Professional competencies of teacher candidates: Personal SWOT analyzes sample

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to examine personal SWOT analyzes of teacher candidates within the scope of professional competencies. Qualitative research approach was used in the study. The study group of the research consists of 49 teacher candidates selected by the easily accessible case sampling method. The data of the research were obtained with the semi-structured "Semi-Structured Interview Form on Personal SWOT Analyzes". Content analysis was used to analyze the data obtained from the opinions of the teacher candidates. As results of the research; it was seen that teacher candidates said 31 strengths. The most repeated category is "to have a strong communication" and the least repeated categories are "to be humanist", "to have numerical intelligence" and "to be hygienic". As a result of the content analysis, it was seen that teacher candidates said 24 weaknesses. The most repeated category is "to be emotional" and the least repeated categories are "to be impulsive, to see every child the same, to be panic, to speak in a low voice, bad handwriting, lack of persuasion ability, lack of attention, to be lonely, to spend to much time on social media". As a result of the content analysis, it was seen that teacher candidates said 16 opportunities. The most repeated category is "opportunities of university" and the least repeated categories are "effective lessons in faculty, new regulations in the field of education, opportunity to go abroad, to be away from family, to have a good family, socioeconomic status of family". As a result of the content analysis, it was seen that teacher candidates said 21 threats. The most repeated category is "talented competitors" and the least repeated categories are "stress, lack of technology knowledge, interpersonal relations, exam oriented education system, inequality of opportunity".

Keywords: Professional competences; teacher candidates; SWOT analysis; teaching qualifications

1. Introduction

Education is the most effective tool for shaping the future of a country. Education is seen as the key to both the individual's self-development and the progress of the society (Çetin & Sönmez, 2009). It is expected that individuals who will work in the teaching profession, which is a practice-oriented field, will have acquired the skills as well as the knowledge required for teaching (Karakuş, Ucuzsatar, Karacaoğlu, Esendemir & Bayraktar, 2020).

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It is believed that pre-service teachers who develop themselves well-equipped in various fields will become more social, more sensitive to the problems of the society and have developed problem-solving skills in their lives after the education process (Ayvacı & Akyıldız, 2009).

Teaching is carried out as a professional profession (Karabacak and Eskicumalı, 2015). Therefore, a teacher must have certain competencies in order to be trained in a qualified manner and to perform his/her profession (Gürler, 2017). Because having qualified teachers is a prerequisite for changes to be made in the field of education.

The most important change agent of the developing society is the teachers. Teaching, known as a profession that has always undertaken the task of giving direction to social life from past to present, has sometimes been the guardian of the regime and sometimes the architect of the social structure. The pedagogical competence, which is an important pillar of the pre-service education of such a sensitive profession, is important for the future (Dilci &Yıldız, 2012).

Competence is the characteristics that must be possessed in order to perform a profession successfully (Şişman, 2002). Şahin (2004) states that the concept of competence should be seen as the minimum standards for a job and underlines its importance in terms of professional performance. The competencies of the teaching profession in Turkey are determined by the Ministry of National Education, it is emphasized that teaching is a profession of specialization.

Teacher competencies has been discussed in 4 dimensions (MEB, 2017).

(i) competencies related to field and field education,

(ii) competencies related to the learning-teaching process,

(iii) monitoring, assessing and recording students' learning and

(iv) complementary professional competences.

Teacher self-efficacy is one's view of one's own capacity for teaching. Teachers' perceptions of their self-efficacy can affect their activities, efforts and academic success of students (Çolak, Yorulmaz, & Altınkurt, 2017). While teachers with low self-efficacy may avoid engaging in activities that they think will surpass them, helping students with difficulties, and seeking materials, teachers with high self-efficacy are more likely to develop challenging activities, guide students with difficulties, and provide a positive classroom environment (Gibson & Dembo, 1984).

