Current Studies in Pre-service Teacher Education

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Edited by

Cihat Atar and Hakkı Bağcı

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AR:	Augmented reality
CCSSM:	Common core state standards for mathematics
CA:	Conversation Analysis
ESL:	English as a second language
EPOSTL:	European language portfolio for foreign language
	teachers
HOTS:	Higher order thinking skills
IRF:	Initiation, response and feedback
MNO:	Ministry of national education
NCTM:	National council of mathematics teachers
PISA:	Programme for international student assessment
SEN:	Students in need of special education
TIMSS:	Trends in international science and mathematics study
3T:	The third turn
VR:	Virtual reality

INTRODUCTION

Pre-service teacher education has the potential to be the genesis of any educational matter. The philosophy, method, success or failure of any educational system cannot be imagined independent of pre-service teacher education. Accordingly, this book provides studies on pre-service teacher education from various fields in Education and in this sense, it offers a volume which provides the readers with an extensive range of studies on pre-service teacher education.

In this book issues around pre-service teacher education are demonstrated through fourteen chapters in several countries (Turkey, Malaysia, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia). The chapters are analysed and discussed based on the related research undertaken by the authors. What this book offers to readers is providing them with an idea of whats and hows of pre-service teacher education through academic studies. So, this book has set out to form a collection of studies which presents the current topics, approaches and methodologies in pre-service education. This means that this book offers the readers a variety of topics and methodologies, which in turn may make this book a handbook for readers who would like to learn about some of the recent issues in pre-service teacher education. In this sense, the readers of this book will be able to read and learn about different topics, approaches and methodologies that have prevailed in their fields recently.

CHAPTER ONE

PRE-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION: FOCUSING ON TURKEY

CAHIT ERDEM, MEHMET KOÇYIĞIT, AND CIHAT ATAR

Introduction

Pre-service teacher education has the potential to be the genesis of any educational matter. The philosophies, methods, success, or failure of any educational system cannot be imagined independently of pre-service teacher education. In this chapter, as an introduction to the book, preservice teacher education is dealt with under three main points. The first issue is the definition and importance of pre-service teacher education in which the concept is explained broadly. Then, teacher education in Turkey is scrutinized, and both historical and current practices are taken into consideration. For the last part, some issues about teacher education in Turkey are considered based on the related research in the country. Accordingly, this chapter offers an idea of the whats and hows of preservice teacher education in general, and its condition in Turkey in particular.

Pre-service Teacher Education

Pre-service teachers are people who pursue a relevant degree in order to become a teacher in the future. In the literature, the term "prospective teacher" is occasionally used. Pre-service teacher education can be defined as degrees or programs in which student teachers acquire different kinds of knowledge and skills. They are required to learn about relevant theoretical and pedagogical issues which include various theories, frameworks, and models. In addition, although there is much variation from country to country and institution to institution, most of the modern institutions

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require them to complete a practice component in which they observe classes, evaluate and discuss the practices they have observed, and ultimately teach themselves. In this sense, pre-service teacher education is a complex phenomenon in which future teachers are expected to obtain not only relevant and sufficient information but also observe teaching in authentic contexts, as well as teach under the supervision of cooperating teachers, mentors, and/or supervisors. Programs designed for pre-service teacher education work on ways to prepare teachers who are acquainted with the pedagogical skills that are expected to serve the needs of the teaching profession (Bransford, Darling-Hammond, and LePage 2005). In recent decades, the significance of pre-service teacher education has been acknowledged.

One point that is worth mentioning, to clarify the significance of preservice teacher training, concerns received wisdom (Kennedy 1999). According to the concept of received wisdom, teaching practice is seen as a self-evident one – it simply means that if you know a subject, you can teach it. This idea presupposes that knowing a subject is sufficient for teaching it. This entails the idea that pedagogic knowledge is not essential, and that anyone, possibly with an undergraduate degree, can teach a subject as long as they are proficient in it. In this sense, this idea is problematic, and it looks down on the benefits of pre-service teacher education. So, why exactly is pre-service teacher education important?

