teaching than their first-year counterparts did. This change is crucial because the recent trend gave emphasis on the impact of designing learning activities rather than a mere implementation of teaching. (4) Prospective teachers view a teacher's affective roles toward students as important. Unlike the previous studies (Book, Byers, & Freeman, 1983; Fajet *et al.*, 2005; Minor *et al.*, 2002; Weinstein, 1990; Witcher *et al.*, 2001) which found that prospective teachers perceive teaching primarily as a task involving affective relationships, this study found that prospective teachers conceive of *good teaching* primarily as a task involving knowledgeable and skilled professionals rather than affective relationships with students. Although both groups of participants attributed to the importance of affective relationships, the fourth-year participants cited it less often than the first-year participants did. This draws attention to whether this difference somehow relates to their *student-teaching* context, which demands more authority and less affection (Işkoğlu, İvrendi, & Şahin, 2007).

A critical analysis of the data reveals that Goodlad's (1990) claim of mental stereotypes go fundamentally unchallenged in formal teacher education programs is still compelling in some respects. To give an example, very few participants in both groups particularized listening as a teacher characteristic, though many in both groups perceive listening to be an important student characteristic. This invites the question of how a teacher could maintain democratic relationship with students if he or she intends merely to talk *to* learners rather than talk *with* learners (Freire, 1998) and confirms the findings from previous research (e.g., Goodlad, 1990; Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1984) that some core beliefs tend to remain unchanged over time.

To conclude, findings from this study draw attention to the perceptions that first-year prospective teachers bring in, perceptions that fourth-year prospective teachers take to the field, and direction of the perceptual change which might have occurred in a teacher education program. Findings suggest that although the first-year and the fourth-year prospective teachers' perceptions are alike in terms of emerging themes, ratings on the themes varied. The fourth-year prospective teachers reflected a more social tone along with a more complete image of teaching, yet the first-year

prospective teachers reflected a subject- and teacher-oriented perception. While this study strongly points to the need for teacher educators to face embedded perceptions and to crumble them, it also points to the need to pay a careful attention to the perceptions that go unchallenged and to the context-bound nature of perceptions. Studying prospective teachers' perceptions of *good teaching*, a *good teacher*, and a *good student* helps us understand what crucial roles teacher education programs play and who the teachers of tomorrow are, which should contribute to improvement of teacher education programs. The study opens the way to further and deeper discussion of student teacher perceptions. Would there be a difference if the study was carried out in different contexts? Would similar characteristics emerge in other cultures, other countries, and other teaching areas? And more importantly, what change occurs in student teacher perceptions upon entering the real world of teaching? Future research might focus on the questions given above as well as in-depth analysis of the unchallenged perceptions.

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GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Öğretmen yetiştirme programına kabul edilen öğretmen adaylarının algıları ve bu algılardaki değişimin saptanması, öğretmen yetiştirme sürecinin etkililiğini belirlemek bakımından önemlidir. Bu algıların tespiti ve olumsuz algıların dönüşümü, öğretmen adaylarının gelecekteki öğretim deneyimlerindeki başarılarını olumlu yönde etkileyebilecek yollardan biridir. Yapılan çalışmalar, öğretmen adaylarının öğretmen yetiştirme programlarına yerleşik bir dizi algılarla geldiklerini göstermektedir. Öğretmen yetiştirme programına geleneksel ortamlardan gelen öğretmen adaylarının algıları, bu ortamlarda edinmiş oldukları deneyimlerle şekillenmekte; bu yüzden öğrenci veya öğretmen rollerine yönelik yanlış algılar geliştirmektedirler. Öğretmen adayları etkili öğretimin; öğrencilerin görevlerini sessizce yaptıkları, sıralarında sessizce oturdukları ve öğretmenin de öğretmekle meşgul olduğu ortamlarda gerçekleştiğini ifade etmektedirler. Öğretmen adayları iyi öğretmeni ise bilgili, güdüleyici, öğretim becerisine sahip ve öğrenciyi anlayan birisi olarak tanımlamakta; ancak öğretmenin duyuşsal özelliklerini diğer özelliklerinden daha fazla önemsemektedirler. Önceki çalışmalar ayrıca öğretmen yetiştirme programlarında adayların algılarının öğretmen-merkezli anlayıştan öğrenci merkezli anlayışa, kişisel ilişkiden profesyonel ilişkiye ve kontrolcü anlayıştan bütüncül anlayışa doğru değiştiğini göstermektedir. Öğretmen adaylarının algıları birçok çalışma tarafından incelenmiş olmakla birlikte, öğretmen yetiştirme programına kabul ve mezuniyet seviyesindeki adayların algılarını inceleyen çalışmalara ihtiyaç vardır. Bu çalışmada şu sorulara cevap aranmıştır. (1) Çalışmaya katılan öğretmen adaylarının kişisel özellikleri nelerdir? (2) Birinci ve dördüncü sınıftaki öğretmen adaylarının iyi öğretim, iyi öğretmen ve iyi öğrenciye yönelik algıları nelerdir? (3) Birinci ve dördüncü sınıftaki adayların algıları hangi açılardan farklılık göstermektedir? (4) İki grup öğretmen adayının algıları karşılaştırıldığında, öğretmen yetiştirme sürecinin etkililiği hakkındaki çıkarımlar nelerdir?

