

Subject Area
Educational Sciences

Year: 2022
Vol: 8 Issue: 100
PP: 2219-2227

Arrival
29 April 2022
Published

31 July 2022
Article ID Number
63311
Article Serial Number
01

Doi Number
<http://dx.doi.org/10.29228/ssj.63311>

How to Cite This Article

Eker, C. (2022).
"Investigation of the
Relationship Between
Teachers' Professional
Commitment Levels and
Their Attitudes Towards
Distance Education"
International Social
Sciences Studies Journal, (e-
ISSN:2587-1587) Vol:8,
Issue:100; pp:2219-2227



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Investigation of the Relationship Between Teachers' Professional Commitment Levels and Their Attitudes Towards Distance Education

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ABSTRACT

In this study, the relationship between the professional dedication levels of primary school teachers and their attitudes towards distance education during the process of covid-19 pandemic was examined. Along with this general purpose, the professional dedication levels of primary school teachers and their attitudes towards distance education were compared in terms of variables such as gender, professional seniority, the number of students in the class, and the socio-economic status of the school's environment. The research, which was designed in the relational survey model, was carried out with 208 primary school teachers. "Teaching Profession Dedication Scale" and "Distance Education Attitude Scale" were used as data collection tools in the research. As a result of the study, it is seen that primary school teachers have a high level of professional dedication and attitudes towards distance education, there is a significant difference in favor of female teachers according to the gender variable, there is a significant difference in attitudes towards distance education according to the variables of gender, professional seniority, socio-economic status of the school environment and there is a positive and significant relationship between teachers' professional commitment levels and their attitudes towards distance education.

Keywords: Covid-19, Distance Education, Professional Dedication, Professional Attitude

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, with the Covid-19 virus epidemic, known as the coronavirus worldwide, many changes have occurred not only in our country but also in the world. Especially in our country, large-scale distance education applications, online trainings and seminars, teleconferences made by using different technological communication tools are actually the most striking examples of the mentioned change and transformation. In this process, due to the conditions caused by the Covid-19 epidemic, the distance education model has become a mandatory part of our education and training activities.

İşman (2015) stated that distance education is the realization of learning-teaching activities in a virtual environment through information communication due to some deficiencies and limitations of traditional learning-teaching methods and techniques. According to Newby, Stepich, Lehman, and Russell (2006) distance education is an organized educational program in which teachers and students are away from each other physically; and Moore & Kearsley (2012) think that distance education is a planned learning and teaching process that requires special institutional organizations and special communication techniques, and in which teaching takes place when the teacher and student are involved in different environments. Considering the distance education process, it is possible to say that the biggest role in achieving the desired goals falls on the teachers. Because teachers play a vital role in students' lives. Teachers are primarily known for their role in educating the students entrusted to them academically, socially, culturally and morally. In addition, they create a positive learning environment by constantly interacting with their students, become role models for their students, listen to students' problems and find solutions. In this context, the importance that teachers give to their work and the way they work are closely relevant to the students' success. In the distance education process, there are many components that have so important role in the efficiency and effectiveness of education. One of them is the professional dedication. Professional dedication is characterized by the concepts of effort, dedication and it is a motivational and positive expression of being well at work (Kanste, 2011).

Butucha (2013) defines professional dedication as the desire to value in teaching and continue their profession in order to increase the success of students. The teacher's dedication to work, deep focus on the work and integration with the work are described as dedication. A person's professional dedication means that he or she has feelings such as importance, challenge, pride and desire for that job (Sawang, 2012). Therefore, professional dedication can be seen as an important factor determining the performance of teachers. As Sood and Anand (2011) state that the teachers' high level of professional dedication is important to increase the quality of education, Shukla (2014) states that it is important for teachers who have the responsibility to shape the future to be dedicated to their profession in order to realize effective learning. In addition, a teacher with a high level of professional dedication focuses on the job at a high level. Hammerness (2005) sees the teacher's dedication to the profession as a motivational factor that leads teachers to change. Dedicated teachers are those who can make big changes in their lives. Their beliefs and diligent pursuits enable us to understand and apply our own values. Professional dedication also contributes to teachers' motivation and performance. These teachers are effective in the success and learning of the students. There is a strong correlation between this type of willing teaching and successful learning. Therefore, professional dedication occur as an important factor that determines the performance of teachers.

