

FACTORS EFFECTING TEACHER-CHILD COMMUNICATION SKILLS & SELF-
EFFICACY BELIEFS: AN INVESTIGATION ON PRESCHOOL TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

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The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and teacher- child communication skills of preschool teachers. More specifically, this study explored how well self-efficacy beliefs and years of experience predict teacher-child communication skills of preschool teachers. In-service preschool teachers (N=304) working in pre-schools within the Ministry of National Education in Ankara were the participants of the study. In the study, a demographic information form and two major questionnaires were used in order to gather data. Self-efficacy beliefs of teachers were identified by using the “Preschool Teachers’ Self Efficacy Beliefs Scale”. The second measurement tool was the “Teacher-Child Communication Scale” used to determine the teacher-child communication skills of pre-school teachers. One-way analysis of variance and multiple regression analysis were used to analyze the data.

The results revealed that there was a strong and positive relationship between teacher-child communication skills and self-efficacy beliefs. Moreover, self-efficacy beliefs made a significant contribution to teacher-child communication skills. On the other hand, years of experience and the type of institution where teachers work did not contribute significantly to preschool teachers’ teacher-child communication skills.

Upon understanding the significant relationship between self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers and their teacher-child communication skills, it can be inferred that training preschool teachers to have higher self-efficacy beliefs should be adopted as one of the primary aims by teacher education institutions in order to develop teachers with a higher level of communication skills.

Keywords: Preschool Teachers, Preschool Children, Teacher-Child Communication, Self-Efficacy.

ÖZ

ÖĞRETMEN-ÇOCUK İLETİŞİM BECERİLERİ VE ÖZ-YETERLİK İNANÇLARINI ETKİLEYEN FAKTÖRLER: OKUL ÖNCESİ ÖĞRETMENLERİ ÜZERİNE BİR ARAŞTIRMA

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Bu çalışmada, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerileri ve öz-yeterlik inançları arasındaki ilişki araştırılmıştır. Çalışma aynı zamanda öz-yeterlik inançları, deneyim ve çalışılan kurum türünün okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerilerini yordama düzeyini araştırmaktadır. Araştırmanın katılımcıları Ankara ilinde Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı bünyesindeki okullarda görev yapmakta olan 304 okul öncesi öğretmenidir. Çalışmada, bir demografik bilgi formu ve iki temel anket veri toplamak amacıyla kullanılmıştır. Öğretmenlerin Öz-yeterlik inançları "Okulöncesi Öğretmenlerinin Öz Yeterlik İnançları Ölçeği" kullanılarak tespit edilmiştir. Buna ek olarak, "Öğretmen-Çocuk İletişim Ölçeği" öğretmenlerin öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerilerini belirlemek için kullanılmıştır. Verilerin analizinde tek yönlü varyans analizi ve çoklu regresyon analizi kullanılmıştır.

Sonuçlar, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerileri ve öz-yeterlik inançları arasında güçlü ve pozitif bir ilişki olduğunu, öz-yeterlik inançlarının öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerilerinin açıklanmasına önemli bir katkıda bulunduğu ortaya çıkarmıştır. Diğer yandan, deneyim ve çalışılan kurum türünün okul öncesi

öğretmenlerinin öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerilerinin açıklanmasına anlamlı bir katkısının olmadığı bulunmuştur.

Öz-yeterlik inançları ve öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerileri arasındaki güçlü ilişkiye dayanarak şu çıkarımlarda bulunulabilir: yüksek öz-yeterliğe sahip öğretmenler yetiştirmek öğretmen yetiştiren kurumlar tarafından, aynı zamanda yüksek düzeyde iletişim becerilerine sahip öğretmenler yetiştirebilmek adına temel hedeflerden biri olarak benimsenmelidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Okul öncesi öğretmeni, okul öncesi dönem çocukları, öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerileri, öz-yeterlik İnançları.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ECE:	Early Childhood Education
TCCS:	Teacher-Child Communication Scale
PTSS:	Preschool Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs Scale
MoNE:	Ministry of National Education
CoHE:	Council of Higher Education
TLP:	Teaching-Learning Process
CS:	Communication Skills
PI:	Parental Involvement
P:	Planning
OLE:	Organization of Learning Environment
CM:	Classroom Management

GLOSSARY of TERMS

Preschool children: Children who are 3 to 5 years old (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009).

Preschool teachers: The teachers who worked in early childhood education institutions (independent kindergartens, nursery and practical classes) and were responsible for children's education from 3 to 5 years were considered as preschool teacher in this study.

Communication skills: In this study, the communication skills of preschool teachers refers to their being skilled in five main domains: communication language, listening, message, empathy and non-verbal communication (Erbay et al., 2012).

Teacher self-efficacy belief: Teachers' self-confidence in their capability to support the learning of students (Woolfolk Hoy & Spero, 2005). In this study, self-efficacy beliefs of teachers refer to teachers' reported views on their perceived capabilities to perform teaching tasks in a preschool setting regarding parent involvement, classroom management, communication skills, organization of learning environment, planning and learning-teaching process.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“Every tale can be told in a different way.”

A Greek proverb

Teachers and the way they interact with children might have a significant effect on children's lives. On 05.03.2015, Turkey woke up to a bad news. Ebru was twelve years old and lived in the Diyadin district of the city, Ağrı. According to the news, she was blamed by three of her teachers for stealing books from the library, and the accusations resulted in her suicide (“Her teachers blamed her with theft,” 2015). Although this is a case that should be analyzed in detail and there might be other reasons underlying Ebru's suicide, it still includes an issue of miscommunication. This issue raised a question mark in people's minds: What is the nature and level of communication between teachers and their students?

According to Kottler, Zehm and Kottler (2005), it is a surprising reality that highly successful teachers are very different from others personally and professionally. These qualified teachers adopt different strategies and have different opinions about student discipline. They organize their teaching environment and teaching-learning process according to their adopted strategies and ideas. However, they share a common critical feature: They are all successful communicators.

People around a child such as parents, peers and adults are vital determinants of the child's social development because children learn many things about the world by merely observing and modeling other people (Bandura, 1986). Children who communicate with adults with higher communication skills grow into better communicators when compared to children who communicate with adults with lower communication skills. The best means of social learning of children in terms of communication skills is to learn what to do during interaction with adults (Sonnenschein, 1980).

The early childhood teacher is one of those adults who take part in the child's Microsystem which includes relationships between the developing children and the people in their proximal environment such as home, school and peers (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). That is why early childhood teachers have a big role in forming future generations and taking part in developing individuals and contributing to the education system (Gürşimşek, Ekinçi Vural, & Selçioğlu Demirsöz, 2008).

In supportive learning environments, children feel safe and are sure about the value and love given to them by other people. The most significant element of this environment is the respectful relationship established between the child and teacher (MoNE, 2013). Therefore, establishing a strong relationship between the educator and the child plays a great role in the child's social, individual, behavioral and academic development as well as in their education (Early Childhood Learning Knowledge Centre, 2006; Francesco, 2011; Trawick-Smith, 2014). In literature, it is stated that positive relationships are based on sensitive interactions, especially verbal interactions, between the teacher and the child (Gable, 2002; Gruber, 2007; Harms, Clifford, & Cryer, 1998). In fact, establishing positive relationships with children require having adequate communication skills for preschool teachers (Jonsson & Williams, 2013; Tepeli & Arı, 2011).

A large body of studies were conducted to reveal the importance of teacher-child communication in child development and to explore related factors (Bolat, 1996; Gable, 2002; Jonsson & Williams, 2013; Kathard & Pillay, 2007; Saltalı & Erbay, 2013; Stronge, 2007). Studies showed that effective teacher-child communication positively affects the social development and academic achievement of the child (Chung, 2000; Shan, Li, Shi, Wang, & Cai, 2014). Moreover, the effectiveness of this communication is found to affect children's adaptation to school, improvement in different development fields and subsequent relationships with peers and adults (Erbay, Ömeroğlu, & Çağdaş, 2012).

Although teachers' communication skills have such a significant impact on children, some research indicated that many teachers lacked this knowledge (Gjems, 2010; Jonsson & Williams, 2013; Soulis, 2009). Further, the findings of Gjems' research (2010) revealed that teachers had some difficulties in answering questions of children

and inviting children younger than six years old to express their beliefs, previous experiences and thoughts.

An effective teacher-child communication requires some skills like communicative language, listening, empathy, message and non-verbal communication (Cooper, 2011; Erbay et al., 2012). First of these skills is communicative language. For a preschool teacher, effective communicative language includes asking open-ended questions, using positive language, using “I message”, greeting and seeing off each student individually at their arrival and departure times, using accurate grammar (Beaty, 2008) and calling every student by their names (Kaltman, 2006). Secondly, listening to children actively and eagerly also constitutes another important part of effective communication skills for preschool teachers (Beaty, 2008). Coming down to their eye level and making eye contact with the children during communication indicate that the teacher is actively listening to the children (Beaty, 2008; Kaltman, 2006). Use of effective listening enables a child to express his/her inner world and feelings. Moreover, the feeling of being important and being well-understood provides a child with self-confidence and self-respect (MoNE, 2013). The third feature is empathy. To be honest and transparent in expression of feelings (Dökmen, 2008), trying to understand the child’s negative feelings rather than denying or sliding over them are the main empathic skills for a preschool teacher (Kaltman, 2006). The research of Saltalı and Erbay (2013) revealed that teachers who used empathy and listening skills effectively in their communication with children, behave more carefully and attentively in their teacher-child communication. The last factor that constitutes effective communication skills is the message and non-verbal communication skills. According to Kail (2003), preschool teacher should be careful in conveying clear and appropriate messages to the child in terms of the child’s age and previous experiences. Another way of conveying message is through non-verbal communication. According to Kaltman (2006), in the non-verbal communication process, a child expresses and understands many things via gestures and voice tone. Thus, communication means much more than speaking for the adults who are responsible for the education and development of young children (Beaty, 2008).

When a person is the communicator, he/she intentionally or unintentionally codes his/her thoughts and feelings to be interpreted by another person. When the person receives the message, he/she interprets the information from his/her frame. Therefore,

individuals' values, attitudes, needs, beliefs and self-evaluations serve as a filter in their communication. People's self-evaluations influence how they treat other people (Beebe, Beebe, & Redmond, 2005). Self-efficacy belief which concerns skills in performing a task successfully is one of these self-evaluations of a person (Judge, & Bono, 2001). According to Bandura (1993), personal achievement is related with not only knowledge and skills of the person about a task but also his/her self-efficacy beliefs in achieving this task. Therefore, two people who have the same skills may differ from each other in terms of their performance due to fluctuations in their self-efficacy beliefs. In addition to having the required knowledge and abilities of the teaching profession, teachers' self-efficacy beliefs for performing tasks and responsibilities are effective in their qualification (Çapa-Aydın, Uzuntiryaki-Kondakcı, Temli and Tarkin, 2013). Indeed, self-efficacy belief is another characteristic of a preschool teacher which is related to higher quality instruction and increasing student achievement (Justice, Mashburn, Hamre, & Pianta, 2008). Therefore, a preschool teacher should have not only communication skills but also self-confidence in his/her abilities (Soulis, 2009).

The theoretical grounds of the present study are based on Bandura's social cognitive theory. According to Bandura's social cognitive theory, in addition to being the products of the environment, human beings are also the producers of the social structure within the environment. A person can dominate his/her self-development by means of his/her choices, forethought, self-reactiveness and self-efficacy beliefs. The self-efficacy belief is the most effective of these four personal agencies of behaviors (Bandura, 2001).

Bandura (1977, 1986, 1993) described self-efficacy as the belief of a person about his/her capability in achieving a task successfully. In other words, self-efficacy means the person's understanding of his/her skills (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2008). It is related with the belief of a person about his/her capability of what he/she can do rather than knowing what he/she will do (Schunk, 1991/2011).

Research showed that teacher self-efficacy beliefs are connected with a number of teaching behaviors such as persistence in a duty, being more focused on academic achievement (Gibson & Dembo, 1984), making more effort to achieve (Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Tschannen Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007), providing more encouragement to students (Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Bandura, 1977) and being eager to

take risk (Ashton & Webb, 1986). Teachers who have high level of self-efficacy are found to be more pleased with their job (Høigaard, Giske, & Sundsli, 2012; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010; Turcan, 2011) and open to changes and innovations (Dembo & Gibson, 1985; Haney, Czerniak, & Lumpe, 1996; Tarkin & Uzuntiryaki, 2012). Teacher self-efficacy beliefs do not only have an effect on teachers but also on students. It is associated with some student outcomes like achievement (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Bandura, 1977; Ross, 1992) and students' self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1977).

Self-efficacy beliefs of teachers are also one of the predictors of the quality of teacher-child relationships (Chung et al., 2005; Yoon, 2002). Bandura, (1993) stressed that teachers with a high level of self-efficacy tend to create a positive classroom environment. Creating a positive classroom environment and establishing positive relationships with children are based on effective teacher-child communication in educational settings (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009; Jonsson & Williams, 2013). That is why teachers' self-efficacy levels may have an indirect effect on teacher-child interaction. Enhancing self-efficacy may develop teachers' skills of coping with stress. In turn, in a less stressful environment, they may establish more positive interactions with their students (Collman, 2012). Indeed, preschool teachers can nurture positive relationships by responding sensitively to preschool children, by interacting with them in an emotionally supportive way, and listening and communicating with sincere attention (Driscoll & Pianta, 2010). According to Rubin, Martin, Bruning, & Powers (1993), self-efficacy beliefs of people have a mediator role in their interpersonal communication. In line with this, how teachers comprehend their roles and abilities and their expectations from children may be effective in their interactions with children (White, 1993). During these interactions, teachers with high self-efficacy beliefs tend to be less critical and judgmental toward their students when their students make an error (Ashton & Webb, 1986), tend to be more open to their students' ideas and show their anger less to children when they confront with children's misbehaviors when compared to teachers with low self-efficacy beliefs, who tend to use threatening language (Ashton, Webb, & Doda, 1983).

Similarly, in addition to the above-stated literature on self-efficacy, in communication literature considering the child without any judgments and criticisms and communicating with the child without threatening, frightening and giving orders are the

main indicators of acceptance and the value given to the child (Cooper, 2011; Gordon, 1974/2010). Therefore, when these commonalities were considered, in this study it was thought that higher self-efficacy beliefs may be related to higher communication skills of preschool teachers in their communication with children. The relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and communication skills of teachers were evidenced by a large body of research (Çiftçi & Taşkaya, 2010; Erözkan, 2013; Hassall, Arquero, Joyce & Gonzalez, 2013; Kesicioğlu & Güven, 2014; Norgaard, Ammentorp, Kyvik, Kofoed, & Med, 2012; Özkan, Dallı, Bingöl, Metin, & Yaralı, 2014), and most of these studies were conducted with in-service teachers from different departments (Çiftçi & Taşkaya, 2010) or with preschool teacher candidates rather than teachers (Kesicioğlu & Güven, 2014; Özkan et al., 2014; Shelton, 2013; Yenice, 2012). Although the studies conducted with pre-service teachers enlighten the path of this study, being an in-service or pre-service teacher may create a difference in self-efficacy beliefs (Şenol Ulu, 2012) and communication skills of teachers (Tepeli & Arı, 2011). Therefore, in the current study, it was found worthy to investigate in-service preschool teachers' communication skills and self-efficacy beliefs and the relationship between these two variables.

1.1. Purpose of the Study

The current study aimed to explore the relationship between teacher-child communication skills and self-efficacy beliefs of in-service preschool teachers. More specifically, the present study aimed to investigate the contribution of some demographic variables (years of experience and the type of school where preschool teachers work) and self-efficacy beliefs of in-service preschool teachers in explanation of their teacher-child communication skills.

In addition, by means of this study, the existence of self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers regarding the sub-dimensions of organization of teaching-learning process, parental involvement, communication skills, planning, organization of the learning environment and classroom management in relation to some independent variables (years of experience, educational level and type of school where the teacher worked) were reached.

1.2. Research Questions and Hypotheses

To above mentioned end, eight main research questions were set for the current study.

1. To what extent do in-service preschool teachers have communication skills?
2. What is the extent of in-service preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs (overall and with respect to each sub-dimension; organization of teaching-learning process, parental involvement, communication skills, planning, organization of learning environment and classroom management)?
3. To what extent does educational level of in-service preschool teachers affect their teacher-child communication skills and self-efficacy beliefs?
 - To what extent does educational level of in-service preschool teachers affect their teacher-child communication skills?
 - To what extent does educational level of in-service preschool teachers affect their self-efficacy beliefs?
4. Is there a relationship between teacher-child communication skills and years of experience of preschool teachers?
5. Is there a relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and years of experience of preschool teachers?
6. Is there a relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and teacher-child communication skills of preschool teachers?
7. How well do self-efficacy beliefs, years of experience and type of institution where teachers work predict preschool teachers' teacher-child communication skills?

- Which is the best predictor of teacher-child communication skills of preschool teachers: self-efficacy beliefs, years of experience and type of school where teacher work?
8. How well do overall and each dimension of self-efficacy beliefs, years of experience and type of institution where they work predict preschool teachers' teacher-child communication skills?
- Which is the best predictor of teacher-child communication skills of preschool teachers: overall self-efficacy beliefs, years of experience and type of institution where teachers work?

With respect to the research questions of the current study, five major null hypotheses (H_0) and five alternate-hypotheses (H_1) were determined as the following:

1. **H_0 :** There is not a significant mean difference in teacher-child communication skills and in self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers with respect to their educational level.
 H_1 : There is a significant mean difference in teacher-child communication skills and in self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers with respect to their educational level.
2. **H_0 :** There is not a significant relationship between teacher-child communication skills and years of experience of preschool teachers.
 H_1 : There is a significant relationship between teacher-child communication skills and years of experience of preschool teachers.
3. **H_0 :** There is not a significant relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and years of experience of preschool teachers.
 H_1 : There is a significant relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and years of experience of preschool teachers.

4. **H₀:** There is not a significant relationship between teacher-child communication skills and self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between teacher-child communication skills and self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers.

5. **H₀:** There is not a predictive effect of self-efficacy beliefs, years of experience and type of institution where teachers work on teacher-child communication skills of preschool teachers.

H₁: There is a predictive effect of self-efficacy beliefs, years of experience and type of institution where teachers work on teacher-child communication skills of preschool teachers.

1.3. Variables

In this study which aims to examine relationships among preschool teachers' teacher-child communication skills, self-efficacy beliefs and some demographic variables (educational level, years of experience and type of school where teachers work), teacher-child communication skills of in-service preschool teachers was the dependent variable.

Self-efficacy beliefs, educational level, years of experience and type of institution where preschool teachers work were set as the independent variables of this study. In the light of the literature which reported a positive relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and communication skills (Hassall et al., 2013; Norgaard et al., 2012; Özkan et al., 2014), it is thought that self-efficacy beliefs and teacher-child communication skills of preschool teachers can be related to each other. Therefore, teachers' level of self-efficacy beliefs was selected as the main independent variable in this study.

In their study, Tepeli and Arı (2011) found a positive significant relationship between years of experience and communication skills of teachers. According to the research of Tepeli and Arı (2011), as teachers' years of experience increased their communication skills also increased. On the other hand, in his study, Bulut (2004) did not find any significant relationship between these two variables. Thus, considering

contradicting results regarding years of experience in related literature, years of experience was identified as another independent variable of the current study.

Finally, although every year thousands of preschool teachers graduate from faculties of education in Turkey, teachers from different educational levels can teach in institutions under the Ministry of National Education. Especially in private schools, preschool teachers from different educational levels are employed (MoNE, 2014). Therefore, educational level and the type of institution where teachers work (public/private) were selected as independent variables in this study.

1.4. Significance of the Study

As an educational leader and as a role model, teachers' skills, beliefs and behaviors have a capital importance not only for the society but also for children (Bulut 2004; Dickinson, McCabe, Anastasopoulos, Peisner-Feinberg, & Poe, 2003). Raising productive children who have social and cultural values and who are aware of the value of science and art depends on teachers who are aware of their competencies and who make effort to improve these competencies (MoNE, 2008).

Based on the belief of raising quality teachers, enhancing their competence and professional skills is a prerequisite (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009/ 2013), this study aimed to shed light on the current communication skills of pre-school teachers and related factors. Therefore, teachers' deficiencies in communication skills may be revealed. Revealing teachers' deficiencies in communication skills may be helpful in developing context related teacher education programs (Erbay et al., 2012). Moreover, the present study may raise the awareness of educators in early childhood education concerning teacher-child communication and its reflection on child development and education. The improvement of teachers' awareness in effective teacher-child communication may enable them to attempt to develop their communication skills and related factors.

In addition, as there is limited research in the literature regarding the subject in question, preschool teachers' teacher-child communication skills and related factors was considered as worthy to investigate in this study. As stressed in the literature, there was a need to conduct studies on teachers' communication skills and related factors (Bulut,

2004). In this way, it may be possible to adopt new and effective communication strategies. In line with this, identifying the relationship between preschool teachers' teacher-child communication skills and their self-efficacy beliefs may provide an opportunity to consider these two variables as interdependent constructs. The information concerning the possible relationship among self-efficacy beliefs, some demographics and teacher-child communication skills may be important in terms of efforts concerning the improvement of teacher-child communication skills of preschool teachers. The possibility of rejecting the null hypotheses and the findings in relation to self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers is a predictor variable on teachers' teacher-child communication skills may provide the opportunity of an indirect improvement of teachers' teacher-child communication skills. Therefore, the current study might shed light on not only preschool teachers' current communication skills but also their current self-efficacy beliefs as a possible related factor. In the related literature, conducted research showed that teachers' beliefs had a significant effect on their teaching styles, their decision making process about classroom activities and their in-class acts (Rentzou & Sakellariou, 2011; Shreck, 1994). Therefore, as well as teachers' skills, their self-efficacy beliefs regarding these skills should be focused on and examined in detail by researchers (Tepe, 2011). Furthermore, studies conducted for the purpose of understanding teachers and teacher candidates' beliefs help to improve the teaching and teacher education processes (McMullen, 1997).

Self-efficacy beliefs of in-service preschool teachers were examined by a handful of studies (Çetingöz, 2012; Giallousi, Tselfes, & Gialamas, 2014; Kesicioğlu & Güven, 2014; Sak, 2015; Tepe, 2012; Whynacht, 2004). Most of these studies used instruments which were prepared for general teachers to measure teachers' self-efficacy beliefs in three sub-dimensions: classroom management, teaching strategies and student engagement (Kesicioğlu & Güven, 2014; Sak, 2015). Yet, the early childhood education context differs from the contexts of other levels of education, such as elementary, middle and high school. Preschool teachers undertake tasks more concerned with classroom management and with the development of social abilities of children rather than their academic abilities. Moreover, a preschool classroom environment is notably different from an elementary school context (Quinn, 2007). Therefore, it might not be practical to generalize elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs to preschool teachers. Hence, Quinn

(2007) states that preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs should be examined in detail and independent of the other stages (Quinn, 2007). As different from studies in the literature, this study aims to investigate teacher-child communication skills and self-efficacy beliefs of in-service preschool teachers by means of instruments which were prepared specifically for preschool teachers.

In addition, the relationship between communication skills and self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers was examined by only a limited number of research (Kesicioğlu & Güven, 2014). However, these studies were conducted with pre-service teachers rather than in-service. This study aims to investigate the relationship between teacher-child communication skills and self-efficacy beliefs of in-service preschool teachers. The current study is significant because it proposes to address this gap in the Turkish context regarding self-efficacy beliefs and teacher-child communication skills of in-service preschool teachers.

As Hunt, Simonds & Cooper (2002) stressed, communication courses are an indispensable component of teacher education. In Turkey, the "Effective Communication" course has been offered as an elective course in teacher training programs since 2009 (The Council of Higher Education, 2009). Thanks to the results of this study, the needs of preschool teachers may be determined in terms of teacher-child communication skills and self-efficacy. Therefore, self-efficacy beliefs and teacher-child communication skills may be improved in teacher education programs within the scope of diverse courses such as classroom management and effective communication. Courses which serve to teach effective communication skills in the early childhood teacher education program may be encouraged.

Thanks to the exploration of teacher-child communication skills and self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers, it can be possible for teachers, the institutions which educate teachers and Ministry of National Education (MoNE) to make self-assessment. By means of revealing existing inadequacies, in service training workshops, seminars intended for developing teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and communication skills can be organized by MoNE and school administrations to fix these deficiencies and to move the preschool teachers' communication skills and self-efficacy beliefs to the highest level.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the first part of chapter two, communication is described and the importance of effective communication skills for preschool teachers is explained. Then, a literature review on communication skills is presented and the five dimensions of effective teacher-child communication are introduced. In the following part, social cognitive theory, social cognitions, sources of self-efficacy, effects of self-efficacy on human behavior and lastly teachers' sense of efficacy and the impact of teacher self-efficacy on education are introduced. Then, a detailed review of the research on teachers' sense of efficacy is presented.

Overall, this chapter presents information about and the context of teacher self-efficacy studies and teacher-child communication studies, documents the significance of self-efficacy beliefs and communication skills for preschool teachers, and states the need for studies which examine self-efficacy beliefs and communication skills in the preschool context.

2.1. Communication

The notion of "communication" stemmed from "communis". "Communis" means "common" in Latin. Therefore "to communicate" implies "to make common"; in other words, it means "to make known" (Hasson, 2012). Katz (2014) defined communication as the unity of smiling, blinking, sometimes asking a question and sometimes telling a past experience. According to Katz (2014), communication means the system of information transfer among people. While expressive communication provides the opportunity to convey a message to others and so to express ourselves, receptive communication means getting the message sent by the others.

In the literature, there is a wide range of communication models. Some of the main communication models in the literature are offered by Aristo, Lasswell, Gerbner, Shannon and Weaver, Riley-Riley, Osgood and Schramm, and Westley-MacLean. In addition, there are also Dance's helical model and Newcomb's ABX model (Demiray, 2014). In the current study, since the scale used prepared by the researchers in order to collect data regarding teacher-child communication skills of preschool teachers based on the non-linear model developed by Osgood and Schramm in 1954 (Erbay et al., 2012), this model was grounded on. The model takes into consideration feedback in addition to source, message, channel and receiver as parts of the communication process. According to this model, the source and receiver undertake equal responsibility and task during the communication process. The message sent from the source to the receiver enters the encoding and then the interpretation process. Then it is encoded again and sent to the source as feedback. This model is used especially to explain interpersonal communication (McQuail and Windahl, 1993).

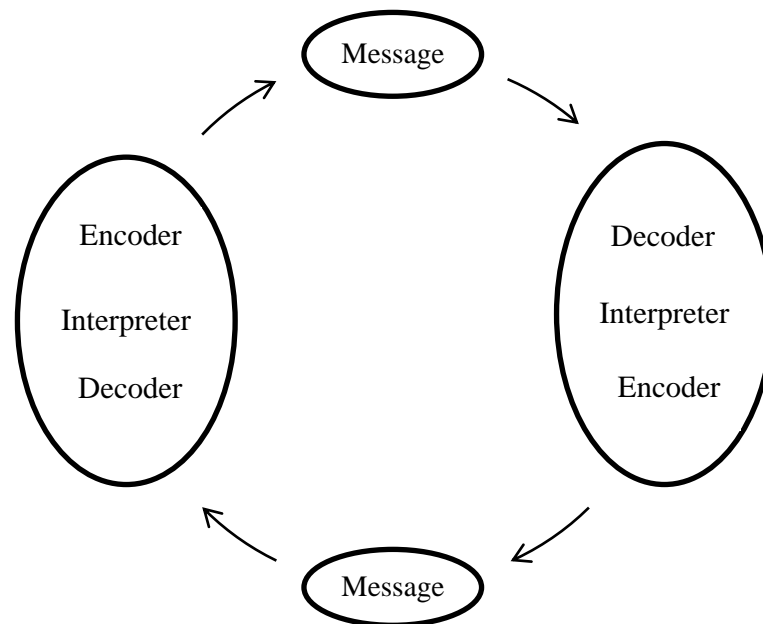


Figure 2. 1 The communication model of Osgood and Schramm (McQuail and Windahl, 1993, p. 20)

In the communication process, the source refers to the originator of an idea or a feeling, who translate the message into a code. This transformation process is named as encoding. The sender codes the idea wanted to be transmitted by choosing words, symbols and gestures and transforms it into the message. Message means written, verbal and non-verbal components of communication to which individuals assign meaning (Beebe, et al., 2005). On the other hand, the receiver refers to the individual who receives and decodes the message sent by the source (Lunenburg, 2010). In this model, after the message is sent from the source to the receiver, it is coded and commented on. After coded once again, the message is sent to source as feedback. The source receives this feedback, decodes and comments on it, and then sends it to back to the receiver again (McQuail and Windahl, 1982). A person or a communication tool such as a newspaper, a television station or a motion picture studio may be a source in communication. The form of message may be an ink on a paper, a sound wave in the air or any signal which can be interpreted meaningfully. The receiver may be a person who listens, watches, or reads, or a group member, such as a member of a discussion group, or a newspaper reader of a television viewer (Schramm, 1971, p. 13).

