TEACHERS' QUALITIES AND SELF-EFFICACY PERCEPTIONS IN CHARACTER EDUCATION

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Abstract: Education has an inevitable effect on character formation and through this process, teachers' role is crucial. Therefore, the aim of the study was analyzing the views of primary school teachers concerning the qualities teachers should have and their self-efficacy perceptions as character educators. This was a descriptive survey study with 301 primary school teachers from schools at different socio-economical level. Within the study, The Qualities and Efficacies of Teacher in Character Education Scale (QETCES) developed within the study was used and statistical analyses (Mann Whitney U, Kruskall Wallis H, Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Tests) were conducted. The findings showed that women teachers had higher scores regarding both importance level and self-efficacy perception of character education; experienced teachers' self-efficacy perceptions were higher compared to less experienced and teachers graduated from bachelor completion program, educational institution and high school of education felt more efficient through character education compared to graduates of the other programs.

Key words: character education, primary school teacher, teacher qualities, self-efficacy perception

1. Introduction

The day by day changing structure of today's world brings about the problems such as interpersonal communication, violence, insecurity. This causes the importance individuals within society gives to standards of judgement, moral responsibility and development to gradually decrease. Studies in recent years show a distinct increase of crimes such as cheating, lie, theft, drunk driving through youngs and young adults; and this indicates the need for adults' being effective in teaching good behaviors in school, family and society being better models (Michigan 4-H Youth Development, 2014). All these ultimately put forward the necessity to raise individuals as better persons, make them possess the fundamental standards of judgement and have 'a good character'. Lickona (1991, p.51) defines 'good character' as knowing, asking for and doing the good and asserts that character includes active values. Character is a concept that shows the determination and consistency between individual's behaviors and opinions that is the conformity between his attitude and behavior (Çağatay, 2009, p.15).

Character is effected by individual's genetics and neighborhood. Either both parents' having to work in line with the responsibilities coming along with industrialized world and therefore the lack of time spent as a family, or the increase of stimulus from outside world effecting children and this effect's being at a high level has made family less effective through character development (Ulusoy & Dilmaç, 2012, p.84). Accordingly, the effect of school as a crucial stakeholder has increased within character education.

Character education is an intentional interference executed to make contribution to form individuals' whole moral actions or any of these (Berkowitz, 1999, s. 3). Character education is vital for the achievement of constructing a democratic society containing some ideals such as respect for others, caring for justice and equality, being concerned about public welfare, helping others voluntarily

(Koller, 2006, s. 22). However, in spite of its significance character education issue has been continually neglected. That most of teachers participated in a recent study conducted by Demirel, Gürsoy and Özkan (2014) stated that they had the opinion that character education is not carried out at a sufficient level also supports this neglect. It is expected in nearly all segments of society that teachers should make the necessary effort in terms of youngs' positive character development (Ekşi and Katılmış, 2011, p. 124). Teachers are the instructors of values by education's nature; so should they (Noddings, 2002, p. 70). Some responsibilities for an effective character education are elements such as teacher's being a model, a guide for students, treating with love, forming a moral basis in class providing students' knowing each other well, providing the moral discipline having support from the neighborhood and family, creating a democratic class environment, giving importance to cooperation and gaining moral values via curriculum (Lickona, 1991).

Through the studies conducted in Turkey and abroad, the views of teachers regarding character education and their self-efficacy perceptions in this context were investigated. In the study carried out by Ülger, Yiğittir and Ercan (2014) the middle school teachers' self-efficacy perceptions regarding character education were analyzed, their efficacy perceptions were found at mid-level. On the other hand, within the study by which Demirel (2009) examined primary school teachers and school principals' self-efficacy perceptions, it was found out that the self-efficacy perceptions of administrators were higher but generally the efficacy perceptions of both groups were high. Koller (2006, pp. 127-128) put forward that teachers' self-efficacy perceptions regarding character education were at a higher level while talking with students about what is right or wrong or moral behaviors, however these perceptions were at a lower level or mid-level when it comes to change the students' character qualities. When the self-efficacy perceptions of primary school teachers were analyzed, it was observed that primary school teachers saw themselves at a level that they could fulfil their responsibilities concerning character education through the study conducted by Milson and Mehlig (2002).