SWOT analysis means strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and potential threats. SWOT analysis is a technique that will help people understand their strengths and weaknesses, realize their opportunities and see the threats they may face.Opportunities and threats of the organization or individual determined by external environment analysis and strengths and weaknesses determined by internal environment analysis combination (Bryson, 1995). Every person has strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Knowing one's strengths is important in terms of fully using one's abilities and being successful in life, similarly, knowing one's weak points is important in terms of learning how to deal with weak points by minimizing the problems they experience (Çalıkoğlu, 2016). This technique facilitates the determination of the right steps to be taken by evaluating the strengths and weaknesses, possible opportunities and threats. The main purpose of this technique; It is to ensure that the strong and weak, advantageous and disadvantageous points are considered as a whole in the decision-making process for any subject. In this way, it will be possible to realistically evaluate all aspects of the decision to be taken personally. One of the important benefits of analysis is to enable the person to gain awareness about himself (Şener & Gündüzalp,2018).

When the literature is examined, studies on SWOT analyzes for educational institutions (Özan, Polat, Gündüzalp & Yaraş, 2015; Yıldırım, 2008; Birel, 2008; Koca, 2015; Güldiken, 2016; Erçetin, 2019; Aköz, 2019; Bozok, 2019; Diktaş, 2019) and studies on the opinions of teacher candidates about SWOT analyzes for community service and teaching practice courses in distance education (Gök Çolak & Efeoğlu, 2021; Uysal Bayrak & Tanık Önal, 2021) and a study to share with other professors the value of a career self SWOT analysis for students and encourage professors to instill the value of business tools and strategies for students' career application, and enable professionals to continuously progress in their careers through the use of these tools (Adams & Allred, 2013), a study to propose a method of SWOT-analysis for individuals in order to form a matrix of activities for achieving the objectives of the individual within the context of the classification of goals (Emiliya, Natalia & Oleg, 2016) were seen.

In addition, Şener & Gündüzalp (2018) aimed to determine the opinions of vocational school students on personal SWOT analyzes. Using the purposeful sampling method in the research, 60 vocational school students studying in the 2018-2019 academic year were determined as the study group. The content analysis method used in the analysis of the study data was used. The research data were obtained with a semi-structured interview form. As results of the research; students had more opinions about their strengths and opportunities less opinions about weaknesses and threats.

When literature examined, no study has been found that discusses the professional competencies of teacher candidates through personal SWOT analyzes. It is important for teacher candidates to know their strengths and weaknesses, to be aware of their opportunities and threats, and to make the right decisions. Teacher candidates should know themselves well in order to perform their profession successfully. The aim of this research is to examine personal SWOT analyzes of teacher candidates within the scope of professional competencies. For this purpose, the following problems were identified:

1. What are the strengths of teacher candidates within the scope of professional competencies?

2. What are the weaknesses of teacher candidates within the scope of professional competencies?

3. What are the opportunities for teacher candidates within the scope of professional competencies?

4. What are the threats within the scope of professional competencies for teacher candidates?

2. Method

2.1. Research model

Qualitative research approach was used in the study. Because qualitative research is a preferred approach in systematically examining the meanings arising from the experiences of the people who are researched or planned to be conducted (Ekiz, 2003). The research design was determined as the phenomenology design. This pattern focuses on facts that we are aware of but do not have an in-depth and detailed understanding of (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011).

2.2. Study group

The study group of the research consists of 49 teacher candidates selected by the easily accessible case sampling method. The easily accessible situation sampling method gives the researcher speed and practicality, and the researcher chooses a situation that is close and easy to access (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011).