The most significant agent of pre-service teacher education concerns the subjects of the training – pre-service teachers. As prospective teachers, pre-service teachers will do teaching and probably have a great effect on hundreds and maybe thousands of students. In this sense, pre-service teacher education is very critical, and thus appropriate and sufficient training will have a snowball effect. Then, it can be argued that for the field of education, the education of pre-service teachers is as significant an issue as the improvements in teaching methods, approaches, or applications. Finding out new methods or applications definitely has a significant effect on teaching and learning practices. However, if the teachers who are going to implement those applications or methods are not trained well enough, such efforts will be futile. Accordingly, the training of pre-service teachers is a vital issue.

Another point that underlines the importance of pre-service teacher training is that teachers tend to teach in the way they have been taught. If teachers are not systematically educated on pedagogical issues, they will probably teach in the same way they observed in their own learning experience. This means that they will be inclined to use more traditional approaches and skip the newer approaches that have recently emerged and have been shown to be more successful via research. For instance, as Mutlu (2015) reported, in-service teachers in Turkey may still use traditional approaches, and they do not ask appropriate questions or let students elaborate and participate in conversations, although studies on the communicative approach or conversation analysis suggest otherwise (Atar and Seedhouse 2018; Walsh 2011). It may be concluded here that preservice teacher education is essential, and it is of great significance to ensure that it is undertaken in accordance with the latest developments.

The History of Teacher Education in Turkey and Current Practices

The Turkish Republic was founded in 1923, following an independence war after the First World War, which led to the collapse of its antecedent, the Ottoman Empire (1299–1922). As Turkey inherited the education system from the Ottoman Empire, a brief summary of teacher education regarding this period is needed, although the reforms performed by the new republic changed it to a great extent. It is not possible to say that there was comprehensive teacher education in the Ottoman Empire. There was not an institution to train teachers until the Tanzimat Reform Era (as of 1839), except for a short teacher training experience in two Madrasahs for elementary schools following the conquest of Istanbul (1453), after which there were no such efforts for a long time (Turhan 2009). The first teaching school was founded in 1848 for prospective teachers for primary schools. In 1868, another branch was established for training teachers of higher levels. These schools accepted only male students, and in 1870 another school was established for training prospective female teachers. The high-school branch of these schools emerged later, and aimed to train teachers for high schools and higher education. Since these schools were not sufficient for training teachers to work all over the country, those who did not graduate also became teachers. Being literate alone was adequate for being eligible as a teacher (Sözer 2011). Few in number (thirty-one in total) and lacking in quality, teacher training was limited to these schools.

With the foundation of the republic, comprehensive reforms took place in education. With respect to teacher education, we can divide the process from 1923 to 2018 into two main parts: the period between 1923 and 1982, and 1982 onwards. The year 1982 was a milestone in teacher education in Turkey since the teacher-training schools were transferred to universities, which changed the nature of teacher education. Before that, the Law on the Unification of Education should be explained. It was enacted in 1924, following the foundation of the republic, and aimed to

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unify the disorderly education system inherited from the Ottoman Empire. The Madrasahs were closed and the Ministry of Education had the sole responsibility for all schools. In the short period of time from 1923 onwards, it can be asserted that Turkey had a rich experience of teacher education, including various models for teacher training aiming different needs at different times. It should be noted that when the republic was founded it was in a challenging situation with respect to the economy, human capital, and policy. The republic aimed to train teachers who would educate generations that were expected to save the republic and contribute to the country to the best of their abilities (Sağlam 2007).

Teacher education in Turkey has altered throughout history as the characteristics of the education system changed. During this span of less than one hundred years, a number of reforms took place changing mainly the structure of the education stages. With the latest changes, the education system has four main stages before higher education. The first stage is early childhood and pre-school education, covering nursery and day-care centres for children aged up to thirty-six months (the Ministry of Family and Social Policies is responsible for these institutions), kindergarten for children aged thirty-six to sixty-six months, and nursery schools for children aged forty-eight to sixty-six months. Children aged sixty-six months start primary school and continue there for four years. Lower secondary schools follow primary schools. There are two types of lower secondary schools: secondary schools and religious secondary schools. Students at religious secondary schools take extra subjects with religious content as well as content in secondary schools. The lower secondary school span is also four years. Upper secondary education takes four years and there are various school types at this level: the Anatolian High School, the School of Fine Arts, the Science High School, the Social Sciences High School, Anatolian Religious High Schools, and Vocational and Technical High Schools. Compulsory education lasts for twelve years in Turkey, covering primary school and lower and upper secondary schools. For students with special education needs, pre-school is also compulsory (Eurydice 2018).

