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SELF-EFFICACY AND LIFE SATISFACTION LEVELS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHERS IN THE U.S. AND TURKEY*

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ABSTRACT

This comparative study investigated the levels of self-efficacy and life satisfaction among early childhood (EC) teachers in the United States (U.S.) and Turkey. The study was structured within general survey methodology. Participants were EC teachers recruited from the province of Konya in Turkey (N: 35) and Buffalo in New York State (N: 30). The study administered Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale and Life Satisfaction Scale. Since participants’ self-efficacy and life satisfaction scores did not demonstrate normal distribution across both contexts (U.S. and Turkey), the study used Mann Whitney U-Test and Kruskal Wallis test, from nonparametric statistics, in the analysis of the data. The relationship between the levels of self-efficacy and life satisfaction of the participants at both contexts was analyzed through Pearson Correlation Coefficient test. The results showed that while there was not any statistically significant difference in participants’ teaching strategies, classroom management and the total scores of self-efficacy and life satisfaction, there was a statistically significance difference in the sub-dimension of student participation in favor of the participants in Turkey. No statistically significant difference was found when Turkish participant’s self-efficacy was examined in relation to reasons of profession selection. However, when self-efficacy of the U.S. participants was examined in relation to reasons of profession selection, there was a statistically significant difference.

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significant difference in favor of those who chose this profession with the desire to become a teacher in sub-dimensions of self-efficacy, such as student participation and teaching strategies as well as in self-efficacy total scores. Results showed that the U.S. participants’ levels of self-efficacy, those who became a teacher as a result of their desire to become a teacher, were higher. Scores were also higher when compared to those who chose this profession for financial needs. When life satisfaction of teachers at both contexts was examined in relation to their reasons of profession selection, no statistically significant difference was found among teachers in Turkey. However, there was a statistically significant life satisfaction difference in favor of the participants in the U.S. who chose this profession due to their desire to become a teacher. Results of Pearson Correlation Coefficient test showed that self-efficacy and life satisfaction scores of teachers in both contexts were positively related.

**Key Words:** Self-Efficacy, Life Satisfaction, Early Childhood Teachers, United States, Turkey.

**INTRODUCTION**

Teacher is a quasi-essential and one of the most important elements of an educational environment. Effective teaching may determine the quality of education to a substantial degree. Today’s teacher is increasingly expected to meet contemporary tasks such as arranging the learning environment, guiding children and offering them choices to achieve their personal goals, helping them with their choices and to explore and improve their skills/abilities, and adopting a reflective style of teaching. Meeting such tasks requires the teacher to be equipped with qualifications needed in the contemporary society. Therefore, prospective teachers need to be equipped with competencies to undertake the tasks and responsibilities expected of themselves (Aytunga & Topkaya, 2008). Aside from a strong training background, being able to gain the competencies necessitated by the profession of teaching is enabled by teachers’ belief that they will be able to fulfill the tasks and responsibilities set in front of them (Yılmaz, Koseoğlu, Gerçek, & Soran, 2004).

Teachers’ self-judgments regarding their abilities and skills play an important role for solving the problems that they encounter during learning process. The way that teacher candidates perceive and self-evaluate themselves in terms of their knowledge, skills and experience also plays an important role in effective teaching service and being able to handle the pedagogical struggles that they face throughout their career. In-service and pre-service teachers’ perception about their occupational self-efficacy has been a hot topic of discussion and research recently. This discussion has been articulated with reference to the concepts of “self-efficacy belief” or “self-efficacy perception”. Both being interchangeable, these concepts refer to the individual’s personal judgments toward tackling a problem or fulfilling a task, and they can provide important clues and insights with regards to the ways in which certain competencies or pedagogical behaviors are perceived in education processes (Özdemir, 2008). Self-efficacy is the person’s comparison of his/her capacity with what he/she needs to perform and proceeding accordingly; person’s self-perceptions as to how he/she could succeed against the challenges that he/she has encountered; briefly, individual’s knowing about himself/herself (Korkmaz, 2002). It indicates the person’s self-directed
judgments regarding the extent to which he/she could succeed in tackling challenging situations that may be encountered in the future (Senemoğlu, 2005). Teachers with high level of self-efficacy tend to apply various new teaching techniques, do research to improve and advance the teaching techniques they use, adopt a student-centered teaching strategy, and support their teaching with a variety of materials (Kücükylmaz & Duban, 2006). Research has shown that teachers’ self-efficacy may be related to classroom management skills, teaching methods, and the level of effort spent to actively help children to succeed (Gürol, Altunay, & Karaaslan, 2010). Individual’s belief in himself/herself in conducting a certain behavior and his/her expectations regarding the successful outcome of that behavior is influential in actually conducting that behavior. In addition to the important outcome of the behavior-to-conduct, individual’s belief himself/herself plays an important role in determining the do ability of that behavior (Korkmaz, 2002). The physiological and psychosocial satisfaction from work experience positively influences individuals’ overall life satisfaction and psychological well-being (Şar, Işiklar, & Aydoğan, 2012). Life satisfaction refers to fulfillment of one’s expectations, necessities, and wishes, and it generally includes individual’s entire life and all of the dimensions of this life. It has been shown that as employees’ life quality increases, their life satisfaction also increases, domestic familial conflicts decrease, and they become more attentive to fulfilling their responsibilities for their affiliated institutions and families (Scandura & Lankau, 1997). Most people spend the majority of their time at workplace, and the positive and negative situations that occur at workplace are shared with family members and/or friends. Likewise, pleasant and unpleasant situations experienced with family and/or friends may be carried to workplace (Dikmen, 1995). In a study conducted by Çankaya and Ekinci (2010), family interactions, social support and cooperation have been determined as important factors that help increase individuals’ life satisfaction. Aysan and Bozkurt (2004) have shown that an increase in life satisfaction of teachers led to a decrease in behaviors such as automatic negative thinking and avoidance. Similarly, in a study conducted by Telef (2011), it has been demonstrated that there is positive relationship between teachers’ self-efficacy and life satisfaction, whereas there is a negative relationship between their state of burnout and life satisfaction. In this regard, Gencay’s (2009) study also found that teachers with low future expectations demonstrated low life satisfaction and high level of despair.