2.1.1. Importance of Effective Communication Skills for ECE Teachers

Every day people interact with individuals having different ideas, beliefs, emotions and needs. A person's skills in exchanging his/her opinions with other people, the way he/she understands others' viewpoints and solves problems might be based on the effectiveness of the person in communication. Effective communication has an important role in all areas of a person's life. In fact, the positive consequences of effective communication can be seen in relationships with people at home, at work and with total strangers (Hasson, 2012). However, a human being is not a passive and predictable creature who interprets meanings and responds as it is 'supposed to' at any time. Similarly, communication is not a passive, one way and predictable event. Rather, it is an active process affected the complexities and ambiguities of human acts. Therefore, communicating effectively is not a simple task (Dixon & O'Hara, 2008). Especially communication with children requires teachers to have special abilities, talents and training (Kolucki & Lemish, 2011).

In addition to critical thinking and problem solving, creativity and innovation and collaboration, communication skills are considered as one of the main four skills of the 21st century's teachers (Trilling & Fadel, 2009). A preschool teacher should have proper communication skills to accomplish and to meet educational expectations (Çetinkaya & Alparslan, 2011; Kayabaşı & Akcengiz, 2014). According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) (2009), a preschool teacher should frequently talk with children in a respectful and linguistically rich way. Moreover, since the communication process consists of proper organization of listening, asking, comprehending and reacting to activities according to developmental steps, individual characteristics and demands of the person communicated with (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009), the teacher should recognize every child in his/her class and be aware of their individual characteristics, desires and developmental needs (Duncan, Kemple, & Smith, 2000).

Having communication skills provides preschool teachers with numerous advantages (Erbay et al, 2012; Kaltman, 2006; Stronge, 2007). As Stronge (2007) stressed, the management of complexities and adaptation to changes which derived from students, families, curriculum and other factors depend on individual capabilities and the background of the teacher. The communication skill is one of these characteristics and an indispensable part of satisfactory educational settings (Erbay et. al., 2012; Hamre, & Pianta, 2007; Harms et al., 1998). In these educational settings communication skills are implemented in the teachers' classroom management, in knowledge of pedagogy and in teacher-child interaction (Saunders and Mills, 1999).

The notion of teacher-child relationships is a broader concept including attachment histories and characteristics of teachers and children, relationships with parents and peers, environmental conditions of the classrooms (Pianta, 2009). In addition all of these factors, teacher-child communication is the main pillar of the bridge established between teachers and students (Gordon, 1974/2010) and it consisted of the focus point of the current study. Research indicated that the bridge established between the teacher and child has an effect on the child's social, individual, behavioral and academic improvement (Chung, 2005; Pehlivan, 2005). Furthermore, in the literature, it is indicated that previous teacher-child relationships are predictive of new relations (Howes, Philipsen, & Feinberg, 2000). A preschool teacher can evaluate his/her teaching

and establish personal relationships with children by communicating with preschoolers coming and going to school (Zhanabekova, 2014). Adaptation to school, improvement in different developmental fields and subsequent relationships with peers and adults are also influenced by the quality of teacher-child communication (Erbay et al., 2012). Having effective communication skills enables preschool teachers to establish more positive relationships not only with children but also parents that strongly predict the quality of the relationship between teacher and child (Chung et al., 2005).

2.1.2. Effective Teacher-Child Communication

Effective teacher-child communication requires the teacher to be competent in communicative language, listening, empathy, message and non-verbal communication (Cooper, 2011; Erbay et al., 2012).

2.1.2.1. Communicative Language

Language provides the opportunity to send a message which includes a systematic integration of words, symbols and signals (Landa, 2005). Therefore, it is a procedure which ensures the realization of communication (Katz, 2014).

The child learns language in a social context, and as a part of this social context teachers should use communication tools appropriately. In this way, the child learns the rules of a common communication language and attributes meaning to hints sent by others (Landa, 2005). For example, as in communication with adults, common courtesies should be used in communication with children. Since children learn by imitating adults' speech and behaviors, the teacher should be a model in using courtesies like "Please", "You are welcome" and "Thank you" (Schenck, 2009). Similarly, calling every child by his/her name can make the child feel valuable and enable children to learn each other's names better (Fernandes, 2014; Kaltman, 2006).

According to Kaltman (2006), there are some important points in communicative language that the teacher should be careful about. For example, the teacher should use positive language rather than negative language and ask open-ended questions rather than simple "Yes" or "No" questions. Indeed positive language includes sentences which

begin with “Yes” rather than “No”. For example, sometimes a child wants to swing on a swing when all the swings are full. The teacher may say to him/her, “Yes, you can swing as soon as Juanita finishes swinging. Would you like to play in the sandbox now and when your turn comes, I will call you” rather than saying “No, you cannot swing because all of them are full”.

Similarly, open-ended questions are another requirement of positive language. Open-ended questions (beginning with interrogatives such as “Why”, “How”, “What”, “Which”, “Who”, etc.) encourage child to talk and to express himself/herself regardless of any guidance or prompts. On the other hand, closed-ended questions (beginning with interrogatives such as “Do”, “Should”, “Will”, “Is”, “Can”, etc.) encourage the child to give short answers (Gjems, 2010; Schenck, 2009).

Another important point in communicative language is in connection with the “you message” and “I message”. The “you message” includes accusation and canalizes the other person to defend himself/herself. Therefore, problems arise and communication comes to a deadlock. The “you message” makes a child feel as though he/she is not liked and accepted (MoNE, 2013). On the other hand, the “I message” enables people to express their own feelings in events. By means of the “I message”, the real thoughts and feelings together with their specific reasons can be conveyed to the child without any injury and accusation (Beaty, 2008). When the adult chooses to say, “When you do not eat your food, I am upset because I am afraid you will become ill” (MoNE, 2013), the solution seeking process begins. The “I message” enables the child to understand the effects of his/her behavior on another person and to take responsibility for changing the unwanted behavior. It is more efficient than “you” message on behavior changing (Schenck, 2009).

2.1.2.2. Listening

Effective communication depends heavily on effective listening. By means of effective listening people attach meaning to the information they receive. It includes leaning forward, making eye-contact, paying attention to what is said, giving appropriate feedback and asking proper questions (Dixon & O’Hara, 2008).

Preschool children like to share their past and imaginary experiences (Santrock, 2014). Since they are very sensitive in the matter of being ignored and not being listened to, adults should listen to them actively and show their interest to the child. That is why active listening is the way of inviting children to be more open and honest in terms of their feelings and thoughts (Kottler et al, 2005). Some body movements called acceptance reactions such as nodding, smiling and bending down means that I hear and understand you, but effective listening includes more than these (Yavuzer, 2014).

There are some ways of showing the child that he/she is being listened to actively. The first is to make eye contact with the child. Kaltman (2006) claims that since children focus on people's faces, when communicating with them adults should crouch down and make eye contact. However, Schenck (2009) stressed that adults sometimes do not imagine how they look in the eyes of children. Children may see each adult as a giant. Therefore, the distance and size difference with the child should be maintained at a minimum while communicating with him/her.

The use of door openers like "I see", "Really?", "Tell me more", "This is interesting" is another way of effective listening. Door openers invite the child to communicate and to share his/her emotions and opinions. In this way, the child believes that the teacher gives importance to his/her ideas, and the teacher is interested in what he/she saying (Schenck, 2009).

Thirdly, the teacher should listen to the child without interrupting him/her when s/he is speaking and wait for the end of the child's talk to respond in order to realize effective listening. When the teacher accepts the children's attempts to communicate, listens to the children eagerly, makes conversation with every child individually, children may be motivated to start and maintain communication (Beaty, 2008).

2.1.2.3. Empathy

A large body of researchers in the literature considers empathy as one of the important and prerequisite elements of educational settings (Çetinkaya & Alparslan, 2011; Peck, 2012; Saltalı & Erbay, 2013; Tatalović Vorkapić & Ružić, 2013; Uzuntaş, 2013). Empathy is defined as the window which provides us with the opportunity of looking from the point of view of another person (Gribble & Oliver, 1973; Ioannidou &

Konstantika, 2008; Yavuzer, 2014). To think empathically, a person should pretend as if he/she is the other person, understand his/her thoughts and feelings correctly and then return to his/her own character (Dökmen, 2008). The notion of understanding means accepting the other person as he/she is and respecting his/her thoughts and feelings (Çetinkaya & Alparslan, 2011). Cooper (2011) stressed the importance of acceptance in teacher-child communication and stressed that acceptance and openness are the starting points of empathic relationships between people. An empathic teacher should accept the child with her/his current beliefs or comprehension without any judgment and criticism and respond to the child positively to enable her/his further development.

According to Kaltman (2006), the teacher should be empathic in understanding the honest feelings of children rather than refusing them. For instance, when a child says that he/she missed her mom, rather than ignoring these feelings, the teacher should tell him/her that he/she is aware of this and that his/her mom misses him/her too, and should assure the child that he/she and his/her mother will meet after school.

According to Dökmen (2008), genuineness, autonomy, individualism, open communication and honesty are indispensable parts of empathic settings. Moreover, he emphasized that an adult should permit a child to try something solitary and at the same time should stand by him/her in case of any failure. When the child succeeds in his/her attempt, the adult should share his/her happiness and motivate the child to express his/her verbal or nonverbal messages.

2.1.2.4. Message

Communication is a process which is based on message exchange (Katz, 2014). That is why the appropriateness of message in teacher-child communication should be considered. The sent message and used language should be clear and comprehensible for the child (Kail, 2003). At this point, the principle of Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP), age appropriateness and developmental stage come to mind. Kail (2003) emphasized the requirement of a match between the age, previous experiences and information on the subject held by the person communicated with and the clarity of the message. During communication with children, sometimes there may be trouble in

understanding the message. In this case, repetition might be required (Jonsson & Williams, 2013; Kail, 2003).

On the other hand, attitudes and statements of teachers against negative events might give children a message. If a teacher reacts to an unexpected event with calmness and reflects this onto his/her conversations, the child may learn to deal with negative cases. For example, when a child loses his/her toy, the teacher may express that he/she is aware of the child's love for this toy, and if she/he wants, they can look for it together (Kaltman, 2006).

2.1.2.5. Nonverbal Communication

Sometimes message transfers occur between people by means of nonverbal elements. In this type of communication, the communication elements may be gestures and facial expressions, body movements, physical contacts, voice tone or some tools which have a special meaning (Dökmen, 2008). Children are found to be very sensitive in touching and nonverbal communication regardless of their ages. It is found that winking, handshaking, touching the shoulder, nodding and especially an intimate smile can motivate them (Kaltman, 2006).

Another element of non-verbal communication is voice tone. The teacher should be sure about whether her/his voice tone matches his/her message. Especially, when an important request is being made, speaking firmly and telling the child about the reason of the request can be helpful for a teacher (Schenck, 2009). A quality teacher uses her/his body language and voice tone effectively. When the body language and voice tone of the teacher show openness and encouragement, students tend to be more receptive (Fernandes, 2014).

2.1.3. Current Research on Communication Skills

In the literature, the topic of communication skills is focused on in different fields. A wide range of research in health care (Gysels, Richardson, & Higginson, 2005; Nørgaard et al., 2012), management and leadership (De Vries, Bakker-Pieper, & Oostenveld, 2010; Zulch, 2014) and in education (Cabell, Justice, McGinty, DeCoster, &

Forston, 2015; Çetinkaya & Alparslan, 2011, Çevik, 2011; Eret, 2013; Fernandes, 2014; Kayabaşı & Akcengiz, 2014; Zhanabekova, 2014) dwell on the issue of communication skills.

In their research Nørgaard et al., (2012) examined the effect of a communication skills course on self-efficacy beliefs of health care staff. The results indicated that after the 3-day communication skills course, the level of self-efficacy beliefs of participants in communication with patients and with colleagues increased. Another study was conducted by Kruijver, Kerkstra, Bensing, and Van De Wiel, (2001) in health care field. They examined nurses' communication skills during their interaction with cancer patients. Similarly, Maguire and Pitceathly (2002) described key communication skills and the way to obtain communication skills for doctors.

Another field in which communication research is conducted is leadership and management. Zulch (2014) examined the significant characteristics a project manager with effective communication skills should possess. She found that in addition to language, attitude, behavior and personality have a significant role in communication of effective leaders.

Having communication skills is significant in many professions as it is crucial for teachers (Fernandes, 2014) because education is a communication process by all means (Seghedin, 2012). When studies conducted in the field of education are examined, it is possible to come across studies which focus on teachers and teacher candidates' communication skills and related factors (Küçükkaragöz, Canbulat & Akay, 2013; Çuhadar, Özgür, Akgün and Gündüz, 2014; Jonsson & Williams, 2013; Tümkaya, 2011). For instance, Çuhadar et al., (2014) conducted a research in order to explore the relationship between communication skills and communicator styles of pre-service teachers. According to the results, pre-service teachers' communication styles with sub-dimensions of friendly, impression-leaving, interested, animated, dramatic and relaxed significantly explained their communication skills.

Similarly, Saracaloğlu, Yenice and Karasakaloğlu (2009) conducted a research concerning communication skills of classroom teacher candidates and examined the relationships between teacher candidates' communication and problem solving skills and their reading habits. Results showed that overall communication skills of teacher

candidates were significantly and positively related to their problem solving skills and reading habits.

Another study, which focused on teachers' communication skills and related factors, was conducted by Tmkaya (2011). Tmkaya (2011) examined the relationship between communication skills and attitudes toward the teaching profession of classroom teacher candidates and found that teacher candidates who chose the teaching profession willingly had better communication skills than those who chose the teaching profession unwillingly.

In another research conducted with elementary school teacher candidates, Ylmaz and Altunbař (2012) examined the relationship between classroom management skills and communication skills of teacher candidates. Results showed that preschool teachers who had higher communication skills had higher classroom management skills.

In addition to factors like attitudes toward teaching profession, classroom management and problem solving skills, teacher assertiveness was examined as a possible related factor. Kkkaragz et al., (2013) explored the relationship between communication skills and the assertiveness level of teacher candidates. They found a small, but positive relationship between these two variables; that is, teacher candidates who had more effective communication skills were more assertive.

On the other hand, Eret (2013) examined a pre-service teacher education program in Turkey that trained pre-service teachers for the teaching profession. She found that the teacher education program was sufficient in preparing teacher candidates to communicate with children. However, teacher candidates reported that they did not feel competent enough in communicating with parents and school staff.

2.1.4. Current Research on Communication Skills in the ECE Context

The importance of communication skills for teachers was evidenced by a large body of research (Cabell et al., 2015; Graham-Clay, 2005; Fernandes, 2014; Morgan, 1989). To the authors' knowledge, a limited number of research studies were conducted to explore communication skills and related factors in the early childhood education context (Arslan, Erbay & ağdař, 2009; Cabell et al., 2015; Grřimřek et al., 2008; Ylmaz, 2011). Teachers' empathic tendencies, emotional intelligence, being fond of

children and knowledge of communication skills are the variables examined in these studies. For example, Arslan et al., (2009) investigated the effect of a course concerning communication with children on the empathic tendencies of preschool teacher candidates. According to the pre and post test results, empathic tendencies of teacher candidates increased after the communication course.

Another study in the preschool context was conducted by Cabell et al., (2015). The researchers investigated the contributions of teacher-child conversations to preschool children's vocabulary development. The results indicated that there was a positive relationship between quality and frequency of teacher-child conversations and preschool children's vocabulary development.

In their research, Gürşimşek et al., (2008) examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and communication skills of preschool and primary school teacher candidates. They found a positive and significant relationship between these two variables. Teachers who had a higher level of emotional intelligence had higher level communication skills. Similarly, Yılmaz (2011) investigated the communication and problem solving skills and empathic tendencies of preschool teachers. Results indicated that communication skills were positively related with problem solving and empathic tendency of preschool teachers.

Saltalı and Erbay (2013) examined speaking, listening and empathy skills of preschool teachers with regard to being fond of children. Results showed that preschool teachers' being fond of children significantly predicted their speaking, listening and empathy skills.

Different from the previously stated studies, Jonsson & Williams (2013) treated effective teacher-child communication as an element of preschool curriculum. Moreover, they examined the role of the preschool teacher as a curriculum maker by means of verbal communication. Therefore, they observed communication between 1-to 3-year-old children and their teachers in a Swedish preschool. According to the results, the teachers served as a guide and a role model for them in doing daily activities and in discriminating good and bad behavior via communicating with children. But the duration of communication was short. Indeed, findings revealed that the required time was not spent in some educational contexts. Moreover, some children did not get a chance to express themselves. Similarly, Siram-Blatchford and Manni (2008) found that most of

the teacher-child communication was based on short term, closed questions. Open ended questions, which provide the incentive to talk and to share feelings and thoughts, constituted only a small part of teacher-child communication.

Importance of having effective communication skills for teachers was evidenced by a large body of research (Cabell et al., 2015; Çetinkaya & Alparslan, 2011, Eret, 2013; Kayabaşı & Akcengiz, 2014; Zhanabekova, 2014). Some research indicated that some preschool teachers underrated communication skills (Soulis, 2009) or they had lack of information about it (Gjems, 2010). In a study by Soulis (2009) special preschool education teachers were asked about the characteristics of effective preschool teachers. The characteristics were stated as being fond of children, being capable of pre-service training and professional development, having responsibility, being competent in instruction and having an excellent temperament. According to the results teachers thought that all of the six characteristics were significant for an effective preschool teacher. However, they thought that personality and effective communication skills were the least important characteristics.

Teachers' knowledge of communication skills was investigated by Gjems (2010). In the study, teacher conversation was evaluated as a promoter of children's talking, listening, cognitive and social skills. Results showed that teachers had insufficient knowledge in encouraging children to participate actively in the communication process. Participant teachers preferred to use prefaced and open ended questions such as "what", "how" and "why" so that their students could have the opportunity to be involved in communication. However, teachers had some trouble in attending to the answers of children who were under six years old. Moreover, the teachers had some trouble in inviting children to share their beliefs, thoughts and their previous experiences.

2.2. Social Cognitive Theory

Human development and developmental changes were examined by a number of theories. The focus of these theories differs from each other depending on the human nature and the source structures of motivation and acts (Bandura, 1989). For example, while Bronfenbrenner (1979) focuses on the ecological systems that people are a part of, Erikson (1963) emphasizes the effect of environmental factors in addition to biological

features on human development. Another theory is the social cognitive theory which explains how social development is experienced by focusing on cognitive factors. It focuses on the effect of cognition on behavior acquisition and on the mutual effect of society and mind during the personal development of a person (Green & Piel, 2002).

According to the social cognitive theory, behavior, environment and cognition have determinant roles on each other and affect each other mutually. Bandura (1989) referred to this as triadic reciprocal causation. The mutual causation relationship between personal factors and behavior refers to the fact that beliefs, anticipations, self-perceptions, feelings and aims of people form and motive their behavior. Cognitive factors partly influence which environmental facts will be observed, which meaning will be inferred from them, whether their effects will be lasting, what emotional effects and motivating strengths they will have, and how the information about environmental events will be arranged for future use (Bandura, 2001). As a result, people affect their environment by means of their behaviors, and in turn, the changed environment affects the future behavior of people. Thinking styles and sensual reactions of people are identified by these extrinsic impacts of human behavior (Bandura, 1977).

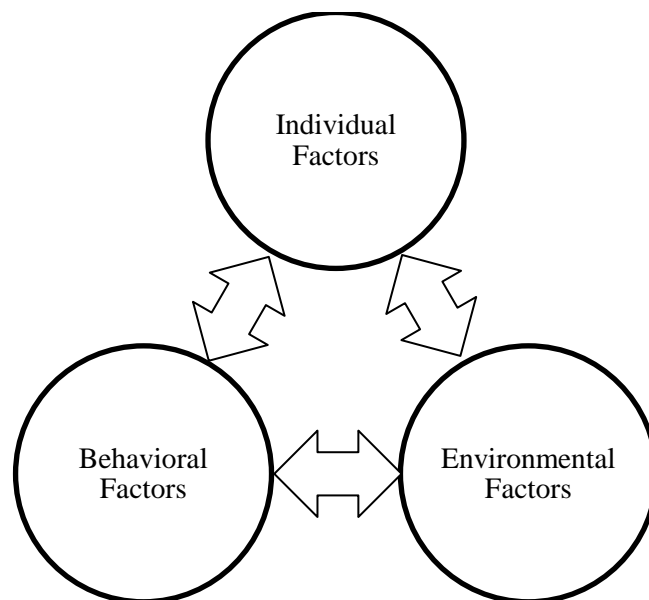


Figure 2. 2 The triadic reciprocal causation schema of social cognitive theory (Bandura, 2001, p.266).

In a similar way, the mutual causation relationship is observed between acts and the environment. That is, the environment presented to the person depends on how he/she acts. For example, students who do not attend class are not affected by the teacher or a child who does not do anything admirable is not praised by her/his parents. On the other hand, the environment and the social experiments presented by this environment play a determinant role on behaviors (Bandura, 1989).

A similar mutual causation relationship is available between environmental impacts and individual characteristics of people (Bandura, 1989). The information taken from the environment is delivered by sensory organs to the neural system where constructing, programming, motivating and organizing are realized. In these processes, social impacts improve and alter the feelings, beliefs, expectations and cognitive skills (Bandura, 1986; 1989). On the other hand, some characteristics and social roles of people may be effective on the reactions of their social environment (Bandura, 1989).

Self-efficacy takes place in the system referred to as triadic reciprocal causation, and it is one of the three factors of social cognitions which are self-efficacy, outcome expectations and outcome values. According to Bandura, human behavior is based on these three factors and can be predicted by examining them (Çapa, Çakıroğlu & Sarıkaya, 2005). Self-efficacy refers to the sense of one's capability to exhibit a behavior. For example, the perception of a person to continue a conversation with another person is an indicator of his/her self-efficacy (Card et al., 2002). Self-efficacy is different from outcome expectation. While self-efficacy is related with individual judgment about capability in achieving a task, outcome expectation is related with judgments of possible consequences of a behavior (Bandura, 1984). For example, before starting a conversation, someone may think, "whether the person with whom he/she converses would want to be friend with him/her". On the other hand, outcome value means the value of the expected outcome for the person. In the above-mentioned example, thinking "Do I want to be friends with him/her?" before beginning a conversation with another person is related to outcome values (Card et al., 2002).

2.2.1. Self-Efficacy

The notion of self-efficacy was introduced by Bandura in 1977 within the frame of Social Cognitive Theory. In 1997, he introduced self-efficacy in a more detailed way and introduced agency (Pajares, 1997). Agency refers to the reflection of personal effects on the skills, beliefs, self-regulatory abilities and functions. That is, a human being is not only a product of the environment and the social structure in this environment, but also a producer of them (Bandura, 2001; 2006). By means of the main features of agency, a person can play a role in her/his self-development and keeping up with the changing time as of birth. According to Bandura (2001) there are four main features of agency; intentionality, forethought, self-reactiveness and self-efficacy. The first of these four features of agency is intentionality. Human behaviors include intentionality; that is, the choice of how he/she acts is human-specific. Due to its relation to self-motivation, it is a proactive commitment of future behaviors. The second mechanism is forethought, which enables a person to motivate him/herself, to reorganize priorities in life and to guide behavior for reaching goals. Self-reactiveness is the third of the four main features of agency. When people compare individual goals which provide meaningful and purposeful behaviors and standards, this self-evaluation motivates and incent them to pursue their goal (Bandura, 2001). Self-efficacy is the last and central feature of agency (Bandura, 2001). Self-efficacy belief is stated as the most pervasive tool of agency. Although the first three mechanisms of agency serves as a guide and driving power, the belief of a person about his/her skill in reaching a desired outcome is the main root of perseverance and motivation (Bandura, 1989; 2001).

Bandura (1977; 1986; 1993) described self-efficacy as the belief of a person in his/her ability to achieve a duty successfully. In addition to knowledge and skills, the motivation provided by self-efficacy is required to carry out a duty. He stressed that self-efficacy belief is not related only with cognitive skills, but also with behavioral and social capabilities (Bandura, 1982). Self-efficacy is not a measure of skills so it does not reflect truths about skills (Çapa Aydın et al., 2013; Tschannen Moran & Hoy, 2007). It is a motivational construction related with self-perception about skills. A person may have a high self-efficacy belief in a skill but an external assessment tool may show that he/she has low ability or vice versa (Tschannen Moran & Hoy, 2007).

Another definition of self-efficacy was made by Green and Piel (2002). They described self-efficacy as the beliefs of people about how well they can manage their own lives. Different from Green and Piel (2002), Brown, Malouff and Schutte (2013) described self-efficacy as the belief of “I can”. On the other hand, according to Schunk (2011), self-efficacy is a self-evaluation of a person which occurs at the end of inferences and interaction with environment.

2.2.1.1. Sources of Self-Efficacy

Explaining the sources of self-efficacy, its effects on motivation and self-regulation systems and its different and similar aspects with other notions of self-belief may enable researchers to gain a better understanding of self-efficacy (Pajares, 1997). Mastery experiences (performance accomplishments), vicarious experiences, persuasive shape of social influence and psychological and emotional arousal are the four main sources which have a role in the occurrence of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977; 1993).

2.2.1.1.1. Mastery Experiences

Mastery experiences are the main and strong source of self-efficacy beliefs of a person (Bandura, 1993). Self-efficacy is increased by successful experiences. On the other hand, self-efficacy decreases with repetitive failure especially in the case where mishaps occur in the early steps of events (Bandura, 1977). Being able to endure difficulties and occasional failure, and not giving up, enable people to improve resilient self-efficacy. What generally lie behind success, especially in education, are sustained effort and being convinced about the required ability to accomplish the task (Bandura, 1989). The reverse case can also be mentioned. If a person has a low self-efficacy or any doubt about his/her skills, he/she may easily give up trying when confronted with difficulties. On the other hand, a person who has strong self-efficacy makes an effort to achieve it (Bandura, 1982). Moreover, if this effort ends in success, self-efficacy belief increases (Bandura, 1977).

2.2.1.1.2. Vicarious Experiences

Vicarious experiences obtained by means of social models is the second source of self-efficacy beliefs. When a person observes another person who is similar to him/her and is successful due to sustained effort, his/her self-efficacy belief about his/her abilities in achieving something increases. Similarly, observing someone who is unsuccessful, despite his/her high effort, may decrease the other's self-efficacy and effort (Bandura, 1994). The possibility of being influenced by a model increases as long as the model is perceived by the observer as being more similar. On the other hand, the model perceived to be highly different by the observer has, in terms of behaviors and their results, a low effect on the self-efficacy belief of the observer (Bandura, 1993).

An observer tends to take proficient people in the skills desired by him/her as a model. Therefore, the observer can learn effective skills and acquire knowledge by means of acting and conveying his/her method of thoughts. Self-efficacy is increased by acquisition of expertise in a skill (Bandura, 1997).

2.2.1.1.3. Verbal Persuasion

People use verbal persuasion also called as social persuasion due to its features of availability and readiness. By using verbal suggestions, a person can be persuaded that he/she possesses the ability to achieve a task that has overwhelmed him/her in the past (Bandura, 1977). This verbal persuasion makes the person to make more effort, to develop his/her skills and self-efficacy belief. However, verbal persuasion has a positive effect on the self-efficacy of a person, if it follows an achievement. The verbal persuasion resulting in disappointing conclusions of one's efforts disconfirms unreal boost and causes decline in his/her self-efficacy belief (Bandura, 1993). In a similar way, providing only verbal persuasion without organizing conditions to promote performance may result in failures which decrease the self-efficacy belief of the persuaded person (Bandura, 1977).

2.2.1.1.4. Emotional Arousals

The fourth source of self-efficacy is emotional arousals. Emotional and somatic expressions such as anxiety, fatigue and stress convey information about self-efficacy (Pajares, 1996). Stress reactions may be comprehended as signs of susceptibility to poor performance. In addition, in some challenging activities, people tend to see their pains and fatigue as an indication of their physical weakness. Moreover, mood has a determinant effect on people's measurements of their self-efficacy. While positive mood increases anticipated self-efficacy, despondent mood decreases it (Bandura, 1993).