Currently, teachers are trained at the education faculties of universities. In parallel with the stages of the education system, at pre-service level, prospective teachers of pre-schools and primary schools are trained in Elementary Education departments with branches of pre-school education and primary education. Teachers of the following stages are trained in the departments of Turkish and social sciences education, departments of mathematics and science education, departments of computer education and instructional technologies, departments of foreign languages, departments of special education, and departments of fine arts education, and so on. The main changes regarding teacher training can be attributed to the years of 1973, 1982, 1989, and 1992. In 1973, law no. 1739 was enacted, prescribing teaching as a profession of specialization, and thereby all teachers were required to hold university degrees, which transferred all teacher-training schools into higher education institutions. With the enactment of law no. 2547 in 1982, all teacher-training schools were transformed into higher schools or faculties of universities. Formerly, teacher-training schools were affiliated with the Ministry of National Education. With the regulation in 1989, the education period for all teaching areas was designated as four years. Accordingly, all teachertraining schools and faculties have offered four years of education (or five years for some departments regarding secondary-school teachers) since then. In 1992, all teacher-training higher schools were united under the education faculty. Therefore, education faculties have been the main source of teacher training, except for the pedagogic certification programs, accepting students from various faculties and offering pedagogic subjects for them to be eligible to be assigned as teachers. Since teacher education changed in parallel with changes in the structure of specific teaching branches, the history of teacher education can best be addressed in line with the stages of education. To this end, developments in the areas of preschool, primary-school, secondary-school, and vocational secondary-school teacher training are explained separately in the following paragraphs.

The efforts to train prospective pre-school teachers have gathered pace in recent years with the European Union accession period. In the early years of the republic, the focus was on training primary-school teachers, as this was an urgent need. The first school to train prospective pre-school teachers was founded in 1927 (and can be translated as the Mother Teacher School), offering a two-year education course, and closed in 1933 (Poyraz and Dere 2001). The childcare and tailoring departments at the Girls' Technical Teacher School (founded in 1935) served as a source for pre-school teachers for many years (Gürkan 2011). In 1961, elementary education law required pre-school teachers to graduate from teachertraining schools or special departments to this end, or graduate from high schools or institutes for female students, and to complete special courses. In 1963, the department of child development and care was established in girls' vocational schools, and in 1967 they were allowed to train prospective pre-school teachers. These schools were high schools offering three years of education. As of 1970, Primary School Teacher Education Schools included Pre-school Education as a subject, and graduates of these schools were eligible to become pre-school teachers. With the Law of

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Basic Education in 1973 prescribing higher education for all teachers, the new source for this field became the Child Development and Care department of the Girls' Technical Teacher Education Higher School in Ankara. In 1982, universities took over the responsibility of teacher training and related departments were opened in Gazi, Hacettepe, and Selçuk universities. These departments were either in education faculties or independent programs. In 1997, compulsory education for eight year olds started, and teaching-training programs at universities were redesigned accordingly. In this process, pre-school education became a sub-department of elementary-education departments (Gürkan 2011; Sağlam 2011).

The training of primary-school teachers was paid special attention due to the conditions of the country after 1923. Until 1954, primary-school teachers who would teach in villages and cities were trained separately. There were some plausible reasons for this. The young population in villages was reduced due to wars and therefore a workforce was needed, which required shorter education periods in villages. Besides, the first aim was to increase the ratio of literate people. The country aimed to develop, starting from educating the villagers, but there were not sufficient teachers, and those available were not appropriate for villages or did not want to go there. In addition, they needed to be knowledgeable in areas of health, arts, agriculture, and stockbreeding, for example (Sağlam 2007). The teachers in the villages were supposed to be the leaders of those villages. There were four different types of school for training primary-school teachers to serve in at villages. The first is Teacher Schools for Villages starting from 1927. These public boarding schools offered three years of education and the graduates undertook obligatory service; however, they closed after a few years due to economic problems (Sağlam 2007). The second is Trainers' Course for Villages, the first of which opened in 1936, and they existed until 1947. Literate primary-school graduates who had finished their military service were educated in these courses for seven or eight months and became teachers (Binbaşıoğlu 2009). Though pedagogically poor, they were cost effective, given the situation then. The third school was a second version of the Teacher School for Villages, which opened in 1937. The difference was that these schools now included primary school, secondary school, and teachers' school. Students who were not eligible to move on to teachers' school worked as craftsmen, and studied subjects like forging or carpentry. The last school was the Village Institute, founded in 1940 after the successful examples of previous schools, and these institutes proved really successful and served as good models. They accepted students after primary school who were raised in villages and offered mixed-sex education. Beside pedagogic and content subjects.