Akgün and Şimşek (2011) investigated the education systems of Turkey and the U.S. comparatively in the dimensions of purpose, structure, and process. Results of the study characterized Turkish education system as a centralist one with the Ministry of Education being the center of administration by which all of the educational arrangements are made and implemented nation-wide. On the other hand, the education system of the U.S. was described as more of a decentralized one differing by local governments/states. With regards to the purpose of education systems, both countries fundamentally aim to raise and educate informed citizens who have completed their social and emotional development and are aware of their responsibilities. In the dimension of process, the study has stated that while weekly class hours are the same for all the public schools across the nation, this differs by states in the U.S. In addition, the study emphasized that while early childhood education (ECE) is not compulsory in both countries, enrollment in early education is substantially higher in the U.S. ECE in the U.S. is offered in a wide variety of options such as half day, full day, and full work day, funded with social welfare and financial support grants by federal, states and/or private sectors, as sometimes operating mostly to align with the “care” aspect of “early
childhood education and care”, sometimes mostly with “education” aspect, and sometimes emphasizing and privileging both aspects equally (Kamerman & Gatenio-Gabel, 2007). In Turkey, on the other hand, there are exclusive kindergartens for the education of children aged 37-66 months, kindergarten classrooms of formal education schools (i.e., public elementary schools) for children 48-66 months of age, and practice classrooms of vocational schools that implement programs related early childhood education for children aged 37-66 months (Ministry of Education, 2012). As seen from these data, in-service early childhood teachers in Turkey and the U.S. perform their jobs toward the same goal but in different conditions and situations. To further shed light on such similarities and differences, the current comparative study investigated whether the fact that early childhood teachers in Turkey and the U.S. do a similar job in different countries, thus conditions, had positive or negative influence on their self-efficacy and life satisfaction. Based on the comparison of data across two contexts, the study offers implications so as to take effective precautions against the negative consequences of low self-efficacy and life satisfaction among EC teachers.

METHOD

The Study Model
This study was undertaken with general survey methodology.

Samples
The study was carried out with early childhood teacher participants who were recruited from the province of Konya in Turkey (N: 35) and Buffalo in New York State of the U.S. (N: 30). 56 (86.2%) of the participants were female (U.S./24–Turkey/32), 9 (13.8%) were male (U.S./6–Turkey/3). 47 (72.3%) of them had undergraduate (U.S./13–Turkey/34), 16 (24.6%) had graduate (U.S./15–Turkey/1), 2 (3.1%) had doctorate (U.S./2–Turkey/0) degrees. 20 (30.8%) of the participants (U.S./2–Turkey/18) had a work experience of 1 to 5 years and 45 (69.2%) of them (U.S./28–Turkey/17) had 2 to 5 years. 10 (33.3%) of the participants in the U.S. chose the profession of early childhood teacher for their love for working with children, 11 (36.7%) for their desire to become a teacher, and 9 (30%) for financial needs. 6 (17.1%) of the participants in Turkey chose this profession randomly, 9 (25.7%) for their love for working with children, and 20 (57.1%) for their desire to become a teacher.

Data Collection
The researchers created personal information forms to be used in data collection that included information regarding gender of the participants, the program from which they graduated, work experience and their reasons to chose teaching profession, and specifically the profession of early childhood teacher. The forms were administered to both sample participants across both contexts (U.S. and Turkey).