Table 1. Demographic variables

Variable	Groups	n
Gender	Female	34
	Male	15
	Total	49
	Department of Maths and Science Education	7
	Department of Turkish and Social Sciences Education	15
	Department of Physical Education	10
	Department of Fine Arts	5
	Department of Foreign Language Education	12
	Total	49
Class	First	29
	Second	7
	Third	5
	Fourth	8
	Total	49

As seen in the table, 34 teacher candidates are female and 15 teacher candidates are male. 12 teacher candidates study in department of foreign language education, 15 teacher candidates study in department of turkish and social sciences education, 7 teacher candidates study in department of maths and science education, 10 teacher candidates study in department of physical education, 5 teacher candidates study in department of fine arts. 29 teacher candidates are first year students, 7 teacher candidates are second year students, 5 teacher candidates are third year students and 8 teacher candidates are fourth year students.

2.3. Data Collection

The data of the research were obtained with the semi-structured "Semi-Structured Interview Form on Personal SWOT Analyzes". By examining the data obtained from the interviews, teacher candadates' views on personal SWOT analyzes within the scope of professional competencies were determined. While preparing the interview form, the opinions of 2 academicians were consulted. In line with the suggestions of expert academicians, the logic and language errors in the interview form were corrected and its final form:

Semi-Structured Interview Form on Personal SWOT Analyzes

What are your strengths of teacher candidates within the scope of professional competencies?
What are your weaknesses of teacher candidates within the scope of professional competencies?
What are your opportunities for teacher candidates within the scope of professional competencies?
What are your threats within the scope of professional competencies for teacher candidates?

2.4. Analysis of Data

Content analysis was used to analyze the data obtained from the opinions of the teacher candidates. Content analysis enables the creation of a certain framework by making sense of the raw data obtained, and the concretization of codes and categories by arranging them after the emerging situation becomes clear (Patton, 2002). Content analysis approach is a method frequently used in the analysis of interview data and open-ended questions. In the study, internal validity was tried to be ensured by expert examination, participant confirmation and keeping the duration of the interviews long. External validity, on the other hand, was carried out with the detailed description method. Each interview was numbered starting from 1 and while the statements of the participants were included in the findings, descriptors such as P1, P2, …, P49 were placed at the beginning.

3. Results

In this section, the results are given in order according to the problems of the research. As seen in Table 2 below, as a result of the content analysis, it was seen that teacher candidates said 31 strengths and they are "to have strong understanding, to be patient, to love job, to have strong communication, to have intense concentration to be helpful, to be responsible, to be hygienic, to be disciplined, to be friendly, to be merciful, to make lessons fun, to empathize, to use teaching principles and methods, to be researcher, to have numerical intelligence, to be an entrepreneur, to be determined, not to give up, to be familiar for teamwork, to be energetic, to be humanist, to be open to criticism, to be punctual, to be hardworking, to have correct diction, to have analytical skills, to have leadership skills, to be good listener, to be social". The most repeated category is "to have a strong communication" and the least repeated categories are to be humanist, "to have numerical intelligence" and "to be hygienic".

Table 2. Teacher candidates' views on the strengths of teacher candidates within the scope of professional competencies

No	Categories	f
1	To have strong understanding	4
2	To be patient	8
3	To love job	4
5	To have strong communication	27
6	To have intense concentration	3
7	To be helpful	3
8	To be responsible	8
9	To be hygienic	1
10	To be disciplined	10
11	To be friendly	3
12	To be merciful	2
13	To make lessons fun	4
14	To empathize	7
15	To use teaching principles and methods	6
16	To be researcher	5
17	To have numerical intelligence	1
18	To be an entrepreneur	2
19	To be determined	4
20	Not to give up	2
21	To be familiar for teamwork	4
22	To be energetic	4
23	To be humanist	1
24	To be open to criticism	2
25	To be punctual	3
26	To be hardworking	3
27	To have correct diction	2
28	To have analytical skills	3
29	To have leadership skills	3
30	To be good listener	4
31	To be social	5

Some of the statements of the participants are as follows:

P6: "...I can make lessons fun when I become a teacher..."

P3: "... I care about the teaching profession and I have intense concentration for this job ..."

P2: "...I have strong communication with my friends, teachers and other people..."

P26: "...I can be friendly to my students and like them..."