education related to agriculture, health, or technical issues was also offered. The graduates were assigned to their own villages or those close by for twenty years. They were also provided with a place to stay in the villages, as well as land, seeds, or saplings with which to engage in agriculture as a model for the villagers (Binbaşıoğlu 2009; Okçabol 2005; Sağlam 2007). With a law in 1954, these schools were closed and transferred to other schools due to pedagogical and political issues. Primary-school teachers for cities were trained in the Primary School Teachers' School, which was inherited from the Ottoman Empire but underwent numerous changes with respect to duration of education, level, and curricula. The duration of education in these boarding schools was initially five years after 1923. In 1932 it reduced to three years, but accepted students after lower secondary schools, though with some variations. The basic education law in 1973 required all teachers' schools to be higher-education institutions. Therefore, some of these schools were transformed into education institutes, and some became teacher high schools. Until 1982, education institutes trained prospective primaryschool teachers. In 1982, these institutes became higher schools, and were closed in 1992 and transferred to faculties (Sağlam 2011). The primaryschool teaching department had been training these prospective teachers.

The training of prospective secondary-school teachers, including lower and upper secondary-school branch teaching, was carried out by education institutes and teachers' higher schools until they were transferred to universities in 1982. Education institutes trained prospective teachers to serve at lower secondary schools. Until 1944, there was only one education institute, but the number of these schools later increased to eighteen. In the late 1970s, some of these institutes were closed, and some were transferred to teachers' higher schools due to the problems as to the quality of education and political issues. Teachers' higher schools trained prospective teachers for upper secondary level and had strict acceptance rules, which is why a small number of prospective teachers could graduate. As these graduates were not sufficient for the country, more schools opened until they were transferred to education faculties (Esme 2001; Öztürk 2005; Sağlam 2011). Although efforts to train teachers in general subjects such as maths or language could be traced back for 150 years, training teachers for vocational and technical schools started in 1930 (Akpınar 2005). However, as technical high schools flourished, the need for teachers increased (Ünlüeser 2007). To this end, Girls' Technical Teacher Higher Schools, Boys' Technical Teacher Higher Schools, Girls' Art Teacher School, Boys Art Teacher Schools, Commerce and Tourism Teacher Higher Schools, Industrial Arts Teacher Higher Schools, Higher Islam Institutes, and Hasanoğlan Higher Village Institutes were opened. In 1982, these schools were transformed into universities. Schools offering four years of education were turned into Vocational and Technical Education, Commerce and Tourism Education, and Industrial Arts Education faculties. As the number of faculties increased and the demand to technical high school decreased, problems with the appointment of graduates as teachers arose. Very few graduates – only about three percent of the total number - could become teachers (Altiparmak and Gülesin 2008). As the curricula of these faculties were theory-based, it was also hard for graduates to find a job in private sectors. Due to this employment problem, these faculties were closed in 2009 and transformed into technology faculties, with the aim to train technology engineers dealing with application and production, while engineering faculties aimed at theory and design. As of 2019, there are no faculties or schools for training prospective technical teachers. The graduates of technology faculties can be teachers at technical high schools if they earn pedagogical certificates from education faculties after graduating. As the need for technical teachers is still low, this does not pose an urgent problem; however, considering the policies to strengthen the technical education and retirement of existing teachers, new models should be designed for training technical teachers as graduates of technology faculties do not consider being a teacher in the future (Erdem 2018).