In order to determine participants’ levels of self-efficacy, the study used “Teachers’ Sense of Efficacy Scale” (TSES) adapted to Turkish (Turkish name: Öğretmen Öz Yeterlik Ölçüğü) by Çapa, Çakıroğlu and Sarıkaya (2005). The scale consists of 24 items, and items are combined under three main factors each of which further divides into 8 items. Three main factors follow as (1) self-efficacy for student participation (1, 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 14, 22), (2) self-efficacy for teaching strategies (7, 10, 11, 17, 18, 20, 23, 24), and (3) self-efficacy for classroom management (3, 5, 8, 13, 15, 16, 19, 21). The Alpha values for the factors of the scale have been determined as (1)
student participation = 0.82, (2) teaching strategies = 0.86, and (3) classroom management = 0.84. For statements in the scales, following codes have been used: 9, 8 very competent; 7, 6 fairly competent; 5, 4 somewhat competent; 3, 2 slightly competent; 1 incompetent. Each score received for a sub-factor indicates the participant’s level of self-efficacy regarding the main factor to which the sub-factor corresponds. Thus, high scores reflect high self-efficacy and low scores reflect low-self efficacy. The lowest score that can be received from the scale is 24 whereas the highest is 216 (Çapa, Çakıroğlu, & Sarıkaya, 2005).

In order to measure participants’ life satisfaction, the study used “The Satisfaction with Life Scale” (SWLS) adapted to Turkish (Turkish name: Yaşam Doyum Ölçeği) by Durak, Şenol-Durak and Gencöz (2010). SWLS is a Lickert scale with 7 scales. In this scale, participants are given with a variety of statements related to the topic and asked to think about to what extent each statement resonates with them. They respond by choosing among a range of scales from “I completely agree” (1) to “I completely disagree” (7). The total value of scores received from the scale reflects individual’s quality of life and the extent to which she/he is satisfied with her/his live. Diener, Emmons, Larsen and Griffin (1985) determined the Alpha value of the scale as .87, and the validity of the scale as .82. This scale has been administered to students attending university in Turkey by Durak, Şenol-Durak and Gencöz (2010). The internal consistency correlation of the scale was .89, and the total correlation of the corrected items ranged between .68 and .78 (Durak, Şenol-Durak, & Gencöz 2010).

Data were collected in the fall of 2012. Original versions of both scales were administered to participants in the U.S. in English and the adapted versions in Turkish were administered to participants in Turkey. Two of the researchers collected the data in the U.S. context and the other two collected in Turkey.

Data Analysis

Whether the data demonstrated normal distribution was examined with Kolmogorov-Smirnov (k-s) test. The test showed that participants’ score average for self-efficacy and life satisfaction did not demonstrate normal distribution. Since the data did not demonstrate normal distribution, nonparametric statistics were used in data analysis. Being two unrelated samples, the data regarding the levels of self-efficacy and life satisfaction of the participants in the U.S. and Turkey were analyzed through Mann Whitney U-test. Kruskal Wallis test was used to analyze the levels of self-efficacy and life satisfaction based on variables of participants’ profession selection. The relation between their self-efficacy and life satisfaction was analyzed through Pearson Correlation Coefficient Test (Büyüköztürk, 2008).

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

This study investigated the levels of self-efficacy and life satisfaction among in-service early childhood teachers in the U.S. and Turkey. Results of this investigation are presented below.

Table 1.
Results of the Mann Whitney U-Test regarding the levels of self-efficacy and life satisfaction of the participants in the U.S. and Turkey
Table 1 shows that there is no statistically meaningful difference (p>.05) in the sub-dimensions such as participant’s teaching strategies and classroom management as well as the total scores of self-efficacy and life satisfaction. However, there is a statistically meaningful difference (p<.05) in student participation sub-dimension in favor of Turkey. Many studies in relevant literature have indicated that the awareness of self-efficacy is an important factor in life and job satisfaction of teachers. For example, in a recent study teacher self-efficacy, Veldman, Tartwijk, Brekelmans, and Wubbles (2013) have found that the job satisfaction of teachers plays a critical role in the quality of teacher-student relationship. Likewise, in another study of teacher self-efficacy conducted in a cross-cultural context of 5 different countries (Canada, Cyprus, Korea, Singapore, and the U.S.) Klassen et al. (2009) determined meaningful differences between the sub-dimensions of life/job satisfaction and awareness of self-efficacy. In this study that was carried out in these five countries whose education systems differ substantially from each other, it is underlined that regardless of the extent to which teaching contexts may differ substantially by countries, teacher’s perception of self-efficacy is an important factor on life/job satisfaction in these contexts. Research suggests that teachers’ self-efficacy and life satisfaction may associate with their professional attachment to and awareness of responsibility for their profession (Ross & Bruce, 2007; Ware & Kitsantas, 2007), occupational skills (Lavella, 2006), status of happiness, satisfaction and stress acquired during teaching (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, & Hoy, 1998) and levels of occupational burnout (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007). Brouwers and Tomic (2010) found meaningful differences in the classroom management sub-dimension of teacher self-efficacy. In conjunction with these findings, the present study shows the significant relationship between teachers’ emotional burnout and their classroom management. Thus, results underscore the pivotal and decisive role of teachers’ self-efficacy regarding classroom management in emotional burnout sub-dimension.