Distance education, which became active at a time when traditional education was insufficient to meet the demands and expectations, provided continuity in education. It is possible to say that distance education provides an advantage in education due to the opportunity to repeat the courses, ease of access and flexibility in learning speed. In the distance education process, an effective and devoted teacher should be committed not only to her/his students but also to the teaching profession as a whole. This means adopting the principles and requirements of the teaching profession and complying with the rules and regulations. Teachers with a high level of professional dedication always give priority to their students' wishes, needs and interests. They meet each student's needs by using many different teaching methods and techniques. A dedicated teacher is also dedicated to the success of the school and uses her/his free time to help her students as much as possible. Teachers with high levels of professional dedication also devote themselves to continuous learning. They are determined to seize every opportunity to continue learning for their own and their students' success (Butucha, 2013). Today, the desired implementation of distance education applications is so important for the achievement and stability of the education system.

The approaches and attitudes of educators and students to the education are seen as the most important factors in the success of distance education. Attitude emerges as an important concept to make sense of people's reactions to events and situations. In the most general sense, attitude is defined as an individual's emotional tendency towards objects, people, places, events and ideas (Papanastasiou, 2002). Küçükahmet (2008) states that teachers' attitudes are one of the most important personality traits that has effect on students and that attitudes to the profession, students and school work greatly affect how they learn and their personality. Shohel (2012) sees the lack of motivation of teachers as one of the biggest obstacles in distance education. In a study conducted by Bakioğlu and Çevik (2020), it was determined that teachers had some problems during the distance education process such as internet connection, communicating with students, low participation rate of the students and being exposed to pressure from the school administration. Besides, it was determined that in addition to the methods and techniques of teaching used in the course along distance education process, the materials that they used changed, they could not complete the distance education and teaching program and laboratory / workshop activities, and the epidemic event affected negatively their use of educational technologies and their professional development. Roth et al. (2020) state that when compared to traditional face-to-face education, distance education can reduce academic achievement and course satisfaction. In this process, teachers state that they are worried about the lack of knowledge that may occur in students and that they feel inefficient in the distance education process.

Looking at the researches on professional dedication and distance education, (Bakioğlu & Çevik 2020; Kocayığıt & Uşun, 2020; Kozikoğlu & Özcanlı, 2020; Moçoşoğlu & Kaya, 2020; Tretyakova, et al., 2020; Unger & Meiran, 2020; Baek, Zhang, & Yun, 2017; Yenilmez, Balbağ & Turgut, 2017; Kışla,2016; Butucha, 2013; Michel, 2013; Menchaca & Bekele, 2008; Özçelik & Kurt, 2007) it has been concluded that attitudes and perceptions are important for teachers and learners. Primary school teaching is a profession with a high need for professional dedication. It can be said that the professional dedication of classroom teachers is aimed at raising individuals who will contribute to the development of society beyond doing the profession with pleasure. The positive approach and attitude of primary school teachers on distance education will bring about the realization of educational goals. It is clear that the continuation of a qualified education in the distance education process and the success of the students can only be achieved with the presence of teachers who do their job well, self-sacrificing and with high professional dedication. Teachers' attitudes towards distance education and their professional dedication levels are important for the effectiveness of the distance education process. It has become even more important in this global epidemic period, when face-to-face education has been replaced by distance education. For this reason, it was

considered important to examine the relationship between primary school teachers' professional dedication levels and their viewpoints towards distance education during the process of covid-19 pandemic.

1.1. Purpose and Sub-Problems of The Research

The purpose of the study is to examine the relationship between primary school teachers' professional dedication levels and their attitudes towards distance education during the process of covid-19 pandemic for this aim, answers were sought for the given sub-problems.