Some effort was also invested in training special-education teachers. These systematic efforts started in 1952. Before that, there were schools for the deaf and dumb in İzmir, İstanbul, and Ankara, founded in 1924, 1944, and 1951, respectively, and the teachers of these schools learned from the school principal and specialists abroad – in other words, they taught themselves. In 1952, a special-education department was opened in the Gazi Education Institute to train special-education teachers, but it closed in 1955. For some time, this need was met by training teachers at special-education schools with the help of graduates from the United States. Following this, some certification programs opened in education faculties. Before 1982, certification and in-service teacher training were applied, but as of 1982, education faculties at universities opened special education departments (Ataman 2004; Çağlar 2004; Özyürek 2008).

In the preceding paragraphs, the history of teacher training in Turkey has been explained in detail. Turkey has had a rich experience of teacher education, but it is hard to say that there has been a steady development. Teacher education has been exposed to many interventions due to political issues. As of 2019, education faculties are the main sources of teacher education. However, in the last few years there has been intensive changes in teacher education in parallel with the country's 2023 aims. In line with these, some revisions and redesigns have been in progress. In 2017, the Teacher Strategy Paper was announced, offering a pathway to develop teacher education - both pre-service and in-service, as well as teacher employment - between 2017 and 2023. This document includes six fundamental components concerning initial teacher training, professional development, and employment processes, including "pre-service teacher training," "the selection and employment of prospective teachers." "teachers' candidacy training and adaptation to the profession." "career development and the reward system," "the status of the teaching profession," and "continuous professional development" (Teacher Strategy Paper 2017). In line with this, the General Competencies for Teaching Profession were revised in 2017, and included competencies in the areas of professional knowledge (content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of legislation), professional skills (planning of education and teaching, creating learning environments, managing the teaching and learning process, assessment and evaluation), and attitudes and values (national moral and universal values, approaches to students, communication and cooperation, personal and professional development) (Ministry of National Education 2017). These competencies are used in revising the initial and in-service teacher education. Accordingly, the curricula of education faculties were revised, with the new curricula implemented as of 2018. These curricula design the departments in education faculties, and the distribution of the subjects were reorganized as well as introducing new subjects such as media literacy. Almost half of the subjects are allocated to field teaching. About thirty-four percent of the subjects are pedagogical subjects, while the remaining subjects are general-culture subjects, the ratios changing by department. In late 2018, the 2023 Education Vision was announced by the Ministry of Education. offering a comprehensive reform in education to be put into practice until 2023. This document proposed a vast number of changes. Regarding teacher education, the following are planned. Successful teachers are going to be sent abroad to enrich their experiences. Instead of pedagogical certification for non-education faculty graduates, a teaching profession specialization program at graduate level is planned. The education at education faculties will be practice-oriented. Only successful students will be accepted to education faculties. The teaching profession will be a career profession with vertical and horizontal opportunities. Finally, graduatelevel education will be encouraged (2023 Education Vision 2018).

Some Issues about Teacher Education in Turkey: An Overview from the Related Research

In Turkey, by 2018 there were nearly 7.6 million university students from associate degree to doctoral education, and about 4.2 million of these were continuing undergraduate education at a total of 206 universities countrywide. There were ninety-six faculties of education and nearly 271,000 students training in pre-service teacher education (https:// istatistik.yok.gov.tr), meaning that nearly one in every fifteen students aims to be a teacher. Although this number seems vast, it is probably higher as, from ninety-three main fields of teaching in nearly eighty main fields, universities permitted by the Council of Higher Education can open up pedagogical formation programmes, which are a means of giving a certificate of teaching to non-educational faculty graduates (Tebliğler Dergisi 2014). The number or names of the fields can be updated or changed in time, but it can be said that faculties of education in Turkey cannot cover as many different fields of teaching, so there seems to be a need for a pedagogical formation programme to meet the need for teachers of various disciplines. However, these programmes also increase the number of the trainee teachers, somehow uncontrollably, and in addition increase the workload of education-faculty academics, as they teach in these programmes as well. While this is the situation in teacher education. the number of teachers working under the Ministry of Education also constitutes a considerable amount. As of 2018, a total of 1.030.130 teachers were working under the Ministry of National Education (Ministry of National Education 2018).

Reasonably, a matter of this importance is mostly discussed and studied, and a system this big is frequently reformed, or at least it can be said that possible reforms are always on the agenda. In addition to the importance of the teacher education system, any deficiencies of the education system in general are referred to the teacher education system, making the topic more intriguing. As a result, a number of studies have been done on teacher education in Turkey, pointing out several issues about pre-service teacher education, and coming up with various suggestions for several stakeholders, like politicians, practitioners, educational administrators, and researchers.