In a similar study that examined the levels of self-efficacy among 48 early childhood teachers in the U.S. Guo et al. (2011) found significant relationship between teachers’ self-efficacy and student participation sub-dimension. Their results showed that participants’ occupational self-efficacy increased when student participation was high and vice-versa. Despite the fact that student’s classroom attendance policy is strictly followed in Turkey, in higher education capacities in the U.S. attendance is relatively flexible. Even though attendance is flexible, in the U.S. overall grades of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Self-Efficacy Sub-Dimensions</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>&lt;X&gt;</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Sum of Ranks</th>
<th>u</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>35</td>
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<td>8.58</td>
<td>38.71</td>
<td>1355.00</td>
<td>325.00</td>
<td>.008*</td>
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<td>10.61</td>
<td>26.33</td>
<td>790.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>35</td>
<td></td>
<td>55.91</td>
<td>7.83</td>
<td>35.96</td>
<td>1258.50</td>
<td>421.50</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>7.18</td>
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<td>Turkey</td>
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<td>58.51</td>
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<td>522.00</td>
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<td>32.90</td>
<td>987.00</td>
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<td>Turkey</td>
<td>35</td>
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<td>24.49</td>
<td>36.71</td>
<td>1285.00</td>
<td>395.00</td>
<td>.087</td>
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<td>23.29</td>
<td>28.67</td>
<td>860.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Life Satisfaction Total</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
<td>22.25</td>
<td>6.09</td>
<td>32.46</td>
<td>1136.00</td>
<td>1009.00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td>22.26</td>
<td>6.59</td>
<td>33.63</td>
<td>1009.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
higher education students are based more on their attendance then exams. That the results of the present study point to a significant difference in student participation sub-dimension in favor of Turkey can be the result of the higher attendance frequency of Turkish students—either willingly or for stipulated attendance rules in the education system– than the students in the U.S.

Table 2.
Results of the Kruskal Wallis test regarding the levels of self-efficacy according to the reasons for profession selection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Domains of Self-Efficacy</th>
<th>Reasons for Profession Selection</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>Mean Rank</th>
<th>sd</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>Student Participation</td>
<td>Random</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>56.16</td>
<td>7.30</td>
<td>19.50</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I love children</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>55.22</td>
<td>5.89</td>
<td>18.83</td>
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<td>.853</td>
</tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>53.30</td>
<td>10.02</td>
<td>17.18</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Random</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>58.50</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>21.17</td>
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<td>.752</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>8.10</td>
<td>16.67</td>
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<td>.687</td>
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<td>55.60</td>
<td>8.65</td>
<td>17.65</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classroom Management</td>
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<td>20.92</td>
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<td>.705</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>.703</td>
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<td>I love children</td>
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<td>29.42</td>
<td>16.61</td>
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<td>.796</td>
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<td>24.79</td>
<td>17.95</td>
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<td>United States</td>
<td>Student Participation</td>
<td>I love children</td>
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<td>50.10</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 shows that there is no significant difference in the self-efficacy levels of participants in Turkey when examined according to their reasons for profession selection. That is, the results indicate that the score averages of the participants in Turkey regarding reasons for profession selection such as their “love for children”, “desire to become a teacher”, and “random” are in a similar range of value. On the other hand, results regarding the levels of self-efficacy among the U.S. participants according to reasons for profession selection are different than the sample in Turkey. As the table 2 shows, there is a significant difference in favor of the participants in the U.S. who chose this profession due to their desire to become a teacher in student participation and teaching strategies sub-dimensions as well as self-efficacy total scores. Levels of self-efficacy among the participants in the U.S. who chose this profession due to their desire to become teacher have been shown to be higher than the score average of those who chose this profession because of their love for children and financial needs. This pattern coheres with the findings of a study carried out by Applied Policy Analytics in Massachusetts with early childhood teachers. The study found that %89 of the participants preferred to pursue a career in the field of early childhood due to their love for working with children. The other factors that played decisive roles in the profession selection of the rest of the participants (%11) included “desire to help families/parents”, “the profession of early childhood teacher being the only occupation with which they felt qualified “and “having participated in a relevant training program” (Applied Policy Analytics, 2012). In a similar study that focused on the self-efficacy of 1794 prospective teachers, Şenler and Sungur (2010) found significant differences in sub-dimensions of the self-efficacy scale such as student participation, teaching strategies and classroom management.

The result documenting higher scores for classroom management and teaching strategies than student participation has been attributed to the relatively higher weigh placed upon classroom management and teaching strategies in teacher training programs. The study aligns with the results of the present investigation in terms of demonstrating that student participation; teaching strategies and classroom management are the factors likely to influence teachers’ perception of self-efficacy. Other similar studies have shown that teacher self-efficacy may be influenced by various external factors such as social environment of the workplace (Devos, Dupriez, & Paquay, 2012), and additional occupational actions and behaviors done by intrinsic motivation (Somech & Drach-Siwatu, 2011). Besides, it has even been shown that teachers’ level of self-efficacy may be determined by whether the schools in which they work are located in rural or urban areas.