Primary school teachers have a very crucial role related to character education. The viewpoints of teachers would be accepted as role models by students at early ages towards this process are very significant (Yaşaroğlu, 2014, p. 126). The interaction of students with primary school teachers is at a very high level in a period they are most vulnerable and open to effect. In this term, it is so important that the awareness level and also efficacy perceptions of primary school teachers regarding character education are high. Also through the studies carried out, it was found out that primary school teachers' self-efficacy perceptions concerning character education are high and they have higher efficacy perceptions compared to middle school or high school teachers (Demirel, 2009; Milson & Mehlig, 2002). However, it is seen that teacher education programs are not that efficient in preparing teachers for this vital role (Sanderse, 2013) and teachers are educated without sufficient knowledge regarding how they could impact on their students' behaviors (Revell & Arthur, 2007).

It is seen that teachers' self-efficacy perceptions in terms of character education are high within literature. However, it is observed that through conducted studies in general the views of teachers regarding character education were consulted and they do not sufficiently include the practices made with this regard. Teachers' being efficient in terms of professional and personal development in a way will contribute to students' character and moral development is very crucial. The aim of this study was to analyze teachers' perceptions regarding the qualities teachers should possess in order to be an effective character educator, highlighting the relative importance of these qualities and to explore to the extent which they see themselves efficient as a character educator utilizing from various methods. In this context, the purpose of the study was analyzing the views of primary school teachers concerning the qualities teachers should have and their self-efficacy perceptions as a character educator.

2. Method

2.1. Research design

The study was conducted and designed by descriptive survey model. Through this model, it is aimed to define the person or subject, matter or incident in their own conditions and as they are (Karasar,

2008, p.77). As the purpose within this study was to find out the teachers' views regarding character education and their self-efficacy beliefs, survey model was the most appropriate design for the scope of the study.

2.2. Participants

The participants of this study were 301 primary school teachers (56.3% women; 43.7% men) from 23 public school within three different socio-economic levels (low-medium-high) in central towns of Adana (Seyhan, Çukurova, Yüreğir, Sarıçam) determined in an unbiased way.

Through the study, with the aim of examining the views of participants concerning the qualities of teachers in character education, The Qualities and Efficacies of Teacher in Character Education Scale (QETCES) was developed and applied to the determined participants through 2014-2015 Education year. The age range of participants was between 22 and 61 years with 45 years average. The years of seniority of participants including 169 women and 131 men were between 1- 44 years. While 67 % of participants were graduates from Faculty of Education, Educational Institution, Bachelor Completion Program, Teachers Training School and High School of Education, 33 % of the sampling were graduates of other faculties (Agriculture, Economic and Administrative Sciences, Arts and Sciences, Engineering, Aquaculture). The distribution of teachers according to socio-economical level of schools was as 49.5 % of participants were in schools in low, 25.9 % were in mid-level, and 24.6 % were in high socio-economical level.

2.3. Procedure

The Qualities and Efficacies of Teacher in Character Education Scale (QETCES) developed by the researcher within this study was used through data collection. Within development of this scale the wholistic definitions of character education and its included elements were examined. The six pillars of character education determined by Josephson Institute of Ethics 'trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, citizenship' values were taken as a basis preparing the items [Josephson Institute of Ethics (JIE), 2014]. Besides, the competencies Ryan and Bohlin (1999) stated as qualities a good character educator should possess (as cited in Demirel, 2009, p. 38) and the effective character education principles determined by Character Education Partnership was utilized (CEP, 2010).

While developing the scale through necessary literature review, an item pool of 68 items was prepared. This item pool was analyzed by 10 instructors working at Çukurova University Faculty of Education as expert opinion; the last form of the item pool was shaped by making necessary arrangements at the end of this period. The items in the scale were arranged in two dimensions. It was asked through the first dimension to what extent participants see the qualities teachers should possess as character educators significant while how much they feel themselves efficient in terms of these qualities was included within second dimension. The scale form was applied to the participants determined for the research after these arrangements.

