



In-service and Pre-service Teachers' Teaching Concerns

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Abstract

The focus of this study was to compare pre-service teachers and in-service teachers in terms of their teaching concerns by gender and teaching experience. Therefore, the current study examined whether there were any significant gender and teaching experience differences in in-service or pre-service teachers' teaching concerns. In total, 357 teachers (279 female and 78 male) participated in the study, of which 212 were in-service and 145 were pre-service teachers. The adapted and translated version of the Teacher Concerns Checklist was used to assess teachers' concerns. A two-way MANOVA was conducted to comprehensively examine whether the teaching concerns of participants varied based on gender and teaching experience. Findings regarding teachers' teaching concerns showed that all participants mostly felt slightly concerned. By systematically investigating and addressing these concerns, teacher preparation programs can become more adaptive, supportive, and effective in nurturing competent and resilient educators.

Keywords: Teaching Concerns, In-service Teachers, Pre-service Teachers

Citation: Özaydın, İ., Çetin Dindar, A. (2024) In-service and pre-service teachers' teaching concerns.

Instructional Technology and Lifelong Learning, 5(1), 237 - 256. <https://doi.org/10.52911/itall.1513618>

Öğretmen Adaylarının ve Hizmet İçi Öğretmenlerinin Öğretime İlişkin Kaygıları

Özet

Bu çalışmanın amacı, öğretmen adayları ile hizmet içi öğretmenlerinin öğretim kaygılarını cinsiyet ve öğretim deneyimi göre karşılaştırmaktır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda, mevcut çalışmada öğretmen adayları ve hizmet içi öğretmenlerinin öğretim kaygılarında cinsiyet ve öğretim deneyimi açısından anlamlı farklılıklar olup olmadığı incelenmiştir. Çalışmaya toplam 145'i öğretmen adayı ve 212'si hizmet içi olmak üzere 357 öğretmen (279 kadın ve 78 erkek) katılmıştır. Katılımcı öğretmenlerin öğretim kaygılarını değerlendirmek için Öğretmen Kaygıları Kontrol Listesi'nin uyarlanmış ve çevrilmiş versiyonu kullanılmıştır. Katılımcıların öğretim kaygılarının cinsiyete ve öğretim deneyimine göre değişip değişmediğini kapsamlı bir şekilde incelemek amacıyla iki yönlü MANOVA yürütülmüştür. Öğretmenlerin öğretim kaygılarıyla ilgili bulgular incelendiğinde, tüm katılımcıların çoğunlukla öğretim ile ilgili hafif kaygı duyduğunu göstermiştir. Bu kaygıların sistematik olarak araştırılması ve ele alınmasıyla, öğretmen yetiştirme programları yetkin ve dayanıklı eğitimciler yetiştirmede daha uyumlu, destekleyici ve etkili hale getirilebilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Öğretime ilişkin Kaygılar, Hizmet içi Öğretmenler, Öğretmen Adayları

Date of Submission	10.07.2024
Date of Acceptance	05.09.2024
Date of Publication	31.12.2024
Peer-Review	Double anonymized - Two External
Ethical Statement	It is declared that scientific and ethical principles have been followed while carrying out and writing this study and that all the sources used have been properly cited.
Acknowledgements	-
Author(s) Contribution	Author1: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing- Original draft preparation. Author2: Data curation, Writing- Original draft preparation, Writing- Reviewing and Editing. Author3: Supervision, Validation. ...
Plagiarism Checks	Yes - Turnitin
Conflicts of Interest	The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.
Complaints	itall.journal@gmail.com
Grant Support	The authors acknowledge that they received no external funding in support of this research.
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1. Introduction