Aside from these factors, results of the present study point to the contrast that while reasons of the participants in Turkey for choosing this profession, such as their desire to become a teacher, enjoying working with children, and financial needs, do not result in a significant difference in their self-efficacy, for participants in the U.S. choosing this profession primarily due to their desire to become a teacher results in
significant differences in their self-efficacy. One explanation for this pattern in the U.S. sample could be their informed, purposeful and willful profession selection based on their abilities, interests and needs. With this pattern, it is evident that enjoying working with children and financial needs are of secondary importance in their self-efficacy and proceeded by their desire to become teacher. In the Turkish sample, on the other hand, the future of the profession and financial worries are the primary considerations in choosing to become an early childhood teacher irrespective of the extent to which this profession is appropriate to their abilities, interests and needs. Interesting enough, a similar study found that prospective early childhood teacher participants in Turkey perceived themselves having lower self-efficacy than those in teacher education programs of Turkish Language, Social Sciences, Music, and Art.

Table 3.
Results of the Kruskal Wallis Test regarding the life satisfaction according to the reasons for profession selection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Reasons for Profession Selection</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>Mean Rank</th>
<th>sd</th>
<th>χ²</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>Life Satisfaction Total</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18.50</td>
<td>7.66</td>
<td>12.25</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.954</td>
<td>.228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I love children</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24.33</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>21.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Desire to be a teacher</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>22.45</td>
<td>5.87</td>
<td>18.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>Life Satisfaction Total</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22.50</td>
<td>5.60</td>
<td>15.15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.03</td>
<td>.011*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I love children</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26.09</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>21.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Desire to be a teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial needs</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17.33</td>
<td>6.28</td>
<td>9.17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When life satisfaction of participants in the U.S. and Turkey are examined in Table 3 according to their reasons for profession selection, it is seen that no significant difference was found in life satisfaction of participants from Turkey. However, there was a significant difference was found in the life satisfaction of participants from the U.S. in favor of those who chose this profession for their desire to be a teacher. Individuals determine the way they prefer to live though their choices. Choices individuals make at different times during their life shape their lifestyle. Personal happiness and success depend on the appropriateness of these choices. In other words, individuals are likely to become happy and successful as long as they make choices that suit their desires and resources. Of these choices, profession selection is one of the most important ones. The profession an individual selects may determine the kind of environment to work at, the lifestyle, as well as the world view that she/he develops (Usluer, 1998). Considering these, this specific result of the study here may be perceived as the reflection of the informed profession selection of participants in the U.S.
Table 4.
Results of the Pearson Correlation Coefficient regarding the relation between the levels of self-efficacy and life satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ Self Efficacy</th>
<th>Participants’ Life Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of Pearson Correlation Coefficient show that there is a significant relationship between the levels of self-efficacy and life satisfaction of teacher participants in the U.S. and Turkey ($r = .406; p<.05$). It is evident that participants across both contexts chose this profession because of their desires to become a teacher. The significant relationship between their self-efficacy and life satisfaction can be explained with the positive effects of their willingness in performing their job with love and care on their life satisfaction.

**CONCLUSIONS and SUGGESTIONS**

The results showed that while there was not any statistically significant difference in participants’ teaching strategies, classroom management and the total scores of self-efficacy and life satisfaction, there was a statistically significance difference in the sub-dimension of student participation in favor of the participants in Turkey. No statistically significant difference was found when Turkish participant's self-efficacy was examined in relation to reasons of profession selection. However, when self-efficacy of the U.S. participants was examined in relation to reasons of profession selection, there was a statistically significant difference in favour of those who chose this profession with the desire to become a teacher in sub-dimensions of self efficacy, such as student participation and teaching strategies as well as in self-efficacy total scores. Results showed that the U.S. participants’ levels of self-efficacy, those who became a teacher as a result of their desire to become a teacher, were higher. Scores were also higher when compared to those who chose this profession for financial needs. When life satisfaction of teachers at both contexts was examined in relation to their reasons of profession selection, no statistically significant difference was found among teachers in Turkey. However, there was a statistically significant life satisfaction difference in favor of the participants in the U.S. who chose this profession due to their desire to become a teacher. Results of Pearson Correlation Coefficient test showed that the self-efficacy and life satisfaction scores of teachers in both contexts were positively related. In light of these results, further research needs to investigate the factors that have negative influences on the levels of self-efficacy and life satisfaction of early childhood teachers in Turkey by comparing them with the conditions of teachers in the U.S. In addition, further research may probe the potential reasons as to why teachers in Turkey have different priorities in choosing the profession of early childhood teaching while teachers in the U.S. prioritize their desire to become a teacher as the main reason for choosing this profession. Findings from such studies may help for the effective precautions to be taken.
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AN EVALUATION OF COMMERCIALS CONCERNING EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