The validity and reliability studies for the scale were statistically conducted by reliability analysis and explanatory factor analysis. Through the factor analysis carried out in order to determine the factor structure of the scale (QETCES), firstly with the aim of checking the appropriateness of the data for factor analysis Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) coefficient and Barlett Sphericty test results were analyzed. It was seen that these values were statistically significant (KMO=0.96; Barlett Sphericty test χ^2 = 6974.831, df = 561 p<.001). With the conducted analyses, skewness and kurtosis coefficients, item-total correlations, correlation matrix values, mutual variances, factor loads (min. .40) of items and the difference between the factor loads (min. .20) of items loaded on more than one factor were examined. Analyzing these values, 34 items were extracted from the scale. These applications were made by using extraction of principal components and orthogonal (varimax) rotation methods.

As a result of the factor analysis, a structure of two dimensions consisting of General Character Education Practices (GCEP) and Classroom Character Education Practices (CCEP) dimensions. Factors and factor loads, factor eigenvalues, variance percentages factors explained and Cronbach Alpha values and corrected item-total score correlation (r) and mutual variance values related to items were presented on Table 1.

Table 1. *Factor loadings and reliability analyses for QETCES items*

Item Number	F1	F2	r*	Communalities	Mean	Sd
1	.76		.71	.64	4.10	.72
2	.74		.73	.63	4.15	.73
3	.74	.30	.74	.63	4.38	.63
4	.73	.30	.73	.62	4.27	.64
5	.73		.68	.58	4.12	.77
6	.72		.68	.57	4.26	.67
7	.71	.35	.75	.63	4.26	.64
8	.71	.30	.72	.60	4.23	.67
9	.71		.68	.57	4.30	.68
10	.71	.30	.72	.59	4.14	.77
11	.70	.31	.71	.58	4.19	.67
12	.67	.38	.74	.59	4.27	.65
13	.64	.32	.67	.51	4.32	.59
14	.63	.31	.65	.49	4.46	.56
15	.61	.35	.67	.50	4.27	.70
16	.60		.57	.41	4.47	.59
17	.60		.61	.43	4.07	.71
18	.60	.36	.67	.49	4.27	.65
19	.60	.40	.68	.51	4.41	.63
20	.58	.32	.63	.44	4.30	.67
21	.57	.38	.66	.47	4.39	.59
22		.75	.66	.63	4.12	.67
23		.74	.60	.59	4.16	.58
24		.73	.65	.60	4.25	.62
25		.71	.59	.55	4.35	.66
26		.71	.65	.58	4.19	.69
27	.31	.71	.67	.60	4.16	.73
28	.31	.70	.66	.58	4.06	.78
29	.32	.69	.67	.58	4.04	.76
30	.33	.68	.66	.56	4.20	.69
31	.41	.63	.70	.57	4.12	.73
32	.31	.61	.60	.47	4.33	.63
33	.43	.60	.69	.55	4.21	.73
34	.42	.59	.68	.52	4.11	.78
Eigenvalue	16.53	2.32	Total			
Variance %	48.61	6.84	55. 44			
Cronbach's Alpha	.96	.93	.97			

r* : Corrected Item-Total Correlations

Note: Factor loads less than .30 are not shown on the table for readability

(KMO=0.96; Barlett Sphericty test χ^2 = 6974.831, df = 561 p<.001)

F1: Classroom Character Education Practices (CCEP); F2: General Character Education Practices(GCEP)

As seen on Table 1 the first dimension came out in QETCES was Classroom Character Education Practices (CCEP) including 21 items. Some of the items in this subscale were 'Gaining the values to the students with appropriate materials', 'Creating a class environment providing students' respect for variety and different ideas', 'Providing efficient communication via in class activities'. Cronbach Alpha coefficient of the items in the subscale was .96 and the factor loads of these items were between .57 and .76.

The other sub dimension of QETCES was General Character Education Practices (GCEP) consisting of 13 items. Within this subscale, there were items such as 'Caring for raising tolerant individuals', 'Providing opportunities making students experience ethical behaviors inside and outside of the school', 'Exchanging opinions with students regarding the rights and wrongs within life'. While Cronbach Alpha for this subscale was .93, the factor loads were between .59 and .75.

Cronbach Alpha coefficient of the whole scale was .97. The two subscales explained 55 % of total variance. Guttman Split Half values calculated in order to test the stability and consistency between two halves were for the first dimension CCEP .91 and for the second GCEP .93. Guttman Split Half value for the scale was .89.

