

Motivations for choosing teaching as a career: a perspective of pre-service teachers from a Turkish context

Kemal Yüce · Esin Y. Şahin · Ömer Koçer ·
Fatih Kana

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Abstract As teaching is a nation-building profession, the career motivations of pre-service teachers are worth exploring. This study examines the career motivations of 283 Turkish pre-service teachers who have chosen teaching as a career. Accordingly, they were asked questions about deciding to teach, career perceptions, and major expectations. A profile of the participants was then developed by analyzing their responses in quantitative and qualitative ways as being descriptive, statistical, and inductive steps. It is seen that extrinsic, altruistic, and intrinsic motivations all play a role when individuals choose teaching as a career. In addition, although altruistic motives are very dominant for females, mercenary-based extrinsic motives are dominant for males. Associatively, teaching is further desired as a first profession by females. In light of the findings, we give suggestions for teacher training institutions and policy makers.

Keywords Altruistic motivation · Extrinsic motivation · Intrinsic motivation · Pre-service teachers

Introduction

What are the reasons motivating young people to choose teaching as a career? Over the last three decades, the reasons for choosing teaching as a career have been a research topic, and it is likely to be an ongoing issue for scholars as long as efforts continue to be made for the recruiting and retaining of teachers.

Within the teacher education literature, numerous positive and negative factors have been noted as influencing young people's decision to pursue a career in teaching. However, as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2005), of which Turkey is a member, noted, teachers' daily work "has become more complex and demanding in addressing increasingly diverse student populations, higher social expectations of schools, expanding fields of knowledge, and new types of responsibilities" (OECD 2005, cited in Watt et al. 2012, p. 1). There is also global recognition that the success of any educational reform strongly depends on the quality and performance of the teachers (Ingersoll and Smith 2004; Kennedy 2008; Tatto 2007). However, due to the demanding workload mentioned above, teachers' performance is likely to be adversely affected. Teaching is a profession that requires a high degree of responsibility and altruism. Consequently, it seems such difficult task motivating young people for teaching profession. Moreover, given that "teaching appears to be an occupation considered central to a country's development and well-being" (Watt et al. 2012, p. 1), there is an understandable concern for the next generation with respect to the mission of nation-building (Manuel and Hughes 2006; Moran et al. 2001; Skilbeck and Connell 2003; Taylor 2006).

There are two underlying factors to be investigated concerning teaching as a career (König and Rothland 2012). First, motivation is described as a mandatory attribute of professional teachers. The modeling and empirical analysis of teacher competence therefore involves motivational components, including career choice motivation (Blömeke et al. 2012; Kunter et al. 2008). Secondly, in recent years, worldwide teacher shortages have given rise to studies of the motivation for choosing teaching as a career, which are particularly important when explaining

K. Yüce · E. Y. Şahin · Ö. Koçer (✉) · F. Kana
Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Faculty of Education,
Çanakkale, Turkey
e-mail: omerkocer@comu.edu.tr

why teacher education graduates do not enter the profession or drop out after a short period of time (Rots et al. 2010; Thomson et al. 2012; Watt and Richardson 2008). Australia, the U.S., Germany, Norway, the U.K., and several European countries, among others, have reported difficulty recruiting and retaining teachers (Johnson and Birkeland 2003; Krecic and Grmek 2005; Kyriacou et al. 1999; Liu et al. 2000; Moran et al. 2001; Newson 1993; Ramsay 2000; Richardson and Watt 2010; Sinclair 2008; Spear et al. 2000). These difficulties in recruiting and retaining teachers are linked to teacher workload, salary, disruptive pupils, and the low status of the profession (Kyriacou et al. 2003, p. 256).

Concerning the issue in Turkey, due to the decline in the income of public employees from the 1980s until today, the teaching profession has lost prestige when compared to the first years of the republican era, and thus, the social status of the profession has gradually diminished (Erden 1998). The decline of teachers' incomes, their rising cost of living, an abundant increase in the number of teachers, and the appointment of unqualified teachers have all reduced the quality of teaching and the prestige of teachers in the eyes of the public (Erden, Eskicumalı 2002). Today, the teaching profession is being cited among the less desirable professions in Turkey. In such a context, it is considered as a profession that anyone can do by quoting a statement that is widely stated in Turkish society: "If you are unfit for anything else, be a teacher!" (Özsoy et al. 2010, p. 912). However, a completely different kind of statement was made centuries ago by Hz. Ali, a scholar from the Islamic world, who said "I will be the slave to the one who has taught me even a letter." Hz. Ali's comment reminds us that teaching is a divine profession that cannot be disregarded. Historically, the statement of Hz. Ali had a motivating value with regard to the teaching profession (Sönmez 2009). Furthermore, the statement of Atatürk on August 25, 1924 at the congress of teachers in Ankara underlies the importance of the teaching profession: "Teachers! The new republican generation will be your heritage." The divineness of the teaching profession can also be clarified by the statement of the glorious philosopher Socrates: "Everything in the world can be assessed but the heritage of a teacher." That is to say, the teaching profession deserves to be defined as the highest profession of all (Işık et al. 2010).