Since people have the ability to shift their own thinking, the way of anticipating and interpreting of emotional arousals is important (Pajares, 1996). While people with high self-efficacy belief interpret the state of emotional arousals as promoter of performance, those who hold some doubts about their efficacy interpret emotional arousals as debilitating (Bandura, 1993).

2.2.2. The Effects of Self-Efficacy on Human Behavior

Self-efficacy beliefs of people reinforce human success and well-being in numerous ways. It is possible to observe the effects of self-efficacy beliefs on motivational, selection, cognitive and behavioral processes. Self-efficacy beliefs of people reflect on their choices, the amount of effort they make in a task, their persistence under difficulties and setbacks, and their thinking patterns (Bandura, 1988).

In literature it is indicated that self-efficacy affects the decision making process and choices of people (Bandura, 1993; Pajares, 2002). For example, a person who thinks that a task or challenge exceeds his/her abilities avoids choosing this task or challenge (Bandura, 1988). Moreover, individuals' career selection is influenced by their self-efficacy. People who perceive their abilities as inadequate for a specific field will avoid taking up a career in these fields (Hassall et al., 2013).

The person who has high self-efficacy belief will create a success scenario in his mind about the conclusion of his performance. The positive scenario will result in a motivation to success. On the other hand, someone who has low self-efficacy belief will create a failure scenario. Therefore, while his/her motivation will decrease, the

possibility of giving up will also increase (Bandura, 1993). Consequently, while a person who has low self-efficacy or doubt about his/her skills easily gives up trying when confronted with difficulties, someone who has strong self-efficacy makes more effort to achieve it (Bandura, 1982).

A person's self-efficacy belief affects his/her ways of thinking and affective reactions. High self-efficacy enables individuals to approach challenging duties and activities impassively. On the other hand, low self-efficacy may lead to the belief that tasks are harder than they really are. Consequently, anxiety, depression, tension and a limited vision as regards the solutions of a problem are encouraged by this belief (Pajares, 2002).

People differ from each other about their capabilities and experiences required to enhance and save these capabilities. The differences among people in terms of abilities and experiences result in diversity in human development. For example, differences in social experiments produce diversity in the available and undeveloped skills (Bandura, 1989). Self-efficacy is another effective factor in the effective use of skills. This may change according to how people perceive skills. Some think that skills are obtained with time and experience. These people choose challenging tasks and beliefs as they believe that these challenging tasks are a chance for them to develop their skills. On the other hand, some people think that skills are inborn, and these skills cannot be gained afterwards (Bandura, 1993). According to the social cognitive theory, in addition to previous experiences and owned abilities, beliefs of people about their own skills have a strong effect on their subsequent acts (Pajares, 1997). Bandura (2001) claims that to make a good evaluation of their skills, to foresee the possible consequences of incidents and to take into consideration opportunities and constraints of the social structure enable people to overcome the challenges of the world and to arrange their acts accordingly (Bandura, 2001). Self-efficacy belief is one of these evaluations and has an important role in not only acts but also the acquisition of knowledge and skills (Pajares, 1997).

2.2.3. Teacher Self-Efficacy

In addition to having the required knowledge and abilities of the teaching profession, teachers' self-efficacy beliefs in performing tasks and responsibilities is another effective factor influencing their quality (Çapa Aydın et al., 2013). Teacher self-efficacy was described by Woolfolk Hoy and Spero (2005, p. 343) as "...teachers' confidence in their ability to promote students' learning". Indeed, it was identified by RAND (Research and Development) researchers on the basis of Rotter's (1966) internal and external locus of control framework for the first time. According to this frame, teachers believe that the control of their reinforcements belong to themselves. Teaching acts are reinforced by student motivation and performance. Therefore, teachers who have a high self-efficacy level think that they can control student motivation and performance. RAND studies maintain that some teachers believe that the home environment of a student is the main determiner of his/her performance and motivation; that is, environmental factors are more effective than teacher's behavior regarding student achievement. According to the RAND researchers, general teaching efficacy is the belief of a teacher about whether these environmental factors have a more powerful effect on student's motivation and performance than the teacher and school (Tschannen Moran, Hoy, & Hoy, 1998).

On the other hand, RAND researchers claimed that some teachers believe that if they really strive, even the toughest student can be handled. Self-efficacy beliefs of these teachers are high and they are more confident in their abilities. This self-efficacy belief was termed as personal teaching efficacy (Tschannen Moran et al., 1998).

As cited in Çapa et al. (2005), the other framework which examines teacher self-efficacy is Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory. According to Bandura (1993), a teacher who attributes her/his success to internal elements managed by her/him may have stronger self-efficacy belief. On the other hand a teacher who thinks that her success is a result of some external elements like chance may have lower self-efficacy beliefs.

Bandura (1997) addressed the teacher self-efficacy issue under three subtitles of teaching efficacy: efficacy to provide parental and communal involvement, efficacy to establish a positive school climate and the efficacy to affect decision making and school

resources. Bandura's theoretical formulation has been used in numerous educational research studies conducted for many years in order to explain teacher self-efficacy, related factors and its diverse effects on instructional performance of teachers and student achievement (Çapa et al., 2005).

2.2.4. The Influence of Teacher Self-Efficacy Beliefs on Education

In the literature, a great deal of studies indicated that teachers' self-efficacy beliefs influence teachers' classroom settings, their performance, their openness to change, their attitudes toward education, their curriculum implementation in the learning process and context selection as well as academic development of their students (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Bandura, 1993; Ciyer, Nagasawa, Swadener & Patet, 2010; Collmann 2012; Çobanoğlu, 2011; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Tschannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy, 1998; Tschannen Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007). In addition, increment in teacher self-efficacy beliefs leads to positive outcomes for both students and teachers (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Bandura, 1977; Ross, 1992; Woolfolk, Rosoff, & Hoy, 1990).

One of these outcomes is observed in the academic achievement of students. Research indicated that students of teachers who had higher self-efficacy beliefs were more successful than students of teachers with lower self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1977; Ross, 1992). High teacher efficacy results in high student efficacy; consequently, as student achievement increases, so does teacher efficacy (Bandura, 1977).

Teachers who have high self-efficacy beliefs create effective solutions to problems (Bangs & Frost, 2012; Yenice, 2012) and learn from their previous experiences (Bangs & Frost, 2012) and consequently have higher job satisfaction levels. This satisfaction reflects on teacher's motivation and performance within a classroom setting (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010; Turcan, 2011). Additionally, high-efficacy teachers are found to be more enthusiastic about their professions and indicating a greater love for teaching (Dembo & Gibson, 1985; Tarkın & Uzuntiryaki, 2012) besides having the willingness to experiment with new classroom activities (Dembo & Gibson, 1985; Tarkın & Uzuntiryaki, 2012). They tend to be more autonomus in their teaching and their classroom environment (Sugawara, Ruder & Burt, 1998).

Similarly, the effort made and the time spent by the teachers for instruction and their persistence in achieving a goal vary with respect to the extent of their sense of self-efficacy. Teachers who have a high sense of self-efficacy make more effort to achieve educational tasks and demonstrate more persistence under difficulties (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). Moreover, the belief of a teacher about being successful with some students affects the effort he/she makes. A teacher who does not expect to achieve accomplishment with some students may put less effort into preparation and transmission of teaching. Moreover, even if they have knowledge about the appropriate teaching strategies to assist these students, they may easily give up when they encounter difficulties (Tschannen Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007).

Teachers who have higher self-efficacy beliefs provide their students with more encouragement in addition to positive reinforcements, respond to students more confidently (Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Bandura, 1997) and are more inclined to use student-centered teaching methods than teachers who have lower self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1997). However, the time spent by teachers on small-group instruction varies with self-efficacy levels. Teachers with low self-efficacy spend nearly 50% of their time on small group instructions, while teachers with high self-efficacy spend only 28% of their time on small group instructions. Teachers with high self-efficacy spare time to checking and monitoring students' assignments (Dembo & Gibson, 1985). They are more tolerant toward their students when they make errors (Ashton & Webb, 1986). Furthermore, there is a difference between the ways they give feedback to students' incorrect answers. Low-efficacy teachers tend to give the correct answers, expect the correct answer from another student or permit other students to step in instead of waiting for the student who made the error to provide the correct answer. In addition, teachers with high self-efficacy beliefs lead students into giving the correct answers more effectively by means of asking questions (Dembo & Gibson, 1985).

The classroom atmosphere is another factor which rests on teachers' beliefs about their teaching efficacy (Bandura, 1993). Collmann (2012) stressed that teachers' self-efficacy levels might have an indirect effect on teacher-child interaction. Improving self-efficacy might develop teachers' stress coping skills. Therefore, in a less stressful environment, they might establish more positive interactions with their students.

Accordingly, a positive classroom and school climate will have a positive influence on teacher's self-efficacy beliefs (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

Not only teachers' relationships with children but also their interaction with parents is related to the teacher's self-efficacy beliefs. According to Tepe (2011), high-efficacy teachers communicate with parents, involve them in the education process, inform them in developmental features of their children, benefit from their profession during the education process and collaborate with parents to eliminate the undesired behaviors of their children.

2.2.5. Current Research on Teacher Self-Efficacy Beliefs

Teacher self-efficacy is an important issue for teacher preparation programs all over the world. It aims to address the lack of qualified and skilled teachers (Çakıroğlu, Çakıroğlu & Boone, 2005). Therefore, it has been the subject of a large body of research in the education context (Ciyer et al., 2010; Leader Janssen & Rankin Erickson, 2013; Sarıçam & Sakız, 2014; Seo and Moon; 2013).

To the author's knowledge, most of the research related to teacher self-efficacy and associated factors with it are conducted with pre-service teachers rather than in-service teachers. In addition, their focuses are different from each other. For example, Leader Janssen and Rankin Erickson (2013) focused on the effect of a literacy course on pre-service teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and content knowledge in teaching reading. The research revealed that the literacy course had a positive impact upon the self-efficacy beliefs and content knowledge of teacher candidates. Moreover, the study showed that self-efficacy belief was strongly and positively correlated with the content knowledge of teacher candidates. On the other hand, in a study by Tarkin and Uzuntiryaki (2012), it was revealed that teacher candidates' self-efficacy beliefs were not related to their attitudes to the teaching profession. That is, self-efficacy belief of a teacher may be high, but he/she may not respect the teaching profession. Researchers stressed that this result may be attributed to the process by which teachers are assigned public schools, their working conditions and their low income.

Siwatu and Starker (2010) examined self-efficacy from a different viewpoint by investigating the contribution of self-efficacy beliefs of pre-service teachers to the

explanation of their own beliefs in resolving conflicts related to cultural differences in their classroom. Similarly, Yenice (2012) focused on the relationship between problem solving skills and self-efficacy beliefs of pre-service teachers. According to the results, preschool teachers who had high self-efficacy beliefs had higher problem solving skills.

In addition to research which investigated related factors with teacher self-efficacy, some research focused on sources of self-efficacy beliefs of teacher candidates. For instance, Çapa Aydın et al., (2013) examined the sources of self-efficacy and found that some emotional or physiological situations such as excitement, tension and fear were effective in self-efficacy beliefs of teachers. Positive emotions like satisfaction with performance was stated as a contributing factor to the development of self-efficacy (Gür, Çakıroğlu, & Çapa Aydın, 2012), while negative feelings led to a reduction in self-efficacy (Çapa Aydın et al., 2013).

2.2.6. Current Research on Self-Efficacy Beliefs in the ECE Context

As in the education context, research in the ECE context examined self-efficacy beliefs of teachers or teacher candidates from different aspects. While some research focused on self-efficacy beliefs of pre and in-service preschool teachers in science teaching (Giallousi, Tselfes & Gialamas, 2014; Özbey & Alisinanoğlu, 2006; Vural & Hamurcu, 2008), in creative drama (Çetingöz, 2012), in music (Koca, 2013) and in art education (Pendergast, Garvis, & Keogh, 2011), some focused on the effects of teacher self-efficacy on teacher behavior (Ciyer et al., 2010).

For example, Pendergast et al., (2011) examined self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers in relation to art education and revealed that preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs in teaching art were lower than their self-efficacy beliefs in teaching maths and English. Similarly, Koca (2013) investigated preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs in teaching music and revealed that preschool teachers had high self-efficacy beliefs in teaching music. However, Koca (2013) did not find any significant difference among preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs in teaching music with regard to gender, years of experience and working status.

On the other hand, it is possible to encounter some studies which compared self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers and teacher candidates (Seo & Moon, 2013; Ulu,

2012). For example, in a study by Seo and Moon (2013), it was revealed that in-service preschool teachers had a higher self-efficacy belief in teaching strategies compared to pre-service teachers, and researchers attributed this case to experience. However, no significant difference was found between overall self-efficacy rates of the groups.

Another point which is examined in relation to teacher self-efficacy is classroom management. In the literature, some research showed that self-efficacy beliefs of teachers have an impact on their classroom management styles (Cerit, 2011) and on their curriculum implementation (Çobanoğlu, 2011). In her research, Karabacak (2014) found a positive significant relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and autonomy of teachers. According to her, teachers' self-efficacy beliefs in classroom management are related to their having an aptitude for controlling undesired behaviors within the classroom setting. It includes their judgments in managing in-class activities properly, in controlling undesirable and negative behaviors of students, in ensuring that students obey classroom rules and in expressing their expectation from students in terms of students' behavior.

Increments in self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers created a change in their long and short term goals. Results showed that as self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers increased, their concern about their capability to maintain their education and get a degree decreased. Moreover, according to the results, the participant preschool teachers became eager to maintain their own teaching and professional development by means of increments in their self-efficacy beliefs (Ciyer et al., 2010).

In literature, the other significant point related with teacher self-efficacy in preschool settings is the effects of teacher self-efficacy on parent-teacher-child relationships (Bangs and Frost, 2012; Tepe, 2011; Chung et al., 2005; Whynacht, 2002). According to Chung et al. (2005) parent-teacher relationship is the strongest predictor of higher teacher self-efficacy belief and is positively related with teacher-parent relationship.

Teacher self-efficacy also has a direct effect on classroom climates and teacher-child relationships (Eichman, 2001; Chung et al., 2005). According to the results of Eichman's (2001) study, teachers with higher educational level believed that they affected their students positively. Similarly, teacher candidates believed that they enabled students to feel like significant members of their classroom, built individual

relationships with students, created a mutual trust environment (Siwatu, 2011) and an affirmative school climate (Billheimer, 2006). On the other hand, in a study by Jong et al. (2014), no significant relationship was found between teacher self-efficacy and teacher-student relationships.

As it is supported by research in the related literature, teacher-child relationship is connected with teacher self-efficacy beliefs. Even if there are some studies which did not find any relationship between these two factors (Jong et al., 2014), as Chung et al. (2005) stressed, self-efficacy was one of the predictors of the relationship between preschool teachers and preschool children. Since communication skills is the most important element of teacher-child relationships (Jonsson & Williams, 2013) and self-efficacy belief is a possible related factor, in this study it was found worthy to examine the relationship between communication skills and self-efficacy beliefs of teachers.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

This chapter provides information about the methods used to collect and analyze data in the present study. Firstly, the research design of the study is explained. Then, the population and sample of the study are presented. Subsequently, an account of the instruments used to collect data and data analysis procedures is given. Finally ethical considerations of the study are mentioned.

3.1 Research Design

The present study aimed to investigate the relationship among in-service preschool teachers' teacher-child communication skills, self-efficacy beliefs, years of experience, educational level and type of institution where teachers work. As Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun (2012) stressed, correlational research is used for the investigation of the relationship between two or more variables regardless of any manipulation. Therefore, in this quantitative study, the correlational research design was conducted. As data sources, answers provided by participant preschool teachers in self-reported questionnaires were used.

3.2 Context

In Turkey, independent kindergartens, nursery and practical classes offered in formal or non-formal educational institutions serve as early childhood education institutions (MoNE, 2015). MoNE (2015) describes kindergartens as institutions which function to provide education to 36-to 66-month-old children. On the other hand, nursery classes are described as classes within formal education institutions that educate 60-to 66-month-old children. Another type of institution by which early childhood education is

provided is practical classes. Practical classes are defined as classes opened under MoNe to educate 36-to 72-month-old children (MoNe, 2006).

According to MoNE (2014-2015) statistics, in Turkey, totally 26,972 institutions (public and private) offer early childhood education (see Table 3.1). In addition to ECE institutions which work under the Ministry of National Education and there are 1,647 private ECE institutions which work under the General Directorate of Children Services. In addition, there are 121 new public institutions opened according to article no. 191 of law no. 657 (MoNE, 2015), which allows nurseries and social facilities to be opened in places where the need arises for state officials. The principles and procedures for these institutions are determined with the general regulation which is prepared by the State Personnel Administration and Ministry of Finance and Customs (MoNE, 2014). As a consequence, the total number of preschool teachers who work in public and private early childhood education institutions is 68,380. While 51,319 of these preschool teachers work in public schools, 16,719 of them work in private schools (MoNE, 2015).

Table 3. 1

The Number of ECE Institutions and Teachers in Turkey (MoNE 2015)

	<i>Type of Institution</i>		
	<i>Public</i>	<i>Private</i>	<i>Total</i>
Kindergartens	2,259	1,908	4,167
Nursery Schools	20,220	817	21,37
Within General Directorate of Children Service	121	1,647	168
ECE Institutions	22,600	4,372	26,972
Preschool Teachers	16,719	51,319	68,038

In Ankara, there are 1,406 private and public early childhood education schools. 860 public and 296 private schools offer early childhood education under the control of the Ministry of National Education. In addition, there are 250 institutions which offer early childhood education under the Directorate of Children Services. In Ankara, a total

of 4,664 preschool teachers (3,496 of them work in public schools and 1,168 of them work in private schools) work under MoNE (MoNE, 2015) (see Table 3.2).

Table 3. 2

The Number of ECE Institutions and Teachers Working under MoNE in Ankara (MoNE, 2015)

	<i>Type of the Institution</i>		
	<i>Public</i>	<i>Private</i>	<i>Total</i>
ECE Institutions under MoNE	860	296	1,256
ECE Teachers who work under MoNE	3,496	1,168	4,664

According to the regulations published in the 21/5/1977 dated and the 15943 numbered official gazette of the Republic of Turkey, experts and qualified instructors can work in ECE institutions under MoNE. Experts and master trainers who graduate from early childhood associate programs could be employed according to the principles arranged by the school principals (MoNE, 2014). The master trainers should be at least secondary school graduates and should document her/his education in the field (MoNE, 2012). According to the regulation concerning private schools published in the 5/07/2014 dated official gazette, the master trainers who are employed in ECE institutions can provide education independently (MoNE, 2014). Although being a teacher requires having graduated from a faculty of education, in Turkey, especially private schools employ people with different levels of educational degrees, like high school graduate, associate's degree or a bachelor's degree, as substitute preschool teachers.

In this study, the participant preschool teachers were selected from public and private nursery and practical classes and independent and private kindergartens under MoNE in Ankara. In Ankara, especially in private schools, people with different levels of educational degrees (high school graduate, associate's degree, bachelor's degree and master's degree) are employed as preschool teachers. Therefore, this study included

people from different educational levels working as preschool teachers within ECE institutions.

In the current study, it was thought that educational level may be related to communication skills of preschool teachers because in faculties of education, teacher candidates obtain knowledge about how to communicate with preschool children in some courses like classroom management, advanced communication skills, parent education or guidance. Similarly, in faculties of education, teacher candidates acquire a number of skills in the teaching profession by means of courses like classroom management, teaching principles and methods, etc. Therefore, whether or not there was a relationship between holding a bachelor's degree and communication skills and self-efficacy beliefs in teaching was an issue of examination. More specifically, this study aimed to investigate whether there was a significant difference in teacher-child communication skills and in self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers in terms of their educational level.

3.3 Participants

The present study's target population was all preschool teachers in Turkey and this the accessible population in this study was composed of preschool teachers who were working in public and primary elementary schools and preschools which operated under MoNE in Ankara (4664 preschool teachers). However, it was notably hard and impractical to reach all of them, so convenience sampling method was employed in order to identify participants. As Fraenkel et al. (2012) stressed, convenience sampling refers to choosing available individuals by which the researcher obtains the required information.

With the aim of reaching a representative sample, for data collection 304 preschool teachers, which were approximately 6.5% of the accessible population, were selected from three districts of Ankara (Çankaya, Yenimahalle, Keçiören). 14 public and 15 private schools (104 teachers) from the Çankaya district, 13 public and 11 private schools (102 teachers) from the Yenimahalle district, and 12 public and 13 private schools (98 teachers) from the Keçiören district were selected. The final sample of the

study consisted of 304 in-service preschool teachers who were working in public and primary elementary schools and preschools in these three districts of Ankara.

All of the participants reached in this study were females. When the school type where the participant teachers were working was examined, it was revealed that 147 (48.35%) of them were working in private schools, and 157 (51.65%) of them were working in public schools. The number of schools and teachers according to districts are presented in Table 3.3.

Table 3. 3

Districts, Number of Participant Schools and Teachers

<i>District</i>	<i>Number of Schools</i>	<i>Number of Teachers</i>
Çankaya	14 Public Schools	54
	15 Private Schools	50
Yenimahalle	13 Public Schools	58
	11 Private Schools	44
Keçiören	12 Public Schools	45
	13 Private Schools	53
<i>Total</i>	78 Schools	304

As indicated in Table 3.4, 61 (20.1%) of the participant preschool teachers were high school graduates, 46 (15.1%) of them held an associate's degree, 178 (58.6%) of them held a bachelor's degree and 19 (6.3%) of them held a master's degree. When the years of experience of the participant teachers were analyzed, it was revealed that their years of experience ranged between 0.5 and 40 years (M=12.35).

Table 3. 4*Characteristics of the Sample*

<i>Type of school where they worked</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
Public	157	51.65
Private	147	48.35
Missing	0	
<i>Educational level</i>		
High School Graduate	61	20.1
Associate's Degree	46	15.1
Bachelor's Degree	178	58.6
Master's Degree	19	6.3
Missing	0	

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

In this study, data were obtained from preschool teachers by means of three different instruments. As a first instrument, a demographic information form was prepared and used by the researcher including questions about teachers, such as their gender, educational level and type of institution they worked at (private or public). Secondly, in order to obtain information about the teacher-child communication skills of preschool teachers, the “Teacher-Child Communication Scale” (TCCS) (Erbay et al., 2012) was used. Finally, self-efficacy beliefs of teachers were investigated by means of the “Preschool Teachers’ Self Efficacy Beliefs Scale” (PTSS) (Tepe, 2011) (see Table 3.5). All of the scales used in this study were initially developed in the Turkish language and the English versions of the scales were released without any validity and reliability studies.

Table 3. 5*Instruments and Variables*

<i>Instruments</i>	<i>Variables</i>
Demographic Information Form	Gender Educational level Years of experience Type of institution where they worked
TCCS (Erbay et al., 2012)	Teacher-Child Communication Skills
PTSS (Tepe, 2011)	Teaching-Learning Process Communication Skills Parental Involvement Planning Organization of Learning Environment Classroom Management

3.4.1 Demographic Information Form

To obtain information about demographic, educational and professional backgrounds of participant teachers, a demographic information form was developed by the researcher. This demographic information form (see Appendix B) (for the English version see Appendix E) included questions about participant preschool teachers' gender, educational level, type of institution they were working at and years of experience.

3.4.2 Teacher-Child Communication Scale

The "Teacher-Child Communication Scale" (TCCS) was developed by Erbay et al. (2012) to identify the extent to which teachers possessed communication skills. The first version of the scale consisted of five sub-dimensions, which were communication language, listening, empathy, message and non-verbal communication, and included a total of 28 items.

As indicated by Erbay et al. (2012), in order to establish the content validity of TCCS, expert opinion was sought, and Erbay et al. (2012) conducted a pilot study with 30 preschool teachers to determine the number of items in the scale. Each of the 28 items was found to be consistent with each other. To check the internal validity of both the sub-dimensions and the scale as a whole, the main study was conducted with 207 preschool teachers in Konya whose ages ranged between 22 and 49 (Erbay et al., 2012).

According to the reported results, the Cronbach alpha value was found to be .81 for communication language, .73 for listening, .72 for empathy, .74 for message, .86 for non-verbal communication, and .88 for the scale as a whole. As stated by Erbay et al. (2012), the internal consistency of the Teacher-Child Communication Scale was good (Cronbach alpha coefficient reported as .88) (see Table 3.6).

In addition, construct validity scores were found to range between .48 and .74, .37 and .64, .61 and .75, .44 and .74, .62 and .88, respectively (Erbay et al., 2012, p. 3169-3170). As a result of the main study, 4 items were omitted by the researchers. The last version of this scale consisted of 24 items related to teacher-child communication skills of preschool teachers. Each item consisted of a five point Likert scale with points defined as (1) Never, (2) Rarely, (3) Sometimes, (4) Often and (5) Always (Saltalı & Erbay, 2013) (Appendix C) (for the English version see Appendix F).

Table 3. 6

Cronbach Alpha Values for the Teacher-Child Communication Scale

<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Item Numbers</i>	<i>Cronbach Alpha (Erbay et al., 2012)</i>
Communication Language	1 – 5	.81
Listening	6 - 13	.73
Empathy	14 - 16	.72
Message (reverse items)	17 - 20	.74
Non-verbal Communication	21 – 24	.86
TCCS	1 – 24	.88

In the present study, the Cronbach alpha values of the sub-dimensions were found to range between .67 and .48. As Pallant (2005) stressed, it is possible to find low Cronbach alpha values if the item numbers of the sub-dimensions are lower than 10. The item numbers of all the sub-dimensions of TCCS were lower than 10. While the empathy sub-dimension had 3 items, each of the message and non-verbal communication sub-dimensions had 4 items. Therefore, the insufficient item numbers might have led to the low Cronbach alpha values for the sub-dimensions (Pallant, 2005). Furthermore, while Erbay et al. (2012) conducted their study with 207 preschool teachers in Konya, this study was conducted with 304 preschool teachers in Ankara. Different samples may have caused a difference in the Cronbach alpha values of the sub-dimensions.

While the higher scores obtained from this scale indicate higher level of teacher-child communication skills, the lower scores indicate lower level of teacher-child communication for preschool teachers (Erbay et al, 2012). In this study, the Cronbach alpha value of the whole TCCS scale was found as .79. This value is higher than .70; therefore, the TCCS scale can be accepted as a reliable instrument with the sample of the current study. After two experts' opinions were sought on the obtained reliability values and the Cronbach alpha value of TCCS, in this study the analyses were carried out as a whole regardless of examining the sub-dimensions.

3.4.3 Preschool Teachers' Self-efficacy Beliefs Scale

The "Preschool Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs Scale" (PTSS) was developed by Tepe (2011) to determine preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs. The scale includes 37 items related to self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers and consists of six sub-dimensions, which are planning of the learning-teaching process, communication skills, parental involvement, planning, organization of learning environment and classroom management (see Appendix D) (for the English version see Appendix G). The item numbers in each sub-dimension are presented in Table 3.7. In PTSS, participants graded their answers to the questions according to a five point Likert type, indicating their level of agreement from one (1= never) to five (5= completely).

Table 3. 7*Cronbach Alpha Values for the Preschool Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs Scale (PTSS).*

<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Number of Items</i>	<i>Cronbach Alpha (Tepe, 2011)</i>
Planning of the Teaching-Learning Process	9 items	.91
Communication Skills	7 items	.90
Parental Involvement	5 items	.90
Planning	6 items	.87
Organization of Learning Environment	5 items	.88
Classroom Management	5 items	.87
PTSS	37 items	.97

As Tepe (2011) reported, the first version of the scale consisted of 66 items. Content validity was established by seeking expert opinion. Following expert opinion, 2 items were eliminated from the scale and 4 items were added. This 68-item scale was administered by Tepe (2011) to 862 preschool teachers who were working in Konya during the 2011-2012 academic year.

For the establishment of construct validity, the items in the scale were examined with the “Principal Components Analysis” technique, which was one of the techniques of “Explanatory Factor Analysis”. Then the “Confirmatory Factor Analysis” was employed to determine to what extent the scales supported the theoretical construct. By calculating the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, the factor loads and the explained average variance, the convergent-divergent validity coefficients of the scales were analyzed (Tepe, 2011).

In order to determine the construct validity of the scale, factor analysis was conducted by the researchers. At the end of the factor analysis, a construct with 37 items under six factors was obtained. The rate of the variance explained by total variance was 64.99%. According to Scherer, Wiebe, Luther and Adams (1988), in multi-factor designs, the explained total variance rate between 40% and 60% is sufficient in the field of social sciences. Following the factor analysis, some items were eliminated, and the last version of the scale was obtained with 37 items (Tepe & Demir, 2012).