Table 3. Teacher candidates' views on the weaknesses of teacher candidates within the scope of professional competencies

No	Categories	f
1	To be emotional	21
2	Lack of time management	13
3	To be obsessed	7
4	Lack of technology knowledge	5
5	To be niggling	7
6	To be impulsive	1
7	To be anxious	2
8	To be stubborn	2
9	To see every child the same	1
10	To be panic	1
11	To speak in a low voice	1
12	Lack of teaching experience	2
13	Bad handwriting	1
14	To have procrastination behavior	2
15	To be angry	6
16	To be lazy	2
17	Self-confidence problem	5
18	Lack of persuasion ability	1
19	To be impatient	6
20	To be shy	10
21	Lack of attention	1
22	To be lonely	1
23	To spend to much time on social media	1
24	To be pessimistic	2

As seen in the table, as a result of the content analysis, it was seen that teacher candidates said 24 weaknesses and they are "to be emotional, lack of time management, to be obsessed, lack of technology knowledge, to be niggling, to be impulsive, to be anxious, to be stubborn, to see every child the same, to be panic, to speak in a low voice, lack of teaching experience, bad handwriting, to have procrastination behavior, to be angry, to be lazy, self-confidence problem, lack of persuasion ability, to be impatient, to be shy, lack of attention, to be lonely, to spend too much time on social media, to be pessimistic ". The most repeated category is "to be emotional" and the least repeated categories are "to be impulsive, to see every child the same, to be panic, to speak in a low voice, bad handwriting, lack of persuasion ability, lack of attention, to be lonely, to spend too much time on social media". Some of the statements of the participants are as follows:

P39: "… I spend too much time on social media..."
P12: "… I am so angry and that causes me to regress…"
P18: "…I think to be impatient will prevent me from getting feedback from students…"
P36: "… I am not active in classes because I am a shy person…"

Table 4. Teacher candidates' views on the opportunities of teacher candidates within the scope of professional competencies

No	Categories	f
1	The increase of interest on foreign languages	7
2	Effective lessons in faculty	1
3	Opportunities to find a job	10
4	Opportunities of university	11
5	Accessibility of academics	3
6	To study in small city	10
7	To meet new people	5
8	Mentors	3
9	Technological developments	6
10	New regulations in the field of education	1
11	EU grants	2
12	Opportunity to go abroad	1
13	To be away from family	1
14	To have a good family	1
15	Socioeconomic status of family	1
16	Talented academics	4

As seen in the table, as a result of the content analysis, it was seen that teacher candidates said 16 opportunities and they are " the increase of interest on foreign languages, effective lessons in faculty, opportunities to find a job, opportunities of university, accessibility of academics, to study in small city, to meet new people, mentors, technological developments, new regulations in the field of education, eu grants, opportunity to go abroad, to be away from family, to have a good family, socioeconomic status of family, talented academics ". The most repeated category is "opportunities of university" and the least repeated categories are "effective lessons in faculty, new regulations in the field of Education, opportunity to go abroad, to be away from family, to have a good family, socioeconomic status of family". Some of the statements of the participants are as follows:

P14: "… Having opportunities to find a job with the confidence of knowing a foreign language…"
P17: "… There are a lot of people around me who are teachers and I can get advice from them…"
P26: "… Since I know a foreign language, I am more advantageous than other candidates and I will have more opportunities to find a job…"
P28: "… Being away from family is an opportunity for me I can take time for myself…"

Table 5. Teacher candidates' views on the threats of teacher candidates within the scope of professional competencies

No	Categories	f
1	Lack of university equipment	4
2	High class sizes	2
3	Noisy school corridors	3
4	Exams	2
5	Stress	1
6	Lack of technology knowledge	1
7	Future	2
8	Interpersonal relations	1
9	Lack of reputation of being a teacher	2
10	Appointments	9
11	Talented competitors	12
12	Lack of university activities	2
13	Negative people	7
14	Social pressure	3
15	Studying in small city	8
16	Obstacles of the family	5
17	Location of the university	4
18	Technological developments	3
19	Exam oriented education system	1
20	Socioeconomic status of family	5
21	Inequality of opportunity	1