As seen above, choosing teaching as a career has been extensively investigated as a research topic throughout the world including Turkey but not so much with respect to some teaching professions such as mathematics, English, biology, chemistry, pre-school, etc. (Aksu et al. 2010; Bulut 2009; Çapri and Çelikkaleli 2008; Çermik et al. 2010; Derman et al. 2008; Gürbüz and Sülün 2004; Işık et al. 2010; Kabadayı 2008; Kılınç and Mahiroğlu 2009;

Özsoy et al. 2010; Saban 2003; Tataroğlu et al. 2011; Temizkan 2008; Yazıcı 2009; Zehir-Topkaya and Uztosun 2012). These types of research in varied teaching branches show us the significance of the issue.

Career motivation theories

The motivating factors in choosing teaching as a career vary from individual to individual. In general, in the teacher education literature, three types of motivation are stressed in regard to choosing teaching as a career (Bastick 2000; Boz and Boz 2008; König and Rothland 2012; Kyriacou and Coulthard 2000; Kyriacou et al. 2003; Moran et al. 2001; Papanastasiou and Papanastasiou 1998; Saban 2003; Sinclair 2008; Young 1995). These are (1) extrinsic motives: job guarantee, money, holidays, social security, appointment, and ease; (2) intrinsic motives: interest, personal satisfaction, and desire and love of profession; and (3) altruistic motives: being in the service of people, society, and country (OECD, 2005).

Starting from 1950s, as well as stemming from the theories within the context of investigation motivations, many theories related to career choice have been argued, of which self-concept is considered as an important theory developed by Super (1953). This theory investigates "who am I"; the self-perception of the person plays a crucial role in career choice (Zehir-Topkaya and Uztosun 2012). Holland (1959) also quotes this theory as self-knowledge theory. He claims that an appropriate career choice depends on having sufficient vocational knowledge as well as self-knowledge. Another theory of career choice has been proposed by Gottfredson (1981), which heavily depends on sex-type rating and prestige level of occupation. According to this theory, while choosing an occupation, people consider its appropriateness to their gender as well as the prestige level of the occupation in the eyes of the public (Zehir-Topkaya and Uztosun). For example, in the first years of the republican era of Turkey, the teaching profession was quite well paid and had a higher prestige level and social status than many other professions (Özsoy et al. 2010). As for sex-type rating, it was claimed that the teaching profession has been perceived as being intrinsic to women (Foster and Newman 2005; Johnston et al. 1999; Saban 2003; Smedley 2007). Concerning this, several scholars have expressed concern over the low numbers of males involved in teaching and the decline in the percentage of males entering teacher education programs (Armitage 1999; Smith 2000). It can then be stated that the profession has been gradually *feminizing* (Çermik et al. 2010). According to a research carried out in Ontario Province of Canada, it was found that male teachers make up less than one-tenth of all primary teachers, and the number is gradually declining (Parr et al. 2008). Similarly,

in a research carried out in Malaysia, it was found that the teaching profession in that country has increasingly become female dominated in the last decade (Azman 2012). That is, according to the theory of Gottfredson, males behave timidly while choosing a *feminized* profession. Hayes (1990) found that in a cohort of American students, entering teaching with altruistic motives such as making a positive difference in the lives of children was more significant (cited in Zehir-Topkaya and Uztosun 2012, p. 127). In another study, carried out by Kyriacou et al. (1999), it was discovered that English and Norwegian pre-service teachers have been choosing the teaching profession with such altruistic motives as enjoying teaching to children. In addition, Sinclair (2008) has found that novice teachers in their first years have been choosing the profession with altruistic and intrinsic motives but have been gradually motivated by extrinsic motives in the ongoing years.

Given the goal of making a comparison of motives in choosing teaching as a career around the world, it would be relevant to consider the OECD report of 2005. According to this report, there are many researches in Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, the Netherlands, Slovakia, and the U.K. telling that working with children and adults, desire for intellectual development, and making social contribution are the most cited reasons for entering the teaching profession. Contrary to this, in many different contexts, with regard to sociocultural varieties such as Brunei, Zimbabwe, Cameroon, and Jamaica, scholars found that salary, job security, and career status entitled with extrinsic motives are more important (Abangma 1981; Bastick 1999; Chivore 1988; Yong 1995).

When the issue of choosing teaching as a career has been evaluated with respect to Turkey, it has seen that a research gap remains despite several studies (Çermik et al. 2010). Evaluating these studies generally, Saban (2003) has found that primary pre-service teachers were motivated to teach by such altruistic motives as thinking of others and such extrinsic motives as having a job with regular income. In another study, Boz and Boz (2008) explored the hypothesis that chemistry and mathematics pre-service teachers were motivated to the profession through intrinsic and extrinsic motives, and Özbek (2007) also stated that the intrinsic motivations of pre-service teachers were more dominant than extrinsic motivations. In brief, when the national and international teacher education literature is evaluated overall, it seems difficult to make a common generalization about which motivation types of pre-service teachers are more drawn than others to choose teaching as a career. However, it is possible to make a generalization as regards to socioeconomic development of a country. That is, according to Bastick (2000), pre-service teachers in developed societies choose teaching as a career with

altruistic and intrinsic motives, but in developing or undeveloped societies, they choose teaching as a career with extrinsic or mercenary-based extrinsic motives.