According to Fuller's (1969) theory of concerns about teaching, the measure of teachers' concerns about teaching can be broken down into three areas: "Concerns about self, concerns about the teaching task, and concerns about the impact that teaching has on students' learning". These concerns reflect different stages of focus and anxiety that individuals might experience in their roles. Self-concern relates to the individual's personal feelings, fears, and anxieties about their role. This can include worries about their own competence, acceptance by colleagues and students, and how they are perceived. In terms of teaching, a teacher with self-concern might be preoccupied with questions like: Am I doing a good job? Do the students like me? How do I compare to other teachers? etc. Task-concern focuses on the practical aspects of teaching tasks. It involves worries and considerations about the tasks and responsibilities inherent in the role. For teachers, this could include concerns about managing classroom activities effectively, having too many students in limited learning environments, creating lesson plans, grading assignments on time, maintaining classroom discipline, meeting curriculum standards, etc. Once both self-concern and task-concern are addressed, teachers begin to focus on the impact their teaching has on student learning. Impact concern is centered on the outcomes and effectiveness of one's work, particularly its impact on others. In teaching, this relates to the teacher's focus on how their teaching affects their students' learning and development. Teachers with impact-concern might think about the following: Is the material clear for the students? How can I improve student engagement and learning outcomes? Are my teaching methods effective? How can I support students who are struggling? etc. These concerns often evolve over time as individuals become more comfortable and proficient in their roles. For instance, new teachers might start with high self-concern, then shift to task-concern as they gain confidence, and eventually develop impact-concern as they focus on their students' learning and development. On the other hand, teachers may or may not be aware of their own concerns. These concerns can be shared with others and some of them cannot (Fuller, 1971). Stair, Warner and Moore (2012) emphasized that teachers at different stages had different teachers' concerns about self-concern, task-concern, and impact-concern. Their findings reveal that teachers at the early stage of their career had higher self-concerns and task-concerns, with higher impact-concerns in the following years. There was no significant difference between the two groups regarding impact-concern scores. This study also confirmed some of the findings of George

(1978), which reported that pre-service teachers exhibited significantly higher self-concern scores and lower task concern scores compared to their in-service counterparts, with no significant difference in impact concern scores. Pre-service teachers had the highest self-concern and the lowest task concern, while in-service teachers had the highest impact concern and similar levels of task and self-concerns.

By understanding the specific concerns and challenges teachers face, educators and program designers can tailor training and support to address these issues effectively. This not only helps in alleviating the immediate concerns of teachers but also fosters a more positive and productive teaching environment. Moreover, identifying and addressing teachers' concerns can lead to the development of more relevant and practical curriculum content, improved instructional strategies, and better support systems within teacher preparation programs. It ensures that these programs are responsive to the real-world demands of teaching, thereby equipping future teachers with the skills and confidence they need to succeed in the classroom.

Pre-service teachers have more limited teaching experience and practice knowledge than in-service teachers. Developing lesson plans, managing classrooms, creating materials based on specific objectives, applying different teaching approaches based on students' levels, etc., are more practical, especially for experienced teachers. Being a teacher has long been viewed as a female-dominated profession. This perception is partly due to the flexibility that teaching offers in terms of working hours, which can be more accommodating to those balancing work with family responsibilities. Additionally, the long summer holidays provide extended breaks, which can be particularly appealing for those who wish to spend more time with their families during these periods. This combination of factors has contributed to the profession's association with women. According to George's (1978) research, gender influences teachers' concerns. Females exhibit higher levels of both self-concerns and task-concerns, while there is no significant gender difference in impact-concerns.

The focus of this study was to compare pre-service teachers and in-service teachers in terms of their teaching concerns by gender and teaching experience. Therefore, the current study examined whether there were any significant gender and teaching experience differences in in-service or pre-service teachers' teaching concerns.

The following research questions were investigated in this study:

- What are the levels of in-service science teachers' teaching concerns?
- What are the levels of pre-service science teachers' teaching concerns?
- Does teaching experience make any significant difference in teachers' teaching concerns?
- Does gender make any significant difference in teachers' teaching concerns?

2. Method

The descriptive survey research design was employed in this current study. All participants were asked to complete the same instrument.

2.1. Population and Sampling

The target population was all in-service and pre-service teachers in Türkiye. The accessible population was represented by the conveniently located schools and universities that were available for participation in the study. This allowed for the inclusion of a diverse sample of educational institutions within a manageable geographic area. The instrument was shared through formal (school managers shared with in-service teachers or advisors of pre-service teachers shared with pre-service teachers) and informal (such as social media, etc.) ways to reach both in-service and pre-service teachers. In total, 357 teachers (279 female and 78 male) participated in the study, of which 212 were in-service and 145 were pre-service teachers (Table 1). Teachers were also asked to write about their teaching experience. There were eleven different teaching disciplines included in the study, encompassing both in-service and pre-service teachers.