- ✓ What are primary school teachers' professional dedication levels and their attitudes to distance education?
- ✓ Level of professional dedication of primary school teachers and their attitudes to distance education; Does it differ visibly according to gender, professional seniority, the number of students in the class and the socio-economic status of the school's environment?
- ✓ Is there a visible relationship between the professional dedication levels of primary school teachers and their attitudes to distance education?

2. METHOD

2.1. Research Model

The research examining the relationship between the professional dedication levels of classroom teachers and their attitudes towards distance education during the Covid-19 epidemic is a relational survey research. In the study, it was also examined whether the relevant variables of the teachers differ according to the determined demographic characteristics (gender, professional seniority, the number of students in the class, the socio-economic status of the school environment). In this respect, it is a causal comparison research. Relational survey research is a type of survey model which examines the situation or event that is the subject of the research in its current conditions and reveals whether there is a relationship between the variables in the research or not (Johnson, 2001).

2.2. Population and Sample

The population of the research consists of 428 primary school teachers working in Zonguldak-Ereğli. The sample of the study consists of 208 primary school teachers. The easily accessible/convenient sampling method was chosen while making up the sample of the research. The convenient sampling method is based on the selection of factors that are quick and easy (Malhotra 2004). The distribution of the sample group according to socio-demographic variables is given in table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Participants by Socio-Demographic Variables

Variable	Groups	f	%
Gender	Women	124	59.6
	Men	84	40.4
Professional Seniority	1-5	14	6.7
	6-10	26	12.5
	11-15	48	23.1
	16-20	62	29.8
	21 and over	58	27.9
Number of students in class	1-19	14	6.7
	20-29	178	85.6
	30-39	16	7.7
	40 and over	-	0.0
Socio-economic status of the school's environment	Low	42	20.2
	Middle	132	63.5
	Top	34	16.3
Total		208	100

When Table 1 is examined, 124 (59.6%) of the teachers are female and 84 (40.4%) are male. 14 (6.7%) of the teachers have professional seniority 1-5 years, 26 (12.5%) of the teachers have professional seniority 6-10 years, 48 (23.1%) of the teachers have professional seniority 11-15 years, 62 (29.8%) of the teachers have professional seniority 16-20 years, 58 (27.9%) of them have 21 years or more professional seniority. Considering the number of students in the class, the number of classes with 1-19 students is 14 (6.7%), the number of classes with 20-29 students is 178 (85.6%), the number of classes with 30-39 students is 16 (7.7%). There is no class with 40 or more students.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

"Teaching Profession Dedication Scale", "Distance Education Attitude Scale" and "Personal Information Form" were used in this research.

2.3.1. The Scale of Dedication to the Teaching Profession: The scale of dedication to the teaching profession, developed by Kozikoğlu and Senemoğlu (2018), is in the 5-point Likert type. The scale consists of 20 items. The scale is a scale of participation that varies between “strongly agree (5)” and “strongly disagree (1)”. The scale has three sub-dimensions: commitment to the profession, dedication to students and selfless work. The Cronbach Alpha value of the scale was 0.92 for the first sub-dimension, 0.86 for the second sub-dimension, 0.70 for the third sub-dimension, and 0.90 for the total scale. In this study, the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient was calculated as 0.91 for professional commitment, 0.87 for devoted work, and 0.94 for relationship with students. For the overall scale, the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient was calculated as 0.94. These values show that the data obtained from the measurement tool are reliable.

2.3.2. Distance Education Attitude Scale: “Distance Education Attitude Scale” developed by Ağır (2007) consists of 21 questions in 5-point Likert type. The scale is a scale of participation that varies between “strongly agree (5)” and “strongly disagree (1)”. The scale consists of 2 sub-dimensions: "advantages of distance education" and "limitations of distance education". The Cronbach Alpha value of the scale was 0.89 for the first sub-dimension, 0.80 for the second sub-dimension, and 0.88 for the total scale. While the highest score from the scale was 105; the lowest score is 21. The higher the score obtained from the scale, the higher the attitudes towards distance education; A low score means that attitudes are also low. In this study, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of reliability for the whole scale was .79 and it was concluded that the test was reliable.