As seen in the table, as a result of the content analysis, it was seen that teacher candidates said 21 threats and they are " lack of university equipment, high class sizes, noisy school corridors, exams, stress, lack of technology knowledge, future, ınterpersonal

relations, lack of reputation of being a teacher, appointments, talented competitors, lack of university activities, negative people, social pressure, studying in small city, obstacles of the family, location of the university, technological developments, exam oriented education system, socioeconomic status of family, inequality of opportunity". The most repeated category is "talented competitors" and the least repeated categories are " stress, lack of technology knowledge, interpersonal relations, exam oriented education system, inequality of opportunity". Some of the statements of the participants are as follows:

P8: " … Having talented competitors are threats for me …."
P7: "… I see lack of reputation of being a teacher in our country as a threat …"
P11: " … I want to improve myself but the city I live in is small…"
P13: "… The location of the university are quite difficult…"

4. Discussion

As a result of the content analysis, it was seen that teacher candidates said 31 strengths, and they are "to have strong understanding, to be patient, to love job, to have strong communication, to have intense concentration, to be helpful, to be responsible, to be hygienic, to be disciplined, to be friendly, to be merciful, to make lessons fun, to empathize, to use teaching principles and methods, to be researcher, to have numerical intelligence, to be an entrepreneur, to be determined, not to give up, to be familiar for teamwork, to be energetic, to be humanist, to be open to criticism, to be punctual, to be hardworking, to have correct diction, to have analytical skills,   to have leadership skills, to be good listener, to be social". The most repeated category was "to have a strong communication" and the least repeated categories were to be humanist, "to have numerical intelligence" and "to be hygienic". Şener & Gündüzalp (2018) found students often shared their strengths as being determined, believing in success and being goal-oriented. In addition, being hardworking, patient, self-confident, challenging, practical, positive, curious, courageous intelligent, entrepreneur, researcher, communicative, calm, observant, creative to be able to deal with people and problems, solution-oriented, merciful, careful, enthusiastic, innovative, playful, sincere, honest and conscious, to have leadership qualities and a good memory, to love, to understand lessons. Uysal Bayrak & Tanık Önal (2021) found teacher candidates stated that the distance community service practices course has the following strengths: to develop human relations, to gain responsibility and different perspectives, to socialize, to belong to the community, to be entertaining, to gain the ability to work with a group, to realize strengths and weaknesses, interaction with children, to improve research skills, affordability, to obtain information, peer learning.

As a result of the content analysis, it was seen that teacher candidates said 24 weaknesses and they are "to be emotional, lack of time management, to be obsessed, lack

of technology knowledge, to be niggling, to be impulsive, to be anxious, to be stubborn, to see every child the same, to be panic,   to speak in a low voice, lack of teaching experience, bad handwriting, to have procrastination behavior, to be angry, to be lazy, self-confidence problem, lack of persuasion ability, to be impatient, to be shy, lack of attention, to be lonely, to spend to much time on social media, to be pessimistic ".The most repeated category is "to be emotional" and the least repeated categories are "to be impulsive, to see every child the same, to be panic,   to speak in a low voice, bad handwriting, lack of persuasion ability, lack of attention, to be lonely, to spend to much time on social media". Şener & Gündüzalp (2018) found students often shared their weaknesses as being emotional, quick, very attached to the family, angry, melancholic, desperate, skeptical ,stubborn, obsessed, anxious, distracted, forgetful, shy, impatient, touchy, not expressing oneself well, having fear of failure and fear of losing family, feeling old/low energy, tear up when angry, succumb to greed, not reading a book, , making sudden decisions. Uysal Bayrak & Tanık Önal (2021) found the most repeated opinions of teacher candidates about weaknesses of the distance community service practices course are; not to be able to practice, not to get pleasure, having difficulty in finding an activity, difficulties in communicating with classmates, lack of professional experience and lack of equipment. However, it is difficult to communicate with the lecturers, to prepare homework and to make videos.