How does one become a teacher in Turkey?

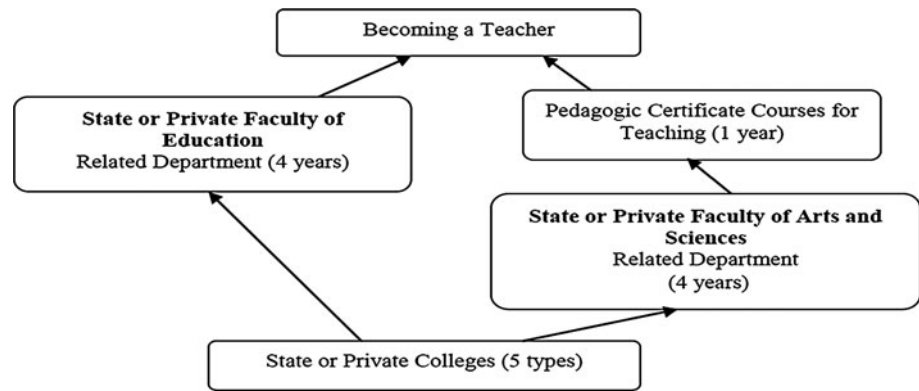
The first teacher training institutions in Turkey were founded in 1848. Since then, serious steps regarding the teacher training system have been taken, as it was during the republican era. Debates over the teacher training model in Turkey continued because the model was continuously changing. However, the teacher training model in Fig. 1 has been accepted in Turkey. To clearly present the paths to becoming a teacher in Turkey, this figure is given as follows.

There are five types of high schools in Turkey for students graduating from a compulsory 8 years of primary education. Directed by state or private funding, these colleges are within the ministry of the national education of Turkey. These schools are composed of science, Anatolian, social sciences, teacher training, and vocational high schools. Students desiring to become teachers within the social sciences branches enroll in colleges for which the curriculum is composed of verbal skills. Students desiring to become teachers within the positive sciences branches enroll in colleges where the curriculum is composed of quantitative skills. After graduating from college, students take a bachelor's examination (LYS) within the scope of state. The students who earn enough points on the exam have the right to study in their branches in a private or state faculty of education for 4 years. Then, they receive diplomas of teaching in their respective branches. Decisions regarding appropriate study field and profession are made after the bachelor's examination (LYS). Accordingly, the students who did not earn enough points for faculties of education enroll in state or private faculties of arts and sciences for 4 years. Then, they take pedagogic certificate courses for 1 year in order to become teachers in their study fields. Graduated novice teachers take a teacher appointment examination called KPSS for assignment to any vacant position in any school on the condition that they have enough assignment points from the exam (MEB, 2006/26098-7/1).

Research questions

Though there is an abundance of literature in the world on the reasons why young people choose teaching as a career or why they do not, a deep literature review on teacher education reveals few studies regarding the motives influencing the decision to teach in Turkey. As such, this study is designed to explore the career motivations of pre-service teachers of the Turkish language. So, determining the

Fig. 1 Paths to becoming a teacher in Turkey



reasons for choosing to teach, career perceptions, and major expectations of pre-service teachers will show the current situation of Turkey compared to the rest of the world on career motivations of pre-service teachers, as well as present a cross section of Turkish pre-service teachers in Turkey. Accordingly, the research questions of the study are mentioned below:

1. What factors influenced Turkish pre-service teachers' decision to teach?
2. Is there any difference between choosing teaching as a career and gender of pre-service teachers?
3. What are major expectations of Turkish pre-service teachers from teaching?

Method

Research design

In this study, mixed methodology both quantitative and qualitative was adopted for exploring research questions. For this, a general survey model was conducted within descriptive research. The aim of descriptive researches is to deeply describe the issue being studied, namely, to determine the existing profile of the issue (Borg et al. 1993). According to Kaptan (1993), descriptive research is defined as describing the events, objects, institutions, and groups. In addition, a general survey model allows universal generalization based on a selected sampling group. In this model, variables are determined according to type and quantity and described in a causative or non-causative way. This process can be restricted to past or present as well as longitudinal in a period of time (Cohen et al. 2007; Karasar 1991; Muijs 2004).

Sample

The participants of the study are 283 Turkish pre-service teachers, including 106 males and 177 females whose age

varies between 18 and 26 ($\bar{X} = 22.3$; $SD = 2.1$). The sampling group consists of first- and second-grade pre-service teachers studying the Turkish language in one of the faculties of education in Turkey. The mission of Turkish language teachers in Turkey is to develop primary school students' varied skills such as critical, analytical, and creative thinking; communication; problem solving; use of informatics technologies; and literacy in the mother language (MEB 2006: 2–5).