Among the issues pointed out in related research, the first is about the crowded classrooms. Şendağ and Gedik (2015) state that pre-service teacher education is carried out in crowded classrooms at universities. The quality of the education received by the students is therefore negatively affected.

The second issue is that pre-service teacher-education programmes are determined as predominantly theoretical by some researchers, and the students lack the experience and practice necessary for teaching. Based on this, school-experience and teaching-practice courses are seen as invaluable by the researchers, yet inadequate. These courses provide an opportunity to unite the theory with practice and increase the social and emotional readiness to teach (Alagözlü 2017; Altıntaş and Yeşiltepe 2016; Inan and Bayrak 2015; Şendağ and Gedik 2015; Yavuz 2018; Yıldırım and Vural 2014; Yıldız, Geçikli, and Yeşilyurt 2016).

The third issue dwelled on is the qualifications of the academics of education faculties. Some researchers indicate that academics working at education faculties should have some specialities to train future educators and experience of teaching, or at least should be graduates of faculties of education, which is not the case at the moment (Akdemir 2013; Işık, Çiltaş and Baş 2010; Şendağ and Gedik 2015; Yavuz 2018). Besides, educational sciences should be regarded with the utmost importance by the academics at the faculties (Yavuz 2018).

Among the issues pointed out, the fourth is pedagogical formation programmes. These programmes are mostly criticized from different aspects (Şendağ and Gedik 2015; Yıldırım and Vural 2014). For instance, they are seen as unhealthy as the quality of the education given is mostly discussed only. Besides, these programmes are seen as being responsible for the decreasing prestige of the teaching profession, and as sometimes creating an imbalance in the employment of the trainee teachers.

Another issue is the pre-service teacher training curricula contents. Their being in accordance with the information age and the integration of information and communication technologies is seen important (Altıntaş and Yeşiltepe 2016; Gündüz and Odabaşı 2004). The studies about the quality of open and distance education in pre-service teacher training (Gültekin 2009) could also be addressed in this respect.

The competence and effectiveness of the teachers are dealt with in preservice teacher education as well. There are plenty of reports in the literature mentioning effective teachers or teacher competencies in various areas, or in general (Alagözlü 2017; Demir and Koçyiğit 2014; İnan and Bayrak 2015; Özoğlu 2010). It can be seen that most of the studies about this topic make reference to pre-service teacher education, thus positioning it as a key element in forming the competencies. It can also be inferred that the selection of successful students to education faculties, which is also an issue about pre-service teacher education mentioned in some studies (Işık, Çiltaş and Baş 2010; Yavuz 2018), forms the basis of the potential for training competent teachers. It is worth mentioning here that the MoNE has recently defined and published general competencies for the teaching profession (Ministry of National Education 2017).

The last issue regarding pre-service teacher education in the Turkish context is the imbalance between teacher education and teacher employment (Ayas 2009; İnan and Bayrak 2015; Özoğlu 2010). The growing number of education faculties and their graduates, and the decreasing need for new teachers as the education system gradually reaches saturation point in time, form an imbalance resulting in the tension between the unassigned trainee teachers and policymakers, at the same time fracturing the self-confidence of the students.

Turkey has a well-established tradition of education stemming from its historical and cultural inheritance, and rich experiences in teacher training (Duman and Karagöz 2016). It has a colossal system of education, considering nearly twenty-five million students from K-12 to postgraduate levels, and more than one million teachers. This constitutes a possible provision of rich experiences and various study areas and topics with the potential to enhance the educational-studies literature. Despite the quantitative good side, debates about how to increase the quality in education and pre-service teacher education in particular still go on. As the scientific studies mostly aim to improve the existing system, they try to propose possible solutions to current issues rather than boast about the positive sides of the circumstances. Thus, in this part, the issues about preservice teacher education in Turkey are handled as is mentioned in the related literature. For future studies about pre-service teacher education in Turkey, researchers are encouraged to focus on diverse topics like the training process of pre-service teachers, the profile of the students, the effects of the courses of professional knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and the general culture on students, and the effect of the quality of the teacher-education programmes on student achievement (Yıldırım 2013).

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