In the early years of a child’s life, media and especially commercials play a vital role in acquiring knowledge from social and emotional perspectives indirectly. In most countries, television commercials occupies a substantial part in television production as well as print media, therefore, serves as a main source of entertainment and knowledge for the child especially with messages (advertising) concerning new inexperienced products. This is where the importance of advertising design and copywriting emerges especially those directed towards children since they find it more persuasive to accept social and behavioural morals, values, ethics and impressions through different forms of entertainment, in our case, advertising. As it associates widely in developing the child’s communication and linguistic skills, in addition to expanding their understanding, imagination, psychological and social forms. Hence, contributes to building positive

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personal values through the planting of indirect messages in advertising. This research assumes that the formulation of advertising messages provides positive values indirectly through commercial advertising help significantly in social and emotional development of children.

**INTRODUCTION**

Psychiatrists have agreed upon that childhood is the most important stage in ones’ life, if developed properly it becomes the milestone of any culture. As truthfulness, honesty, respect, compassion, hygiene, self-esteem and other human values is a key element in building a generation capable of making a positive civilization, progress and prosperity. Specialists have concluded, according to previous research, that children until the age of sixteen spend the same amount of time in front of the television as the time spent at school if not more, making television parallel with school as a tool of persuasion, education and social development.

Social and Emotional development involves learning the values, knowledge and skills that enable children to relate to others effectively and to contribute in positive ways to family, school and the community. This kind of learning is passed on to children directly by those who care for and teach them, as well as indirectly, through social relationships within family or friends, and through children’s participation in the culture around them. Through their relationships with others and their growing awareness of social values and expectations, children build a sense of who they are and of the social roles available to them. As they develop socially, children both respond to the influences around them and play an active part in shaping their relationships
The early years of a child’s life present a unique opportunity to foster social development, and research has underscored the importance of the first five years of life – both positive and negative experiences – in shaping children’s cognitive, behavioral, social, and emotional development. This briefly outlines the risks faced by young children with social, emotional, and behavioral problems, as well as barriers to eligibility, access to services, and service utilization. (Janice L. C., Rachel M. & Jessica V. August 2009). The role of the parent or caretaker is invaded by the commercials or services promised by the commercials, where parenthood is transferred to the commercials.

THE SHIFTING OF TRANSFERENCE OF PSYCHOLOGY FROM HUMAN TO COMMERCIAL

Transference is the name given to the survival of the existing “childhood desires, fears of a person and the defense against the expression of such desires and fears” (Volkan, 2009) through a person or an object.

Above described emotional development between early childhood and commercial viewing experience can lead the transference mechanism to be reversed from persons towards mediums, as is known in psychology. Transference is used by both educated as well as uneducated yet experienced advertisers. The educated ones use this mechanism as a formula to cast spells on masses and the less educated use it instinctively as a hocus pocus device. However, both groups are generally oblivious to the psychodynamic function of the mechanism. What’s important is that it’s functional, and as long as there are no legal issues involved, there is no need to dwell upon the other aspects.
Transference is applied in commercials by aiming to transfer a certain amount of emotional weight cathexis to the product being promoted. Hence, the positive emotional weight stays attached to the product, so to say, and can be experienced subconsciously over and over again every time it is purchased. “Investment in libidinal energy, or cathexis, is transferred from the ego into objects” (Rasit, 2002), commercials on the other hand, is a process ensuring these objects are established as consumable products. If a regular object is loaded with what is for us, a meaning beyond its own existence, that object slowly breaks away from reality and proceeds towards the symbolic universe of the subconscious.

We can basically assume that if the child is exposed to commercials more than he/she is exposed to the natural parent, then the transference of parenthood shifts towards to the more exposed one.

DEFLATING THE SELF-IMAGE

Media exposure is also considered a public health issue, as children receive lots of information about health especially from commercials, not all give true information about healthy lifestyles, and the majority of children believe what the commercials say leading to obesity and overweight.

Another issue is the portrayal of unrealistic images of beauty through advertising, promoting the idea of severe slimness, leading young girls to strive to look like "size zero" models. In 2007, Unilever adopted a global guideline to prevent the use of 'size zero' models or actors in its advertising to ensure that our advertising does not promote 'unhealthy' slimness. All brand directors and agencies are expected to use models and
actors with a Body Mass Index (BMI) of between 18.5 and 25 as a guideline. This is in line with United Nations' guidance on what level of BMI can be considered healthy.

In such cases commercials attempt to systematically devalue the self-image of the individual, making negative suggestions to cause the person to lose self-respect. The triggering of the worthless self-core is done by re-surfacing the: “I am worthless” thought (in other words the phobia), a negative prejudice which the individual has constructed about himself in the time period going all the way back to pre-childhood, even if the individual is in a healthy period of his life. The message given is obvious: “If you aren’t like the women in these magazines, you’re ugly”, “If you don’t dress like the men in this poster, you’re not worthy of respect”, “if the brand of the car you drive is not this one, you’re worthless”, “if your lifestyle is not like that of the people in this representation, people will not accept you” and various versions of such statements. Let’s now take a look at how this psychodynamic process functions.