The reliability of the scale was ensured by determining the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient and the Composite Reliability Coefficient for each dimension. The Cronbach Alpha values calculated for each sub-dimension was .91 for planning of the teaching-learning process, .90 for communication skills, .90 for parental involvement, .87 for planning, .88 for organization of learning environments and lastly .87 for classroom management (Tepe, 2011) (see Table 3.7).

In the current study, the Cronbach alpha coefficient value for the whole scale was reported as .95. As for the sub-dimensions, the Cronbach alpha coefficient values were found to be .87 for the teaching-learning process, .77 for communication skills, .83 for parental involvement, .88 for planning, .82 for organization of learning environment and .80 for classroom management. Since all of these values were above .70, the PTSS scale and its' sub-dimensions were considered to be reliable with the sample of this study.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

The starting point of the present study was to determine research problem and research questions in order to reach the aim of the study. Then a detailed literature review was done to access knowledge about the research topic, and data collection instruments were selected.

Before the study begins, permission was taken from Ethical council of METU, Ministry of National Education and then participating schools and teachers. Researcher introduced the aim of the study and told process to the school administrators and teachers. In the study, different information about teachers was obtained from them via instruments. Therefore, after telling the teachers the aims and significance of the research, the researcher asked volunteer teachers to fill in the questionnaires. There were information about the researcher and brief explanation about the aim and the procedure of research on the cover page of the questionnaires (see Appendix A).

The data were collected in the spring semester of 2014-2015 academic year. Teachers were asked to deliver the scales to the researcher in two days. 363 preschool teachers were reached by the researcher in 78 public and private elementary schools and preschools. 311 of these 363 preschool teachers returned to the questionnaires. Entirely data collection this study took one and half months. In this study, totally 363 teachers was reached and 304 questionnaires were used to conduct analyses. The return rate was 85.6%.

3.6 Ethical Consideration

The study was planned to begin after the necessary permission was taken from the METU Ethical Council and the Turkish Ministry of National Education (see Appendix I). Moreover, necessary consents were taken from the school administrators and participant teachers. The identities of the participants and the obtained data were kept confidential by the researcher by means of using id numbers. Also, the participants were informed about the research process and the purpose of the research. All participants were treated respectfully (Fraenkel et al., 2012).

3.7 Data Analysis

A preliminary data analysis was conducted to check whether the data were appropriate for the proposed statistical analyses. This preliminary analysis was conducted by using the IBM SPSS 22.0 package program and included the check of missing data, outliers and normality assumption.

In this study, general patterns of teacher-child communication skills and self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers were examined via descriptive analysis. The total scores obtained from both scales were entered into the IBM SPSS 22.0 Package program. In order to summarize the data obtained from the questionnaires, the frequency polygon technique was used. Thus, visual information of the data was provided (Fraenkel et al., 2012).

In order to examine whether there was a significant difference in teacher-child communication skills of preschool teachers in terms of their educational level, a one-way

between groups ANOVA, used to determine the mean differences among groups on the dependent variable (Gravetter & Wallanu, 2009), was conducted. Similarly, it was revealed by means of the one-way between groups ANOVA analysis whether there was a significant difference in preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs in terms of their educational level. In addition, correlation analysis was conducted to determine the direction and strength of linear relationship among demographics, self-efficacy beliefs and communication skills of teachers.

In this research, to understand how well independent variables (preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, years of experience and type of institution where teachers work) predict teacher-child communication skills of preschool teachers both as a whole and separately, Multiple Regression Analysis, which is a form of correlational analysis, was conducted. As stressed by Gravetter and Wallnau (2009), Multivariate Regression is used to examine how well more than one predictor variables can predict a specific outcome separately and entirely as a set of variables. In other words, as Pallant (2005, p.140) stated, "Multiple Regression is based on correlation, but allows a more sophisticated exploration of the interrelationship among a set of variables".

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

In this chapter, the results of the preliminary data analyses, descriptive statistics and inferential statistics are presented. The first section includes the results of the preliminary analyses, including the missing values, outliers and normality. Secondly, under the title of descriptive statistics, the results pertaining to the characteristics of the participants and study variables are presented. Then, follow the inferential statistics results conveying the relationship between the study variables and the predictor variables. Finally, the assumptions are stated and the results of the One-way between groups ANOVA and Multiple Regression Analysis are presented.

4.1. Preliminary Data Analysis

Preliminary data analysis was conducted to ensure the appropriateness of the dataset for the statistical analyses. Preliminary data analyses, which included checking missing data, outliers and normality assumption, were performed using the IBM SPSS 22.0 package program.

4.1.1. Missing Data Analysis

Especially in studies conducted with human beings, receiving incomplete data from participants is very frequent. However, these missing values can affect the precision of the statistical analyses. Therefore, it is important to inspect the dataset for missing values. One of the ways of handling missing data is the use of the data deletion model of excluding cases listwise. In this method, if the case is missing even one part of the information, it is totally deleted from all the analyses. This method is not suggested because it can limit the sample size. Another way of handling missing values is the option of excluding cases pairwise. In this method, the case is excluded only if it is

missing a value required for a specific analysis. The last method of handling missing values is to replace a missing value with the mean. In this way, the mean value of the variable is inserted into every missing case (Pallant, 2005).

According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2001), missing data of up to 5% of the whole data does not affect the results seriously. In this study, there are no missing values in educational level, years of experience and type of institution where teachers work. The questionnaires which had missing values of more than 5% were excluded from the study. Since the questionnaires had some missing items, every missing item in the scales was replaced by the mean value of that item.

4.1.2. Outliers

An outlier refers to a very different value from the other values in a particular data set. The entity of even one extreme value may have a large effect on the representativeness of the data set (Grawetter & Wallnau, 2009). Outliers can be discriminated from the data set by determining extreme values via box plots. By means of box plot, it can be analyzed whether there are points which take place 3 box-lengths away from the edge boxes. These points refer to outliers and are indicated with asterisks (Pallant, 2005).

Furthermore, whether outliers have a significant effect on the mean can be determined by the 5% trimmed mean value for one each sub-scale. If the mean value is very different from the 5% trimmed value, data points must be examined in more detail (Pallant, 2005). The influence of outliers on the data can be analyzed by Cook's Distance. Cook's Distance value greater than 1 indicates that the outlier has a significant effect on the data (Green, Salkind, & Akey, 2000). In the present study, all of the criteria mentioned above were taken into consideration to determine the outliers.

4.1.3. Normality

Checking for normality is important before performing an inferential statistic. Normality can be checked by means of skewness and kurtosis values (Tabachnick & Fiedel, 2001). According to Tabachnick and Fiedel (2001) while skewness and curtosis

values within the range of -1 and +1 may be accepted as a good value, the skewness and kurtosis values within the range of -2 and +2 can be considered as acceptable. In this study, the skewness and kurtosis values of each of the variables were examined, and they were found to be within the range of -2 and +2 (see Table 4.1).

Table 4. 1

Skewness and Kurtosis Values for Each Variable

Variables	<i>Skewness</i>	<i>Kurtosis</i>
Educational Level	-.642	-.683
Years of Experience	.829	-.283
Type of Institution	-.053	-1.010
TCCS	-.856	.698
PTSS	-.805	.283
Teaching-Learning Process (TLP)	-.974	.262
Communication Skills (CS)	-1.111	.529
Parental Involvement (PI)	-.742	.352
Planning (P)	-1.063	.717
Organization of Learning Environment (OLE)	-.609	-.122
Classroom Management (CM)	-.749	.491

4.2. Results of Descriptive Statistics

Educational level and years of experience of preschool teachers and type of school where they worked were considered as the demographic characteristics of the participants in the present study. The demographic variables of the participant teachers are presented in the following part.

4.2.1. Demographic Data of the Participant Preschool Teachers

A total of 304 preschool teachers completed the questionnaires. When their years of experience was examined, it was found that years of experience of the participant preschool teachers ranged between 0.5 and 40 years ($M=12.35$, $SD=9.3$). While the majority of the teachers had 25 (8.2%), 23(7.6%) and 20 (6.6%) years of experience, there was one teacher who had 20.5 (0.3%), 21 (0.3%), 27 (0.3%), 34 (0.3%), 35 (0.3%) and 36 (0.3%) year years of experience (see Table 4.2).

Table 4. 2

Characteristics of the Sample in terms of Years of Experience

<i>Years of Experience</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Years of Experience</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
0.5 years	2	0.7	19 years	9	3.0
1 years	18	5.9	20 years	15	4.9
2 years	18	5.9	20.5 years	1	0.3
3 years	10	3.3	21 years	1	0.3
4 years	23	7.6	22 years	5	1.6
5 years	25	8.2	23 years	4	1.3
6 years	18	5.9	24 years	9	3.0
7 years	12	3.9	25 years	3	1.0
8 years	12	3.9	26 years	3	1.0
9 years	9	3.0	27 years	1	0.3
10 years	20	6.6	28 years	2	0.7
11 years	13	4.3	29 years	2	0.7
12 years	8	2.6	30 years	18	5.9
13 years	9	3.0	31 years	4	1.3
14 years	4	1.3	34 years	1	0.3
15 years	3	1.0	35 years	1	0.3
16 years	3	1.0	36 years	1	0.3
17 years	4	1.3	38 years	2	0.7
18 years	9	3.0	40 years	2	0.7
<i>Total</i>	218	100		86	100

Educational levels of participant preschool teachers were as follows: 61 teachers (20.1%) were high school graduate; 46 teachers (15.1%) held an associate's degree; 178 teachers (58.6%) held a bachelor's degree and 19 teachers (6.3%) held a master's degree. The types of schools where they worked were examined under two titles (private and public). All of the schools where the participant teachers worked, regardless of being public or private, operated under MoNE. 147 (48.4%) of the participant preschool teachers were working in private schools, while 157 (51.6%) of them were working in public schools operating under MoNE (see Table 4.3).

Table 4. 3

Distribution of Preschool Teachers According to Educational Level

<i>Educational level</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
High School Graduate	61	20.1
Associate's Degree	46	15.1
Bachelor's Degree	178	58.6
Master's Degree	19	6.3
Total	304	100

4.3. Research Question One

“To what extent do Turkish in-service preschool teachers have teacher-child communication skills?”

The descriptive statistics analysis for the entire TCCS yielded a mean value of 112.13 (SD=5.38, Min=92, Max=120). The mean scores ranged between 4.01 and 4.87 for the items. The reliability score for TCCS (24 items) was found to be 0.79 for this sample as calculated by the Cronbach Alpha coefficient.

Table 4. 4*Mean Values and Standard Deviations for the TCCS Items*

Items (Rated from 1 to 5)					<i>TCCS</i>	
1	2	3	4	5	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always		
1. When I want to talk with my student, I choose a silent and calm environment.					4.41	.69
2. When faced with undesired behaviours by the student, I talk to him/her by assuming statements that do not belittle him/her, harm his/her self-confidence or target his/her personality.					4.87	.34
3. I use simple, clear and comprehensible sentences when I talk with my student.					4.84	.42
4. When my student has some trouble in expressing her/his feelings, I use door openers like “I understand you”, “Really?”, “Interesting” or expressions like “Do you want to talk about that?”, and “I’m interested in your opinions, I want to listen to what you will tell me” in order to encourage him/her to speak.					4.66	.53
5. I talk with my student without reflecting my anger and rage toward another person, case or event.					4.53	.58
6. When I listen to my student, I try to understand his/her current feelings and I express that to him/her.					4.77	.41
7. By means of my body posture, I show my student that I am ready to listen to him/her					4.77	.43
8. I pay attention not only to what the child is telling but also to her/his hand, arm and body movements.					4.68	.41
9. I listen to my student without using communication barriers like criticizing, making fun, shaming, advising and blaming.					4.80	.43
10. I use some expressions like smiling, nodding and “hmm” and “I am listening to you” in order not to make him/her feel that he/she is not listened to.					4.65	.80

Table 4.4.*(Continued)*

11. I set an example in being a good listener for the student when I listen to him/her.	4.80	.40
12. I listen to my student by making eye contact with him/her.	4.87	.35
13. I listen to my student by going down to her/his eye level and standing at a minimum distance with him/her.	4.82	.40
14. I use expressions that indicate to him/her that I understand her/his feelings and thoughts correctly.	4.75	.48
15. I explain to my student that some feelings like rage, anger and jealousy are natural and temporary, and that these feelings can be experienced by everybody.	4.42	.81
16. I listen to my student by putting myself into her/his shoes and looking at events from her/his viewpoint.	4.44	.72
17. I use expressions which include imperative sentences when I talk with my student.	4.45	.50
18. When my student has a problem, I use some expressions like "Never mind, don't be upset, it will be ok in time" so that he/she doesn't get upset.	4.44	.55
19. When the student behaves in an undesired way, I show my anger toward the student by being cross and not talking to him/her.	4.80	.39
20. When I talk with my student, I use expressions that compare him/her with other children.	4.84	.36
21. When I am angry and nervous, I show that to my student via my gestures, facial expressions and voice tone.	4.01	.75
22. I let my student hug me when he/she needs it.	4.87	.36
23. I hug my student in order to show my love to him/her.	4.74	.51
24. I talk with my student by smiling.	4.78	.41

In the five point Likert type Teacher-Child Communication Scale, 3 corresponded to moderate level, while 5 corresponded to the highest level. In the TCCS, there were 24 questions to measure self-communication skills of preschool teachers in their communication with children. According to the results of the descriptive statistics, the mean value of preschool teachers' communication skills was very close to 120, which is the highest score that can be obtained from the teacher-child communication skill scale ($M=112.13$, $SD=5.38$, $Min=92$, $Max=120$). The mean scores for each item were highly above the moderate level and were close to the highest level. It can be interpreted that the participant preschool teachers had high communication skills (see Table 4.4).

Preschool teachers had the highest mean scores in item 2 ($M = 4.87$, $SD = .34$), item 12 ($M = 4.87$, $SD = .35$) and item 22 ($M = 4.87$, $SD = .36$). It can be concluded that most of the participant preschool teachers did not talk with their students by using expressions that belittle him/her, harm his/her self-confidence or target the child's personality.. Moreover, the teachers listened to their students by making eye-contact with them and let students hug them when they needed to. On the other hand, preschool teachers had the lowest mean scores in item 21 ($M = 4.01$, $SD = .75$), which is about showing anger and nervousness via gestures, facial expressions and voice tone to the child, item 1 ($M = 4.41$, $SD = .69$), which is about choosing a silent and calm environment to talk to the child, and item 15 ($M = 4.42$, $SD = .81$), which is about explaining to the student the naturality and temporariness of some feelings like rage, anger and jealousy, and the possibility that these feelings are experienced by everybody.

4.4. Research Question Two

“What is the extent of in-service preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs (overall and under each sub-dimension: organization of the teaching-learning process, communication skills, parental involvement, planning, organization of the learning environment and classroom management)?”

Descriptive statistics results for the entire PTSS indicated that the mean value was 167.40 ($SD=14.31$, $Min=118$, $Max=185$). The reliability score for PTSS (37 items) was found as 0.95 for this sample as evaluated by The Cronbach Alpha coefficient.

As can be seen in Table 4.5, when the maximum scores could be obtained, each sub-dimension and preschool teachers' mean scores in that dimension were compared, and it could be seen that teachers had the highest mean scores in communication skills ($M=32.83$, $SD=2.36$, $Min=24$, $Max=35$), in classroom management ($M=22.32$, $SD=2.23$, $Min=14$, $Max=25$) and in planning ($M=27.15$, $SD=2.96$, $Min=17$, $Max=30$). When compared with the above-mentioned three sub-dimensions, preschool teachers had the lowest mean scores in the teaching-learning process ($M=41.54$, $SD=3.47$, $Min=30$, $Max=45$), in parental involvement ($M=21.63$, $SD=2.87$, $Min=11$, $Max=25$) and in organization of the learning environment ($M=21.90$, $SD=2.56$, $Min=13$, $Max=25$).

Table 4. 5

Mean Values and Maximum Points for PTSS Sub-dimensions

<i>Sub-dimensions</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>
Teaching-Learning Process	41.54	3.47	30	45
Communication Skills	32.83	2.36	24	35
Parental Involvement	21.63	2.87	11	25
Planning	27.15	2.96	17	30
Organization of Learning Environment	21.90	2.56	13	25
Classroom Management	22.32	2.23	14	25
PTSS	167.40	14.31	118	185

As Descriptive Statistics indicated, all mean scores were close to maximum scores which could be obtained from the PTSS scale. Moreover, all mean scores were above the average value in the five point likert type scale, which is 3. It can be inferred that preschool teachers have high self-efficacy beliefs in communication skills, in classroom management, in planning, in organization of the learning environment, in parental involvement and lastly in the teaching-learning process dimensions of PTSS. However, their mean score in the subdimensions of organization of the learning environment and in parental involvement were remote from maximum scores which could be obtained

from these two sub-dimensions when compared to the mean scores in the other four sub-dimensions. Therefore, it can be said that participant preschool teachers feel more efficacious especially in communication skills, planning and classroom management rather than in organization of the learning environment and parental involvement. The mean scores for each item ranged between 4.17 and 4.83 on the five-point PTSS (see Table 4.6).

Table 4. 6

Descriptive Statistics for the PTSS Items

Sub-dimensions and Items	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Teaching-Learning Process</i>		
1. I can encourage my students to be enterprising.	4.53	.60
2. I can encourage my students to become autonomous.	4.50	.61
3. I can create opportunities by which my students can experience success.	4.55	.53
4. I can create opportunities for my students to transfer their learnings to everyday life.	4.48	.68
5. I can create a collaborative environment in my classroom.	4.68	.53
6. I can encourage my students to actively participate in the learning process.	4.61	.54
7. I can be a model to my students with my behavior.	4.70	.48
8. I can promote the effort my students put into expressing themselves.	4.71	.48
9. I can make clear and understandable explanations to my students.	4.73	.47
<i>Communication Skills</i>		
10. I can make eye contact with my students.	4.83	.41
11. I can use my body language (posture, facial expressions, eye contact etc.) effectively.	4.68	.49
12. I can adjust my tone and emphasis as needed.	4.65	.52
13. I can use the Turkish language in a grammatically correct and comprehensible way.	4.66	.52
14. I can make my students feel that I value each of them as an individual.	4.79	.40
15. I can reward the positive behaviors of my students.	4.61	.63
16. I can treat my students' families in an understanding and sensitive manner.	4.58	.59

Table 4.6
(Continued)

<i>Parental Involvement</i>		
17. I can take advantage of parents' various skills and expertise in the educational environment.	4.17	.86
18. I can do incentive work to encourage parents to participate in school and classroom activities.	4.24	.77
19. I can organize activities in order to inform families about the developmental features and needs of preschool children.	4.26	.80
20. I can enable the participation of families into taking decisions in the learning process.	4.28	.76
21. I can collaborate with families to be able to change the undesired behaviors of students.	4.66	.51
<i>Planning</i>		
22. I can prepare activities in my daily schedule to address all the developmental fields of my students (cognitive, emotional, social and psychomotor).	4.57	.63
23. I can determine objectives that correspond to the developmental levels of my students.	4.62	.56
24. I can give equal space to individual and group activities in my daily plan.	4.52	.61
25. I can plan the teaching-learning process effectively.	4.60	.57
26. I can reflect the features of the immediate environment on my daily plan.	4.29	.76
27. I can consider individual differences and needs of my students in my activities.	4.53	.60
<i>Organization of Learning Environment</i>		
28. I can organize the learning environment to promote the creativity of my students.	4.39	.69
29. I can organize the physical conditions of the learning environment (the regulation of interest corner, the seating arrangement of the students. etc.) to support children's learning.	4.45	.67
30. I can organize the learning environment to support the problem solving skills of my students.	4.22	.72
31. I can make arrangements to meet the needs of my students by identifying and analyzing factors that inhibit learning in my classroom.	4.29	.66

Table 4.6
(Continued)

32. I can enable the learning environment to be free from dangers, to be aesthetical, clean and neat.	4.52	.63
<i>Classroom Management</i>		
33. I can use the time effectively in the learning process.	4.50	.62
34. I can plan the transitions between activities without disrupting the flow of the course.	4.55	.62
35. I can enable my students to comply with class rules.	4.37	.52
36. I can find solutions to the negative student behavior.	4.33	.60
37. I can motivate all of my students to activities.	4.54	.58

As can be observed in the descriptive statistics for each item of PTSS, mean scores of all items were close to 5, which is the highest level in this five point likert scale. However, preschool teachers had the highest mean scores in item 10 ($M=4.83$, $SD=.41$), in item 14 ($M=4.79$, $SD=.40$) and in item 9 ($M=4.73$, $SD=.48$). It can be inferred that preschool teachers had higher self-efficacy beliefs especially in making eye-contact with their students, in making their students feel that they are valued and in making clear and understandable explanations to their students. On the other hand, they had the lowest self-efficacy mean scores in item 17 ($M=4.17$, $SD=.86$), which is about taking advantage of parents' various skills and expertise in educational environments, in item 30 ($M=4.22$, $SD=.72$), which is about arranging the learning environment to support children's problem solving skills, and in item 18 ($M=4.24$, $SD=.72$), which is about doing incentive work for parents to enable their participation into school and classroom activities.

4.5. Research Question Three

“To what extent does educational level of in-service preschool teachers affect their teacher-child communication skills and self-efficacy beliefs?”

One-way between groups ANOVA was conducted to evaluate whether there was a significant mean difference among more than two groups on the dependent variable (Green et al., 2000). In the present study, in order to examine whether there was a significant difference among preschool teachers' teacher-child communication skills and their self-efficacy beliefs in terms of their educational level, one-way between groups ANOVA was conducted. In the first analysis, teacher-child communication skills was the independent variable, and the educational level (high school graduate, associate's degree, bachelor's degree and master's degree) was the independent variable. In the second analysis, preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs was the independent variable, and educational level (high school graduate, associate's degree, bachelor's degree and master's degree) was the independent variable.

4.5.1. Assumptions of One-way between groups ANOVA

Level of measurement, independence of observations, normal distribution and homogeneity of variance are determined as the assumptions of One-way ANOVA (Pallant, 2005).

According to Green et al. (2000), the dependent variable(s) should be measured at interval or ratio measurement level. In the current study, dependent variables were preschool teachers' teacher-child communication skills and their self-efficacy beliefs. As previously stressed, these were identified by the mean scores that the participant preschool teachers scored from TCCS and PTSS. Considering this, it can be mentioned that the dependent variables were continuous and were at interval level. Therefore, the assumption of level of measurement was met.

The second assumption is random sampling. According to Pallant (2005), participants should be selected randomly from the population to benefit from parametric tests. For the ANOVA test, participants that represent groups were randomly selected

from the sample so it is believed that the random sampling assumption was met. Moreover, according to Green et al. (2000), the cases and the scores obtained from measurements must be independent of each other. In this study, it is assumed that in the course of the data collection process, independence of observations was met.

Another assumption is normality. It is a necessity of parametric statistical techniques that scores of each group should be normally distributed on the independent variable(s) (Pallant, 2005). In this study, the groups consisted of high school graduate, and of those holding an associate's degree, a bachelors' degree or a master's degree. As seen in Table 4.7, skewness and kurtosis values for these four groups were within the ranges of -2 and +2. It can be inferred that the groups were normally distributed on the independent variables. The last assumption is homogeneity of the variances. As Pallant (2005) stressed, the variance of the samples obtained from the population should be equal. The Levene test for equality of variances gives information about the homogeneity of the variances. The significance value should be higher than .05 to meet this assumption. In this study, the significance values were found to be .09 for both ANOVA tests. Therefore, it can be inferred that this assumption was also met.

Table 4. 7

Skewness and Kurtosis Values of TCCS and PTSS Mean Scores with regard to Educational Level

Groups	TCCS Mean Scores			PTSS Mean Scores		
	<i>Skewness</i>	<i>Kurtosis</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Skewness</i>	<i>Kurtosis</i>	<i>N</i>
High School Graduate	-.278	-.683	61	-.709	-.580	61
Associate's Degree	-.874	1.846	46	-.751	.057	46
Bachelor's Degree	-.847	.514	178	-.669	.078	178
Master's Degree	-1.500	1.620	19	-1.426	1.673	19

4.5.2 Research Question 3.1

“To what extent does educational level of in-service preschool teachers affect their teacher-child communication skills?”

A one-way between groups ANOVA analysis was conducted to explore the effect of educational level on teacher-child communication skills of preschool teachers. Subjects were divided into four groups according to their educational level (Group 1: High school graduate; Group 2: Associate’s degree; Group 3: Bachelor’s degree; Group 4: Master’s degree). There was no significant statistical difference in the TCCS scores for the four groups [$F(3,300)=1.5$, $p=.20$] at the $p>.05$ level. It can be concluded that there is no significant difference among high school graduate, those holding an associate’s degree, a bachelor’s degree or a master’s degree with respect to preschool teachers’ teacher-child communication skills (see Table 4.8).

Table 4. 8

One-way ANOVA between Groups for Teacher-Child Communication Skills

<i>Educational level</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F(3,300)</i>	<i>P</i>
High School Graduate	112.68	4.87	1.538	.20
Associate’s Degree	113.19	4.32		
Bachelor’s Degree	111.59	5.78		
Master’s Degree	112.87	5.11		

4.5.2. Research Question 3.2

“To what extent does educational level of in-service preschool teachers affect their self-efficacy beliefs?”

To explore whether there is a statistically significant difference in self-reported self-efficacy belief scores of preschool teachers in terms of their educational level, a one-way between groups ANOVA analysis was conducted. Subjects were divided into four groups according to their educational level (Group 1: High school graduate; Group 2: Associate’s degree; Group 3: Bachelor’s degree; Group 4: Master’s degree). There was no statistically significant difference in the PTSS scores for the four groups [$F(3,300)=2.3$, $p=.07$] at the $p>.05$ level. Thus, it can be inferred that there is no statistically significant difference among self-efficacy belief scores of high school graduates, those holding an associate’s degree, a bachelor’s degree or a master’s degree with respect to preschool teachers’ self-efficacy belief scores (see Table 4.9).

Table 4. 9

One-way ANOVA between Groups for Preschool Teachers’ Self-efficacy Beliefs

<i>Educational level</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F(3,300)</i>	<i>P</i>
High School Graduate	168.88	7.62	2.301	.07
Associate’s Degree	171.62	5.36		
Bachelor’s Degree	165.95	7.78		
Master’s Degree	165.66	6.13		

4.6. Research Question Four

“Is there a relationship between teacher-child communication skills and years of experience of preschool teachers?”

In the present study, by means of Pearson product moment correlations the relationships among years of experience, communication skills and self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers were determined. Pearson product moment correlations can be used to examine the relationship between both continuous or one continuous and one dichotomous variables (Pallant, 2005). This study's variables were examined considering their relationships with each other were continuous (teacher-child communication skills, self-efficacy beliefs and years of experience).

In this study, normality assumption, histograms and skewness and kurtosis values for years of experience on the dependent variables were checked. Mean scores of teachers obtained from TCSS and PTSS were normally distributed for years of experience because skewness and kurtosis values were within the range of -2 and +2 (Pallant, 2005).

The relationship between overall teacher-child communication skills (as measured by TCCS) and years of experience of preschool teachers was examined by means of the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. According to preliminary analyses, normality, linearity and homoscedasticity assumptions were not violated. There was a small, positive but an insignificant correlation between preschool teachers' teacher-child communication skills and their years of experience [$r = .06$, $n=304$, $p>.05$].

4.7. Research Question Five

“Is there a relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and years of experience of preschool teachers?”

The relationship between overall self-efficacy beliefs (as measured by PTSS) and years of experience of preschool teachers was investigated by means of the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. According to preliminary analyses, normality, linearity and homoscedasticity assumptions were not violated. There was a small, positive but insignificant correlation between preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and their years of experience [$r=.10$, $n=304$, $p>.05$].

When the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs under each sub-dimension and years of experience was examined, it was found that there was a small, positive and significant relationship between self-efficacy beliefs in parental involvement and years of experience [$r=.13$, $n=304$, $p<.05$]. In addition, there was a small, positive and significant relationship between teachers' self-efficacy beliefs as regards classroom management and their years of experience [$r=.11$, $n=304$, $p<.05$] (see Table 4.10).