The Qualities and Efficacies of Teacher in Character Education Scale (QETCES) is a five point Likert scale. Through this scale, teachers' views on the qualities teachers should possess regarding character education and their self-efficacy perceptions regarding these qualities were analyzed as two dimensions. In the first dimension regarding their views on qualities answers were as 1.Not important at all, 2. Not important, 3. Not sure, 4. Important, 5. Very Important and for the second dimension asking for self-efficacy perceptions answers could be 1. I am not efficient at all, 2. I am little efficient, 3. I am moderately efficient, 4. I am mostly efficient, 5. I am completely efficient. There were no negative items in the scale and there were clear instructions regarding the answering of the scale. The scores of the scale could be calculated both for subscales and the total scale. Both subscale and total scores were calculated. In the first dimension, high scores were showing that teachers gave high importance to the qualities while low scores were pointing low significance. Similarly, for the second dimension, high scores were related with high self-efficacy while low scores were associated with low self-efficacy.

2.4. Data Analysis

Prior to analyses of the data, the scores obtained by the scale were checked for normal distribution with Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. According to the results, it was found out that scale scores did not show normal distribution and therefore non-parametric tests were used through the analyses. Gender, institution of graduation, years of seniority variables were taken into consideration. For the comparison regarding gender Mann Whitney-U Test was used while for the other variables Kruskal Wallis H Test was used. For interpreting the means belong to teachers' scores from the scale group width value, was accepted as 4/5=0.80 as the scale was five point Likert. According to this value; the results were evaluated as 1.00-1.80 'very low'; 1.80-2.60 'low'; 2.60-3.40 'medium'; 3.40-4.20 'high'; 4.20-5.00 'very high'.

3. Results

3.1. Primary school teachers' views and self-efficacy perceptions concerning the necessary teacher qualities for character education

Within the scope of the first research question, primary school teachers' views on the qualities teachers should have for character education (to what extent teachers believe they are important-importance level) and their self-efficacy perceptions regarding these qualities were analyzed. Result of the analyses of the subscales CCEP and GCEP were presented on Table 2. Through the descriptive statistics for the subscales and total scores, it was seen that the scores obtained by two subscales for both importance level and self-efficacy perceptions were over 4. It was also found out that there was a difference between importance level and self-efficacy perception scores in both subscales and total scores. The results of Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test conducted to examine these differences were shown on Table 2.

Table 2. *Wilcoxon signed ranks test results*

Qualities Regarding Character Education Practices	Importance level-Self-efficacy perception	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	z	p
Classroom Character Education Practices (CCEP)	Negative Ranks	50	61.77	3088.50	-12.868 [a]	.000*
	Positive Ranks	207	145.24	30064.50		
	Ties	44				
General Character Education Practices (GCEP)	Negative Ranks	37	53.92	1995.00	-11.312 [a]	.000*
	Positive Ranks	238	151.07	35955.00		
	Ties	26				
Total	Negative Ranks	42	63.82	2680.50	-12.885 [a]	.000*
	Positive Ranks	248	159.33	39514.50		
	Ties	11				

a.   Based on negative ranks, p<.05*

According to Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test results, it is found out that there were significant differences for two subscales and total scores regarding the importance teachers gave for character education qualities and their self-efficacy perceptions in favor of importance level (p<.05).

3.2. The comparison of primary school teachers' views and self-efficacy perceptions according to gender

Primary school teachers' views and self-efficacy perceptions concerning the necessary teacher qualities for character education were compared according to gender. The results regarding this comparison were presented on Table 3 and 4.

Table 3. *Mann Whitney U results regarding primary school teachers' views concerning the necessary teacher qualities for character education according to gender*

Qualities Regarding Character Education Practices		Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U	p
	Classroom Character Education Practices (CCEP)	Women	169	162.14	27402.50	9101.500	.008*
		Men	131	135.48	17747.50		
	General Character Education Practices (GCEP)	Women	169	163.64	27656.00	8848.000	.003*
		Men	131	133.54	17494.00		
	Total	Women	169	163.91	27700.00	8804.000	.002*
		Men	131	133.21	17450.00		

p<.05*

When the values were examined, it could be asserted that there were significant differences between the views of women and men primary school teachers regarding both subscales and total scores. These differences were in favor of women within both subscales and total scores.