To facilitate deep description of the existing case, no alteration in sampling group and environment was made in this study; simple random sampling was used. Simple random sampling gives the opportunity of being selected to each sampling unit in the universe (Çingir 1994). Accordingly, simple random sampling of this study consists of first- and second-grade pre-service teachers studying in Turkish language departments.

Data collecting

The data were gathered using a questionnaire form prepared by the researchers. After preparing it, three scholars gave their opinions on the face validity of the questionnaire. The validity percentage index of the questionnaire was deemed by the independent scholars to be 90 %. The questionnaire was administered in the Turkish language on a voluntary basis to first- and second-grade pre-service teachers of the Turkish language. The participants completed the questionnaire in about 30 min and did not need external assistance for completing them. First question was answered by participants by choosing boxes below the question. Second question was both answered by choosing one of the two boxes (yes/no) below the question and by writing its reason in an open-ended way. Finally, third question was answered by writing in an open-ended way.

The following questions were asked of the participants in the questionnaire form:

1. What factors influenced your decision to teach? You can choose the reasons from the boxes below.

2. Was teaching your first career choice? Yes/No. Explain the reason in detail.
3. What are your major expectations from the teaching profession as a Turkish pre-service teacher? Explain.

Given the number of participants, analyzing of 283 participants' written responses to the open-ended questions in a qualitative way was very difficult process for the researchers. Even so, this type of analysis is crucial in order to deeply identify their opinions and not restrict them.

Data analysis

In this study, three types of data analyzing techniques were used: (1) descriptive statistics for a multiple-choice question, (2) *t* test and descriptive statistics for a close-ended question, and (3) inductive content analysis for open-ended questions. Analysis for the first and second techniques was conducted using SPSS 17.0 software, while that for the third technique was completed using QSR NVivo 8 software.

Experts in the field define content analysis as the process of analyzing repeated statements, and compressing them into fewer and more specific content categories using coding, in order to objectively and systematically identify the characteristics of the statements in a flowing style (Denzin and Lincoln 1998; Miles and Huberman 1994; Silverman 2000). Firstly, repeated statements of the participants were examined and combined. Then, 548 statements were executed from first open-ended question, and 391 statements from second open-ended question. Next, each statement to which questions were applied was encoded. The statements were combined using specific codes and classified with respect to the participants' choice of teaching into four main themes: altruistic, intrinsic, mercenary-based extrinsic, and influence-based extrinsic motives.

The reliability of content analysis depends heavily on the coding process (Büyükoztürk et al. 2012). The reason for coding is related to reliability of researchers and coding categories. Coding, in turn, depends on the reliability of the researchers and the coding categories. A coder is said to be reliable when she/he codes a particular text in a manner such that she/he reaches the same conclusion as independent coders for the same text (Bilgin 2006). Accordingly, each researcher in this study coded the data independently. The following formula was used to determine the reliability of each independent coder: $\text{Reliability} = \frac{\text{Agreement}}{\text{Agreement} + \text{Disagreement}} \times 100$ (Miles and Huberman 1994). The percentage agreement index of coding among the researchers was found to be 94 %. "Since this value was greater than 75 %" (Miles and Huberman), reliability in the qualitative analysis of participants' responses to open-ended questions was considered to have been maintained.

Findings

Research Question 1 What factors influenced Turkish pre-service teachers' decision to teach?

The aim of the study is to investigate the career motivations of pre-service teachers who have chosen teaching as a career. The findings related to the first research question are given in Tables 1, 2, 3, and 4. Tables 1, 2, and 3 show that extrinsic (36.75 %), altruistic (33.23 %), and intrinsic (30.02 %) motives, respectively, play a preponderant role in choosing teaching as a career. In addition, altruistic (23.39 %) motives are more dominant for females, and mercenary-based extrinsic (13.95 %) motives for males. Table 1 shows intrinsic motives influencing the decision to teach.

As can be seen in Table 1, the *intrinsic* (19.31 %) motivation of females is more dominant compared to males (10.71 %) when choosing teaching as a career. Table 2 shows extrinsic motives influencing the decision to teach.

Table 2 clearly shows that male participants choose teaching as a career with mercenary-based extrinsic motives (13.95 %) in mind, while female participants choose it with influence-based extrinsic motives (10.53 %) in mind. Table 3 shows altruistic motives influencing the decision to teach.

In Table 3, it can be seen that the altruistic motivation of female (23.39 %) participants is more dominant than those of males (9.84 %).

The participants were also asked whether teaching was their first choice of profession and the reasons for the same. Through this question, written expressions were obtained from pre-service teachers so as to reach in-depth reasons highlighting their preference. Table 4 lists these qualitative responses after conducting an inductive content analysis.