The mirroring hypothesis, one of the hypotheses also emphasized by Lacan and developed in line with the psychoanalysis school, is an approach on how the self-image of a child forms during the oral development phase. It can be expressed as: I am, whatever I am in the eyes of others. In this phase, which Lacan terms as the mirroring phase, the baby makes the first determinations about its self from the expressions in the eyes and face of the person taking care of it, and comes to a designation in regards to what kind of an thing it is (Ozakkas, 2004). In later years, this person seeks a mirroring to feel excitement, sorrow, and appreciation; to experience its emotions. “Early ego identifications are formed, not only out of identification with the mothers state; but at the same time by identifying with the mothers perception of the baby.” (Volkan, 2005).
In adulthood however, the communication model established with the mother is renewed in personal relationships and relationships with all of society and the world.

The following message, given by the advertising industry, is critically important in this regard: “If you are not in line with the fashion here, you are not valuable” or “If you don’t look like the people here, you have no worth.” The ideal physical appearance or lifestyle image is pictured by the advertisement. The most basic, most fundamental needs of the psyche, such as respectability, being loved, acceptance, being of importance is associated with the marketed product in the fairy tale story established by the advertisement. Within this cycle, what is being purchased is no longer a “car tire” in the psyche of the consumer; but “sexual performance or the adoration of all women”, what is being purchased isn’t “lipstick”, but the “sexual desire of all men”, what is being purchased isn’t an “apple”, but a “lengthy life”, not a “phone plan”, but an “ideal lifestyle”. The products presented in the advertisement are objects that help complete the viewers feeling of inadequacy, and for the person purchasing it, it is magical (charming/spellbinding/enchanting). The person has symbolically compensated for his deficiency by purchasing that product.

In terms of the logic, the mechanism functions similar to the magical thinking process. However, what initially instigates the process and forces the person to ask if “it is a deficiency to not have this product?” or if he “really needs this?” is the emotional triggering of the neurotic structures self-worthlessness/defense mechanism, in other words narcissism. Since the person is not like those in the commercial, he feels worthless, and consumers are kept within that fragile state as a personal profile; the product is offered as the solution to this sense of worthlessness. The product is
purchased, self-worth is attained, until the new product catalogue comes out or the new season gets under way.

EXTERNAL CENTERED LIFE

External centered life is one of the key psychodynamics of advertising and consumer culture. So much so that we can consider the course of the external centered life in people and the course of the advertising industry as being synonymous. Narcissistic personality disorder “is the lack of empathy and interest towards others despite running after the other to gain extreme devotion, recognition and acceptance. It’s as if the narcissist... has an endless motivation to seek perfection, prosperity, power and beauty and finding others to admire him by mirroring his own vanity in everything he does” (Masterson, 2006). Together with this, a constant feeling of lacking something and emptiness haunts the narcissist. To put it more generally, Narcissism can be summed up as the state of “emotions such as grandiose uniqueness, significance, talent; endlessly keeping the mind busy with fantasies of winning and becoming victorious, feeling the need to constantly obtain the interest of others, being sensitive against the criticisms and evaluations of others despite lacking empathy towards others, using others, swaying back and forth between extreme idealization and extreme despise.” (Budak, 2003).

A great fear that follows the narcissist is the fear of being caught: being caught in the role he plays, being caught with his mask down if everyone realizes that everything they see is a setup, an image, this is the narcissists biggest fear. The narcissist dedicates his whole life keeping this secret. The result: people with this disorder are far from being natural, they’re artificial, and open to influence. “Use this” People will be impressed...”
When such a message is given, you can’t stop the narcissist, if what they tell him to use is manure or mud, he’ll go into it and bathe in it.

While primary narcissism during babyhood is viewed as being a normal part of the development process, secondary narcissism, the narcissistic defense mechanism active in adulthood, is a neurotic disorder. What’s interesting is that, beginning with personal effect on the narcissist, the description of the personality disorder is almost like a list of the emotions used by almost every single advertisement, as they exclaim: “if you buy my product, I promise you these.” In other words, it can be observed how this neurosis is so harmonious with the nature of advertisements, and how it is a disorder that functions in coordination with advertisements, even though a simple study of the dictionary definition of narcissism.