Table 4. 10

Relationships among PTSS Sub-dimensions and Years of Experience

Dimensions	Correlations with years of experience	
	<i>r</i>	<i>P</i>
Teaching-Learning Process	.071	.106
Communication Skills	.038	.182
Parental Involvement	.131	.021
Planning	.054	.264
Organization of Learning Environment	-.037	.472
Classroom Management	.117	.045
Overall Self-efficacy Beliefs	.105	.088

4.8. Research Question Six

“Is there a relationship between teacher-child communication skills and self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers?”

The relationship between overall teacher-child communication skills (as measured by TCCS) and overall self-efficacy beliefs (as measured by PTSS) of preschool teachers was investigated by means of the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. According to preliminary analyses, normality, linearity and homoscedasticity assumptions were not violated. There was a strong, positive and statistically significant correlation between preschool teachers' teacher-child communication skills and self-efficacy beliefs [$r=.62$, $n=304$, $p<.05$].

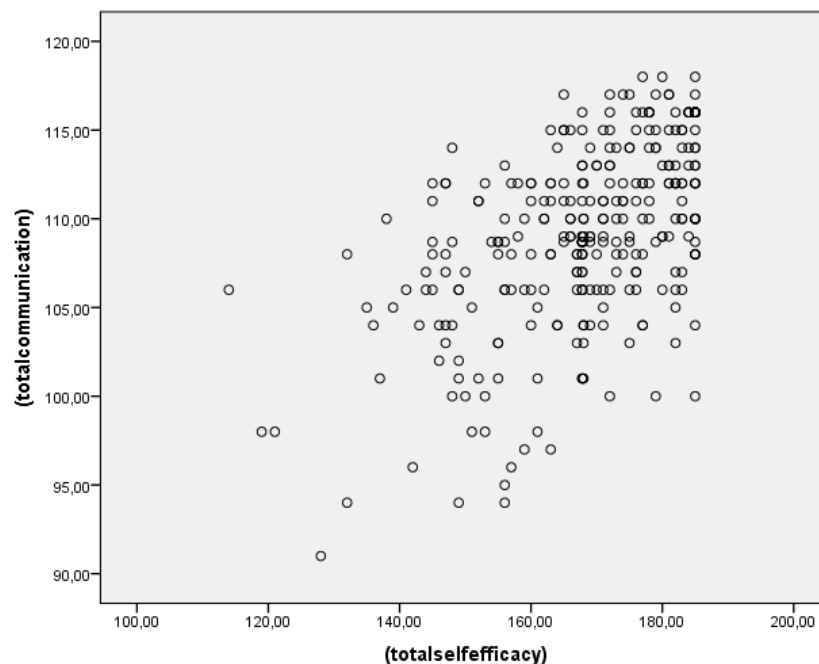


Figure 3. 1 Scatterplot that shows the distribution of preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and teacher-child communication score.

4.9. Research Question Seven

“How well do the overall self-efficacy beliefs, years of experience and type of institution where they work predict preschool teachers’ overall teacher-child communication skills?”

In this part, the results of the multiple regression analysis performed to examine the predictive effects of self-efficacy beliefs, years of experience and type of the institution where teachers worked on teacher-child communication skills of preschool teachers are presented. It begins with the introduction of the assumptions of the multiple regression analysis. Then, the results of multiple regression analyses are presented.

4.9.1. Assumptions of Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis which makes numerous assumptions concerning data is a valuable statistical technique (Pallant, 2005). To perform multiple regression analyses, sample size, outliers, multicollinearity and singularity, normality, homoscedasticity and linearity assumptions should be met (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001).

4.9.1.1. Sample Size

According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2001, p. 117), in order to obtain a generalizable sample size to run a multiple regression analysis, the researcher should use the formula of “ $N > 50 + 8m$ ”. In this formula m represents the number of independent variables. In the present study there are three independent variables and according to the formula, sample size should be higher than 74. The sample of this study consisted of 304 in-service preschool teachers. The sample size of this study seemed to meet the requirements regarding sample size to perform multiple regression analysis.

4.9.1.2. Outliers

Very high or low scores can be effective on the results. As Pallant (2005) stressed, multiple regression is notably sensitive to outliers. For this reason, all variables which will be used in regression analysis should be checked in terms of extreme scores. Histograms and box plots were examined to check for outliers. In box-plots, “Extreme points (indicated with asterisks,*) are those that extend more than 3 box-lengths from the edge of the box” (Pallant, 2005, p.71). Seven outliers indicated with an asterisk were removed completely from the dataset.

In multiple regression analysis, detecting outliers on the dependent variable of the study can be realized by using the standardized residual plot. Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) identify outliers as values with a standardized residual of above 3.3 or less than -3.3. In the present study, the criteria mentioned above are taken into consideration as indicators of outliers. In addition, residual statistics, Cook’s Distances and centered leverage values were controlled for predicted variables.

Table 4. 11

Residual Statistics for Research Question 7.1 and Research Question 7.2

		<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
TCCS (for RQ 7.1)	Standardized Residuals	-4.092	2.683	.00	.99
	Cook’s Distances	.00	.00	.00	.00
	Centered Leverage Value	.00	.00	.00	.00
TCCS (for RQ 7.2)	Standardized Residuals	-4.037	2.806	.00	.99
	Cook’s Distances	.00	.07	.00	.00
	Centered Leverage Value	.00	.09	.02	.01

The data set of the present study was examined with regard to outliers and maximum and minimum values. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2001), values

above +3.3 or below -3.3 can be defined as outliers. As can be observed in the Table above, standardized residuals were above 3.3 for teacher-child communication skills. It means that there were specifiable outliers in this variable. However, with the consideration of the sample size, it can be asserted that few outliers could be eliminated without distorting data (Pallant, 2005).

The outliers were examined by means of Leverage values. In this study, any Leverage value above $3p/n$. ($p = k + 1$ and $k =$ number of predictor variables) was regarded as an outlier. Leverage values of variables in this study were higher than $3p/n$, which can be concluded that there were no outliers. Moreover, when Cook's distance values were examined, it was seen that there was no case with values higher than 1. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2001), if the Cook's Distance value is higher than 1, it can create a potential problem. As can be seen in the table above, the maximum Cook's Distance was .07 and it did not suggest a major problem (see Table 4.11).

Table 4. 12

Intercorrelations between Variables

	YE	TI	TCCS	PTSS	TLP	CS	PI	P	OLE	CM
YE	1									
TI	.500**	1								
TCCS	.067	-.125*	1							
PTSS	.105*	-.171**	.626**	1						
TLP	.071	-.163**	.589**	.916**	1					
CS	.038	-.132*	.538**	.834**	.792**	1				
PI	.131**	-.013	.474**	.810**	.657**	.565**	1			
P	.054	-.207**	.578**	.915**	.794**	.713**	.709**	1		
OLE	-.037	-.212**	.537**	.846**	.710**	.599**	.611**	.759**	1	
CM	.117**	-.125**	.533**	.876**	.761**	.695**	.642**	.768**	.741**	1

*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

4.9.1.3. Multicollinearity and Singularity

Multicollinearity refers to the correlation among independent variables. It exists if independent variables of the study are highly correlated and may affect the accuracy of the results in correlational research. Therefore, it is important to check whether correlation among each of the independent variables is too high ($r \geq .9$) (Pallant, 2005). According to Pallant (2005), the presence of multicollinearity can be determined by means of cut-off points. When the VIF value is higher than 10 or the tolerance value is less than .10, it can be accepted as the sign of the presence of multicollinearity.

In the present study, the correlation between each of the independent variables was less than .9 (between .01 and .79) (see Table 4.12), tolerance values are higher than .10 (between .60 and .95) and VIF values are lower than 10 (between 1.05 and 1.66). Therefore, it was inferred that multicollinearity assumption was not violated within the data set.

Singularity exists if one independent variable consists of the combination of the other independent variables. As in the multicollinearity, it may negatively affect the regression model so it should be checked (Pallant, 2005). In this study, there was no independent variable which was a combination of the other independent variables.

Moreover, Table 4.12 showed that there was a strong, positive and significant relationship between type of institution and years of experience [$r=.50, n=304, p<.05$]. In this study, when data entering into the SPSS program, private school was coded as 0, while public school (non-private) was coded as 1. Therefore, it can be inferred from the results that preschool teachers who worked in a public school had more years of experience. When the table is examined, it can be seen that preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs was negatively and significantly correlated with type of institution where they worked [$r=-.17, n=304, p<.05$].

4.9.1.4. Normality, Linearity, Homoscedasticity and Independence of Residuals

Residuals scatterplot and the normal probability plot were examined in order to check assumptions of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity and independence of residuals. In the plot of regression standardized residuals (normal probability plot),

points lay in a reasonable straight diagonal line. When the scatterplot of the residuals was examined, a rough rectangular distribution with most of the scores concentrated in the center was observed. In addition, in a normally distributed samples Casewise Diagnostics table, which provides information about cases with standardized residual values above +3 or below -3, only 1 percent of the cases are expected to fall outside the range of -3 and +3 for normally distributed samples. In the present study, there were only two cases with standardized values out of that range (-3.169 and -3.101) and they constituted .06 percent of all cases. In addition, the Durbin-Watson values were 2.0 for the first analysis and 1.99 for second analysis for communication skills in the data set. The closeness of the Durbin-Watson value to 2 shows independence of residuals (Field, 2005). Therefore, it was inferred that the assumptions were met.

4.9.2. Research Question 7.1

“How well do the overall self-efficacy beliefs, years of experience and type of institution where teachers worked predict preschool teachers’ overall teacher-child communication skills?”

The contributions of overall self-efficacy beliefs, years of experience and type of institution where teachers worked to teacher-child communication skills of preschool teachers were determined by Multiple Regression Correlation Analyses. The overall teacher-child communication skills were considered as the dependent variable when overall self-efficacy beliefs, years of experience and type of institution where teachers worked were employed as the predictor variables (see Table 4.13).

Table 4. 13*Independent Contributions of Overall Self-efficacy Beliefs and Type of Institution*

Variables	Teacher-Child Communication Skills			
	<i>B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	73.196		23.528	.000
Self-Efficacy Beliefs	.231	.614	13.312	.000
Years of Experience	.038	.067	1.268	.206
Type of Institution	-.574	-.053	-1.003	.317

According to the results related to the relationships among preschool teachers' teacher-child communication skills, self-efficacy beliefs and some demographics (years of experience and type of institution), self-efficacy beliefs, years of experience and type of institution where teachers worked explained 39% of the variance in teacher-child communication skills. The multiple correlation (R) was .62 with $R^2=.39$ for teacher-child communication analysis ($F=65.349$, $p=.000$). The positive correlation between self-efficacy beliefs ($\beta=.61$), years of experience ($\beta=.06$) and teacher-child communication skills indicated that higher self-efficacy beliefs and years of experience lead to higher teacher-child communication skills. On the other hand, there was a negative relationship between type of institution where teachers worked ($\beta= -.05$) and teacher-child communication skills. In this study, while private schools was coded as "0", public school was coded as "1". Therefore, this result indicated that there was a negative relationship between working in a public school and having higher level teacher-child communication skills for preschool teachers.

4.9.3. Research Question 7.2

“Which is the best predictor of teacher-child communication skills of preschool teachers: overall self-efficacy beliefs, years of experience or type of institution where teachers worked?”

R squares were examined to identify how well self-efficacy beliefs predict overall teacher-child communication skills of teachers (see Table 4.14).

Table 4. 14

Multiple Regression Analysis Results for Teacher-Child Communication Skills of Teachers

Teacher-Child Communication Skills	β	R^2	F	P
Self-Efficacy Beliefs	.614	.350	65.30	.000
Years of Experience	.067	.000		.206
Type of Institution	-.053	.000		.317

As regards the teacher-child communication skills scores, the results indicated that self-efficacy beliefs of teachers was the best predictor of teacher-child communication scores ($\beta=.61$), explaining 35% of the variance. On the other hand, years of experience ($\beta=.06$) and type of institution ($\beta=-.05$) made a unique contribution to explaining preschool teachers' teacher-child communication skills but their contribution was not statistically significant ($p>.05$).

4.10 Research Question Eight

“How well do the self-efficacy beliefs in the teaching-learning process, communication skills, parental involvement, planning, the organization of the learning environment and classroom management predict preschool teachers’ teacher-child communication skills?”

The contribution of self-efficacy beliefs in each sub-dimension, namely the teaching-learning process (TLP), communication skills (CS), parental involvement (PI), planning (P), organization of the learning environment (OLE) and classroom management (CM), to preschool teachers’ teacher-child communication skills was determined by Multiple Regression Correlation Analyses. The teacher-child communication skills of preschool teachers was considered as a dependent variable when their self-efficacy beliefs in each sub-dimension was considered as the predictor variable (see Table 4.15).

Table 4. 15

Contributions of Sub-dimensions of the PTSS on TCCS

<i>Dimensions</i>	Teacher-Child Communication Skills			
	<i>B</i>	β	<i>T</i>	<i>P</i>
Constant	71.267		20.666	.000
TLP	.319	.205	2.211	.024
CS	.299	.131	1.704	.026
PI	.089	.048	.719	.473
P	.287	.158	1.721	.086
OLE	.300	.143	1.877	.062
CM	.069	.029	.348	.728

According to the results regarding the relationships among preschool teachers' teacher-child communication skills and sub-dimensions of self-efficacy beliefs, sub-dimensions explained 39% of the variance in teacher-child communication skills. The multiple correlation (R) was .63 with $R^2=.39$ for teacher-child communication analysis ($F=32.577$, $p=.000$). Teacher-child communication skills was positively correlated with self-efficacy beliefs in the teaching-learning process ($\beta=.20$), with self-efficacy beliefs in communication skills ($\beta=.13$), with self-efficacy beliefs in parental involvement ($\beta=.04$), with self-efficacy beliefs in planning ($\beta=.15$), with self-efficacy beliefs in organization of the learning environment ($\beta=.14$) and with self-efficacy beliefs in classroom management ($\beta=.02$). Results indicated that higher self-efficacy beliefs in the teaching-learning process, in communication skills, in parental involvement, in planning, in organization of the learning process and in classroom management leads to higher teacher-child communication skills.

4.10.1 Research Question 8.1

“Which is the best predictor of teacher-child communication skills of preschool teachers: overall self-efficacy beliefs in the teaching-learning process, communication skills, parental involvement, planning, organization of the learning environment and classroom management?”

Table 4. 16

Multiple Regression Analysis Results for Teacher-Child Communication Skills of Teachers

Teacher-Child Communication Skills	B	R^2	P
TLP	.205	.018	.024
CS	.161	.013	.026
PI	.048	.001	.473
P	.158	.006	.086
OLE	.143	.007	.062
CM	.029	.000	.728

R squares were examined for each sub-dimension to identify which variable best predicts overall teacher-child communication skills of teachers (see Table 4.16). In order to compare the contribution of one each independent variable, β values were examined. For the teacher-child communication skills scores, the results indicated that self-efficacy beliefs in the teaching-learning process made the strongest and statistically significant unique contribution to explaining teacher-child communication skills ($\beta=.20$), by explaining 1.8% of the variance. Self-efficacy beliefs in communication skills was the second variable which made the strongest and statistically significant unique contribution to teacher-child communication ($\beta=.16$) by accounting for 1.3% of the variance. On the other hand, self-efficacy beliefs in planning ($\beta=.15$), in organization of the learning environment ($\beta=.14$), in parental involvement ($\beta=.04$) and in classroom management ($\beta=.02$) made unique contributions to explaining teacher-child communication skills but their contribution was statistically insignificant ($p>.05$).

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents discussion of the findings regarding research questions of the current study in the light of previous research. Moreover, it introduces implications for preschool teachers, preschool teacher educators and curriculum developers of preschool teacher training programs. The last section of the chapter involves recommendations for further studies.

5.1 Preschool Teachers' Communication Skills

One of the purposes of this study was to examine teacher-child communication skills of in-service preschool teachers. Findings of the study indicated that preschool teachers had a high level of teacher-child communication skills. Indeed, their mean score in self-reported teacher-child communication skill ($M=112.13$) was above the average score ($M=82$) and close to the highest score which could be obtained from the scale ($M=120$). Thus, it can be inferred that based on preschool teachers' self-reports they have a high level of communication skills.

Having a high level effective communication skills is a prerequisite for the teachers of the 21st century (Trilling & Fadel, 2009) and is one of the competencies that a preschool teacher should have (MoNE, 2008). Thus, the finding of the current study with regard to a high level of communication skills is parallel with expectations from teachers as stated in the literature.

When each item in the teacher-child communication skill scale was analyzed, it was observed that participants had higher mean scores from the items relevant to avoiding the use of assuming expressions that belittled children, harmed their self-confidence or targetted their personality, listening to the child by making eye contact with the him/her, and letting the child hug the teacher when he/she when needed to. They also reported that they used clear, simple and comprehensible sentences during their

communication with children and listened to the child without using some communication barriers like criticizing, making fun, shaming, advising and blaming. In parallel with these findings, a study by Durmuşoğlu Saltalı and Erbay (2013) revealed that according to self-reports of preschool teachers, preschool teachers tried to communicate with children without hurting them, listened to children without criticizing and interrupting them and showed that they cared for them by making eye contact with children during the communication.

In the teacher-child communication scale, other items from which teachers obtained higher mean scores were about showing anger to the child by being cross at him/her when he/she misbehaved and using expressions that compared the child with another child. These items were determined as the reverse items by the scale developers. According to the results, most of the teachers reported that they did not show their anger to the child by being cross at the child when he/she behaved undesirably and did not use expressions based upon comparing children. However, there are some negative findings compared to current findings in terms of communication. The observational study of Akgün, Yazar and Dinçer (2011) indicated that preschool teachers frequently used commands and comparative sentences towards children and they avoid listening to them attentively. The research of Akgün et al. (2011) also revealed that preschool teachers frequently used negative facial expressions and voice tone like yelling toward children, frequently compared children with one another and displayed anger by sending off the child without listening to the reasons of the matter.

Findings of Akgün et al. (2011) is contradictory with communication literature in that young children may not estimate the results of their behaviors and how their behaviors make people feel (Beaty, 2008). Therefore, adults should share the reasons of their anger and their feelings by using “I message” with the child rather than judging him/her without listening to the child. Therefore, a child may learn to empathize with the teacher and it may be possible to eliminate undesired behaviors (Yavuzer, 2014). Then again, to be cross at a child or to judge him/her without learning the reasons of her/his behavior may give him/her the message that he/she is not accepted or loved by the teacher (Gordon, 1974/2010). The difference among findings of the current with Akgün et al., (2011) might be due to the nature of these studies. While the study of Akgün was conducted by a third person (independent observer), the current study was conducted

based on self reports. There may be some bias or falsifies in self-reports or evaluations of a third person. For example, teachers might want to hide some real information about them or could be biased about themselves. Similarly, the data collector's bias may be effective on the results when the data was collected by a third person (Fraenkel et al., 2012). On the other hand, in this study, when the results were interpreted it was assumed that preschool teachers responded to the questions objectively.

When the items in the teacher-child communication scale from which teachers had lower mean scores were examined, it was found that preschool teachers had lower mean scores in the items related to showing feelings like anger and frustration to the child by means of gesture, facial expressions and voice tone, choosing a silent and calm environment when communicating with children, listening to the child by looking at events from his/her viewpoint and by putting themselves into the child's shoes as well as explaining to the child the normality and temporariness of some feelings like anger and jealousy. Furthermore, they obtained lower mean scores from the two reverse items related to using expressions including imperative sentences and using expressions like "Never mind", "Don't get upset" or "It will be ok in time" in order to prevent the child from getting upset when the child has a trouble. Indeed, some teachers reported that they ordered children and they used expressions like "Never mind" and "Don't get upset" to console the child.

According to Gordon (1974/2010), most of the teachers do not know what to do when their students have problems. Since they do not know how effective response should be, even if they try to help, they rarely achieve it. Consoling and providing assurance about the future may prevent the child from effectively coping with her/his problems and make the child think that he/she is not understood. The child needs to be understood and accepted by his/her teacher rather than assured or consoled. At that point, listening effectively to the child, giving the signs of acceptance by nodding, stooping and using "Hi hi", "I understand" and using door openers like "Do you want to talk about that?" or "I am interested in what you tell me. Do you want to say something more about this subject?" will be more effective than consoling and providing assurance to the child (Schenck, 2009). In this study, even if findings showed that preschool teachers had a high level of communication skills, based on the answers given to the items, it was

understood that some of them had some troubles in responding to the child who had a problem.

The findings in relation to showing some negative feelings like anger and frustration and explaining the normality and temporariness of feelings like anger, jealousy and rage may signify that preschool teachers did not have enough information about how negative feelings should be manifested to children. As Reit (1985) stressed, children think differently from adults so it is wrong to judge them according to our rules or “true” patterns. They have the same feelings with adults such as jealousy, anger, sadness or happiness but they express these feelings differently from adults because of not having developed the skills to control their emotional responses yet. Although they try to suppress some of these negative feelings, some emotional responses give them away (Reit, 1985). When a child begins to comprehend emotional statements of other people, he recognizes the possible effects of his behavior on people around him so he learns to organize his behaviors according to possible results (Kail, 2003). Similarly, when the child who observes that his/her teacher also experiences negative feelings, he/she may learn the temporal nature of negative feelings and the ways of coping with these negative feelings (Kaltman, 2006). In fact, it can be interpreted that teachers may have some trouble in demonstrating their feelings towards children transparently and in teaching children to think empathically. Moreover, they may have some trouble in listening to the child by looking from her/his perspective and by putting themselves into the child’s place. This finding is not parallel with some other research findings in the literature. In a relevant study, Peck (2012) found that preschool teachers were aware of their feelings and knew how to manage their frustration when they were frustrated by a child. In the study it is stated that even if they had some indecision in the matter of how they should respond to the child for a while, they reminded themselves to think and respond empathically. According to Yavuzer (2014), the sincere expression of feelings without hurting the child enables the child to understand the effect of her/his behavior on another person and to gain empathic thinking. In line with this, the reflection of feelings on voice tone or facial expressions may be beneficial provided that the child is not hurt. For example, when the child misbehaves, using a firm way of speaking and voice tone can be effective in expression of important requests (Schenck, 2009). However, this does not mean yelling at the child due to anger. As Schenck (2009) stressed, sensing anger

and rage on the face or voice of the adults may frighten children and make them feel insecure. Moreover, preschool children are very good observers and teachers' attitudes and responses to negative events may set a model for young children. Therefore, a teacher who responds calmly to unexpected events and expresses her/his feelings appropriately can be a good model for children in dealing with negative cases (Kaltman, 2006).

The other low rated item was related to choosing a silent and calm environment to communicate with the child privately. This finding may be interpreted in connection with preschools' physical conditions. When the teachers rated the statements in the scale, they expressed that they did not find a silent and calm environment when they wanted to communicate with the child privately by taking into consideration preschools' physical conditions. Teachers expressed that their classrooms were highly dynamic environments and they had some problems in providing silence. Moreover, some of the teachers stated that there was no staff to help them so they could not leave the children alone in classroom. Therefore, even their private communications with the children may have taken place within the classroom environment and the findings concerning preschool teachers' choice of environment for communication with children may be related to that. This finding is important in terms of being a reflection of physical and environmental conditions of preschools in Turkey. Some classrooms are very crowded and student-teacher ratio is high (MoNE, 2015). Teachers of crowded classrooms might have some trouble in providing a silent and calm environment for communication with children (Cooper, 2011).

5.2 Preschool Teachers' Teacher-Child Communication Skills and Educational Level

Another focus of this study was whether there was a difference in teacher-child communication skill scores of preschool teachers with regard to educational level. Results revealed that teacher-child communication skills of preschool teachers did not significantly differ in terms of their educational level. In this study, there were two major reasons for investigating differences in terms of communication skills among preschool teachers based on educational level. The first reason is that faculties of education programs offer classroom management courses or some of them offer effective

communication (as an elective course). Secondly, preschool teachers who held at least a bachelor's degree had more extensive academic background and performance-oriented training than preschool teachers from other educational levels. However, unexpectedly, results indicated that there was no statistical difference between teacher-child communication skills of preschool teachers who were high school graduates, and those that held an associate's degree, a bachelor's degree or a master's degree.

According to the social cognitive theory, how people behave is not only dependent on their genetic makeup. Observation and interaction with others enable people to discover that they can adapt and accommodate their behavior. In fact, people can enhance their communication skills by observing and interacting with others (Beebe et al., 2005). When the findings concerning educational level and years of experience were considered from this viewpoint, it may be said that communication skills are based on experiences of preschool teachers with preschoolers rather than their years of experience and educational level. For example, a preschool teacher who had a bachelor's degree had less school experience, but had more knowledge in some subjects like classroom management and the ways of effective-teacher child communication when compared to a vocational high school graduate preschool teacher. On the other hand, the preschool teacher who had graduated from a vocational high school might have had the chance to interact and communicate with children more than the others. Thus, these may be the reason why the study did not yield a significant difference between communication skills of preschool teachers in terms of educational level.

The reason underlying such a result may also be related to effective communication courses in teacher education programs. In 2007, the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) brought innovation to teacher training programs in Turkey. This innovation included the increment of courses concerning cultural and social issues. Effective communication was one of these courses which take place in the preschool teacher education program as an elective course. Consequently, due to the flexibility of the program, whether to integrate an effective communication course into the curriculum is under the initiative of faculties of education (CoHE, 2007). The above mentioned finding of this study might be due to the existence or nonexistence of a communication course in faculties or/and the quality of the provided courses. Preschool teachers in this study with a bachelor's or master's degree graduated from diverse faculties of education.

The program of the faculties that teachers graduated from might not include an effective communication course. Therefore, even if they obtained high scores in the teacher-child communication scale, their scores may not differ from those of high school graduates or teachers with an associate's degree. Another interpretation for this finding may be related to the effectiveness of the communication courses offered in faculties of education. This finding may lead to an improvement in effective communication courses with the aim of enhancing teacher candidates' communication skills. By considering all of these interpretations, including effective communication course as a must course in preschool teacher training program and improving efficiency of the courses related to teacher-child communication may enable preschool teachers to reach the highest possible level in communication skills.

5.3 Preschool Teachers' Teacher-Child Communication Skills and Years of Experience

Investigating the relationship between preschool teachers' teacher-child communication skills and years of experience was another goal of the current study. Findings of the current study indicated that preschool teachers' teacher-child communication skills was positively but not significantly related to their years of experience. In the literature, the findings of relevant studies showed diversity. For example, according to Kıldan (2011), teachers have some troubles in their relationships and communications established with children in the early years of their professional life. As their experiences improve, their professional skills that can be learned with practice such as problem solving skills and the ability to communicate with children will improve. On the other hand, in a study by Tepeli and Arı (2011), it was revealed that as preschool teachers' years of experience increased, their communication skills scores decreased. As parallel with the findings of the current study, Cabell et al., (2005) found that communication strategies used by preschool teachers were not related to their educational level and years of experience. Similarly, in a study by Tezel Şahin, Kandır, Yaşar and Yazıcı (2012), it was found that communication skills of preschool teachers did not differ according to their years of experience. At that point, the finding of this study concerning the relationship between years of experience and communication skills

of teachers support the findings of Cabell et al (2005) and those of Tezel Şahin et al., (2012). These findings can be related to advantages of being a beginner or experienced teacher. The rapid changes in science and technology have a vital effect on the field of education. Teacher education institutions aim to train teachers who have the required skills and knowledge to meet the needs of the new generation (Cevher, 2004). Therefore, beginner teachers may be more equipped in terms of innovations and be more motivated toward the teaching profession. On the other hand, experienced teachers may have more practical knowledge and experience on one to one communication with children and get the chance of observing the effect of different communication styles on children. Their experiences might help them use various ways of communication styles with children and see their impact on children. As indicated, being experienced or being a beginner teacher might have various advantages and disadvantages. In order to explore more factors which may be effective on the relationship between two variables, the extent of research related to teacher-child communication should be broadened.

5.4 Preschool Teachers' Self-efficacy Beliefs

Focusing on preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs was another purpose of this study. According to the findings, preschool teachers' mean score in the self-efficacy belief scale ($M=167.4$) was above the average score ($M=111$) and close to highest score ($M=185$).

Results showed that preschool teachers had high self-efficacy beliefs especially in the subdimensions of communication skills, classroom management and planning. When the items in the subdimension of communication skills were examined, findings indicated that they had high self-efficacy beliefs in making eye-contact with their students, in using their body language effectively and in making their students feel that their teacher valued each of them as an individual. This finding supports the finding of Gömleksiz and Serhatlıoğlu (2013). In their research Gömleksiz and Serhatlıoğlu (2013) found that preschool teachers had high self-efficacy beliefs in communication skills and in making eye-contact with their students, in using their body language effectively and in making their students feel that they are valued as an individual. This finding may be related to the awareness of teachers that communication skills are important in the

education process, especially eye-contact with children and using body language in an effective way.