Bu çalışmanın verileri Pamukkale Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Sınıf Öğretmenliği Anabilim Dalı'nda öğrenim gören 142 birinci ve 138 dördüncü sınıf öğretmen adayından toplanmıştır. Örneklem, evrenin yüzde 40'ını oluşturmaktadır. Veriler kapalı- ve açık-uçlu sorulardan oluşan bir anket formu yardımıyla toplanmıştır. Kapalı-uçlu sorular katılımcıların kişisel bilgilerini derleme amacıyla kullanılırken, açık-uçlu sorular katılımcıların iyi öğretim, iyi öğretmen ve iyi öğrenci

nitelikleriyle ilgili algılarını ortaya çıkarmak amacıyla kullanılmıştır. Kişisel bilgiler SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) programı aracılığıyla çözümlenmiş ve bulgular frekans ve yüzdeler şeklinde sunulmuştur. Açık-uçlu sorulara verilen cevaplar ise içerik analizi tekniğiyle çözümlenmiş; bulunan temalar birinci ve dördüncü sınıftaki öğretmen adaylarının algılarıyla, gruplar arasındaki değişimi göstermek için frekans ve yüzdeler olarak sunulmuştur.

Araştırmanın katılımcı özelliklerine yönelik bulguları, bayanların öğretmenlik mesleğini erkeklere göre daha fazla tercih ettiklerini, katılımcıların genellikle alt sosyoekonomik katmanlardan geldiklerini, katılımcıların annelerinin yüzde 70'den fazlası ve babalarının yaklaşık yüzde 40'ının ilköğretim düzeyi ve altında eğitim aldıklarını göstermektedir. Ayrıca öğretmen adaylarının genellikle tek ebeveynin çalıştığı aile bireyleri olduğu anlaşılmaktadır. Her iki gruptaki öğretmen adaylarının iyi öğretimin ne olduğuna yönelik algıları incelendiğinde; tasarım, uygulama, değerlendirme ve sosyal boyutlar olmak üzere dört ana tema ortaya çıkmıştır. Ancak öğretmen yetiştirme sürecinde dördüncü sınıftaki adaylarda öğretimin tasarım, değerlendirme ve sosyal boyutlarında daha fazla; buna karşılık öğretimin uygulama boyutunda ise daha düşük seviyede algı geliştiği görülmektedir. Öğretimin uygulama boyutunda birinci sınıftaki öğretmen adaylarının cevaplarında bilginin transferi ve konu tekrarı temaları daha yüksek oranda yer alırken, dördüncü sınıftaki öğretmen adaylarının cevaplarında daha düşük oranda yer almaktadır. Özellikle öğretimde bilginin transfer edildiği görüşü öğretmen yetiştirme sürecinin etkisiyle büyük oranda değişime uğramaktadır. Katılımcıların iyi öğretimin ne olduğuna yönelik algılarına ait bulgular; genel kişisel nitelikleri, öğretime yönelik profesyonel rolleri ve öğrenciye yönelik duyuşsal rolleri ifade ettiklerini göstermektedir. Birinci sınıftaki öğretmen adayları profesyonel rolleri ve öğrenciye yönelik duyuşsal rolleri daha çok benimserken, dördüncü sınıftaki adaylar genel kişisel niteliklere daha çok önem vermektedirler. Katılımcıların iyi öğrencinin ne olduğuna yönelik algılarına ait bulgularda ise kişisel, akademik ve sosyal nitelikleri ifade eden temalar ortaya çıkmaktadır. Birinci sınıftaki öğretmen adayları öğrencide akademik özellikleri, dördüncü sınıftaki öğretmen adayları ise sosyal nitelikleri daha çok önemsemektedirler.

Elde edilen bulgulara dayanarak dört temel sonuca varılmıştır. (1) Önceki çalışmaların bulgularına benzer şekilde öğretmen adaylarının algıları öğretmen yetiştirme sürecinde öğretmen- ve konu-merkezli anlayıştan öğrenci-merkezli bir anlayışa doğru kaymaktadır. (2) Öğretmen adaylarının öğretime yönelik algıları, akademik yönelimli görüşten sosyal yönelimli görüşe doğru çevrilmektedir. (3) Öğretimin tasarım boyutu her iki grupta da, öğretimin uygulaması ile birlikte önemsenmekte; ancak dördüncü sınıftaki öğretmen adaylarının algılarında tasarım boyutu daha çok yer almaktadır. Bu dönüşümlerde, son zamanlarda sıklıkla vurgu yapılan oluşturmacı öğrenme anlayışına ait ilkelerin içselleştirilmesinin önemli bir rol oynadığı düşünülebilir. (4) Öğretmen adayları, öğretmenlerin öğrencilere yönelik duyuşsal yaklaşımlarını önemsemelerine rağmen, son sınıftaki öğretmen adaylarının algılarında bu boyut daha az yer tutmaktadır. Bu bulgu, duyuşsal algıdaki azalmanın sebeplerine dikkatleri çekmektedir. Ayrıca, bulguların eleştirel analizi bazı yerleşik inançların devam ettiğine işaret etmektedir. Örneğin, her iki gruptaki katılımcılar, dinleme niteliğini iyi bir öğrenci niteliği olarak ifade ederken, bu niteliği sadece birkaç katılımcının iyi bir öğretmen niteliği olarak ifade etmesi halen katılımcıların bilinçaltında öğretmen-merkezli öğretime ait izlerin bulunduğunu; mesleğe başlayınca geleneksel yollara kayabileceklerini düşündürmektedir.