As seen in Table 4, there were not any significant differences between women and men in terms of subscales and total scores regarding teachers' self-efficacy perceptions for necessary teacher qualities in character education (p>.05).

Table 4. *Mann Whitney U results regarding primary school teachers' self-efficacy perceptions concerning the necessary teacher qualities for character education according to gender*

		Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U	p
Qualities Regarding Character Education Practices	Classroom Character Education Practices (CCEP)	Women	169	151.15	25545.00	10959.000	.718
		Men	131	149.66	19605.00		
	General Character Education Practices (GCEP)	Women	169	152.09	25703.50	10800.500	.882
		Men	131	148.45	19446.50		
	Total	Women	169	151.02	25522.50	10981.500	.906
		Men	131	149.83	19627.50		

3.3. The comparison of primary school teachers' views and self-efficacy perceptions according to years of seniority

Within this study, the effect of primary school teachers' years of seniority on these teachers' views regarding qualities teachers should possess in character education and their self-efficacy perceptions for these qualities was analyzed by Kruskal Wallis H-Test. Through these analyses, it was found out that importance level teachers gave to these qualities did not differ depending on years of seniority while their self-efficacy perceptions do so. The results of analyses regarding teachers' views and self-efficacy perceptions according to years of seniority were presented on Table 5 and 6.

Table 5. *Kruskal Wallis H-Test results regarding primary school teachers' views concerning the necessary teacher qualities for character education according to years of seniority*

		Years of seniority	N	Mean Ranks	df	X^2	p
Qualities Regarding Character Education Practices	Classroom Character Education Practices (CCEP)	1-10 years	22	139.30	3	5.485	.140
		11-22 years	142	138.39			
		23-33 years	96	163.42			
		34-44 years	33	141.41			
	General Character Education Practices (GCEP)	1-10 years	22	134.64	3	3.666	.300
		11-22 years	142	147.43			
		23-33 years	96	156.29			
		34-44 years	33	126.39			
	Total	1-10 years	22	134.70	3	4.375	.224
		11-22 years	142	142.64			
		23-33 years	96	161.03			
		34-44 years	33	133.12			

It was seen that there were not any significant differences regarding the importance level teachers gave to the qualities teachers should possess through character education; however the teachers having experience of 23-33 years gave more importance to these qualities.

Looking at the findings, it was observed that self-efficacy perceptions of teachers regarding the character education teacher qualities significantly differed by years of seniority [X^2 (3, 293) = 28.868; X^2 (3, 293= 24.132); X^2 (3, 293= 30.160)]. When the results for Classroom Character Education Practices subscale was examined, it could be asserted that the self-efficacy perceptions of teachers with 11-44 years of experience were higher than the teachers within their first 10 years and teachers with 23-44 years of seniority had higher self-efficacy perceptions than the ones within 11-22 years of seniority (p>.05). Moreover, regarding General Character Education Practices subscale, the data showed that teachers with 23-44 years of seniority had higher self-efficacy perceptions than teachers with 1-22 years of experience (p>.05). Similarly, related to total scores by the scale, there were found significant differences in favor of teachers with 23-33, 34-44 years of seniority.

Table 6. *Kruskal Wallis H-Test results regarding primary school teachers' self-efficacy perceptions concerning the necessary teacher qualities for character education according to years of seniority*

		Years of seniority	N	Mean Ranks	df	X^2	p	U
Qualities Regarding Character Education Practices	Classroom Character Education Practices (CCEP)	1. 1-10 years	22	92.36	3	28.868	.000*	2>1 3>1 4>1 3>2 4>2
		2. 11-22 years	142	130.40				
		3. 23-33 years	96	177.75				
		4. 34-44 years	33	165.38				
	General Character Education Practices (GCEP)	1. 1-10 years	22	100.09	3	24.132	.000*	3>1 4>1 3>2 4>2
		2. 11-22 years	142	131.08				
		3. 23-33 years	96	175.91				
		4. 34-44 years	33	162.65				
	Total	1. 1-10 years	22	95.30	3	30.160	.000*	3>1 4>1 3>2 4>2
		2. 11-22 years	142	128.94				
		3. 23-33 years	96	179.39				
		4. 34-44 years	33	164.95				

p<.05*

3.4. The comparison of primary school teachers' views and self-efficacy perceptions according to institution of graduation

Another variable, participants' views and self-efficacy perceptions regarding qualities within character education were examined with was institution of graduation. The institutions primary school teachers graduated from were as: 'Faculty of Education, Educational Institution, Bachelor Completion Program, Teachers' Training School, High School of Education and Other'. According to these institution types, whether there were significant differences between teachers' views and self-efficacy perceptions was analyzed by Kruskal Wallis H test. The results were presented on Table 7 and 8.