Table 1.

The descriptive statistics of the teachers by gender

	In-service teachers	Pre-service teachers	Total
Female	157	122	279
Male	55	23	78
Total	212	145	357

Table 2.

The descriptive statistics of the teachers by teaching experience

Teaching Experience	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Pre-service Teachers	145	40.6	40.6
Less than a year	5	1.4	42.0
1 -5 years	60	16.8	58.8
6 - 10 years	57	16.0	74.8
11 – 15 years	35	9.8	84.6
16 – 20 years	20	5.6	90.2
More than 20 years	35	9.8	100.0
Total	357	100.0	

Table 3.

The descriptive statistics of the teachers by teaching discipline

Teaching Discipline	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Science	105	29.4	29.4
Chemistry	75	21.0	50.4
Psychological Counseling and Guidance	26	7.3	57.7
Turkish Language	14	3.9	61.6
Computer	8	2.2	63.9
Pre-school	25	7.0	70.9
Social Sciences	10	2.8	73.7
English	12	3.4	77.0
Mathematics	26	7.3	84.3
Elementary	46	12.9	97.2
Religion	10	2.8	100.0
Total	357	100.0	

2.2. Instrument

In this study, the adapted and translated version (Boz, 2008) of the Teacher Concerns Checklist (TCC) was used to assess teachers' concerns. The checklist consists of three factors: self-concern, task-concern, and impact-concern. There are 45 items in this checklist, and some sample items are presented in Table 4. The responses were on a 5-point Likert scale, from 1, which refers to "Not Concerned", to 5, which refers to "Extremely Concerned". The study results reveal that the adapted and translated version of the TCC was valid and reliable. The Cronbach alpha value for self-concern was.89, for task-concern was.81, and for impact-concern was 0.91 (Boz, 2008).

Table 4.

The sample items from the checklist

Factor Name	Sample Items
Self-concern	“Having an embarrassing incident occur in my classroom for which I might be judged responsible.” “My ability to work with disruptive students.”
Task-concern	“The rigid instructional routine.” “Having too many students in a class.”
Impact-concern	“Understanding why certain students make slow progress.” “Whether students can apply what they learn.”

The means were calculated for each factor while calculating the participants’ teaching concern scores. The intervals of teaching concerns were calculated by dividing the difference between the highest and lowest scores that could be obtained from the scale by five (level = $(5-1)/5 = 0.8$). Limit values and levels were determined by adding the calculated value of 0.8 to the lowest possible value, and intervals were as follows: (1) 1.00-1.80, (2) 1.81-2.60, (3) 2.61-3.40, (4) 3.41-4.20, (5) 4.21- 5.00.

2.3. Data Collection and Data Analysis

The TCC was applied by the instructors during appropriate class hours in the fall and spring semesters of the 2023-2024 academic year to the pre-service teachers. Meanwhile, the TCC was also shared with in-service teachers through social media and school managers, and they responded to the instrument through the link. In-service and pre-service teachers were informed about the study and told that the information they provided would only be used for research and no personal information was asked. During the data collection process, the teachers' names or any information that would reveal their identity were not requested. The average time to complete the instrument was about 20 minutes.

The possible threat to internal validity arose from participant selection, which aimed to ensure a diverse representation across various disciplines, necessitating a substantial number of participants to be recruited. Another potential threat was related to the selection of instrumentation. To mitigate this threat, a rigorous, validated, and reliable instrument was used. This strategy was instrumental in minimizing the impact of instrumentation on the study's findings, thereby enhancing the overall internal validity of the research.