2.3.3. Personal Information Form: It was used to determine the demographic information of the teachers participating in the research. The personal information form consists of 4 questions to determine teachers' gender, professional seniority, the number of students in the class, and the socio-economic status of the school's environment.

2.4. Data Collection and Analysis

Frequency (f), percentage (%) arithmetic mean (\bar{X}) and standard deviation (SD) were used to describe the data in the study. Skewness and kurtosis coefficients and Kolmogorow-Smirnov test were used to examine the normal distribution of scores. Statistics regarding the normality of the scores are given in table 2.

Table 2. Normality Test Results Regarding Scores Distribution

Evaluation	\bar{X}	SS	Kurtosis		Skewness		K-S Test (p)
			Coefficient	Standart H.	Coefficient	Standart H.	
Dedication to the teaching profession	3.44	0.68	-0.38	0.35	-0.34	0.16	.00
Attitude towards distance education	4.21	0.56	1.23	0.33	-0.81	0.17	.03

Kolmogorow-Smirnov Test, $p > 0.05$

When the Skewness and Kurtosis coefficients of the scale of dedication to the teaching profession and the attitude towards distance education scale are examined in table 2, it is seen that the Kurtosis coefficient values for both scales are above +1.5, but the Skewness coefficient values are in the range of +1.5. In addition, Kolmogorow-Smirnov test results for both scales are seen to be $p < 0.05$. This value shows that the scale scores do not exhibit a normal distribution. Since the data did not show a normal distribution, nonparametric tests, Mann-Whitney U and Kruskall-Wallis tests were used. In addition, Spearman's Rank correlation coefficient was examined to determine the relationship between classroom teachers' level of dedication to the teaching profession and their attitudes towards distance education. Mean scores obtained from the scales (strongly disagree (1.00 - 1.80) / very low; disagree (1.81 - 2.60) / low; undecided (2.61 - 3.40) / moderate; agree (3.41 - 4.20) / high; strongly agree (4.21 - 5.00) / very high) values.

3. FINDINGS

In this part, the research's findings related to the sub-problems are presented.

The first sub-problem of the research is "What are the professional commitment levels of primary school teachers and their attitudes to distance education?" Findings related to this sub-problem are presented according to the sub-dimensions of the scale. Findings are given using arithmetic mean and standard deviation values. The findings obtained are shown in table 3.

Table 3. Average and standard deviation values of primary school teachers' professional dedication and attitudes to distance education

Scales	Sub Dimensions	N	\bar{X}	SS
Professional Dedication	Devotion To The Profession	208	3.90	.61
	Dedication To Students	208	4.77	.51
	Selfless Work	208	4.28	.79
	(Grand Total)	208	4.42	.38
	Advantages Of Distance Education	208	3.60	.51

Attitudes Towards Distance Education	Limitations Of Distance Education	208	3.22	.57
	(Grand Total)	208	3.52	.62

When table 3. is analyzed, it is seen that the level of professional dedication of the primary school teachers in general is at a very high level with the value ($\bar{X}=4.42$), and their attitudes to distance education are at a high level with the value ($\bar{X}=3.52$). Among the sub-dimensions of the professional dedication scale, it is seen that the level of commitment to the profession ($\bar{X}=3.90$) is high, the level of dedication to students ($\bar{X}=4.77$) and self-sacrificing work ($\bar{X}=4.28$) are very high. From the sub-dimensions of the distance education attitude scale, it is seen that the advantages of distance education ($\bar{X}=3.60$) are high, and the limitations of distance education \bar{X} ($=3.22$) are moderate.

The second sub-problem of the research is "Classroom teachers' professional dedication levels and their attitudes to distance education; Does it differ significantly according to gender, professional seniority, the number of students in the class, and the socio-economic status of the school environment?". Mann-Whitney U Test and Kruskal-Wallis Test were used to obtain the findings related to this sub-problem. The results of the comparison of primary school teachers' professional dedication levels and attitudes to distance education according to the gender variable are shown in table 4.