Table 7. *Kruskal Wallis H Test results regarding the comparison of primary school teachers' views concerning the necessary teacher qualities for character education according to institution of graduation*

		Institution of Graduation	N	Mean Ranks	df	X^2	P	U
Qualities Regarding Character Education Practices	CCEP	Faculty of Education	118	154.33	5	17.233	.004*	BC>FE BC>EI BC>HS BC>O
		Educational Institution	26	152.38				
		Bachelor Completion Program	19	222.45				
		Teachers' Training School	1	95.50				
		High School of Education	38	128.51				
		Others	99	142.15				
	GCEP	Faculty of Education	118	158.10	5	6.400	.269	
		Educational Institution	26	142.58				
		Bachelor Completion Program	19	188.08				
		Teachers' Training School	1	136.00				
		High School of Education	38	137.63				
		Others	99	142.92				
	Total	Faculty of Education	118	156.19	5	11.486	.043*	BC>FE BC>EI BC>HS BC>O
		Educational Institution	26	146.44				
		Bachelor Completion Program	19	208.29				
		Teachers' Training School	1	117.50				
		High School of Education	38	133.59				
		Others	99	142.04				

p<.05*

It could be seen that there were significant differences according to institution of graduation between importance levels for both CCEP (Classroom Character Education Practices) subscale and total scores in favor of Bachelor Completion Program graduates [X^2 (5, 301= 17.233; X^2 (5, 301= 11.486)]. It was found out that primary school teachers graduated from 'Bachelor Completion Program' gave more importance to the necessary character education qualities than graduates of 'Faculty of Education', 'Educational Institution', 'High School of Education' and 'Other' institution types for bot CCEP subscale and total scores. However, there was not found any significant difference for GCEP subscale [X^2 (5, 301= 6.400); p>.05].

Table 8. *Kruskal Wallis H Test results regarding the comparison of primary school teachers' self-efficacy perceptions concerning the necessary teacher qualities for character education according to institution of graduation*

		Institution of Graduation	N	Mean Ranks	df	X^2	p	U
Qualities Regarding Character Education Practices	CCEP	Faculty of Education	118	135.56	5	14.571	.012*	EI>FE BC>FE HS>FE BC>O
		Educational Institution	26	179.33				
		Bachelor Completion Program	19	193.39				
		Teachers' Training School	1	120.50				
		High School of Education	38	175.21				
		Others	99	144.84				
	GCEP	Faculty of Education	118	132.04	5	15.248	.009*	EI>FE BC>FE HS>FE BC>O
		Educational Institution	26	173.81				
		Bachelor Completion Program	19	192.71				
		Teachers' Training School	1	164.50				
		High School of Education	38	177.03				
		Others	99	149.48				
	Total	Faculty of Education	118	132.71	5	16.612	.005*	EI>FE BC>FE HS>FE BC>O
		Educational Institution	26	175.04				
		Bachelor Completion Program	19	197.55				
		Teachers' Training School	1	141.00				
		High School of Education	38	178.41				
		Others	99	147.13				

p<.05*

When the values on Table 8 were looked through, in both subscales of QETCES and total scores teachers' self-efficacy perceptions regarding character education qualities differed significantly in terms of institution of graduation [X^2 (5, 301) = 14.571; X^2 (5, 301= 15.248); X^2 (5, 301= 16.612)]. According to the results of U test conducted for paired comparison in order to analyze the source of significant differences between the means of scores obtained from Classroom character education practices subscale (CCEP), there were found statistically significant differences between educational institution graduates and education faculty graduates in favor of educational institution graduates; between bachelor completion program graduates and in favor of bachelor completion program graduates; between high school of education graduates and education faculty graduates in favor of high school of education graduates and between graduates of bachelor completion and other faculties in favor of bachelor completion graduates. On the other hand, there were significant differences between educational institution graduates and education faculty graduates in favor of educational institution graduates; between graduates of bachelor completion, education faculty and other faculties in favor of bachelor completion graduates; between graduates of high school of education and faculty of education in favor of high school graduates regarding the scores of General Character Education Practices subscale. In respect with U test results, the differences between means of groups were examined in terms of total scale scores, it was seen that there were found significant differences as in GCEP subscale scores, between educational institution graduates and education faculty graduates in