In this study, another sub-dimension in which teachers had higher self-efficacy beliefs than the other sub-dimensions was classroom management. Teachers believed that they were efficacious especially in using time effectively in the teaching-learning process, planning the transition between activities without disrupting the flow of the course and in motivating all of the students to the activities. In a relevant study, Aydemir, Duran, Kapıdere, Kaleci, & Aksoy (2014) found that preschool teachers had higher self-efficacy beliefs regarding the subtitle of student engagement but had lower self-efficacy beliefs with respect to the subtitle of teaching strategy. When the nature of preschool classrooms is considered, this finding of the current study can be interpreted as being a positive finding since early childhood education classrooms are open to unexpected events and preschool children have a limited attention span. For example, when the teacher is telling a story, a child may interrupt the teacher and say what he/she ate yesterday. The teacher who sees that the child's interruption distracts all of children may have to quickly pass onto another activity. Similarly, sometimes an accident may interrupt the activity and teachers may be obliged to make quick transitions between activities. Therefore, activities and transitions between activities may not occur as planned. However, in this study teachers reported that they had high-self efficacy in the items related to classroom management.

Preschool teachers also had high self-efficacy beliefs in the items related to preparing activities in the daily schedule by considering all the developmental fields of children and in identifying objectives corresponding with developmental levels of children. MoNE (2008) emphasized that preschool teachers should organize education environments and activities according to developmental and individual features and needs of children. Hence, this may be interpreted as a promising finding in this study.

The previous paragraphs under this title were related to the sub-dimensions and items in which teachers had high self-efficacy beliefs. However, the following paragraphs are devoted to the discussion of the sub-dimensions and items in which teachers had lower self-efficacy beliefs. According to the results, preschool teachers had lower self-efficacy beliefs in the sub-dimensions of organization of the learning environment and in parental involvement. This finding is similar with those of

Gömleksiz and Serhatlıoğlu (2013). As in this study, in the study of Gömleksiz and Serhatlıoğlu (2013) preschool teachers reported that they were less efficacious in the sub-dimensions of parental involvement and organization of the learning environment.

When the items in the sub-dimension of organization of the environment were considered, it was found that preschool teachers had lower self-efficacy beliefs in organizing the learning environment to promote creativity and problem solving skills of children, in organizing the classroom environment to meet the needs of children, and determining the factors which limit learning in the classroom. These findings may have stemmed from the physical conditions of preschools. As mentioned above, some of the preschool teachers may not have had an appropriate classroom environment to organize the learning needs of the students due to some economic or physical insufficiencies (Turkish Education Association, 2007). Therefore, they may have considered these insufficiencies when evaluating their efficacy in organizing the classroom environment.

The reasons of preschool teachers' lower self-efficacy beliefs in taking advantage of parents' various skills and expertise in the educational environment, in making incentive work to encourage the participation of parents in school and classroom activities and organizing activities in order to inform families about the developmental features and needs of preschool children may be related to both internal and external factors. As an external factor, some parents may resist the teacher's efforts to encourage parents to become involved in the education of their children (Griffin, & Galassi, 2010). As Hornby and Lafaele (2011) stated, difference in parents' beliefs about parental involvement, in their goals and agendas, in their attitudes, in their demographic features like gender, race, language and class, in economic, historical, political factors and in their current life context, parents may resist becoming involved in parental involvement activities. Due to parents' resistance, preschool teachers may not make parental involvement as their ideal and that may be one of the reasons of their lower self-efficacy in parental involvement.

On the other hand, internal factors such as teachers' characteristics or skills may play a role in teacher's sense of self-efficacy in parental involvement. For example, preschool teachers may have some trouble in establishing relationship and communication with parents. Therefore, their self-efficacy beliefs in parental involvement might be high but lower than their self-efficacy beliefs in the other sub-

dimensions. Bangs and Frost, (2012) found that many teachers have some concerns about relationship with parents. In a relevant study, Eret (2013) found that teacher education programs in Turkey were sufficient for preparing teacher candidates to communicate with children. However, when it comes to communicating with parents and school staff, teacher candidates reported that they did not feel prepared. Moreover, Chung et al. (2005) found that self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers in teaching were positively correlated with teacher-parent relationships. Therefore, teachers can be helped in becoming more efficacious by supporting their knowledge and skills in the matter of how to establish more positive relationships and communication with parents.

5.5 Preschool Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs, Educational Level and Years of Experience

According to the findings, even if the level of self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers who held an associate's degree was higher than that of the others, there was no significant statistical difference among preschool teachers in terms of their educational level. This finding is parallel with the findings of Şenol Ulu (2012). In her study, Şenol Ulu (2012) found that the level of self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers who held an associate's degree was higher than that of preschool teachers who held a bachelor's degree, but this difference was not statistically significant. Most of the teachers who held an associate's degree had graduated from the department of Child Development in vocational high schools. They receive early childhood education in their high school years and take courses related to child development and education both in their university years and their high school years. On the other hand, preschool teachers who held a bachelor's degree had graduated from different high schools like Anatolian high schools, teacher high schools, vocational high schools or general high schools. They may have confronted early childhood education for the first time when they began university, where they take courses related to the teaching profession and early childhood education for four years. Therefore, even if preschool teachers who held an associate's degree may feel more efficacious than preschool teachers from the groups of other educational level, the difference in their self-efficacy beliefs is not statistically significant.

Another explanation may be related to years of experience. Since mastery experiences is one of the sources of self-efficacy belief (Bandura, 1997), even if teachers had different educational backgrounds, there may not be significant difference in their self-efficacy beliefs due to differences in their years of experience. Moreover, it is possible to encounter research which found a positive relationship between preschool teachers' years of experience and their self-efficacy beliefs (Klassen, & Chiu, 2010; Gür et al., 2012; Ulu, 2012). Expectedly, in this study even if any significant relationship between years of experience and teachers' overall self-efficacy beliefs was not found, a positive and significant relationship was found between years of experience and teachers' self-efficacy beliefs in parent involvement and teachers' self-efficacy beliefs in classroom management. According to Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2007), teachers who begin their teaching profession with low self-efficacy may be prone to find better teaching strategies to develop their teaching performance in time; therefore, their self-efficacy beliefs increase over time. Even if preschool teachers have a considerable self-efficacy belief in classroom management due to their previous experiences with children, their abilities continue to develop over time. Therefore, years of experience may provide them with further enhancement in self-efficacy regarding classroom management (Drang, 2011). Similarly, experiences with parents gained over time may make preschool teachers feel more efficacious in parental involvement.

Findings also revealed that there was a negative and significant relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and working in a public school. This finding may be related to the competition inherent in the private sector. Preschool teachers who work in private schools may need to develop themselves to remain within the same institution. Moreover, unlike teachers who work in public schools, those who work in private schools may get the chance to experience teaching in a number of institutions. Thus, they may improve their self-confidence in their abilities. Another reason may be physical and economic advantages of private schools. Preschool teachers who work in private schools may be more advantageous than those who work in public schools in terms of classroom size and physical conditions of the classrooms since private schools have better physical conditions. Consequently, this may be effective on their self-efficacy beliefs.

5.6 The Relationship between Teacher-Child Communication Skills and Self-Efficacy Beliefs of Preschool Teachers

Investigating the relationship among preschool teachers' teacher-child communication skills, self-efficacy beliefs and some demographics was the major aim of the current study. To that end, preschool teachers' teacher-child communication skills were examined in relation to self-efficacy beliefs, years of experience and type of institution where teachers worked. According to the results, there was a strong, statistically significant and positive relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and teacher-child communication skills of teachers. This finding is parallel with the literature indicating that as teachers' self-efficacy beliefs increased, their communication skills also increased (Çiftçi & Taşkaya, 2010; Hassall, et al., 2013; Hullman, Planisek, McNally, & Rubin, 2010; Kesicioğlu & Güven, 2014; Özkan et al., 2014; Shelton, 2013).

The findings also revealed that while self-efficacy beliefs of teachers made a significant contribution to preschool teachers' teacher-child communication skills, years of experience and type of institution where teachers worked did not make any significant contribution. Indeed, self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers made the greatest unique contribution to teacher-child communication skills of preschool teachers. White (1993) stressed that teachers' comprehension of their roles and skills may predict their interaction with children. As stated in the literature (Beaty, 2008; White, 1993), teacher-child communication skills of teachers are not independent in their nature. They are related with self-efficacy belief as supported in the current study.

Since having effective communication skills and high self-efficacy beliefs are two significant characteristics of effective teachers (Soulis, 2009) and two prerequisites for creating a positive classroom climate and positive relationships with children (Jonsson & Williams, 2013; Chung et al., 2005), the findings regarding the positive relationship between these two variables can be interpreted as a positive finding in this study. Teachers who had high self-efficacy beliefs tended to have higher teacher-child communication skills because they may feel more self-confident. Their self-confidence may enable them to be more comfortable in explaining their feelings and thoughts or in responding to children. Moreover, as Gibson & Dembo (1984) stressed, teachers with high self-efficacy are more success-oriented. They may be aware of the fact that for

adults who engage in young children effective communication is a cornerstone of success in child development and education (Chung, 2000; Shan et al., 2014). Therefore, preschool teachers with higher self-efficacy may give more importance to their communication with preschool children and make effort to develop their effective communication skills. On the other hand, it is claimed in literature that high self-efficacious teachers tend to be more satisfied with their job (Høigaard et al., 2012; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010; Turcan, 2011) and committed to the teaching profession (Canrinus, Helms-Lorenz, Beijaard, Buitink, & Hofman, 2012). Their satisfaction and commitment may reflect onto their communication with children. Therefore, they may be more open, eager to listen, effective and tolerant but less critical and judgmental in their communication with children.

Even if the positive relationship between teachers' communication skills and self-efficacy beliefs was evidenced by a handful of research, these studies were conducted with pre-service teachers rather than in-service (Çiftçi & Taşkaya, 2010; Kesicioğlu & Güven, 2014; Özkan et al., 2014) and examined general communication skills of teachers rather than their teacher-child communication skills. According to the literature review conducted for the current study, the relationship between teacher-child communication skills and self-efficacy beliefs of in-service preschool teachers has not been examined until now. Findings showed that the relationship between these two variables is valid for in-service preschool teachers. In a relevant study, Kesicioğlu and Güven (2014) examined the relationship among pre-service preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and problem solving, empathy and communication skills. Findings of their study revealed that communication skills were a significant predictor of self-efficacy beliefs of pre-service preschool teachers. In the current study, self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers were found as a strong predictor of their teacher-child communication skills. This may be related to the influence of beliefs and skills on each other.

When the contribution of each sub-dimension of self-efficacy beliefs to teacher-child communication was analyzed, it was revealed that self-efficacy beliefs in the teaching-learning process and in communication skills significantly contributed to teacher-child communication skills. Even if all sub-dimensions significantly and positively correlated with teacher-child communication, self-efficacy beliefs in the

teaching-learning process and communication skills made significant contribution to the explanation of teacher-child communication. Indeed, self-efficacy beliefs in the teaching-learning process made the strongest contribution to the explanation of teacher-child communication skills of preschool teachers.

This finding is parallel with Pajares' (1996) viewpoint. According to Pajares (1996), self-efficacy beliefs of people have a determinant role on their behaviors and skill acquisition. High self-efficacy beliefs in communication skills and the teaching-learning process may make preschool teachers feel more confident and successful in their teacher-child communication skills. On the other hand, the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs in communication skills and the teaching-learning process can be explained by mastery experiences. According to Bandura (1977), while successful experiences increase the level of self-efficacy beliefs, repetitive failures lead to a decrease as preschool teachers with high teacher-child communication skills tend to have successful experiences in their communication with children and tend to see the positive outcomes of their effective communication skills on the teaching-learning process (Chung, 2000; Pehlivan, 2005). Therefore, his/her self-efficacy belief in the teaching profession, in the teaching-learning process and in communication skills may increase in direct proportion to his/her successful experiences.

5.7 Implications

By considering the findings of the present study and prior research concerning preschool teachers' teacher-child communication skills, their self-efficacy beliefs and related issues, it can be possible to suggest some suggestions to preschool teachers, school administrations, teacher education programs and the Turkish Ministry of National Education.

First of all, the results of the current study showed that preschool teachers had a high level of communication skills but some of them had trouble in some topics such as responding to the child, being empathic toward the child and showing their negative feelings. Therefore, the findings of this study may make preschool teachers in Turkey reflect upon their communication processes with children. They may gain more awareness and knowledge in teacher-child communication in early childhood education

settings through training programs. The preschool teachers who recognized their deficiencies in this respect may professionally develop themselves in teacher-child communication by participating in trainings or reading related literature. School administrations may attempt to organize or demand from MoNE for seminars and teacher training activities to be organized. Therefore, preschool teachers may move their teacher-child communication skills to the highest level.

Peck (2012) claims that the diversity among preschool children and their parents in terms of abilities, socioeconomic status and culture is gradually increasing. In order to focus on this diversity and cope with the rapid increase, preschool teachers need to be more skilled in empathizing with children (Peck, 2012). However, according to the findings of this study, even if their teacher-child communication skills were high, preschool teachers had some trouble especially in the topic of empathy. Moreover, another finding showed that teachers felt less efficacious in organization of the learning environment and parental involvement when compared to other sub-dimensions. By considering the results of this study, MoNE may organize in-service trainings in effective communication skills, parental involvement and organization of the learning environment. By means of activities like role playing and dramatization in these trainings, preschool teachers' empathy skills may be developed. Moreover, these trainings may serve to inform preschool teachers about effective communication strategies in parental involvement.

In addition, improvement of environmental conditions of preschools may also be considered by school administrations and MoNE. Furthermore, when teacher-child communication is considered, the physical conditions should be one of the points that should be paid attention to. Some regulations might be done by MoNE to reveal the physical and environmental conditions of early childhood education institutions, especially in low socioeconomic districts where teachers face limited opportunity in terms of organization of classroom environment.

In terms of teacher education programs in Turkey, the findings of the current study may help in understanding the importance that self-efficacy beliefs of preschool teachers depend on improving their teacher-child communication skills. Therefore, when the importance of the current study is focused on from the viewpoint of teacher education programs in Turkey, it can be suggested that there is need for training teacher candidates

who have higher levels of self-efficacy beliefs and consequently have better communication skills. From this perspective, effective communication courses may be added as a must course on all teacher training programs implemented in Turkish universities. Furthermore, in their teaching practices, teacher candidates may be followed up and evaluated in terms of development of their teacher-child communication skills. In addition, the current study revealed that self-efficacy beliefs in parental involvement and in classroom management were positively related with years of experience. Gaining more and firsthand experience in the teaching profession by means of practice teaching may improve self-efficacy beliefs of teacher candidates in skills like classroom management and parental involvement. Therefore, teacher training programs may provide teacher candidates with practice teaching for a long term.

5.8 Limitations and Recommendations

The present study includes some limitations that should be taken into consideration during the interpretation of the results. These limitations and recommendations for future research are presented below.

The first limitation is associated with the measurement of all the variables. Since all the measurements are based on self-reports of the participants in this study, there might be some bias or falsifications. For example, teachers might want to hide some real information about them or could be biased about themselves. This can lead to the common procedure bias about identifying findings' consistency and accuracy. In order to control this threat, the researcher strived to reach as many teachers as she could. In addition, it was assumed that the participants answered every question carefully and honestly. Moreover, it was assumed that their answers reflected their own individual beliefs and opinions.

The second limitation is associated with the sampling procedure. The participants of this study were selected from 78 public and private elementary schools and preschools in 3 districts of Ankara (Çankaya, Yenimahalle, Keçiören). The study was limited to only this sample and this case might create a limitation for the generalizability of the study results. Future research may be conducted with larger samples and in different districts of Turkey. Therefore, it may be possible to reach more generalizable findings.

On the other hand, to reach an in-depth understanding concerning the determined relationships and to make better accounts of the relationships, a qualitative research method may be employed to support the findings of this study. Therefore, researchers may get the chance of specifying the role of sample difference and culture in explaining improbable results. In addition, in future qualitative research, data may be collected from both preschool teachers and preschool children by means of interviews or observations. Therefore, the nature of communication between preschool teachers and their students may be understood deeply.

During the analyses of the current study, the teacher-child communication skills scale was used as a unidimensional tool due to the reliability scores of some of the sub-dimensions, which were below .70. Different samples may give different reliability scores for future research. Therefore, in further studies the same communication tool can be used to consider the sub-dimensions.

After revealing the relationship between teacher communication skills and self-efficacy beliefs, training should be organized for teachers and teacher educators about how teachers can be more skilled in their teacher-child communication and how their self-efficacy beliefs and indirectly teacher-child communication skills can be improved. By means of future experimental research, the effects of these trainings may be determined. This may provide helpful information to teacher training programs for the development of a curriculum and enable them to train more qualified preschool teachers.

Finally, although communication is one of the core points of educational process, in the literature, a limited number of research examined teacher-child communication skills and related factors within the preschool context (Durmuşoğlu Saltalı & Erbay, 2013; Erbay et al, 2012; Gjems, 2011; Soulis, 2009; Tezel Şahin et al., 2012). Similarly, preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs were considered as the main subject in a handful of research. Further research conducted in the early childhood education context may examine these two important topics in relation to possible related factors.

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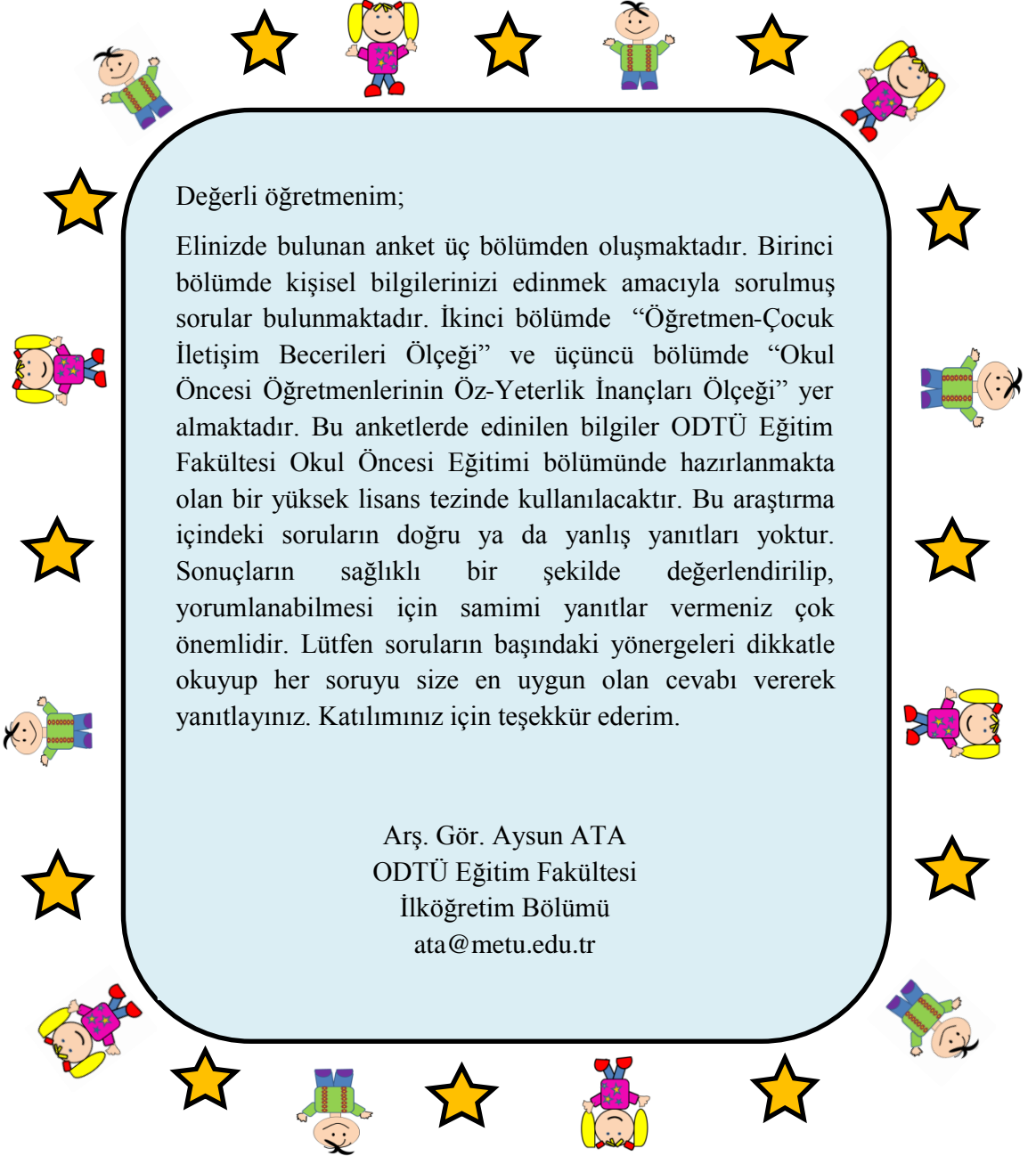
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: COVER PAGE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES



APPENDIX B: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM

1. Cinsiyetiniz

a) Kadın ☐

b) Erkek ☐

2. En son mezun olduđunuz eğitim/öğretim kurumu

a) Lise ☐

b) İki yıllık yüksekokul ☐

c) Lisans ☐

d) Yüksek Lisans ☐

e) Doktora ☐

3. Kaç yıldır öğretmenlik yapıyorsunuz? _____ Yıl

4. Şu anda çalışmakta olduđunuz kurumun türü?

a) Özel okul ☐

b) Devlet okulu ☐

APPENDIX C: TEACHER-CHILD COMMUNICATION SCALE

	Her Zaman 5	Sık Sık 4	Ara Sıra 3	Nadiren 2	Hiçbir Zaman 1
1-Öğrencimle yalnız konuşmak istediğimde sessiz, sakin bir ortam tercih ederim.					
2-Öğrencimle istenmedik davranışları karşısında onu küçük düşürüp, öz güvenini zedeleyecek ve kişiliğini hedef alan ifadeler kullanmadan konuşurum.					
3-Öğrencimle konuşurken anlayabileceği şekilde açık, anlaşılır ve basit cümleler kullanırım.					
4-Öğrencim duygularını ifade etmekte zorlandığında, konuşmasını cesaretlendirmek için ona “ <i>Anlıyorum, ilginç, doğru mu?</i> ” gibi kapı aralayıcıları ya da “ <i>Bu konuda konuşmak ister misin? Senin görüşlerin ilgimi çekiyor, anlatacaklarını dinlemek istiyorum.</i> ” gibi ifadeleri kullanırım.					
5-Başka kişi, durum ya da olaylara olan kızgınlık, sinirlilik, öfke gibi duygularımı öğrencime yansıtmadan konuşurum.					
6-Öğrencimi dinlerken onun o andaki duygularını anlamaya çalışır ve bunu ona ifade ederim.					
7-Öğrencimle konuşurken beden duruşumla onu dinlemeye hazır olduğumu belli ederim.					
8-Öğrencimin sadece anlattıklarına değil; el, kol, vücut hareketlerine de dikkat ederek dinlerim.					
9-Öğrencimi yargılayıp eleştirme, alay etme, utandırma, öğüt verme, suçlama gibi iletişim engellerini kullanmadan dinlerim.					

	Her Zaman 5	Sık Sık 4	Ara Sıra 3	Nadiren 2	Hiçbir Zaman 1
10-Öğrencime dinlenmediği duygusunu yaşatmamak için gülümseme, başımı aşağı yukarı sallama, “hı hı”, “dinliyorum” gibi ifadeler kullanırım.					
11-Öğrencimi dinlerken iyi bir dinleyici olma konusunda ona model olurum.					
12-Öğrencimi gözlerinin içine bakarak dinlerim.					
13-Öğrencimi onunla aynı seviyede ve en az mesafede durarak dinlerim.					
14-Öğrencimle konuşurken onun duygu ve düşüncelerini doğru olarak anladığımı belirten ifadeler kullanırım.					
15-Öğrencime kıskançlık, öfke, kızgınlık gibi duyguların doğal olduğunu, bu duyguları herkesin yaşayabileceğini ve geçici olduğunu açıklarım.					
16-Öğrencimi; kendimi onun yerine koyarak ve olaylara onun bakış açısı ile bakarak dinlerim.					
17-Öğrencimle konuşurken emir cümleleri içeren ifadeler kullanırım.					
18-Öğrencimin sorunu olduğu zaman ona üzülmemesi için “Boş ver, üzülme, zamanla düzeldir” gibi ifadeler kullanırım.					
19-Öğrencim olumsuz davranışlar gösterdiğinde, onunla konuşmayarak, ona küserek ona kızdığımı gösteririm.					
20-Öğrencimle konuşurken onu diğer çocuklarla kıyaslama ifadeleri kullanırım.					
21-Sinirli ve kızgın olduğum zaman öğrencime bunu jest, mimik ve ses tonumla belli ederim.					
22-Öğrencimin ihtiyaç duyduğu zaman bana sarılmasına izin veririm.					
23-Öğrencime sevgimi belli etmek için sarılıyorum.					
24-Öğrencimle gülümseyerek konuşurum.					

APPENDIX D: PRESCHOOL TEACHERS' SELF-EFFICACY BELIEFS SCALE

MADDELER	Katılım Düzeyiniz				
	Hiç	Az	Orta	Çok	Tamamen
Öğrenme Öğretme Süreci					
1. Öğrencilerimi girişken olmaya özendirebilirim.					
2. Öğrencilerimi özerk olmaya özendirebilirim.					
3. Öğrencilerime başarıyı yaşayacakları fırsatlar yaratabilirim.					
4. Öğrencilerime, öğrendiklerini günlük yaşama aktarabilecekleri fırsatlar yaratabilirim.					
5. Sınıfımda işbirlikçi bir ortam yaratabilirim.					
6. Öğrencilerimin öğrenme sürecine aktif katılımını sağlayabilirim.					
7. Öğrencilerime davranışlarımla model olabilirim.					
8. Öğrencilerimin kendilerini ifade etme çabalarını cesaretlendirebilirim.					
9. Öğrencilerime açık ve anlaşılır açıklamalar yapabiliyorum.					
İletişim Becerileri					
10. Öğrencilerimle göz teması kurabilirim.					
11. Beden dilini (duruş, mimikler, göz teması, el-kolhareketleri vb.) etkili bir şekilde kullanabilirim.					
12. Sesimin tonunu ve gerekli vurgulamaları uygun şekilde ayarlayabilirim.					
13. Türkçeyi kurallarına uygun ve anlaşılır bir biçimde kullanabilirim.					
14. Öğrencilerime, bir birey olarak değer verdiğimi hissettirebilirim.					
15. Öğrencilerimin olumlu davranışlarını ödüllendirebilirim.					
16. Öğrencilerimin ailelerine karşı anlayışlı ve duyarlı davranabilirim.					

MADDELER	Katılım Düzeyiniz				
	Hiç	Az	Orta	Çok	Tamamen
Aile Katılımı					
17. Ailelerin çeşitli beceri ve uzmanlık alanlarından eğitim ortamında yararlanabilirim.					
18. Ailelere, okul ve sınıf etkinliklerine katılmaları için özendirici çalışmalar yapabilirim.					
19. Aileleri, okulöncesi öğrencisinin gelişim özellikleri ve gereksinimleri hakkında bilgilendirmek için çalışmalar düzenleyebilirim.					
20. Ailelerin öğrenme süreciyle ilgili kararlara katılımını sağlayabilirim.					
21. Öğrencimin istenmeyen davranışlarını değiştirebilmek için ailelerle işbirliği yapabilirim.					
Planlama					
22. Günlük planımı hazırlarken öğrencilerimin tüm gelişim alanlarına (bilişsel, duygusal, sosyal ve psikomotor) yönelik etkinlikler hazırlayabilirim.					
23. Öğrencilerimin gelişim düzeylerine uygun amaçlar belirleyebilirim.					
24. Günlük planımda bireysel ve grup etkinliklerine dengeli biçimde yer verebilirim.					
25. Öğrenme sürecini etkili bir şekilde planlayabilirim.					
26. Günlük planıma yakın çevrenin özelliklerini yansıtabilirim.					
27. Etkinliklerimde, öğrencilerimin bireysel farklılıklarını ve gereksinimlerini göz önünde tutabilirim.					
Öğrenme Ortamlarının Düzenlenmesi					
28. Öğrenme ortamını öğrencilerimin yaratıcılığını destekleyecek şekilde düzenleyebilirim.					
29. Öğrenme ortamının fiziksel koşullarını (ilgi köşelerinin düzenlenmesinde, öğrencilerin oturma düzeni. vb.) öğrenmeyi destekleyecek biçimde düzenleyebilirim.					