In Table 4, the results indicated that there is a strong resonance between participants choosing teaching as a first career and the motivational factors influencing their decision to teach (see Tables 1, 2, 3). That is, Table 4 shows that, by order, extrinsic ($f = 118$), altruistic ($f = 92$), and intrinsic

Table 1 Intrinsic motives influencing the decision to teach

Intrinsic motives	Male		Female		Total	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Idealized profession	52	4.80	80	7.39	132	12.19
Interest to educational environment	29	2.68	65	6.01	94	8.69
Esteem to Turkish language	26	2.40	46	4.25	72	6.65
Teaching is appropriate for my personality	9	0.83	18	1.66	27	2.49
Total	116	10.71	209	19.31	325	30.02

Table 2 Extrinsic motives influencing the decision to teach

Extrinsic motives	Male		Female		Total	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
<i>Mercenary-based extrinsic motives</i>						
High social status and prestige of teaching profession	44	4.07	29	2.68	73	6.75
Working conditions	46	4.25	21	1.94	67	6.19
Holidays	38	3.51	22	2.03	60	5.54
Opinion of appointment	11	1.01	10	0.92	21	1.93
Salary	12	1.11	7	0.64	19	1.75
<i>Total</i>	151	13.95	89	8.21	240	22.16
<i>Influence-based extrinsic motives</i>						
Previously idolized Turkish teacher at school	19	1.75	67	6.19	86	7.94
Family support	12	1.11	38	3.51	50	4.62
Family pressure	13	1.20	9	0.83	22	2.03
<i>Total</i>	44	4.06	114	10.53	158	14.59
<i>General total</i>	195	18.01	203	18.74	398	36.75

Table 3 Altruistic motives influencing the decision to teach

Altruistic motives	Male		Female		Total	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Loving Turkish language and wanting to teach it to others	32	2.96	98	9.06	130	12.02
Being in service of people	31	3.02	70	6.47	101	9.47
Teaching is sacred	26	2.40	53	4.90	79	7.30
Loving children	16	1.48	32	2.96	48	4.44
<i>Total</i>	105	9.84	253	23.39	358	33.23

($f = 78$) motives were responsible for participants' choice of teaching as a first career. On the other hand, mercenary-based and influence-based extrinsic motives have been stated for not choosing teaching as a first career choice.

As seen in Table 5, intrinsic ($\bar{X} = 1.79$), altruistic ($\bar{X} = 1.80$), and influence-based extrinsic ($\bar{X} = 1.87$) motives are more frequently cited by female participants, while mercenary-based extrinsic motives ($\bar{X} = 1.85$) are more predominantly attributed to male participants. Also, the t test results in Table 5 support the results of Tables 1, 2, and 3 with respect to types of motivation by gender.

Research Question 2 Is there any difference between choosing teaching as a first career and the gender of the pre-service teachers?

The quantitative responses given in Table 6 reveal the rate of Turkish pre-service teachers, by their gender, who have (not) chosen teaching as a first career preference.

Table 4 Teaching as a first career choice (why/why not?)

Yes—first choice—reason	<i>f</i>	No—not first choice—reason	<i>f</i>
<i>Altruistic motives</i>			
Loving Turkish language and desiring to teach it to others	35	Dream for other jobs	30
Help others to learn	30	Much more money idea in other jobs	23
Working with young people	27	Desire for high quality career than teaching	17
<i>Intrinsic motives</i>			
Dream to be a teacher	40		
Esteem to Turkish Language	38	Teaching is uncool in Turkey	13
<i>Mercenary-based extrinsic motives</i>			
Working conditions	25	Getting harder of appointment in Turkey	10
Social status	24	Having a family member as teacher facing many troubles	10
Job guarantee	19		
<i>Influence-based extrinsic motives</i>			
Previously idolized Turkish teacher at school	32		
Family support	18		
<i>Total</i>	288*		103*

* Some participants gave more than one reason and some did not

Table 5 Types of motivation and gender

Types of motivation	Gender	\bar{X}	SD	t value ($df = 210$)
Intrinsic	Male	1.75	.27	2.720*
	Female	1.79	.25	
Mercenary-based extrinsic	Male	1.85	.20	2.523*
	Female	1.81	.23	
Influence-based extrinsic	Male	1.77	.23	3.679*
	Female	1.87	.19	
Altruistic	Male	1.71	.17	2.687*
	Female	1.80	.12	

* $p < .05$

As seen clearly in Table 6, 58.65 % of the participants chose teaching as a first career, while 41.35 % of them did not choose it as a first career. An important point to be noted here is the percentage of females (64.4 %) who have chosen teaching as a first career preference. Accordingly, chi-square value ($\chi^2 = 6.442$; $p < .05$) shows that there is significant relationship between teaching as a first career and gender of participants.