Table 4. Comparison of primary school teachers' professional dedication levels and attitudes to distance education by gender variable

Scales	Gender	N	Rank Average	Rank Total	U	P
Professional Dedication	Female	124	101.02	14608.00	2155.0	.00*
	Male	84	72.19	3138.00		
Attitudes Towards Distance Education	Female	124	87.42	14224.00	2421.0	.02*
	Male	84	72.10	3522.00		

*P<0,05

When table 4 is analyzed, the results of primary school teachers' professional dedication levels and attitudes towards distance education by gender are seen. It was seen that there was a statistically significant difference in favor of female teachers in terms of their professional dedication levels (U=2155.0; p=0.00) and their attitudes towards distance education (U=2421,0; p=0.03). It was seen that there was a statistically significant difference in favor of female teachers. The results of the comparison of primary school teachers' professional dedication levels and attitudes to distance education according to professional seniority are shown in table 5.

Table 5. Comparison of primary school teachers' professional dedication levels and attitudes to distance education according to the variable of professional seniority

Scales	Professional Seniority	N	\bar{X}	Ss	Rank Average	X^2	P	Source of Difference
Professional Dedication	1-5 years	14	4.27	.32	96.14	1.54	.33	There is no difference
	6-10 years	26	4.36	.36	60.98			
	11-15 years	48	4.38	.43	77.99			
	16-20 years	62	4.56	.42	96.14			
	20 and more years	58	4.34	.52	84.37			
Attitudes Towards Distance Education	1-5 years	14	3.52	.42	81.15	2.60	.01	There is a difference 1>4
	6-10 years	26	3.34	.44	68.91			
	11-15 years	48	3.27	.42	87.95			
	16-20 years	62	3.10	.42	79.60			
	20 and more years	58	3.12	.44	63.92			

P<0,05

When table 5 is analyzed, the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test, which was conducted to determine the differentiation status of primary school teachers' professional dedication levels and attitudes to distance education, according to the variable of professional seniority are seen. The scores of the primary school teachers from the professional dedication scale are formed as ($X^2=1.54$; Sd=4; P= .54). According to this finding, it was found that there was not a significant difference in the level of professional dedication of classroom teachers according to the variable of seniority. The scores of the primary school teachers from the attitude scale towards distance education are formed as ($X^2=2.60$; Sd=4; P=.01). According to this finding, it was found that the variable of seniority in primary school teachers' attitudes to distance education showed a significant difference between teachers with a seniority of 1-5 years and teachers with a seniority of 16-20 years. The results of the comparison of primary school teachers' professional dedication levels and attitudes to distance education according to the variable of the number of students in the classroom are shown in table 6.

Table 6. Comparison of primary school teachers' professional dedication levels and attitudes to distance education according to the variable of the number of students in the classroom

Scales	Students in class	N	\bar{X}	Ss	Rank Average	X^2	P	Source of Difference
Professional Dedication	1-19	14	4.12	.40	91.32	3.34	.24	There is no difference
	20-29	178	4.18	.39	82.43			
	30 and more	16	3.90	.42	89.60			
Attitudes Towards Distance Education	1-19	14	4.10	.52	98.92	4.57	.60	There is no difference
	20-29	178	4.12	.48	74.44			
	30 and more	16	3.98	.42	99.66			

P<0.05

When table 6 is analyzed, the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test, which was conducted to determine the differentiation of primary school teachers' professional dedication levels and attitudes to distance education, according to the variable of the number of students in the classroom are seen. The scores of the classroom teachers from the professional dedication scale are formed as ($X^2=3.34$; Sd=3; P=.24). According to this finding, it was seen that the professional dedication levels of the classroom teachers did not show a significant difference according to the variable of the number of students in the classroom. The scores of the classroom teachers from the attitude scale towards distance education are ($X^2=4.57$; Sd=3; P=.60). According to this finding, it was seen that there was no significant difference in the attitudes of primary school teachers to distance education according to the variable of the number of students in the classroom. The results of the comparison of primary school teachers' professional dedication levels and attitudes to distance education according to the socio-economic status of the school environment are shown in table 7.