favor of educational institution graduates;   between graduates of bachelor completion, education faculty and other faculties in favor of bachelor completion graduates; between graduates of high school of education and faculty of education in favor of high school graduates (p<.05).

3. Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, the views and self-efficacy perceptions of primary school teachers regarding the qualities teacher should possess for character education were analyzed by different variables. At first, the level of significance teachers gave to the qualities necessary for character education that is their views regarding these qualities were examined. In this sense, the importance level regarding these qualities were found to be very high (X = 4.65) in terms of scale scores. In parallel with the qualities within the scale and considered important by the teachers, Lickona (1991) stated that teachers should show love and respect for their students, contribute to their self-confidence, be a role model and take on the task as a moral consultant, while Narvaez and Lapsley (2008) indicating that teachers need to possess characteristics of good parents through character education, emphasized that teachers should have the pedagogical knowledge regarding the relationship between character, society, achievement and supporting classroom environments (p.159).

When the self-efficacy perceptions of primary school teachers were analyzed, it was found out that the mean for the scale scores was 4.22 and this shows that they found themselves efficient in terms of these qualities. In a study carried out with primary school teachers in state schools of West Virginia, it was revealed that teachers perceived high self-efficacy related to contributing to character education while they did not feel the same efficacy in terms of dealing with external factors (Toney, 2012, p. 108). Within the study by Demirel (2009), it was also seen that self-efficacy beliefs of primary school teachers concerning character education were positive. Some similar findings were in the studies of Ülger, Yiğittir and Ercan (2014) and Dönmez and Avcı (2011) as well. In line with these findings, it could be asserted that teachers perceive themselves as efficient at a high level in terms of character education regardless of their teaching level or discipline.

On the other hand, when the scores teachers got from QETCES were compared regarding importance level and self-efficacy perceptions, there was found significant difference for both subscales and total scores in favor of importance level (p<.05). This result shows that both the importance level teachers gave to the qualities in QETCES and their self-efficacy perceptions regarding these qualities were high; however their self-efficacy perceptions were not high as much as the importance they gave to these qualities and the importance levels were higher. Through the conducted studies, it was also observed that teachers believe the importance of character education but they are not fully informed about what they should do for this education (Arthur & Revell, 2004; Ampel, 2009). Consequently, it could be inferred that teachers are aware of their roles concerning character education however they need a more comprehensive education related to character education practices and they want to feel more efficient in terms of this process.

As a part of this study, primary school teachers' views and self-efficacy perceptions regarding teacher qualities in character education were compared according to gender, years of seniority and institution of graduation. Firstly, according to gender, it was found that there were significant differences for importance level teachers gave to qualities when both subscales (GCEP and CCEP) and total scores were based on in favor of women teachers. As for self-efficacy levels, although there were not found any significant differences between women and men teachers' scores, it could be seen that the scores of women teachers were higher than men for both subscales and total scores. These findings could be inferred as women teachers give more importance to teacher qualities in character education and feel more efficient regarding these qualities compared to men. Through literature, there are many different findings regarding these results. For instance, within the studies by Demirel (2009), Milson and Mehlig (2002) and Ülger, Yiğittir and Ercan (2014), it was revealed that gender did not cause any significant differences regarding self-efficacy. Similarly, Waters (2011) in the study with pre-service teachers, self-efficacy perceptions in character education did not show any significant differences according to gender. On the other hand, there were also some studies supporting findings of this study. In some similar studies, even though there were not any significant differences between men and

women, generally women found to have higher self-efficacy perceptions compared to men. In Ampel (2009)'s study, as a result of the comparisons regarding giving importance to character education, self-efficacy and practices in this term, it was found that for importance and self-efficacy levels the difference were not significant despite higher scores for women; however concerning practices there were significant differences in favor of women (p.85). In the study by Dönmez and Avcı (2011) similar results showed that the self-efficacy perceptions of women social sciences teachers were higher than men. Through conducted studies, it is obvious that generally women teachers or pre-service teachers have higher self-efficacy perceptions regarding character education; however these differences between men and women teachers are not mostly statistically significant. Besides, it could be asserted that especially regarding importance level teachers gave to character education qualities, men's falling behind women teachers reveals a need for carrying out studies to close the gap between genders and make men to care for character education at least as much as women.