Table 6 Teaching choice by gender

Response	Male		Female		Total		χ^2 6,442*
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	
Yes	52	49.05	114	64.4	166	58.65	
No	54	50.95	63	35.6	117	41.35	
Total	106	100	177	100	283	100	

* $p < .05$ **Table 7** Comparison of gender and teaching choice

Gender	Yes (2)/No (1)			<i>t</i> value (<i>df</i> = 210)
	N	\bar{X}	SD	
Male	106	1.35	.50	1.558
Female	177	1.50	.48	2.529*

* $p < .05$

Table 7 provides quantitative *t* test data regarding the difference between gender and teaching as a first career. In agreement with Table 6, *t* test results in Table 7 show that there is a meaningful difference between teaching as a first career choice and gender among pre-service teachers ($\bar{X} = 1.50$; $SD = 0.50$).

Research Question 3 What are major expectations of pre-service teachers from teaching?

Giving two contrary quotations from participants can highlight expectations of Turkish pre-service teacher from teaching. These quotations are as follows:

I decided to become a teacher because I think there will be so many children near me waiting for my guidance. I think it will be enjoyable working with them in school. As a pre-service Turkish language teacher I am sure teaching them would satisfy me very much. This is the biggest heritage of a teacher. Therefore, I love teaching and desire to work as a teacher as long as I live. (One of the female participants)

I came to this department by chance. I always wanted to study law. Unfortunately, the conditions of Turkey are uncool and teaching is not so well paying. Choice was not given to me. My career was chosen by my family and I came here. It was just one of those things. (One of the male participants)

The quotations that were given above by the participants may be interpreted as indicators of an already existing commitment or non-commitment to the teaching profession, namely intrinsic-, extrinsic-, and altruistic-type motivations for choosing teaching as a career.

Table 8 Major expectations of teaching as a career

Expectation	<i>f</i>	%
A challenging career	133	24.2
A long-term career	120	21.8
A fulfilling career	103	18.9
A difficult career	80	14.8
A short-term career	75	13.6
Other	37	6.7
Total	548*	100

* Some participants gave more than one expectation and some did not

As a result of content analysis of 548 statements obtained from participants, major expectations were extracted. Table 8 shows participants' major expectations according to the frequency of qualitative responses.

As can be seen in Table 8, with respect to motivational factors, the first three expectations listed such as challenging, long-term, and fulfilling careers reflect subjects' high level of motivation to carry on a teaching career. In addition, the last three expectations reflect participants' low level of motivation for a teaching career.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the career motivations of pre-service teachers in Turkey who have chosen teaching as a career. To contextualize the notion of career motivation, the participants were asked about their reasons for deciding to teach, career perceptions, and major expectations from teaching.

The first research question aimed at determining the reasons influencing a pre-service teacher's decision to teach. The results demonstrate that without gender discrimination, the decision to enter the teaching profession is influenced by extrinsic, altruistic, and intrinsic motives. The findings of the inductive content analysis also support the results presented in the first three tables.

In the literature about teacher education in western countries, it is stated that altruistic and intrinsic motives have been the very reasons in choosing teaching as a career (Ewing and Manuel 2005; Goh and Atputhasamy 2001; Hayes 1990; Kyriacou and Coulthard 2000; Kyriacou et al. 2003; Ling Low et al. 2011; Manuel 2003; Priyadharshini and Robinson-Pant 2003; Reid and Caudwell 1997; Spear et al. 2000; Yong 1995). According to Bastick (2000), pre-service teachers in developed societies choose teaching with altruistic and intrinsic motives, but in underdeveloped and developing societies, most teachers choose it based on extrinsic motives. However, Sinclair (2008) stated that young people are motivated to teach not by only one

motive but by many reasons such as working conditions, being in service to people, appropriateness to personality, salary, social status and prestige, appointment, etc. It can, then, be said that pre-service teachers could choose teaching by being motivated by many different reasons to some extent according to the socioeconomic well-being of their societies. As seen from the findings, it is less likely to generalize over only one motive because of the closeness of the statistical data of the three motivation types for career choice. It can, then, be said that Turkish pre-service teachers have chosen teaching as a career by being motivated, to a certain extent, by extrinsic, altruistic, and intrinsic motives. This case supports the view of Sinclair. However, percentages for extrinsic and altruistic motives are higher than those for intrinsic motives. This result supports the view of Bastick (2000). In many studies carried out in developing countries, Bastick found that extrinsic and altruistic motivations of pre-service teachers were more dominant than intrinsic motivation to choose teaching as a career. The current findings also support the findings of many related studies in developing countries (Çermik et al. 2010; Yaakob 1988), that is, these studies demonstrated that pre-service teachers generally chose teaching generally with extrinsic and altruistic motives. For instance, Çermik et al. (2010) found that pre-service classroom teachers in Turkey chose the profession with extrinsic motives. It can, then, be stated that pre-service teachers in developing societies choose teaching as a career with altruistic motives with reference to the divinity of teaching in itself, but they also take into account the prestige and social status of the profession in their societies such as high level of income, good working conditions, etc. The current findings show that Turkish pre-service teachers are motivated to teach with altruistic motives, such as loving the Turkish language, wanting to teach it to others, and being in service to people, and extrinsic motives, such as working conditions and the social status of the profession in Turkey.