MADDELER	Katılım Düzeyiniz				
	Hiç	Az	Orta	Çok	Tamamen
30. Öğrenme ortamını öğrencilerimin problem çözme becerilerini destekleyecek şekilde düzenleyebilirim.					
31. Sınıfımda öğrenmeyi engelleyen etmenleri belirleyip analiz ederek, öğrencilerimin ihtiyaçlarına yönelik düzenlemeler yapabilirim.					
32. Öğrenme ortamının tehlikelerden uzak, estetik, temiz ve düzenli olmasını sağlayabilirim.					
Sınıf Yönetimi					
33. Öğrenme sürecinde zamanı etkin kullanabilirim.					
34. Etkinlikler arası geçişleri dersin akışını bozmayacak şekilde planlayabilirim.					
35. Öğrencilerimin sınıf kurallarına uymalarını sağlayabilirim.					
36. Olumsuz öğrenci davranışları için çözümler üretebilirim.					
37. Tüm öğrencilerimi etkinliklere motive edebilirim.					

APPENDIX E: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM

1. What is your gender?

a) Female ☐

b) Male ☐

2. What is your educational level?

a) High School Graduate ☐

b) Associate's Degree ☐

c) Bachelor's Degree ☐

d) Master's Degree ☐

e) Phd ☐

3. What is your years of experience in the teaching profession? _____ Years

4. What is the type of instituton where you worked?

a) Private School ☐

b) Public School ☐

APPENDIX F: TEACHER-CHILD COMMUNICATION SCALE

(IT IS MERELY FOR THE READERS. IT CAN NOT BE USED WITH AN ENGLISH SPEAKING SAMPLE WITHOUT CONDUCTING VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY STUDIES)

	Always 5	Often 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When I want to talk with my student, I choose a silent and calm environment.					
2. When faced with undesired behaviours by the student, I talk to him/her by assuming statements that do not belittle him/her, harm his/her self-confidence or target his/her personality.					
3. I use simple, clear and comprehensible sentences when I talk with my student.					
4. When my student has some trouble in expressing her/his feelings, I use door openers like “I understand you”, “Really?”, “Interesting” or expressions like “Do you want to talk about that?”, and “I’m interested in your opinions, I want to listen to what you will tell me” in order to encourage him/her to speak.					
5. I talk with my student without reflecting my anger and rage toward another person, case or event.					
6. When I listen to my student, I try to understand his/her current feelings and I express that to him/her.					
7. By means of my body posture, I show my student that I am ready to listen to him/her					
8. I pay attention not only to what the child is telling but also to her/his hand, arm and body movements.					
9. I listen to my student without using communication barriers like criticizing, making fun, shaming, advising and blaming.					
10. I use some expressions like smiling, nodding and “hmm” and “I am listening to you” in order not to make him/her feel that he/she is not listened to.					

	Always 5	Often 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
11. I set an example in being a good listener for the student when I listen to him/her.					
12. I listen to my student by making eye contact with him/her.					
13. I listen to my student by going down to her/his eye level and standing at a minimum distance with him/her.					
14. I use expressions that indicate to him/her that I understand her/his feelings and thoughts correctly.					
15. I explain to my student that some feelings like rage, anger and jealousy are natural and temporary, and that these feelings can be experienced by everybody.					
16. I listen to my student by putting myself into her/his shoes and looking at events from her/his viewpoint.					
17. I use expressions which include imperative sentences when I talk with my student.					
18. When my student has a problem, I use some expressions like “Never mind, don’t be upset, it will be ok in time” so that he/she doesn’t get upset.					
19. When the student behaves in an undesired way, I show my anger toward the student by being cross and not talking to him/her.					
20. When I talk with my student, I use expressions that compare him/her with other children.					
21. When I am angry and nervous, I show that to my student via my gestures, facial expressions and voice tone.					
22. I let my student hug me when he/she needs it.					
23. I hug my student in order to show my love to him/her.					
24. I talk with my student by smiling.					

APPENDIX G: PRESCHOOL TEACHERS' SELF-EFFICACY BELIEFS SCALE

(IT IS MERELY FOR THE READERS. IT CAN NOT BE USED WITH AN ENGLISH SPEAKING SAMPLE WITHOUT CONDUCTING VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY STUDIES)

ITEMS	Your participation level				
	Never	Little	Middle	Much	Completely
Teaching-Learning Process					
1. I can encourage my students to be enterprising.					
2. I can encourage my students to become autonomous.					
3. I can create opportunities by which my students can experience success.					
4. I can create opportunities for my students to transfer their learnings to everyday life.					
5. I can create a collaborative environment in my classroom.					
6. I can encourage my students to actively participate in the learning process.					
7. I can be a model to my students with my behavior.					
8. I can promote the effort my students put into expressing themselves.					
9. I can make clear and understandable explanations to my students.					
Communication Skills					
10. I can make eye contact with my students.					
11. I can use my body language (posture, facial expressions, eye contact etc.) effectively.					
12. I can adjust my tone and emphasis as needed.					
13. I can use the Turkish language in a grammatically correct and comprehensible way.					

ITEMS	Your participation level				
	Never	Little	Medium	Much	Completely
14. I can make my students feel that I value each of them as an individual.					
15. I can reward the positive behaviors of my students.					
16. I can treat my students' families in an understanding and sensitive manner.					
Parental Involvement					
17. I can take advantage of parents' various skills and expertise in the educational environment.					
18. I can do incentive work to encourage parents to participate in school and classroom activities.					
19. I can organize activities in order to inform families about the developmental features and needs of preschool children.					
20. I can enable the participation of families into taking decisions in the learning process.					
21. I can collaborate with families to be able to change the undesired behaviors of students.					
Planning					
22. I can prepare activities in my daily schedule to address all the developmental fields of my students (cognitive, emotional, social and psychomotor).					
23. I can determine objectives that correspond to the developmental levels of my students.					
24. I can give equal space to individual and group activities in my daily plan.					
25. I can plan the teaching-learning process effectively.					
26. I can reflect the features of the immediate environment on my daily plan.					
27. I can consider individual differences and needs of my students in my activities.					

ITEMS	Your participation level				
	Never	Little	Middle	Much	Completely
Organization of Learning Environment					
28. I can organize the learning environment to promote the creativity of my students.					
29. I can organize the physical conditions of the learning environment (the regulation of interest corner, the seating arrangement of the students. etc.) to support children's learning.					
30. I can organize the learning environment to support the problem solving skills of my students.					
31. I can make arrangements to meet the needs of my students by identifying and analyzing factors that inhibit learning in my classroom.					
32. I can enable the learning environment to be free from dangers, to be aesthetical, clean and neat.					
Classroom Management					
33. I can use the time effectively in the learning process.					
34. I can plan the transitions between activities without disrupting the flow of the course.					
35. I can enable my students to comply with class rules.					
36. I can find solutions to the negative student behavior.					
37. I can motivate all of my students to activities.					

APPENDIX H: HISTOGRAM GRAPHS

Figure H1: Histogram of participants for TCCS and PTSS

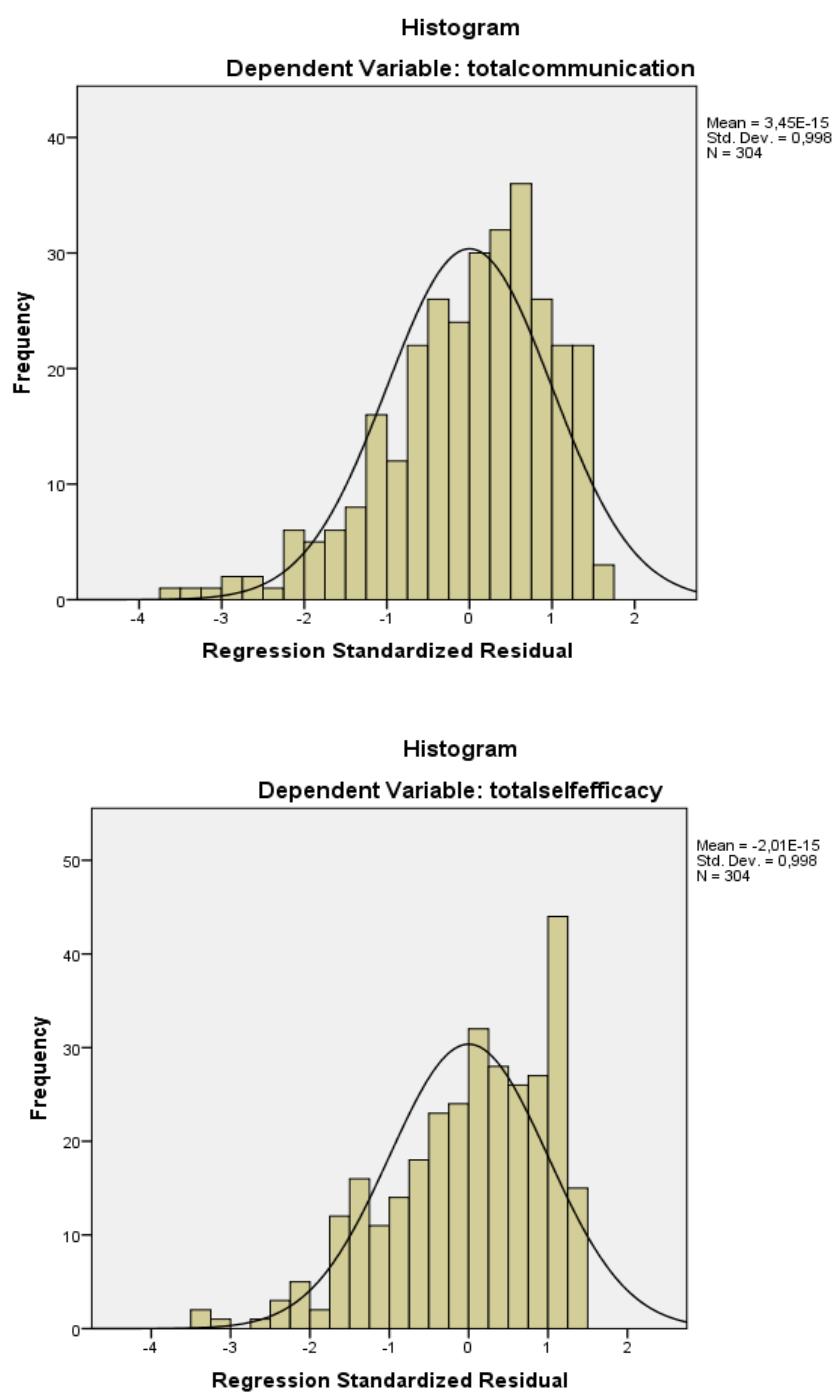
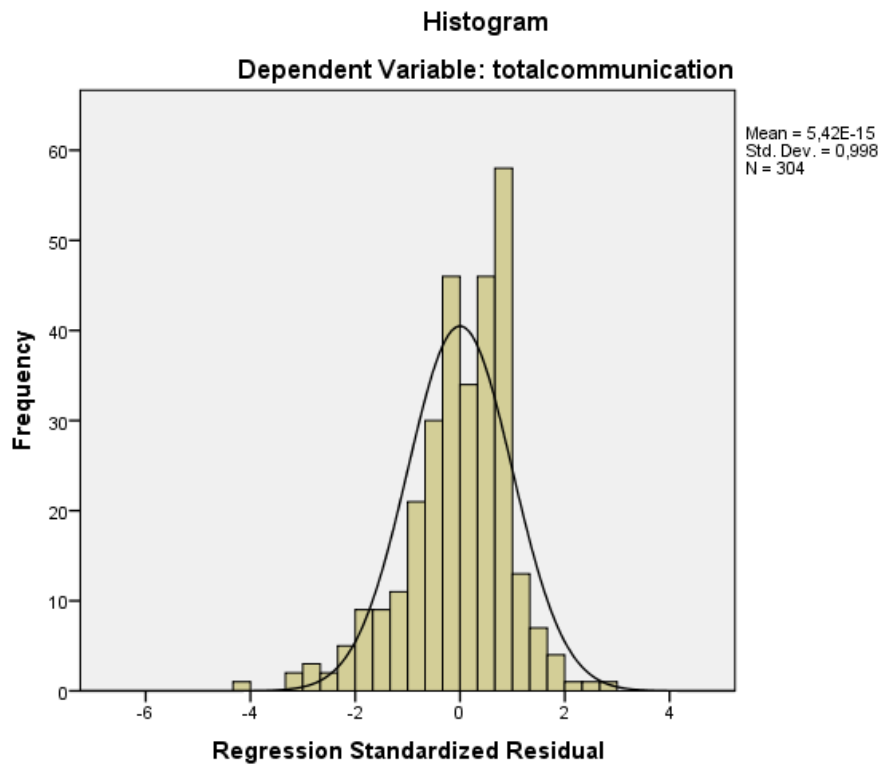


Figure H2: Histogram of the distribution of participants' TCSS scores on PTSS scores



APPENDIX I: TURKISH SUMMARY

1. GİRİŞ

Öğretmenler ve onların çocuklarla olan etkileşimleri çocukların yaşantısı üzerinde önemli bir rol oynayabilmektedir. Öyle ki, 5 Mart 2015 günü Türkiye kötü bir haberle uyandı. Habere göre Ağrı ilinin Diyadin ilçesinde yaşayan 12 yaşındaki Ebru, üç öğretmeni tarafından kütüphaneden kitap çalmakla suçlanmış ve bu suçlamalar Ebru'nun intiharına neden olmuştu ("Öğretmenleri hırsızlıkla suçladı," 2015). Bu olay, detaylı bir inceleme gerektirmesine ve Ebru'nun intiharının altında yatan başka sebepler olabilme ihtimaline rağmen hala bir iletişim sorunu içermekte ve bu sorun insanların kafasında bir soru işareti oluşmasına neden olmaktadır: Öğretmenler ve öğrencileri arasında kurulan iletişimin doğası ve düzeyi nedir?

Başarılı öğretmenler kişilik özellikleri açısından ve mesleki açıdan birbirlerinden oldukça farklıdır. Bu öğretmenler farklı yöntemler ve öğrenci disiplinine yönelik farklı düşünceler benimserler ve bu da öğretme-öğrenme ortamlarına ve süreçlerine yansır. Bu farklılıklara rağmen kaliteli öğretmenlerin paylaştıkları ortak ve çok önemli bir özellik vardır ki o da hepsinin etkili birer iletişimci olmalarıdır (Kottler, Zehm & Kottler, 2005).

Çocuklar dünyayla ilgili birçok şeyi sadece gözlem ve taklit yoluyla öğrendikleri için, ebeveynleri, yaşlıları ve çevresindeki yetişkinler çocuğun sosyal gelişimi açısından kritik bir rol oynamaktadırlar (Bandura, 1986). Öyle ki, etkili iletişim becerilerine sahip yetişkinlerle birlikte büyüyen çocuklar, diğer çocuklarla kıyaslandığında daha iyi birer iletişimci olarak yetişmektedir. İletişim becerileri açısından bakıldığında, çocuklar için sosyal öğrenmenin en iyi yolu yetişkinlerle etkileşimleri sırasında ne yapılacağını öğrenmektir (Sonnenschein, 1980). Okul öncesi öğretmeni, gelişmekte olan çocuğun ev ve okul gibi yakın çevresindeki kişilerle olan ilişkilerini içeren, Mikrosistem adı verilen yapının bir parçası olan bu yetişkinler arasında yer almaktadır (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Bu nedenle okul öncesi öğretmeni gelecek neslin şekillenmesinde önemli rol oynarken, eğitim sistemine de büyük bir katkı sağlamaktadır (Gürşimşek, Ekinci Vural, & Selçioğlu Demirsöz, 2008).

Gelişim ve öğrenmeyi destekleyici eğitim ortamlarında, kendini güvende hisseden çocuk aynı zamanda kendisine verilen sevgi ve değerden de emindir. Bu eğitim ortamlarının en önemli ögesi çocukla öğretmen arasında kurulan karşılıklı saygıya dayalı ilişkidir (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2013). Bu nedenle, çocuk ve eğitimci arasındaki güçlü ilişki çocuğun eğitiminde olduğu kadar, sosyal, kişisel, davranışsal ve akademik gelişimi açısından da büyük önem taşımaktadır (Early Childhood Learning Knowledge Centre, 2006; Francesco, 2011; Trawick-Smith, 2014). Literatürde de vurgulandığı gibi, öğretmen ve çocuk arasında kurulan olumlu ilişkiler, onların arasındaki hassas etkileşime özellikle de sözlü etkileşime dayanmaktadır (Gable, 2002; Gruber, 2007; Harms, Clifford, & Cryer, 1998). Aslında, okul öncesi öğretmenleri için çocuklarla olumlu ilişkiler kurabilmek iyi düzeyde iletişim becerilerine sahip olabilmeyi gerektirmektedir (Jonsson & Williams, 2013; Tepeli & Arı, 2011).

Literatürde, öğretmen-çocuk iletişiminin çocuk gelişimi açısından önemini ve ilişkili faktörleri ortaya çıkarmayı hedefleyen çok sayıda çalışmaya rastlamak mümkündür (Bolat, 1996; Gable, 2002; Jonsson & Williams, 2013; Kathard & Pillay, 2007; Saltalı & Erbay, 2013; Stronge, 2007). Bu çalışmalardan bazıları, etkili öğretmen-çocuk iletişimi çocuğun sosyal ve akademik gelişimini olumlu yönde etkilediğini ortaya koymuştur (Chung, 2000; Shan, Li, Shi, Wang, & Cai, 2014). Ayrıca, okul öncesi öğretmeni ve çocuk arasındaki iletişimin kalitesinin, çocuğun okula uyum süreci, çeşitli gelişim alanlarındaki ilerleyişi ve gelecekte yaşlılarıyla ve yetişkinlerle kuracağı ilişkileri de etkilediği bulunmuştur (Erbay, Ömeroğlu, & Çağdaş, 2012).

Öğretmenlerin iletişim becerileri çocuklar üzerinde bu denli önemli bir etkiye sahip olsa da, pek çok öğretmenin konuyla ilgili yeterince bilgi sahibi olmadığı çalışmalar tarafından kanıtlanmıştır (Gjems, 2010; Jonsson & Williams, 2013; Soulis, 2009). Üstelik bazı öğretmenler altı yaşın altındaki çocukların sorularını yanıtlama ve onları duygu, düşünce ve inançlarını ifade etmeye teşvik etmek konusunda sıkıntılar yaşamaktadırlar (Gjems, 2010).

Etkili öğretmen-çocuk iletişimi iletişim dili, dinleme, empati, mesaj ve sözsüz iletişim gibi bazı becerileri gerektirmektedir (Cooper, 2011; Erbay vd., 2012). Bir okul öncesi öğretmeni için, iletişim dilini etkili kullanmak, açık uçlu sorular sormayı, olumlu bir dil kullanmayı, “Ben dili” ni, her bir çocuğu okula geliş ve okuldan ayrılış saatlerinde tek tek selamlayıp uğurlamayı ve dilbilsigini doğru şekilde kullanmayı (Beaty, 2008) ve

çocuklara isimleriyle hitap etmeyi içerir (Kaltman, 2006). Okul öncesi öğretmenler için etkili iletişimin bir diğer önemli unsuru ise çocuğu aktif ve istekli bir şekilde dinleme becerisidir (Beaty, 2008). İletişim sırasında çocuğun göz hizasına inmek ve onunla göz teması kurmak çocuk için aktif dinlemenin bir göstergesidir (Beaty, 2008; Kaltman, 2006). Etkin dinleme, çocuğun iç dünyasını ve duygularını yansıtmaya olanak verdiği gibi önemli olduğu ve iyi anlaşıldığı hissi çocuğun öz güven ve öz saygı gelişimini destekler (MoNE, 2013). Empati becerisi üçüncü önemli beceridir ve bir okul öncesi öğretmeni için duyguların ifade edilmesinde dürüst ve açık olmayı (Dökmen, 2008), çocuğun olumsuz duygularını inkar etmek ya da geçiştirmek yerine anlamaya çalışmayı içerir (Kaltman, 2006). Saltalı ve Erbay'ın (2013) çalışmaları, çocuklarla olan iletişimlerinde empati ve dinleme becerilerini etkili şekilde kullanan öğretmenlerin öğretmen-çocuk iletişiminde daha özenli ve dikkatli davrandıklarını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Mesaj ve sözsüz iletişim becerileri etkili bir öğretmen-çocuk iletişimi için gereken son iki faktörünü oluşturmaktadır. Kail (2003)'e göre, okul öncesi öğretmenleri çocuğa yaşına ve önceki yaşantılarına uygun, açık ve anlaşılır mesajlar iletme konusunda dikkatli olmalıdır. Diğer yandan çocuk için jest ve mimikler ve ses tonu aracılığıyla pek çok şey anlatmak ve anlamak amacıyla kullanılan sözsüz iletişim süreci mesaj aktarımının bir diğer yoludur. Bu nedenle, çocukların eğitimi ve gelişiminden sorumlu yetişkinler için çocuklarla iletişim kurmak konuşma becerilerinden çok daha fazlasını içerir (Beaty, 2008).

Konuşmacı, istemli ya da istemsiz olarak duygu ve düşüncelerini iletişim kurulan kişi tarafından yorumlanması için kodlar. Mesajı alan kişi, mesajı kendi bakış açısına göre yorumlar. Böylece, kişisel değerler, tutumlar, ihtiyaç, inanış ve öz-değerlendirmeler kişilerin iletişimlerinde bir süzgeç görevi üstlenir. Bireylerin öz-değerlendirmeleri, onların diğer insanlara yönelik davranışları üzerinde etkilidir (Beebe, Beebe, & Redmond, 2005). Kişinin bir işi başarıyla yapabileceğine yönelik kendi yeteneklerine olan inancı anlamına gelen öz-yeterlik inancı bu öz-değerlendirmelerden biridir (Judge, & Bono, 2001). Bandura (1993)'ya göre kişilerin başarısı onların bir kondaki bilgi ve becerilerinin yanı sıra o işi başarıyla yapmak konusundaki öz-yeterlik inançlarına da bağlıdır. Bu nedenle, bir beceriye aynı düzeyde sahip olan iki kişi, öz-yeterlik inançlarındaki farklılıklar yüzünden birbirinden farklı performanslar sergileyebilir. Etkili iletişim becerilerinin yanı sıra, kaliteli eğitim ve artan öğrenci başarısıyla ilişkili olan öz-

yeterlik inancı, bir okul öncesi öğretmeninin sahip olması gereken bir diğer önemli özelliktir (Justice, Mashburn, Hamre, & Pianta, 2008; Soulis, 2009).

Öz-yeterlik inancı aynı zamanda kaliteli öğretmen-çocuk ilişkisinin yordayıcılarından biridir (Chung vd., 2005; Yoon, 2002). Bandura (1993) yüksek öz-yeterlik inancına sahip öğretmenlerin olumlu bir sınıf ortamı yaratmaya eğilimli olduğunu belirtmiştir. Eğitim ortamlarında, olumlu bir sınıf ortamı yaratmak ve çocuklarla olumlu ilişkiler kurmak aynı zamanda öğretmen ve çocuklar arasındaki iletişimin etkililiğine bağlıdır (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009; Jonsson & Williams, 2013). Bu nedenle, öz-yeterlik inançları dolaylı olarak öğretmen ve çocuklar arasındaki etkileşim üzerinde etkili olabilir. Öğretmenlerin öz-yeterliğinin artırılması onların stresle başa çıkmak konusundaki becerilerini artırabilir. Dolaylı olarak, daha az stresli bir sınıf ortamında, öğretmenler ve öğrenciler arasında daha olumlu bir iletişim kurulabilir (Collman, 2012). Okul öncesi öğretmenleri, öğrencileriyle olan olumlu ilişkilerini onları büyük bir hassasiyet ve özenle yanıtlayarak, onlarla duygusal açıdan destekleyici bir yolla etkileşim içinde olarak, onları dikkatle dinleyip onlarla özenle iletişim kurarak besleyebilir (Driscoll & Pianta, 2010). Rubin, Martin, Bruning, & Powers (1993)' e göre öz-yeterlik inançları kişilerarası iletişimde uzlaştırıcı bir rol üstlenmektedir. Bu doğrultuda, öğretmenlerin kendi rollerini ve becerilerini nasıl algıladıkları ve çocuklara yönelik beklentileri, onların çocuklarla olan etkileşimlerini etkileyebilir (White, 1993). Bu etkileşimler sırasında, düşük öz-yeterlik sahibi öğretmenlerle kıyaslandığında, yüksek öz-yeterliğe sahip öğretmenler öğrencilerinin hataları karşısında daha az eleştirel ve yargılayıcı bir tutum sergileme (Ashton & Webb, 1986), öğrencilerinin fikirleri karşısında daha açık olma, öğrencilerin istenmeyen davranışları karşısında kızgınlıklarını çocuğa daha az gösterme ve daha az tehdit edici dil kullanma eğilimindedirler (Ashton, Webb, & Doda, 1983). Benzer şekilde, yukarıda sözü edilen öz-yeterlik inancı literatürüne ek olarak, iletişim literatüründe de çocuğu onu yargılamadan ve eleştirmeden değerlendirmek, çocukla onu tehdit etmeden, korkutmadan ve emirler vermeden iletişim kurmak kabulün ve çocuğa verilen değerin başlıca göstergelerindendir (Cooper, 2011; Gordon, 2010). Tüm bu ortak yönler dikkate alındığında, bu çalışmada, okul öncesi öğretmenleri için yüksek öz-yeterliğe sahip olmanın, yüksek düzeyde öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerilerine sahip olmakla ilişkili olabileceği düşünülmüştür.

Öğretmenlerin iletişim becerileri ve öz-yeterlikleri arasındaki ilişki literatürde çok sayıda çalışmaya konu olmuş (Çiftçi & Taşkaya, 2010; Erözkan, 2013; Hassall, Arquero, Joyce & Gonzalez, 2013; Kesicioğlu & Güven, 2014; Norgaard, Ammentorp, Kyvik, Kofoed, & Med, 2012; Özkan, Dallı, Bingöl, Metin, & Yaralı, 2014), ve bu çalışmaların pek çoğu okul öncesi öğretmenlerinden ziyade farklı branşlardan öğretmenlerle (Çiftçi & Taşkaya, 2010) ya da okul öncesi öğretmen adaylarıyla yürütülmüştür (Kesicioğlu & Güven, 2014; Özkan vd., 2014; Shelton, 2013; Yenice, 2012). Okul öncesi öğretmen adaylarıyla yapılan çalışmalar, bu çalışmanın yolunu aydınlatsa da öğretmen ve öğretmen adayı olmak öğretmenlerin öz-yeterlikleri (Şenol Ulu, 2012) ve iletişim becerileri (Tepeli & Arı, 2011) arasında farklılık yaratabilir. Bu nedenle, bu çalışmada, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerileri, öz-yeterlikleri ve bu iki değişken arasındaki ilişki araştırılmaya değer görülmüştür.

1.1. Araştırmanın Önemi

Bir eğitim lideri ve bir rol model olarak, öğretmenlerin becerileri, inançları ve davranışları sadece toplum için değil aynı zamanda çocuklar içinde oldukça büyük önem taşımaktadır (Bulut 2004; Dickinson, McCabe, Anastasopoulos, Peisner-Feinberg, & Poe, 2003). Sosyal ve kültürel değerlere sahip ve bilim ve sanatın değerinin farkında, üretken çocuklar yetiştirmek kendi yeteneklerinin farkında olan ve bu yetenekleri geliştirme çabasında olan öğretmenlere bağlıdır (MoNE, 2008).

Kaliteli öğretmenler yetiştirmek için onların yeteneklerini ve mesleki becerilerini artırmanın gerekliliğinden yola çıkılarak (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009/ 2013), bu çalışma, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin mevcut iletişim becerilerine ve ilişkili faktörlere ışık tutmayı hedeflemiştir. Böylece, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin iletişim becerileri ve öz-yeterlikleri açısından bazı eksik ve güçlü yönlerini ortaya çıkarmak mümkün olabilir. Eksikliklerin ortaya çıkarılması, gelişmekte olan öğretmen eğitimi kapsamına faydalı olabilir (Erbay vd., 2012). Aynı zamanda, bu çalışma okul öncesi alanındaki eğitimcilerin öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerileri ve bu becerilerin çocuk eğitimi ve gelişimine yansımaları açısından farkındalıklarını artırabilir. Etkili öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerileri konusunda öğretmenlerin farkındalıklarının artması, onların bu

becerilerini ve ilişkili faktörleri geliştirmeye yönelik girişimlerde bulunmalarını mümkün kılabilir.