Another purpose of this study was to analyze the views and self-efficacy perceptions of participants regarding teacher qualities in character education according to years of seniority. When the scores obtained from subscales and the whole scale in terms of years of seniority were examined, it was observed that there were not significant differences related to importance level however there were significant differences concerning self-efficacy perceptions. It was found that these differences were between teachers having 1-22 years of experience and 23-44 years of experience in favor of the second group. Getting through literature, it was seen that in Ampel (2009)'s study, it was found out that teachers at their first year got higher scores than more experienced teachers regarding importance level, self-efficacy perceptions and practice level (p. 71-72). Nonetheless, in many studies there are findings showing that year of seniority is a vital variable through self-efficacy perception concerning character education. In the studies by Dönmez and Avcı (2011) and Ledford (2011) with teachers and also Lowe (2013) with pre-service teachers, findings were implying that years of seniority effect the efficacy in character education and more experienced teachers feel more efficient. In line with these studies and findings, it could be considered that experience has a positive effect on character education and more experienced teachers believe that they are more effective in students' character development.

The last variable through this study was institution of graduation. With this respect, according to the scores by subscales and the whole scale, teachers' views on character education qualities (importance level) significantly differed in favor of Bachelor Completion Program graduates. In terms of self-efficacy perceptions, it was seen that graduates of educational institution, high school of education and bachelor completion program had higher levels of self-efficacy compared to graduates of faculty of education and other faculties and there were significant differences among each other. Through the studies by Milson and Ekşi (2003) it was found that institution of graduation did not cause any significant differences regarding self-efficacy within character education while Milson and Mehlig (2002) put forward that institution of graduation effects self-efficacy belief. Moreover, in Avcı (2011)'s study, it was observed that social sciences teachers graduates of bachelor completion program had higher level of self-efficacy perceptions compared to graduates of education faculty and other faculties. This finding is parallel with the findings of the study showing that bachelor completion program, educational institution and high school of education graduates having higher self-efficacy perceptions. These teachers could be considered as more experienced teachers and this shows that teachers with higher self-efficacy perceptions are more experienced teachers. Considering that there have not been any appointments except for graduates of faculty of education in recent years, it could be asserted that these teachers are more experienced and working for many years. Looking at the findings regarding years of seniority, more experienced teachers were found to have higher self-efficacy perceptions which supports this finding as well. In this case, it could be considered that the significant differences were mostly related with years of seniority. However, there could be various reasons of these results. One of them could be related with years of seniority as mentioned. Another one could be that teachers graduates of faculty of education having a full grasp of the situation and being more pedagogically equipped make more realistic and sensitive assessment; therefore they evaluate their self-efficacy at a low level feeling the need for being more effective. Lastly, this result could create a need for questioning the quality of teacher education within recent years. Furthermore, that the self-efficacy levels of teachers graduated from education faculties were lower than graduates of bachelor completion, high school of education and educational institution is such as to justify this

questioning. It was put forward that there is a quality problem within teacher education and this is felt by the stakeholders as well in studies conducted (Okçabol, 2004; Azar 2011). It could be said that this problem should be dealt with on the basis of increasing teacher quality and educating teachers will contribute to students' gaining values and character development.

As a consequence, it is really crucial to improve teachers' effectiveness in character education and also make them give importance to children's character development and their roles through this period. Therefore, it could be beneficial to include character education and the necessary teacher qualities within teacher education to raise teachers will contribute character development of their students. Besides, it is obvious that experience has a positive impact on efficacy in character education, and so teachers should be provided in-service education to be more efficient and have more experiences regarding character education. There could be conducted many other studies to include the other stakeholders and to be able to form a wholistic picture related to the current character education process in schools.

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