Current research differs from findings of earlier studies, particularly in western communities (Bastick 2000; Reid and Caudwell 1997; Hayes 1990; Kyriacou et al. 2003; Papanastasiou and Papanastasiou 1998; Watt et al. 2012; Watt and Richardson 2007). These studies have revealed that intrinsic and altruistic motivations have a preponderant role in choosing teaching as a career. For instance, Kyriacou et al. (2003) observed that English and Norwegian pre-service teachers chose teaching as a career, since it best suited to their personalities. In another study, Hayes (1990) stated that American pre-service teachers chose teaching only with altruistic motives. Watt and Richardson (2007) used a comprehensive scale in their research with pre-service teachers studying in Australian universities and found that teaching skills, the intrinsic value of teaching,

and the desire to make a social contribution were the highest rated reasons (cited in Zehir-Topkaya and Uztosun 2012, p. 127). As we have presented, the motives to choose teaching as a career may be varied according to the contexts. It is here the views of Bastick must be underlined. That is, with respect to gradually developing Turkey, the career motivations of pre-service teachers heavily depend on extrinsic and altruistic and, afterward, intrinsic motives.

With respect to gender and motivation types, females selected teaching as a career mainly based on altruistic, intrinsic, and influence-based extrinsic motives, but males chose a teaching career based on extrinsic and mercenary motives. On the whole, studies concerning the effect of pre-service teachers' gender on choosing teaching as a career present consistent findings (Johnston et al. 1999; Reid and Caudwell 1997). Although both males and females emphasize intrinsic reasons for choosing teaching as a career, females attribute greater stress on altruistic and intrinsic reasons. Johnston, Mckeown, and McEwen (1999) surveyed over 1030 pre-service teachers in Ireland and demanded them to range motivating factors that may be important when choosing teaching as a career. Gender differences indicated that males placed greater significance on mercenary-based extrinsic motives such as money and social status of profession. In contrast, females placed greater weight on perceived job satisfaction, mental stimulation, and the ability to help others learn. As such, the present findings support the study of Johnston et al. In another study, Saban (2003) showed that female pre-service teachers in Turkey chose teaching for more altruistic and intrinsic motives than did males. Similarly, Johnston et al. showed that in England, female pre-service teachers decided to pursue a teaching career for altruistic and intrinsic reasons. But males chose to pursue a teaching career based only on mercenary motives. In particular, meaningful differences arose between males and females with respect to "accompanying children," "appropriateness of the profession to personality," and "salary." In another study, Zehir-Topkaya and Uztosun (2012) showed that female pre-service English teachers in Turkey chose teaching based on intrinsic and altruistic motives more than males did. The dominance of influence-based extrinsic motives among female participants compared to male participants supports numerous extant studies. For instance, Manuel (2003) and Reid and Caudwell (1997) found that female pre-service teachers chose teaching as a career due to more influence-based extrinsic motives than males; that is, female pre-service teachers were influenced by previous teachers and their family's support in choosing teaching as a career. Overall, when deciding to pursue teaching as a career, female pre-service teacher considers serving others and pursuing their own intrinsic desires to be more important factors, but male pre-service teachers emphasize

mercenary motives. In this way, the findings of this study support the studies described above.

The research offers insight into the motivations for not choosing teaching as a first career. These reasons include wanting to pursue other jobs, the potential of greater income in other careers, and a perception that there are limited opportunities in the teaching profession in Turkey. Research has shown that, since the 1980s, declining teacher salaries, rising costs of living, an oversupply of teachers, and the appointments of unqualified teachers have all contributed to reducing the quality and prestige of teaching and teachers in the eyes of the public (Erden 1998; Eskicumalı 2002). These perspectives were echoed in our research on the factors dissuading pre-service teachers from choosing teaching as a first career. These factors seem to be less of an issue in Western countries. A study carried out in Finland on the teacher training model there found that the teaching profession was associated with scholarly research and cited among the professions having the highest levels of income and prestige. Therefore, the most successful students in Finland competed to become teachers (Ekinci and Öter 2010). However, the teaching profession in Turkey is considered as a *safety net* among young people (Çermik et al. 2010).

The second issue addressed in the research was the difference between gender and choosing teaching as a career. The findings indicated that the teaching profession was chosen as a first career by 58.65 % of participants. However, among female participants, 64.4 % chose teaching as their first career, while only 49 % of male participants had chosen teaching as their first career. This suggests a positive difference between gender and choosing teaching as a first career. These findings are similar to those of several other studies in the teacher education literature in Turkey (Saban 2003; Şahin, et al. 2008) and elsewhere (Allison 2008; Foster and Newman 2005; Johnston et al. 1999; Parr et al. 2008; Smedley 2007). This phenomenon has been described as “feminizing” of the teaching profession. In a trend explained by the career motivation theory of Gottfredson (1981), it appears that the perception of male pre-service teachers that they are entering a feminized field becomes a sociopsychological reality. According to Gottfredson, there are two variables influencing an individual’s choice of teaching as a career. One of them is gender compromise, namely perceptions of the teaching profession’s appropriateness to his/her gender in the society in which he/she exists. When interpreting the issue in any society in which nine out of ten women and one out of ten men choose teaching as a career, it would appear unrealistic to expect an equal gender rating.