As a result of the content analysis, it was seen that teacher candidates said 16 opportunities and they are " the increase of interest on foreign languages, effective lessons in faculty, opportunities to find a job, opportunities of university, accessibility of academics, to study in small city, to meet new people, mentors, technological developments, new regulations in the field of education, eu grants, opportunity to go abroad, to be away from family, to have a good family, socioeconomic status of family, talented academics ". The most repeated category is "opportunities of university" and the least repeated categories are "effective lessons in faculty, new regulations in the field of Education, opportunity to go abroad, to be away from family, to have a good family, socioeconomic status of family". Şener & Gündüzalp (2018) found students often shared their opportunities as job opportunity family support, enough free time, lack of social life, school environment, study environment, being in a small place, age, being knowledgeable, good educators, private sector, no barriers, educational activities, friend environment and budget. Uysal Bayrak & Tanık Önal (2021) found the most repeated opinions of teacher candidates about opportunities of the distance community service practices course are; to gain experience in conducting the course in a distance learning environment, to reach many people with events, to learn professional development and activity development, to provide personal development,the process provides the opportunity to learn wherever and whenever you want, to learn to develop activities with

simple inexpensive materials,to use of information technology, to learn how to make videos and development of positive attitudes towards the profession

As a result of the content analysis, it was seen that teacher candidates said 21 threats and they are " lack of university equipment, high class sizes, noisy school corridors, exams, stress, lack of technology knowledge, future, ınterpersonal relations, lack of reputation of being a teacher, appointments, talented competitors, lack of university activities, negative people, social pressure, studying in small city, obstacles of the family, location of the university, technological developments, exam oriented education system, socioeconomic status of family, inequality of opportunity". The most repeated category is "talented competitors" and the least repeated categories are "stress, lack of technology knowledge, interpersonal relations, exam oriented education system, inequality of opportunity". Şener & Gündüzalp (2018) found students often shared their threats as unable to find a job, family pressure, social pressure, prejudice of environment, studying in a small place, harmful people, technology, marriage, social media, and occupational challenges. Uysal Bayrak & Tanık Önal (2021) found the most repeated opinions of teacher candidates about threats of the distance community service practices course are problems arising from the lack of internet speed and infrastructure, control difficulty and problems related to course content.

5. Conclusions

Teacher candidates should know themselves well in order to perform their profession successfully. The aim of this research is to examine personal SWOT analyzes of teacher candidates within the scope of professional competencies. As results of the research; it was seen that teacher candidates said 31 strengths. The most repeated category is "to have a strong communication" and the least repeated categories are "to be humanist", "to have numerical intelligence" and "to be hygienic". As a result of the content analysis, it was seen that teacher candidates said 24 weaknesses. The most repeated category is "to be emotional" and the least repeated categories are "to be impulsive, to see every child the same, to be panic, to speak in a low voice, bad handwriting, lack of persuasion ability, lack of attention, to be lonely, to spend to much time on social media". As a result of the content analysis, it was seen that teacher candidates said 16 opportunities. The most repeated category is "opportunities of university" and the least repeated categories are "effective lessons in faculty, new regulations in the field of education, opportunity to go abroad, to be away from family, to have a good family, socioeconomic status of family". As a result of the content analysis, it was seen that teacher candidates said 21 threats. The most repeated category is "talented competitors" and the least repeated categories are "stress, lack of technology knowledge, interpersonal relations, exam oriented education system, inequality of opportunity".

Activities in terms of professional competence that teacher candidates can learn to use their strengths improve their weaknesses and become aware of the opportunities and threats around them can be organized. So teacher candidates can know themselves well in order to perform their profession successfully. The research can be conducted with other samples such as teachers, administrators, academicians or with teacher candidates at other universities.

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