The TCC was applied to the in-service and pre-service teachers. The data obtained were analyzed via the SPSS program. Participants' teaching concerns levels were determined using descriptive statistics according to teaching discipline, teaching experiences, and gender. First,

the data cleaning and missing analysis were conducted. Whether there was a difference according to the variables specified in the participants' teaching concerns was tested using MANOVA. Before the analysis, the assumptions regarding the test (multivariate outlier, sample size, normality, linearity, correlations between dependent variables, equality of variances, variance-covariance matrix equality) were checked. The mean, median, mode, skewness, and kurtosis values were calculated to reveal whether the data was distributed normally. Additionally, Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test and Q-Q graphs were examined, and it was determined that the data showed normal distribution for all variables. Then, the Mahalanobis distance was checked to test the multivariate outlier assumption. Scatterplots were examined for linearity. Finally, the assumption of correlations between dependent variables was met since the pairwise correlations remained below .80 when checked (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). The assumptions of equality of variances and variance-covariance matrix equality are explained in the "Results" section before the relevant tests. Furthermore, the partial eta-squared value (η^2) was gotten to the extent to which the independent variable explained variance in the dependent variables. According to Cohen (1988), $\eta^2 = .01$ indicated a small effect, $.06$ indicated a medium effect, and $.14$ indicated a large effect, providing benchmarks for interpreting the impact of the independent variable on the study outcomes.

3. Result

3.1. Results regarding the level of teachers' teaching concerns

In order to determine the level of participants' teaching concerns, descriptive statistics results were utilized for each factor according to gender and presented in Table 5. The level of participants' teaching concerns the limit values previously explained under the Instrument heading. When the descriptive statistics in Table 4 were examined according to gender, it was observed that the mean scores were quite close to each other in all factors. However, the mean scores of the female participants were slightly higher than the male participants. A similar tendency was also observed for the mean scores of pre-service or in-service teachers (Table 6); the mean scores were quite close to each other in all factors, but the mean scores of the pre-service teachers were slightly higher than those of the in-service teachers.

Table 5.

The descriptive statistics for each factor in terms of gender

Factor	Gender	Mean	SD	N	Level
Self-Concern	Female	2.09	.78	87	Slightly Concerned
	Male	1.94	.70	18	Slightly Concerned
	Total	2.06	.76	105	Slightly Concerned
Task-Concern	Female	2.34	.68	87	Slightly Concerned
	Male	2.12	.79	18	Slightly Concerned
	Total	2.30	.70	105	Slightly Concerned
Impact-Concern	Female	2.03	.70	87	Slightly Concerned
	Male	1.99	.76	18	Slightly Concerned
	Total	2.02	.71	105	Slightly Concerned

Table 6.

The descriptive statistics for each factor in terms of pre-service or in-service teachers

Factor	Participant	Mean	SD	N	Level
Self-Concern	Pre-service teachers	2.22	.81	69	Slightly Concerned
	In-service teachers	1.75	.56	36	Not Concerned
	Total	2.06	.76	105	Slightly Concerned
Task-Concern	Pre-service teachers	2.34	.72	69	Slightly Concerned
	In-service teachers	2.21	.67	36	Slightly Concerned
	Total	2.30	.70	105	Slightly Concerned
Impact-Concern	Pre-service teachers	2.05	.73	69	Slightly Concerned
	In-service teachers	1.98	.67	36	Slightly Concerned
	Total	2.02	.71	105	Slightly Concerned

When the descriptive statistics in Table 7 were examined according to in-service teachers' experience, it was observed that the mean scores of the participants were not much apart from each other, but the means differed based on the experience. In terms of self-concern, when the experience increased, mainly the teachers' concerns decreased. In terms of task-concern, there were ups and downs according to teaching experiences increased. Furthermore, in terms of impact-concern, when the experience increased, mostly the teachers' concerns decreased.

Table 7.

The descriptive statistics for each factor in terms of in-service teachers' experiences

	Experience	Mean	SD	N	Level
Self-Concern	1 – 5 years	2.05	.73	65	Slightly Concerned
	6 – 10 years	1.88	.61	57	Slightly Concerned
	11 – 15 years	1.73	.59	35	Not Concerned
	16 – 20 years	1.81	.63	20	Slightly Concerned
	More than 20 years	1.85	.66	35	Slightly Concerned
	Total	2.04	.73	357	Slightly Concerned
Task-Concern	1 – 5 years	2.43	.75	65	Slightly Concerned
	6 – 10 years	2.51	.81	57	Slightly Concerned
	11 – 15 years	2.38	.76	35	Slightly Concerned
	16 – 20 years	2.53	.88	20	Slightly Concerned
	More than 20 years	2.46	.85	35	Slightly Concerned
	Total	2.46	.78	357	Slightly Concerned
Impact-Concern	1 – 5 years	2.20	.71	65	Slightly Concerned
	6 – 10 years	2.14	.67	57	Slightly Concerned
	11 – 15 years	2.02	.66	35	Slightly Concerned
	16 – 20 years	2,11	.65	20	Slightly Concerned
	More than 20 years	2.04	.80	35	Slightly Concerned
	Total	2.13	.72	357	Slightly Concerned

3.2. Results Regarding Gender and Teaching Experiences

A two-way MANOVA was conducted to comprehensively examine whether the teaching concerns of participants varied based on gender and teaching experience. The results of this analysis are detailed and discussed, providing insights into the potential differences and their implications for educational practices. In other words, a two-way MANOVA was conducted to test statistically significant differences between the groups based on gender and teaching experience, focusing on a linear combination of the sub-dimensions of the participants' teaching concerns. During the preliminary assumption checks before conducting the analysis, the results of Levene's Test indicated that the assumption of equality of variances was satisfied for all three sub-dimensions ($p > .05$). This compliance with the homogeneity of variances assumption ensures the robustness and validity of the subsequent analysis. According to the results of Box's M Test (Box's $M=88.571$; $F=1.378$; $p < .05$), the assumption of the equality of variance-covariance matrices was not met. Consequently, Pillai's Trace value was used for the multivariate F-test to ensure the robustness of the analysis. The multivariate statistics are presented in Table 8. The multivariate F-test result did not reveal a statistically significant difference between the groups based on gender and teaching experience interaction for a linear combination of the sub-dimensions of teaching concerns [Pillai's Trace = .057, $F(15, 1035) = 1.331$, $p = .176$]. Since the interaction effect was not significant, the effects of the independent variables were examined

individually. This approach allows for a clearer understanding of how each independent variable—gender and teaching experience—separately influences the sub-dimensions of teaching concerns. The multivariate F-test result revealed a statistically significant difference between the groups based on gender for a linear combination of the sub-dimensions of teaching concerns [Pillai’s Trace = .039, $F(3, 343) = 4.618$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .039$]. The partial eta-squared value indicated that 3.9% of the variance is explained by gender, suggesting a small effect size. The multivariate F-test result revealed a statistically significant difference between the groups based on teaching experience for a linear combination of the sub-dimensions of teaching concerns [Pillai’s Trace = .142, $F(15, 1035) = 3.416$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .047$].

Table 8.

The multivariate statistics for teaching concerns

Effect	Pillai's Trace Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Observed Power
Gender	.039	4.618	3	343	.003	.039	.889
Teaching Experience	.142	3.416	15	1035	.000	.047	.999
Gender * Teaching Experience	.057	1.331	15	1035	.176	.019	.824

Detailed results from the univariate F-tests are presented in Table 9, providing further insights into the specific sub-dimensions of teaching concerns that contribute to the observed multivariate effect. These findings help identify which aspects of teaching concerns were influenced by gender, teaching experience and gender and teaching experience interaction. The Bonferroni correction was applied to reduce the Type-I error rate, adjusting the significance level to $\alpha = .0167$ ($\alpha = .05/3$). This adjustment ensures a more stringent criterion for determining statistical significance, thereby minimizing the likelihood of false positives in the multiple comparisons.

Table 9.

The univariate statistics for the factors of teaching concerns

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Observed Power
Gender	Self	1.548	1	1.548	3.106	.079	.009	.420
	Task	6.603	1	6.603	11.030	.001*	.031	.912
	Impact	3.146	1	3.146	6.081	.014*	.017	.691
Teaching Experience	Self	10.280	5	2.056	4.126	.001*	.056	.955
	Task	3.112	5	.622	1.040	.394	.015	.371
	Impact	1.366	5	.273	.528	.755	.008	.195
Gender * Teaching Experience	Self	3.838	5	.768	1.540	.177	.022	.538
	Task	6.389	5	1.278	2.134	.061	.030	.702
	Impact	3.932	5	.786	1.520	.183	.022	.532
Error	Self	171.925	345	.498				
	Task	206.536	345	.599				
	Impact	178.476	345	.517				

Upon examining Table 9, it is evident that there is a significant difference between the groups for all factors regarding gender or teaching experience. The significant differences observed were in task-concern and impact-concern with respect to gender (female participants had higher concerns for both factors), and in self-concern with respect to teaching experience (pre-service teachers had higher concerns). The mean score of female teachers' task-concern was 2.34 (SD = .68), and the mean of male teachers was 2.12 (SD = .79). The mean score of female teachers' impact-concern was 2.03 (SD = .70), and the mean of male teachers was 1.99 (SD = .76). This indicates that gender influences task and impact concerns, while teaching experience primarily affects self-concern. The mean score of pre-service teachers' self-concern was 2.22 (SD = .81) and the significant differences observed between the pre-service teachers and the in-service teachers with teaching experience within 6-10 years (M = 1.88, SD = .61), within 11-15 years (M = 1.73, SD = .59), and within more than 20 years (M = 1.85, SD = .66). This finding underscores the influence of the independent variables on each specific aspect of the participants' teaching concerns.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, the pre-service and in-service teachers' teaching concerns were determined and examined in terms of the teaching experience and gender variables. Findings regarding teachers' teaching concerns showed that all participants mostly felt slightly concerned.

According to Fuller (1969), when individuals choose teaching as their career path and enter teacher training programs, they often begin to experience a range of concerns related to the demands of the profession. These concerns stem from the realization that, as future educators, they will be entrusted with significant responsibilities, not only in the classroom but also in their interactions with school administration, students, and students' families. The multifaceted nature of these responsibilities—ranging from managing classroom dynamics to addressing the diverse needs of students and maintaining effective communication with parents—can create a sense of apprehension among pre-service teachers. This anxiety is a natural response to the recognition that teaching requires high expertise, dedication, and the ability to navigate complex interpersonal relationships within the educational environment. As they progress through their training, these pre-service teachers continue to grapple with these concerns, which play a crucial role in shaping their professional identity and preparedness for the teaching role.

Based on the findings in this study, when teaching concerns across the gender variable were compared, it was observed that the mean scores for self-concern, task-concern, and impact-concern factors were relatively similar. However, the mean scores for female participants were slightly higher than those of male participants. This suggests that female teachers may have high teaching concerns due to their higher self-discipline and sensitivity. This finding aligns with existing literature, which often highlights that female educators tend to exhibit higher levels of concern in various dimensions of teaching (Pigge & Marso, 1997), particularly in relation to self-efficacy, classroom management, and the perceived impact on student outcomes. This finding is supported by Guillaume and Rudney (1993), who assert that gender is a determining factor in teaching concerns. Additionally, Pigge and Marso (1987) also found that female teachers tend to exhibit higher levels of concern compared to their male counterparts. The current study revealed that female teachers were more concerned with task- and impact concerns than males. The task-concerned teachers are focused on the teaching responsibilities themselves. This implied that female teachers actively seek out new teaching methods, materials, and tools that can enhance their effectiveness in the classroom than male ones. The impact-concerned female teachers focus more on students and think critically about how to address best their students' mental, emotional, and social needs. On the other hand, the study by Yurtseven and Yaylı (2019) concluded that the self-concern factor was more

pronounced in female pre-service teachers than in males, with the averages in other dimensions being close to each other, further supporting our findings. These heightened concerns among female educators may be attributed to gendered expectations and the distinct ways in which male and female educators experience and navigate professional challenges within the educational environment.

However, it is important to note that not all research aligns with these conclusions. Ghaith and Shaaban (1999) argued that gender is not a significant variable in forming teaching concerns, suggesting that factors other than gender may play a more crucial role. These differing perspectives highlight the complexity of the issue and suggest that the relationship between gender and teaching concerns may be influenced by contextual factors or varying methodologies across studies.

In the light of results, when comparing the teaching concern factors of pre-service and in-service teachers, it was found that the mean scores across all factors were relatively similar. However, the mean scores for pre-service teachers were slightly higher than those of in-service teachers. This suggests that pre-service teachers may experience a slightly greater concern intensity than their more experienced counterparts. According to Fuller (1969), pre-service teachers' concerns about the teaching profession tend to focus on specific areas at different stages of their development. These concerns can be broadly categorized into self-concerns, task-concerns, and impact-concerns. Self-concerns center around the individual pre-service teacher. Those who experience self-concerns are primarily worried about their ability to succeed in the teaching profession. They often grapple with doubts about their competence and fear whether they will be able to meet the demands of teaching effectively, leading to heightened levels of stress and anxiety. Task-concerns are focused on the teaching responsibilities themselves. Pre-service teachers with task concerns are preoccupied with becoming effective educators. This leads them to actively seek out new teaching methods, materials, and tools that can enhance their effectiveness in the classroom. Their goal is to master the skills necessary to deliver high-quality instruction. Impact-concerns shift the focus to students. Pre-service teachers who are concerned with the impact of their teaching are more student-centred in their approach. They begin to think critically about how to best address their students' mental, emotional, and social needs. These teachers are driven by a desire to positively influence their students' learning experiences and overall development, often engaging in research and reflection to find the most effective

strategies for meeting the diverse needs of their students. In essence, Fuller's framework illustrates the progression of concerns that pre-service teachers may experience, moving from a focus on their own adequacy and teaching skills to a broader concern for the impact they have on their students. This progression reflects their growing confidence and professional maturity as they prepare for teaching. Pre-service teachers tend to be more self- and task-concerned, and this current study empirically supports that pre-service teachers' self-concerns are significantly higher than other concerns. Those who experience self-concerns are primarily worried about their ability to succeed in the teaching profession. They often grapple with doubts about their competence and fear whether they will be able to meet the demands of teaching effectively, leading to heightened levels of stress and anxiety. As teaching experience increases, the level of self-concern decreases, and the level of task- and impact-concerns increases. This finding is consistent with the study of Çakmak (2008), who asserted that experienced teachers were not very self-concerned.

Studies conducted with pre-service teachers have found that female teachers exhibit higher levels of concern than their male counterparts across various factors. These studies emphasized that gender differences might play a significant role in teaching concerns (Fuller, 1969; Şaban, 2004; Taşğın, 2006; Yaylı & Hasırcı, 2009; Mergen et al., 2014; Varol et al., 2014), with female pre-service teachers often reporting more significant concerns related to aspects such as self-efficacy, classroom management, and the perceived impact of their teaching on students. From the moment pre-service teachers begin their education and training, they start to develop a range of concerns about their future and the teaching profession. These concerns often revolve around their ability to succeed in the field, manage classroom dynamics, and effectively meet the diverse needs of their future students (Yeşilyurt, 2013). These concerns evolve over time, shifting in focus as pre-service teachers progress through their educational journey. Initially, concerns tend to be self-directed, centred on their own abilities and suitability for the teaching profession. As they gain more experience and confidence, these self-concerns gradually transition into task-related concerns, where the focus shifts to mastering teaching responsibilities, such as lesson planning and classroom management. Eventually, these concerns further evolve into impact concerns, emphasizing their influence on their students' learning and development. Throughout their training and into their professional careers, teachers continue to experience a variety of concerns that reflect their growth and adaptation

within the educational field (Fuller, 1969). These concerns can stem from both external environmental factors and internal personal factors unique to each individual. The frequency and timing of these concerns can also vary widely, depending on the individual's circumstances, experiences, and personal development. Some may experience certain concerns early in their training, while others may encounter them later or more sporadically, reflecting the diverse nature of how prospective teachers navigate their professional preparation. A similar result was observed in a study conducted by Ekizler (2013) with pre-service English teachers, where it was found that their concerns were slightly higher compared to in-service teachers. This finding also aligns with the results of Boz and Boz's (2010) study, which investigated pre-service science teachers and reported comparable outcomes. These studies collectively suggest that pre-service teachers, regardless of their subject area, may experience a higher level of concern as they prepare to enter the teaching profession.

It was observed that while the mean scores of in-service teachers were relatively consistent overall, there was notable variation when examined in relation to their years of experience. Specifically, self-concerns tended to decrease as teachers gained more experience, indicating that experienced teachers may feel more confident in their abilities. In contrast, task-concerns showed fluctuations, suggesting that these concerns may be influenced by specific stages in a teacher's career or changing responsibilities. Additionally, impact-concerns were generally found to decrease with increasing experience, possibly reflecting a shift in focus or a greater sense of efficacy in addressing students' needs as teachers become more experienced in teaching. Kafkaş, Açak, Çoban, and Karademir (2010) support the findings of this study concerning self-concerns among teachers. They found that as teaching experience increases, the level of self-concern tends to decrease while the perception of self-efficacy grows. Boz and Cetin-Dindar (2023) also reported a negative correlation between teaching concerns and self-efficacy, indicating that teachers with high self-efficacy beliefs were less teaching concerned. Similarly, Yurtseven and Yaylı (2019) observed that the concern levels of teachers can vary significantly depending on their experience, with those new to the profession experiencing higher levels of concern compared to their more experienced teachers. According to their research, as teachers gain more experience, these initial concerns often give way to increased self-confidence. Additionally, Ekizler (2013) reported that as in-service teachers' competence improves over time, their levels of concern decrease correspondingly. These findings

collectively suggest that experience plays a crucial role in shaping the concerns and self-perceptions of teachers throughout their careers.

4.1. Implications of Research

This current study explored the differences between teaching concerns, gender, and teaching experience, revealing significant differences. It was found that gender influenced task- and impact-concerns, while teaching experience primarily affected self-concerns. These findings indicate that different variables have distinct impacts on teaching concerns. The study highlights the need for further investigation into the teaching concerns of both pre-service and in-service teachers, as current research in this area is limited. While most studies have focused on pre-service teachers' concerns, there is also a pressing need to examine the concerns of in-service teachers to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how these factors evolve throughout a teaching career.

Research on the professional concerns of teachers has shown that the variability in the scales used and the differences in academic departments may have influenced the research results. These factors could lead to variations in findings, as the tools and contexts in which the studies were conducted might capture different aspects of teachers' teaching concerns or reflect the unique challenges teachers face in specific disciplines. Consequently, these differences highlight the need for careful consideration when interpreting and comparing the results across studies. By systematically investigating and addressing these concerns, teacher preparation programs can become more adaptive, supportive, and effective in nurturing competent and resilient educators.

4.2. Limitations and Suggestions

The sample size in this study was relatively small and limited to a specific geographic region, which may be limited in representing the broader population of in-service and pre-service teachers. Future research could benefit from a larger, more diverse sample to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Including a more varied demographic in terms of teaching experience, educational settings, and cultural backgrounds would provide a more comprehensive understanding of teaching concerns.

The study relied heavily on self-reported data, which may be subject to social desirability bias. Participants might have underreported or exaggerated their teaching concerns. Employing a

mixed-methods approach, including observations or interviews, could yield more nuanced insights. As the current research captures the concerns of teachers at a single point in time, longitudinal studies could provide valuable insights into how teaching concerns evolve over time, particularly as pre-service teachers transition into in-service roles.

Future studies could conduct comparative analyses between in-service and pre-service teachers across different educational systems or regions to identify commonalities and differences in teaching concerns. Research could examine the impact of targeted professional development programs on alleviating teaching concerns, particularly for pre-service teachers transitioning into the profession. Longitudinal research tracking the evolution of teaching concerns from pre-service education through the early years of teaching could provide deeper insights into how initial concerns persist, diminish, or transform over time. Investigating the relationship between early teaching concerns and long-term outcomes like teacher retention, job satisfaction, and burnout could offer valuable implications for teacher preparation programs. Research could explore how cultural and institutional differences influence teaching concerns and the effectiveness of support systems, providing insights into contextually appropriate interventions.

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