The third issue addressed by the study was the expectations that pre-service teachers had of teaching. The findings show that in rank order, pre-service teachers

wanted a challenging, long-term, and fulfilling career, which can be interpreted as being highly motivated and committed to teaching. Other career expectations from teaching are a difficult and/or short-term teaching career. This illustrates how they perceive the teaching profession in a real-life context as they are yet to start teaching, namely they consider teaching as a safety net. As mentioned at the beginning of the study, the perception of “*If I am unfit for anything else, I will be a teacher!*” (Özsoy et al. 2010, p. 912) that is widely stated in Turkish society makes itself evident in the expectations of a difficult and/or short-term career of pre-service teachers. This attitude actually derives from the negative shift of the status of teaching from the beginnings of the 1980s (Erden 1998; Eskicumalı 2002). This is highlighted by the career motivation theory of Gottfredson (1981). In this theory, a variable shaping people’s career choices is the perception of the prestige level of the profession. Accordingly, in the present findings, the major career expectations of pre-service teachers can be explained by the status and prestige level of the teaching profession. That is to say, pre-service teachers’ perceiving teaching as a higher status shows their major expectations toward a long-term, challenging, and fulfilling career. Otherwise, short-term and difficult career expectations come to light. In other words, when a better opportunity emerges, teachers in service leave the profession. Concerning this, a number of studies have explored the reasons given by teachers who leave the profession (Newson 1993; Spear et al. 2000). Four reasons appear to be particularly frequent: workload, salary, disruptive pupils, and low status. As seen, pre-service teachers’ short-term and difficult career expectations come from those underlying four factors. The view of Kyriacou et al. (2003) supports this statement. According to them, altruistic, intrinsic, and extrinsic reasons that motivate young people for entering teaching as a career are related to their expectations of what this profession will be like in practice. Accordingly, it can be stated that expectations play an important role for choosing teaching as a career or not. As such, this situation has a critical importance in explaining why some new teachers leave the teaching profession within the first few years.

Conclusions and recommendations

Due to the number of countries experiencing difficulty in recruiting teachers and suffering from a low teacher retention rate, it is becoming increasingly important to determine what motivates the aspiring youth to become teachers. To better understand this question, the career motivations of pre-service teachers were examined and concluded that extrinsic, altruistic, and intrinsic forms of

motivations had a preponderant influence on Turkish pre-service teachers when choosing teaching as a career.

More specifically, female pre-service teachers chose teaching as a profession due to intrinsic, altruistic, and influence-based extrinsic forms of motivation. The teaching profession has also been gradually becoming more feminine by the year in Turkey and other countries. Males, on the other hand, mostly became teachers due to mercenary-based extrinsic motivation. Both genders, as it was discovered, had long-term, challenging, and rewarding career expectations from choosing teaching as a career.

Understanding why pre-service teachers choose teaching as a career is crucial for teacher training programs within the faculties of education in Turkey and for identifying the vocational attitudes of pre-teachers. Moreover, the present results are vital to determine where Turkey stands in the international community in respect to the career motivations of pre-service teachers.

Based on the conclusions from this study, some recommendations were formulated for policy makers and teacher training institutions. However, these suggestions are not restricted to policy makers and teacher training institutions in Turkey since the conclusions of this study concur also with other studies concerning the career motivation of pre-service teachers. The results of this study also come at a time when politicians and teacher training institutions around the world are addressing the issues of ameliorating recruitment and retention of teachers, structuring their works, improving teacher training system, and trying to develop effectiveness of teaching. In summary, the most important recommendations of this study are listed below:

- Policy makers should consider the vocational duty of teaching and attempt to increase the social status of teachers.
- Policy makers around the world should take measures to avoid the feminization of the teaching profession.
- Teacher training institutions should concentrate on trying to ameliorate the attitudes of pre-service teachers.
- Teacher training institutions should make an effort to inform pre-service teachers that teaching is about altruism and self-devotion.
- Authorities in underdeveloped and developing countries should investigate teacher training models, and teacher recruiting and retaining strategies of developed countries so as to ameliorate the current case of their countries.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the career motivations of pre-service teachers in Turkey who have chosen teaching as a career. Accordingly, we tried to make a useful contribution to the teacher education literature.

Although many studies have been carried out on the motivation of pre-service teachers, this study can make an important contribution to the field in two ways. Firstly, it is hoped to add to the rather sparse Turkish literature in this field. Secondly, it is hoped that the argument that extrinsic/mercenary motives may be stronger in less economically developed countries can be especially pertinent at a time of global recession. In terms of the contribution to understanding of motivation in terms of gender, the study is hoped to reinforce previous findings with regard to feminizing of the profession.

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