Table 7. Comparison of primary school teachers' professional dedication levels and attitudes to distance education according to the socio-economic status variable of the school's environment

Scales	Socio-Economic Status Of The School's Environment	N	\bar{X}	Ss	Rank Average	X^2	P	Farkın Kaynağı
Professional Dedication	Low	42	4.25	.28	77.60	7.34	.44	There is no difference
	Middle	132	4.33	.25	98.12			
	High	34	4.22	.33	87.64			
Attitudes Towards Distance Education	Low	42	3.24	.34	73.28	9.57	.03	There is difference. 1>3
	Middle	132	4.10	.38	109.94			
	High	34	4.65	.28	68.84			

P<0.05

When table 7 is analyzed, the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test, which was conducted to determine the differentiation status of primary school teachers' professional dedication levels and attitudes to distance education are seen according to the socio-economic status of the school environment. The scores of the primary school teachers from the professional dedication scale are formed as ($X^2=7.34$; Sd=2; P=.44). According to this finding, it was found that the professional dedication levels of the primary school teachers did not show a significant difference according to the socio-economic status of the school environment. The scores of the primary school teachers from the attitude scale towards distance education are formed as ($X^2=9.57$; Sd=2; P=.03). According to this finding, it was seen that there was a significant difference between the teachers working in a school in a medium socio-economic environment and a school in a high socio-economic level, according to the socio-economic status of the school's environment, in the attitudes of primary school teachers to distance education.

The third sub-problem of the study is "Is there a significant relationship between the professional dedication levels of primary school teachers and their attitudes towards distance education?" While obtaining the findings related to this sub-problem, the Spearman's Rank correlation coefficient was examined. The obtained findings are shown in table 8.

Table 8. Relationship values between primary school teachers' professional dedication levels and their attitudes to distance education

Sub-Dimensions		Advantages of distance education	Limitations of distance education	Attitude towards distance education
Devotion To the Profession	r	0.214	0.213	0.244**
Dedication To Students	r	0.112	0.197	0.127**
Selfless Work	r	0.206	0.181	0.215**
Professional Dedication	r	0.203	0.190	0.227**

P<0.05**

When table 8 is analyzed, primary school teachers' professional dedication scale "Devotion To The Profession" sub-dimension, "Advantages of distance education" value (r=0,214), "Limitations of distance education" value (r=0,213), and "Attitude towards distance education" general point value (r=0.244) was positive and a significant

relationship has been determined. Primary school teachers' professional dedication scale "Dedication To Students" sub-dimension, "Advantages of distance education" value ($r=0.112$), "Limitations of distance education" value ($r=0.197$), and "Attitude towards distance education" general point value ($r=0.127$) is in the positive direction and a significant relationship has been determined. Professional dedication scale of primary school teachers with the sub-dimension of "Selfless work" and the value of "Advantages of distance education" ($r=0.206$), "Limitations of distance education" value ($r=0.181$), and "Attitude towards distance education" general point value ($r=0.215$) was in the positive direction and a significant relationship has been detected. The relationship between the general point value of the primary school teachers' professional dedication scale and the value of "Advantages of distance education" ($r=0.203$), the value of "Limitations of distance education" ($r=0.190$), and the general point value of "Attitude towards distance education" ($r=0.227$) positive and a significant relationship was detected.

4. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

The results obtained from the research are as follows;

When the results of primary school teachers' professional dedication levels and attitudes to distance education were examined, it was found that teachers' professional dedication levels were very high and their attitudes to distance education were high. Dedication in primary school teachers consists of dedication to students and self-sacrificing work as well as being dedicated to the profession. These dimensions also express the distinctive aspects of primary school teachers for their professional dedication. The high level of these dimensions may have led to a high level of primary school teachers' attitudes to distance education. However, the fact that their attitudes to distance education are slightly lower than the level of professional dedication may be associated with the negativities experienced during the pandemic process. It is seen that there are studies in the literature that support these results. In his research to determine the professional dedication levels of primary school teachers. Ağır (2007), it was tried to determine what kind of attitude the primary school teachers working in private and public schools exhibit to distance education, and the attitude levels of teachers to distance education were found to be positive, although close to the middle value. In a similar study, Menchaca and Bekele (2008) determined that teachers' perceptions and attitudes to distance education are at a positive level. Professional dedication is the individual's voluntariness to perform a job, to devote herself/himself to her/his work in terms of mind, to exert effort and to value her/his profession. The teaching profession, unlike other professions, is a profession where the need for professional dedication is more. It is obvious that the level of professional dedication of primary school teachers is important because of their role in raising future generations. The results obtained can be interpreted as primary school teachers love their profession, strive to be successful in their profession and value their profession, and teachers consider distance education as a complementary educational technology, not as an alternative to traditional education.

When the results about whether the professional dedication levels of the primary school teachers and their attitudes to distance education differ significantly according to gender, professional seniority, the number of students in the class, and the socio-economic status of the school environment, it is seen that there is a significant difference in favor of female teachers in both their professional commitment levels and their attitudes to distance education. It has been concluded that there is a difference in professional commitment levels according to the variable of professional seniority. However, there is a significant difference between teachers with 1-5 years of seniority and teachers with 16-20 years of seniority in their attitudes to distance education, there is no significant difference in both the level of professional dedication and attitudes to distance education according to the number of students in the classroom. It has been found that there is no significant difference in the level of professional dedication according to the socio-economic status variable of the environment, and there is a significant difference in attitudes to distance education between the teachers working in a school in a medium socio-economic environment and a school in a school with a high socio-economic level. A dedicated teacher tends to increase students' success levels, make students more qualified and show similar behaviors (Reyes, 1990). It can be said that such an understanding causes female teachers' attitudes to distance education to be high. It is seen that there are similar results in the literature that support the research result.

Kozikoğlu & Özcanlı (2020) found in their study that female teachers have a higher level of professional dedication than male teachers. To determine teachers' attitudes towards distance education Baek, Zhang, & Yun (2017) stated in their study that female teachers have a more positive attitude than male teachers. In the study of Michel (2013), it was stated that especially the teachers who have just started their profession are very satisfied with their profession and their level of dedication is quite high. As a result of the research, Ağır (2007) stated that teachers who have just started their profession have a more positive attitude to distance education. The result that teachers' perceptions of distance education differ significantly according to the variable of seniority is similar to the result of the research conducted by Özçelik and Kurt (2007). As a result of the research, it was stated that the

attitudes of teachers with professional seniority between 0-5 years are more positive than teachers with other seniority levels.

It has been determined that there is a positive and significant relationship between primary school teachers' professional dedication levels and their attitudes towards distance education. We can say that professional dedication is one of the most important elements that explain the level of having qualifications related to teaching. Teachers who adopt the teaching profession, are proud to be a member of this profession, and value professional ethics at the same time, have the basic qualifications required by the profession. These qualities are directly related to the perception of the teacher's profession. It is clear that the positive perceptions of teachers about their profession also affect their perceptions of distance education positively. This situation can be considered as the reason why there is a positive relationship between teachers' dedication to the profession and their perceptions of distance education.

5. SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results of this research, the following recommendations were developed;

- ✓ Since the research is limited to primary school teachers, studies can be conducted to determine the professional dedication levels of teachers from different levels and branches and their perceptions of distance education.
- ✓ The professional dedication of female teachers and their perceptions of distance education are higher than male teachers. The reasons for this situation can be examined.
- ✓ A similar research can be conducted through interviews with teachers and thus the reasons for the differences in attitudes towards distance education can be determined.
- ✓ A similar study can be done using different variables on a larger sample group.

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