THE MECHANICS OF COMMERCIALS AND CHILD MINDS’ ENGAGEMENT IN ADULTHOOD

One of the significant indications which we would like to point out here is that for a narcissist, how the exterior world views him and what others say about him carries vital importance. The Narcissist has to mesmerize everyone in order to obtain admiration towards him. And for this, he has to organize his whole life as if it’s a showcase piece, and present it. The cost this has on the individual is truly immense. This cost resembles Jim Carey’s whole life and world consisting of a design, and him being forced to live inside the script in the 1998 production The Truman Show. Consequently, for a narcissist, the ending of admiration filled glances means death. Because of this, he is forced to constantly continue his role and is doomed to his role. What’s more, because
he is aware of this pretense deep down inside, he constantly lives with the fear of being caught. The most tragic of all is that he cannot understand what it is that makes him unhappy most of the time. He can only sense it: There are some things that are going wrong in this world, but what?

Yes there is adversity for the narcissist, however for the advertiser, never! Think for a moment how a person with this line of thought and so bewildered can be such a great model to sell all kinds of products to. Such a helpless person, ready to do anything and with a lifelong subscription to such a trait can be deceived so easily.

The emergence and development of the mentioned structure is as follows: short after birth the child begins separating from the mother and attempts to be an individual person. This is a necessary and healthy phase. However, it disheartens the mother. The pathological mother exhibits a reaction to the child separating. This reaction exhibits itself in the form of a threat to cut off love towards the child. The child feels this and returns back to the mother in panic at the end of every attempt to disassociate, cutting the process it short. This course of action is what establishes the seed to the external centered life that will arise in the future. External centered life also brings along with it, the need to highly mirror from others. In order to not lose the mother, to obtain her love and to ensure the continuation of the mirroring that allows the baby to experience heavenly feelings in babyhood, the child abandons its own need to be an individual, focuses on functioning for others by putting aside its own internal need (as the mother would approve of, not as the baby would prefer itself), and the first seed of external centered life is established. Such a person creates false identities to obtain approval.
Despite the disassociation, a healthy mother would respect the effort put forth by the baby to become an individual. Even if the child’s independence causes agony. An unhealthy mother however, uses her love as a bargaining chip to prevent the child from obtaining independence. Such a mother doesn’t develop this structure consciously, it had already been established 15-20 generations before her. Such constructs passes from one generation to the other, exactly like genetic material. Conditional love is the love given to the child when it becomes exactly as the mother would like it to be.

The threat of not being loved causes the child tremendous fear. The child develops the following thought pattern: “Instead of shifting towards my own preference, I should move towards my mother’s choice so I can guarantee love.” Because the child’s own desire carries the risk of losing the mothers love, it is casted aside. Being as the mother would approve of continues later on and takes on a shape that others, or in other words, the external world approves of. At this point, the false self has been developed, everything belonging to himself is now exhibited as a front to the outside. The worthless self-forms the basic core of the narcissist personality disorder.

Such narcissist traits rigorously need to be loved and approved of. They put forth this front everywhere they attempt to obtain love and approval. The narcissistic trait views the real inner-self as being worthless, and constantly forms (structures) itself according to the approval of other people, pursuing external based mirroring. For the narcissist, the world is a grand stage and he is there to obtain the love and admiration of everyone. He needs to present himself, and for this, every method and everything is acceptable because the interruption of mirroring is definite death for the narcissist.
WRANGLER ADVERTISMENT: WE ARE ANIMALS

The use of narcissism in the advertising industry is not coincidental nor is it intuitive. These practices are conscious undertakings, completed with knowledge of what the psychological dynamics of this disorder are, aiming to activate, beyond the individual, the masses. So much so that practitioners in the industry are well informed, not only about the attributes of the disorder, but at the same time, its literary roots, and even the artistic expressions of it in museums, and they also don’t refrain from simulating them as if ridiculing them. So much so, that Wranglers “We are Animals” campaign is an off shoot of Caravaggio’s 1599 dated Narcissist portrait, exhibited at the Galleria Nazionale d’Arte Antica Museum in Rome.

FFL Paris (Fred & Farid) Wrangler, 2008

The Wrangler print campaign produced for the 2008 season featured the slogan: WE ARE ANIMALS. The commercial was constructed using images of jean wearing naked
youth, placed in nature. While the slogan referred to impulses (urges), the visuals exhibited naked bodies sanctifying their own beauty.

Caravaggio; Narcissus, 1599

The conceited Narcissus, whose name was given to narcissism disorder, was warned by the gods: “those who can’t love others, should love themselves!” and was punished by being made to fall in love with himself (Sar, 2010).
CONCLUSION

Advertising associates widely in developing the child’s communication and linguistic skills, in addition to expanding their understanding, imagination, psychological and social forms. A child’s social and emotional development is largely dependent on the emotional well-being of his surrounding environment; this relationship supports healthy development in communication, cognition, social-emotional competence, and moral understanding. As children are our future, they are the ones that carry on family traditions, continue to build and develop communities, and continue to expand the knowledge of the human-race, advertising is considered one of the important means of child development, a way of expressing social values and ideology. Symbols and models used in advertising are important in shaping perceptions of one-self and others. (Deserieree A. Kennedy, 2000) It highly influences society and function as the producers and transmitters of ideologies, as they explain, instruct, and justify practices.
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