Literatürde de sözü edildiği gibi, öğretmenlerin iletişim becerileri ve ilişkili faktörler üzerine yapılacak olan çalışmalara ihtiyaç vardır (Bulut, 2004). Bu sayede, yeni ve etkili iletişim stratejileri geliştirmek mümkün olabilir. Bu doğrultuda, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerileri ve öz-yeterlikleri arasındaki ilişkinin belirlenmesi, bu iki değişkeni birbiri ile ilişkili yapılar olarak değerlendirme olanağı sağlayabilir. Öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerileri, öz-yeterlik ve bazı demografik değişkenler arasındaki muhtemel pozitif ilişkiye yönelik bilgi okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin iletişim becerilerini artırmaya yönelik çabalar açısından önemli olabilir. Öz-yeterliğin okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin öğretmen-çocuk iletişiminin önemli bir yordayıcısı olduğuna yönelik bulgular, öğretmenlerin iletişim becerilerinin onların öz-yeterliklerini artırmak koşuluyla dolaylı olarak artırılmasına olanak sağlayabilir.

Öğretmenlerin inançlarının onların sınıf içi aktivitelerine yönelik karar verme süreçlerindeki ve öğretim süreçlerindeki önemli etkisi literatürdeki çalışmalar tarafından desteklenmiştir (Rentzou & Sakellariou, 2011; Shreck, 1994). Bu nedenle, öğretmenlerin becerilerinin yanında bu becerilerine olan inançlarına da odaklanmak ve bu inançları da detaylı olarak incelemek gerekmektedir (Tepe, 2011). Öğretmenlerin ve öğretmen adaylarının inançlarını anlamak amacıyla yürütülen çalışmalar aynı zamanda öğretim ve öğretmen yetiştirme süreçleri açısından da büyük önem taşımaktadır (McMullen, 1997).

İletişim becerileri alanyazında olduğu gibi, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin öz-yeterlik inançları da çok az sayıda çalışmaya konu olmuştur (Çetingöz, 2012; Giallousi, Tselfes, & Gialamas, 2014; Kesicioğlu & Güven, 2014; Sak, 2015; Tepe, 2012; Whynacht, 2004). Bu çalışmaların çoğunda öğretmenlerin genel iletişim becerilerini ve sadece sınıf yönetimi, öğretim stratejileri ve öğrenci katılımı altboyutlarındaki öz-yeterliklerini ölçmeye yönelik ölçme araçları kullanılmıştır (Kesicioğlu & Güven, 2014; Sak, 2015). Ancak, okul öncesi eğitim kapsamı açısından ilkökul, ortaokul ve lise gibi diğer eğitim kademelerinden farklılık göstermektedir. Okul öncesi öğretmenleri akademik becerilerden ziyade sosyal becerilerin artırılması ve sınıf yönetimi gibi konularda görevler üstlenmektedir. Aynı zamanda okul öncesi eğitim ortamları da ilkokullardan büyük ölçüde farklılık göstermektedir (Quinn, 2007). Dolayısıyla ilkökul öğretmenlerinin öz-yeterliklerine yönelik çalışmaların bulgularını okul öncesi öğretmenlerine de

genellemek uygun olmayabilir. Bu nedenle Quinn (2007)'in de sözünü ettiği gibi okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin öz-yeterlik inanışları diğer kademelerden farklı ve detaylı olarak incelenmelidir. Literatürdeki çalışmalardan farklı olarak bu çalışma okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin iletişim becerilerini ve öz-yeterliklerini okul öncesi öğretmenleri için özel olarak hazırlanmış olan ölçme araçlarını kullanarak incelemiştir. Aynı zamanda bu iki değişken arasındaki ilişki okul öncesi eğitim alanında oldukça az sayıda çalışma tarafından incelenmiş ve bu çalışmalar okul öncesi öğretmenlerinden ziyade okul öncesi öğretmen adayları ile yürütülmüştür (Kesicioğlu & Güven, 2014). Okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin öğretmen-çocuk iletişimleri ve öz-yeterlikleri arasındaki incelemeyi hedefleyen bu çalışma okul öncesi öğretmenleri ile yürütülmesi açısından literatürdeki boşluğu doldurmayı hedeflemiştir.

Hunt, Simonds & Cooper (2002)'un da belirttiği gibi, iletişim becerileri dersleri öğretmen eğitiminin ayrılmaz birer parçasıdır. “Etkili İletişim” dersleri, Türkiye’de 2009 yılından beri öğretmen eğitim programlarında seçmeli ders olarak yer almaktadır (Yüksek Öğretim Kurulu, 2009). Bu çalışmanın sonuçlarından faydalanarak okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerileri ve öz-yeterlik açısından ihtiyaçları belirlenebilir. Böylece öğretmen eğitim programlarınca sınıf yönetimi ve etkili iletişim gibi dersler kapsamında okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin öz-yeterlik inançları ve öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerileri artırılabilir.

Son olarak, bu çalışmadan elde edilen veriler öğretmen yetiştiren kurumları ve Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı’na (MEB), okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin mevcut iletişim becerileri ve öz-yeterlikleri konusunda ışık tutabilir ve öz-değerlendirme yapmalarını sağlayabilir. Mevcut eksikliklerini ortaya çıkarılmasıyla, MEB ve okul yönetimleri tarafından bu eksiklikleri gidermek ve okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin en yüksek düzeyde iletişim becerilerine ve öz-yeterliğe sahip olmasını sağlamak amacıyla hizmet içi eğitimler, çalıştaylar ve seminerler düzenlenebilir.

2. YÖNTEM

Bu çalışma okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerileri, öz-yeterlik inançları, deneyim, eğitim düzeyi ve okul türü gibi değişkenler arasındaki ilişkiyi araştırmayı amaçlamıştır. Bu amaçla, bu nicel çalışmada korelasyon yöntemi kullanılmıştır.

2.1. Örneklem

Çalışmanın hedef popülasyonunu Türkiye’deki tüm okul öncesi öğretmenleri oluştururken, erişilebilir popülasyon Ankara ilinde Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı’na bağlı özel okullarda ve devlet okullarında görev yapmakta olan okul öncesi öğretmenlerinden oluşmaktadır. Çalışmanın örneklemi ise Çankaya, Keçiören ve Yenimahalle’deki özel okul ve devlet okullarında görev yapmakta olan 304 okul öncesi öğretmeninden oluşmaktadır.

2.2. Veri Toplama Araçları

Çalışmada veri toplama aracı olarak iki temel anket ve katılımcıların eğitim düzeyi, çalıştıkları okul türü, cinsiyetleri ve deneyimleri hakkında bilgi edinmek amacıyla bir demografik bilgi formu kullanılmıştır. Çalışmada, öğretmenlerin öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerilerini ölçmek amacıyla “Öğretmen-Çocuk İletişim Ölçeği” (Erbay vd., 2012) ve öğretmenlerin öz-yeterlik inançlarını ölçmek amacıyla “Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerinin Öz-Yeterlik İnançları Ölçeği” (Tepe, 2011) kullanılmıştır. Çalışmada kullanılan veri toplama araçları ve araştırmanın değişkenleri Tablo 2.1’de belirtilmiştir.

Tablo 1*Çalışmada Kullanılan Veri Toplama Araçları ve Araştırmanın Değişkenleri*

<i>Anket</i>	<i>Değişken</i>
Demografik bilgi Formu	Cinsiyet, Deneyim, Eğitim durumu, Çalışılan Okul Türü
Öğretmen-Çocuk İletişim Ölçeği	Okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerileri
Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerinin Öz-Yeterlik İnançları Ölçeği	Okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin öğrenme-öğretme sürecine, iletişim becerilerine, aile katılımına, planlamaya, öğrenme ortamlarının düzenlenmesine ve sınıf yönetimine yönelik öz-yeterlik inançları

3. BULGULAR

3.1. Demografik Bilgiler

Çalışmada toplam 304 adet öğretmenden veri toplanmıştır. Öğretmenlerin mesleki deneyimleri 0.5 ve 40 yıl arasında değişim gösterirken ($M=12.35$, $SD=9.3$), eğitim düzeyleri lise mezunu (20.1%), iki yıllık meslek yüksek okulu mezunu (15.1%), dört yıllık üniversite mezunu (58.6%) ve master mezunu (6.3%) olmak üzere çeşitlilik göstermektedir. Bununla birlikte katılımcı öğretmenlerin 147'si (48.4%) MEB bünyesinde hizmet veren özel okullarda, 157'si (51.6%) ise yine MEB bünyesinde hizmet vermekte olan devlet okullarında görev yapmaktadır.

3.2. Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerinin Öğretmen-Çocuk İletişim Becerileri

Öğretmen-çocuk iletişim anketi incelendiğinde, öğretmenlerin toplam 112.13 ortalama puana sahip oldukları, alınan en yüksek puanın 120, en düşük puanın ise 92

olduğu görülmüştür (SD=5.38). 5 puanlık Likert tipi öğretmen-çocuk iletişim ölçeğinde her bir madde için 5 alınabilecek en yüksek puanı ifade ederken, 3 orta değere karşılık gelir. Ölçek incelendiğinde, öğretmenlerin her bir maddeden 3'ten oldukça yüksek ve n yüksek değer olan 5'e oldukça yakın puanlar aldıkları bulunmuştur. Bu bulgu, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin yüksek düzeyde öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerilerine sahip oldukları şeklinde yorumlanabilir.

Öğretmenler, diğer maddelerle kıyaslandığında en yüksek puanları sırasıyla 2., 12. ve 22. maddelerden almışlardır. Sonuçlar, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin çoğunun öğrencileri aşağılayıcı ve özgüvenlerini zedeleyici ifadeler kullanmaktan kaçındıkları, onlarla göz temsali kurarak iletişim kurdukları ve çocukların ihtiyaç duyduklarında kendilerine sarılmasına izin verdiklerini göstermiştir. Diğer yandan, diğer maddelerle kıyaslandığında öğretmenler sırasıyla 21., 1. Ve 15. maddelerden düşük puanlar almışlardır. Bu sonuç, bazı öğretmenlerin kızgınlık ve öfke gibi olumsuz duygularını, yüz ifadeleri, mimik ve ses tonları aracılığıyla çocuğa ara sıra veya sık sık belli ettikleri, bazılarının öğrencileriyle konuşurken nadiren veya ara sıra sessiz bir ortam seçtikleri ve yine bazılarının çocuklara nadiren veya ara sıra kızgınlık, öfke ve kıskançlık gibi olumsuz duyguların doğal olduğunu ve herkes tarafından deneyimlendiğini açıkladıklarını ortaya koymuştur.

3.3. Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerinin Öz-Yeterlik İnançları

Öz-yeterlik inançları ölçeği incelendiğinde, öğretmenlerin 167.40 (SD=14.31) ortalama puana sahip oldukları, alınan en yüksek puanın 185 ve alınan en düşük puanın 118 olduğu bulunmuştur. 5 puanlık Likert tipi öz-yeterlik inançları ölçeğinde her bir madde için 5 puan en yüksek değeri gösterirken, 3 puan ortalama değere karşılık gelmektedir. Ölçekteki her bir madde incelendiğinde, öğretmenlerin her bir maddeden ortalama değer üstünde ve en yüksek değere yakın puanlar aldıkları görülmektedir. Bu sonuç, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin yüksek düzeyde öz-yeterlik inançlarına sahip oldukları şeklinde yorumlanabilir.

Ölçeğin altboyutları incelendiğinde ise okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin en yüksek puanı sırasıyla iletişim becerileri (M=32.83, SD=2.36), sınıf yönetimi (M=22.32, SD=2.23) ve planlama (M=27.15, SD=2.96) altboyutlarından, en düşük puanları ise

sırasıyla öğrenme-öğretme süreci ($M=41.54$, $SD=3.47$), aile katılımı ($M=21.63$, $SD=2.87$) ve öğrenme ortamlarının düzenlenmesi ($M=21.90$, $SD=2.56$) altboyutlarından aldıkları bulunmuştur.

3.4. Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerinin Öğretmen-Çocuk İletişim Becerileri, Öz-Yeterlikleri ve Eğitim Seviyeleri

Araştırmanın sonuçlarına göre, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin eğitim seviyelerinin onların öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerileri [$F(3,300)=1.5$, $p=.20$] ve öz-yeterlikleri [$F(3,300)=2.3$, $p=.07$] üzerinde önemli ölçüde bir etkisi yoktur. Buradan çıkarımla, lise mezunu, iki yıllık yüksekokul mezunu, üniversite mezunu ve yüksek lisans mezunu öğretmenlerin öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerileri ve öz-yeterlikleri arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir fark olmadığı söylenebilir.

3.5. Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerinin Öğretmen-Çocuk İletişim Becerileri, Öz-Yeterlikleri ve Deneyimleri

Sonuçlar göstermiştir ki okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin deneyimleri ile onların öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerileri [$r = .06$, $n=304$, $p>.05$] arasında ve öz-yeterlikleri arasında [$r=.10$, $n=304$, $p>.05$] düşük düzeyde, pozitif yönde fakat istatistiksel olarak önemli olmayan bir ilişki vardır. Benzer şekilde, öğretmenlerin genel öz-yeterlikleri ve deneyimleri arasında önemli bir ilişki bulunmamaktadır. Diğer yandan, öğretmenlerin aile katılımı [$r=.13$, $n=304$, $p<.05$] ve sınıf yönetimi [$r=.11$, $n=304$, $p<.05$] alt boyutlarındaki öz-yeterlikleri, onların deneyimleri ile önemli ölçüde ilişkilidir.

3.6. Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerinin Öğretmen-Çocuk İletişim Becerileri ve Öz-Yeterlikleri Arasındaki İlişki

Okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerileri ve öz-yeterlikleri arasında güçlü, pozitif ve istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir ilişki bulunmuştur [$r=.62$, $n=304$, $p<.05$]. Bu sonuç, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin öz-yeterlikleri ve öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerilerinden herhangi birinde meydana gelecek olan artışın bir diğerinde

de artışa yol açığı sonucu çıkarılabilir. Ayrıca, deneyim, okul türü ve öz-yeterlikleri içeren modelde, öğretmenlerin öz-yeterliklerinin onların öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerilerinin en iyi ve tek anlamlı yordayıcısı olduğu bulunmuştur.

4. TARTIŞMA, SINIRLILIKLAR ve ÖNERİLER

Bu bölümde çalışmanın araştırma sonuçlarına yönelik bulgular geçmiş çalışmaların ışığında tartışılmaktadır. Bununla birlikte, bu bölüm çalışmanın sınırlılıklarını, çıkarımlarını ve gelecek çalışmalara yönelik önerilerini içermektedir.

4.1. Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerinin Öğretmen-Çocuk İletişim Becerileri

Öğretmenlerin öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerileri ölçeğinden aldıkları ortalama puan ($M=112.13$) ölçekten alınabilecek ortalama puandan ($M=82$) oldukça yüksek ve yine ölçekten alınabilecek en yüksek puana bir hayli yakındır ($M=120$). Bu bulgu, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin yüksek düzeyde öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerilerine sahip olduğu şeklinde yorumlanabilir. Yüksek düzeyde etkili iletişim becerilerine sahip olmak 21.yüzyıl öğretmeni için bir gereklilik (Trilling & Fadel, 2009) ve bir okul öncesi öğretmenin sahip olması gereken özelliklerden biridir (MoNE, 2008). Dolayısıyla bu bulgu, literatürde belirtilen okul öncesi öğretmenlerine yönelik beklentilere paralellik göstermektedir.

Ölçekteki diğer maddelerle kıyaslandığında, öğretmenler çocukların özgüvenini zedeleyen ve onların kişiliklerini hedef alan, küçük düşürücü ifadelerden kaçınma, çocuklarla iletişim sırasında göz teması kurma, basit ve anlaşılır cümleler kullanma ve çocuğu yargılayıp eleştirme, alay etme, utandırma, öğüt verme ve suçlama gibi iletişim engellerini kullanmadan dinlemeye yönelik maddelerden daha yüksek puanlar elde etmişlerdir. Benzer şekilde Durmuşoğlu Saltalı ve Erbay (2013)'ın çalışmasında öğretmenler çocukla iletişimlerinde onu incitecek ifadeler kullanmamaya, çocuğu sözünü kesmeden ve onu eleştirmeden dinlemeye, onunla göz teması kurarak onu dinlemeye çalıştıklarını ifade etmişlerdir. Diğer yandan, literatürde mevcut çalışmanın bulgularından farklı bulgular elde etmiş çalışmalara rastlamak da mümkündür. Örneğin,

Akgün, Yazar ve Dinçer (2011)'in gözleme dayalı çalışması göstermiştir ki; okul öncesi öğretmenleri emir vermeye ve çocukları birbiriyle kıyaslamaya yönelik cümleleri sık sık kullanmakta, çocukları çok dikkatli, çocuklara karşı olumsuz yüz ifadesi ve bağırma gibi olumsuz ses tonu kullanmakta, olayın nedenini çocuğun ağzından dinlemeden çocuğu oyun ya da etkinlik dışı bırakmaktadırlar (Akgün vd., 2011). Bulgular arasındaki bu farklılık, çalışmaların doğasından kaynaklanmış olabilir. Akgün vd., (2011)'nin bulguları üçüncü bir kişinin gözlemlerine dayanırken, mevcut çalışma öğretmenlerin öz bildirimlerine dayanmaktadır. Her iki yöntemin de kendine ait sınırlılıkları söz konusudur. Bu çalışmada öğretmenlerin kendilerini objektif bir şekilde değerlendirdikleri ve sorulara dürüst cevaplar verdikleri varsayılmıştır.

Diğer yandan, öğretmenler, öğretmen-çocuk iletişim ölçeğinde yer alan öfke ve kızgınlık gibi duygularını yüz ifadesi, ses tonu, jest ve mimiklerle çocuğa belli etme, çocukla konuşmak için sessiz, sakin bir ortam tercih etme, çocuğu olaylara onun bakış açısından bakarak ve kendini onun yerine koyarak dinleme, kıskançlık, öfke gibi olumsuz duyguların normal oluşunu ve herkesin bu tip duygular yaşayabileceğini ifade etme ve “Boşver, üzülme, zamnala düzeler” gibi ifadeler kullanmak ile ilgili maddelerden diğer maddelerle kıyaslandığında daha düşük puanlar almışlardır. Bu bulgular bazı öğretmenlerin, sıkıntı yaşayan bir çocuğa uygun şekilde yaklaşp uygun cevaplar vermekte, çocuklarla empati kurmakta ve öfke, kızgınlık gibi bazı olumsuz duyguları çocuğa ifade etmekte zorluklar yaşadıkları şeklinde yorumlanabilir.

Bununla birlikte, çocukla konuşmak için sessiz, sakin bir ortam tercih etmeye yönelik bulgu okul öncesi eğitim sınıflarının fiziksel koşullarıyla bağlantılı olabilir. Çalışmanın veri toplama sürecinde, bu souyu cevaplayan bazı öğretmenler, sınıflarının kalabalık ve oldukça hareketli ortamlar olmasından dolayı sınıflarında sessizliği sağlamakta zorluk yaşadıklarını, yardımcı bir personel olmadığından çocukları sınıfta yalnız bırakıp dışarı çıkamadıklarını ve bu nedenle çocuklarla yapacakları özel konuşmaları bile sınıf ortamında ve diğer çocukların önünde yaptıklarını belirtmişlerdir.

5.2. Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerinin İletişim Becerileri, Eğitim Düzeyleri ve Deneyimleri

Çalışmanın bulguları, öğretmenlerin eğitim düzeylerinin onların iletişim becerisi puanları üzerinde önemli bir etkisi olmadığını göstermiştir. Aynı zamanda, öğretmenlerin iletişim becerileri ile deneyimleri arasında da önemli bir ilişki bulunmamıştır. Beebe vd., (2005)'nin de belirttiği gibi, insanlar gözlem yoluyla ve diğer insanlarla etkileşimleri yoluyla iletişim becerilerini artırabilirler. Bu açıdan bakıldığında, eğitim düzeyi ve deneyime yönelik bu bulgular, öğretmenlerin çocuklarla olan iletişimlerinin deneyim ve eğitim seviyesinden ziyade çocuklarla olan yaşantılara bağlı olduğu şeklinde yorumlanabilir. Örneğin, lisans mezunu bir okul öncesi öğretmeni, iki yıllık üniversite mezunu bir öğretmenle kıyaslandığında daha az tecrübeye fakat iletişim becerileri ve sınıf yönetimi konularında daha fazla bilgiye sahip olabilir. Diğer yandan, iki yıllık üniversite mezunu bir öğretmen lisans mezunu ile kıyaslandığında, çocuklarla daha fazla zaman geçirme şansı bulmuş olabilir. Dolayısıyla, eğitim düzeyi ve deneyim birbirinin etkisini nötrleştiriyor olabilir.

5.3. Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerinin Öz-Yeterlikleri

Araştırmanın sonuçlarına göre okul öncesi öğretmenleri, öz-yeterlik ölçeğinden aldıkları ortalama puan (M=167.4) ölçekten alınabilecek ortalama puandan yüksek (M=111) ve yine ölçekten alınabilecek en yüksek puana yakındır (M=185). Bununla birlikte öğretmenler, diğer alt boyutlarla kıyaslandığında iletişim becerileri, sınıf yönetimi ve planlama altboyutlarında daha yüksek öz-yeterliğe sahiptir. İlgili bir çalışmada, Gömleksiz ve Serhatlıoğlu (2013) okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin iletişim becerilerine yönelik öz-yeterliğinin yüksek olduğunu bulmuştur. Bu bulgu, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin iletişim becerilerinin eğitim sürecindeki önemine yönelik farkındalılarının yüksek oluşu ile ilgili olabilir.

Diğer yandan, sonuçlar öğretmenlerin genel olarak yüksek öz-yeterliğe sahip olsalar da, diğer alt boyutlarla kıyaslandığında öğretme-öğrenme süreci, öğrenme ortamının düzenlenmesi ve aile katılımı alt boyutlarında daha az öz-yeterliğe sahip olduklarını göstermiştir. Öğrenme ortamlarının düzenlenmesi altboyutunda düşük öz-

yeterliğe sahip olmanın sınıfların fiziksel koşulları ile ilişkili olabileceği düşünülmüştür. Bazı fiziksel ve ekonomik yetersizliklerden (Türk Eğitim Derneği, 2007) dolayı okul öncesi öğretmenleri öğrenme ortamlarını kendi ideallerindeki gibi düzenleyemiyor olabilir ve bu da onların öz-yeterliğini düşürüyor olabilir. Bununla birlikte, diğer alt boyutlarla kıyaslandığında aile katılımı alt boyutundaki düşük öz-yeterlik bazı ailelerin, öğretmenlerin aile katılımı konusundaki çabalarına direnç göstermesi veya öğretmenin karakteristik özellikleriyle ilgili olabilir. Bazı aileler, aile katılımına yönelik inanışları konusunda, uygun zaman konusunda, ekonomik, politik, dille, cinsiyetle ve ırkla ilgili farklılıklarından dolayı bu tip aktivitelere katılım konusunda direnç gösterebilirler (Hornby ve Lafaele, 2011). Diğer yandan, Bangs ve Frost'un (2012) da belirttiği gibi bazı öğretmenler ailelerle ilişki kurmak konusunda endişelere sahip olabilir. İlgili bir çalışmada, Eret (2013) öğretmen adaylarının, Türkiye'deki öğretmen eğitimi programlarını çocuklarla iletişim kurma konusunda yeterli bulduklarını fakat ailelerle ve okul personeliyle iletişim konusunda yeterli bulmadıklarını ifa etmişlerdir.

5.4. Öğretmenlerin Öz-Yeterlikleri, Eğitim Düzeyleri ve Deneyimleri

Bulgular, iki yıllık üniversite mezunu öğretmenlerin diğerlerinden daha yüksek öz-yeterliğe sahip olduğunu fakat bu farkın istatistiksel olarak önemli bir fark olmadığını, eğitim seviyesinin öğretmenlerin öz-yeterlikleri üzerinde önemli bir etkisi olmadığını ortaya koymuştur. Benzer şekilde Şenol Ulu (2012) da iki yıllık üniversite mezunu okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin lisans mezunu öğretmenlerden daha yüksek öz-yeterliğe sahip olduğunu fakat bu farkın önemli düzeyde olmadığını bulmuştur.

Diğer yandan çalışmanın bulguları, öğretmenlerin deneyimleri ve sınıf yönetimi ve aile katılımı konusundaki öz-yeterlikleri arasında önemli ölçüde ve pozitif bir ilişki olduğunu göstermiştir. Öğretmenler, çocuklarla olan önceki deneyimlerinden dolayı yüksek düzeyde öz-yeterliğe sahip olsalar bile yetenekleri zaman içinde gelişmeye devam etmektedir. Bu nedenle, deneyim onların sınıf yönetimi konusunda zamanla daha fazla yeteneğe ve böylece daha yüksek öz-yeterliğe sahip olmasını sağlayabilir (Drang, 2011). Benzer şekilde, zaman içinde ailelerle olan tecrübeler öğretmenlerin kendilerini aile katılımı konusunda daha yeterli hissetmelerini sağlıyor olabilir.

5.5. Sınırlılıklar ve Öneriler

Çalışmanın ilk sınırlılığı very toplama sırasında kullanılan ölçme araçlarıyla ilgili olup bu çalışmada kullanılan ölçekler katılımcıların özbildirimlerine dayanmaktadır. Katılımcılar kendilerini objektif şekilde değerlendiremeyebilir ve kendilerine yönelik gerçek bilgileri saklayabilirler. Ancak bu çalışmada, katılımcılara kendilerine hakkında herhangi bir kişisel bilgi istenmediği, amacın onları yargılamak veya eleştirmek olmadığı dolayısıyla sorulara dürüstçe cevap vermeleri vurgulanmış, mümkün olduğunca çok sayıda katılımcıya ulaşılmaya çalışılmış ve katılımcıların soruları dürüstçe yanıtladıkları varsayılmıştır.

Bununla birlikte çalışmada Ankara ilinin Keçiören, Çankaya ve Yenimahalle ilçelerinde görev yapmakta olan 304 öğretmeninden veri toplanmış ve çocuklardan bilgi toplanmamıştır. Gelecek çalışmalar daha genellenebilir sonuçlar elde etmek adına, daha çok sayıda öğretmenin katılımıyla, Türkiye'nin farklı bölge ve illerinde uygulanabilir. Öğretmenlerin yanı sıra çocuklardan da veri toplanabilir, böylece çalışma bulguları gelecek çalışmalarla desteklenebilir.

Son olarak, bu çalışmada öğretmenleri öğretmen-çocuk iletişim becerileri, deneyim, öz-yeterlik, okul türü ve eğitim seviyesi gibi değişkenlerle ilişkili olarak incelenmiştir. Gelecek çalışmalarda ilişkili olabilecek diğer değişkenlere yönelik de veri toplanabilir ve öğretmenlerin iletişim becerileri ve öz-yeterlikleri bu değişkenlerle ilişkili olarak incelenebilir.

APPENDIX J: ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVAL

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
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19.01.2015

Gönderilen : Y.Doç.Dr.Hasibe Özlen Demircan
İlköğretim Bölümü

Gönderen : Prof. Dr. Canan Sümer
IAK Başkan Vekili

İlgi : Etik Onayı

Danışmanlığını yapmış olduğunuz İlköğretim Bölümü öğrencisi Aysun Ata'nın "Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerinin Öz-Yeterlik İnançları ve Öğretmen Çocuk İletişim Becerileri Arasındaki İlişkinin Araştırılması" isimli araştırması "İnsan Araştırmaları Komitesi" tarafından uygun görülerek gerekli onay verilmiştir.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

Etik Komite Onayı

Uygundur

19/01/2015

Prof.Dr. Canan Sümer
Uygulamalı Etik Araştırma Merkezi
(UEAM) Başkan Vekili
ODTÜ 06531 ANKARA

22/1/2015 23:11 E. G. S.

APPENDIX K: TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü

☐

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

☒

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü

☐

Enformatik Enstitüsü

☐

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

☐

YAZARIN

Soyadı : Ata

Adı : Aysun

Bölümü : İlköğretim Bölümü

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : Factors Effecting Teacher-Child Communication Skills and Self-Efficacy Beliefs: An Investigation on Preschool Teacher

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans

☒

Doktora

☐

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz.

☐☐☒

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: