

Evaluation of Reading Habits of Teacher Candidates: Study of Scale Development

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Received: September 2, 2015 Accepted: September 17, 2015 Online Published: October 9, 2015

doi:10.11114/jets.v4i1.1068

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.11114/jets.v4i1.1068>

Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to develop a valid and reliable scale for printed and digital competencies (“The Printed and Digital Reading Habits Scale”). The problem statement of this research can be expressed as: “The Printed and Digital Reading Habits Scale: is a valid and reliable scale?” In this study, the scale development method was employed, and two instruments were used: “The Personal Information Form” (sex, age, university, department, and grade)” and 5 Likert-Type “Printed and Digital Reading Habits Scale”. Five hundred twenty-four teacher candidates (1st and 4th grades) from the departments of Turkish Teaching, Elementary School Teaching, and Pre-School Teaching at Marmara University and Kocaeli University participated in this study. Based on the results of the validity and reliability analyses obtained in the present study, the number of items in the scale was reduced to 18. The KMO value of the scale was found to be .904. The coefficient of Cronbach’s Alpha of the scale was found to be .82. Based on the factor analysis of the scale, it was discovered that it had three sub-factors. The test-retest results indicated that the scale would not change at any time ($t: -1.664, p < 0.05$). In conclusion, it is possible to describe “The Printed and Digital Reading Habits Scale” is a valid and reliable scale.

Keywords: printed reading, digital reading, scale development method, teacher candidates

1. Introduction

1.1 Problem

Nowadays, with the technological developments, the world aims to acquire habits and evaluating such information for everybody (Önal, 2010). The economic and social variations make large consequences for the education systems in 21st century. Nowadays, the society becomes more and more complex. In the complex society the individuals need more metacognitive skills and competencies for social interaction and economical participation. To gain these competencies, first of all, the students should have to learn how to learn and should have to learn analyzing and criticizing their learnings. Nowadays, traditional education is moving toward to constructivist education. In constructivist education, students get the responsibility of their learnings (Tanrıverdi, Ulusoy and Turan, 2012). And this make them more conscious in their learning and in this approach, students attempt to learn everything more than traditional (Geçer, 2012). Consequently, if the individuals read so much, actually they can get these competencies easily.

The factors, supporting education and ensuring social and personal development of individuals are listed below (21st Century Skills, Education & Competitiveness, 2008):

- Critical thinking,
- Quite high problem-solving skill,
- Creativity,
- Strong collaborative and communication skills,
- Making efficient use of information, tools, an opportunities,

- Improvement of economic and health facilities.

An attempt is made to introduce basic literacy skills to individuals through the education reforms and policies. In Turkey, many institutions and organizations (specially the Ministry of National Education) organize activities with the reading habits. For example, the Ministry of National Education, provincial directorates of national education and municipalities undertake many organizations such as “Now It Is Time for Reading Project”, “Reading Time and Reading/Comprehension Speed Map Project”, etc... In addition, schools conduct some reading projects. However, the majority of university students do not have any regular and critical reading culture (Odabaş, Odabaş & Polat, 2008).

Reading is one of the most important indicators of development in societies. It can be said that achieving development through realizing the change at personal and social levels depends on the level and quality of relationship (Yılmaz, Köse, Korkut, 2009). Reading is an activity that can be conducted for learning, increasing one’s general knowledge, improving creativity, progressing in career and increasing success (İyibilgin, 2004).

Reading habit is defined as “making reading a need and considering it part of life” (Bircan and Tekin, 1989). The person perceives reading as a need. Reading activity continues for all life (Gönen, Çelebi-Öncü, Işıtan, 2004; Saracaloğlu, Bozkurt, Serin, 2003; Yılmaz, 1992). It is not likely that students who do not have any reading habit and who fail to comprehend what they read will succeed in their lessons, improve their vocabulary and gain new experiences (Ünalın, 2006).

Additionally, the individuals acquire most of their knowledge through reading. Today, reading involves printed and digital (computer and the Internet). Printed reading refers to reading various printed materials such as books, magazines, newspapers and encyclopedias. But, digital reading, which started in the late of 20th century, composes with the computers, tablets, smart phones, etc... The advantages of digital reading are enumerated below (Belisle, 2004):

1. It allows accessing many texts about a specific topic rapidly,
2. It enables one to read and examine a great variety of texts at the same time.

The biggest disadvantage of digital reading is physical fatigue. It causes harm in eyes particularly (Vandendorpe, 1999). Despite all, the number of e-books (Google Book Search, Google Livres, Yahoo [Open Content Alliance (OAC)], Bibliothèque numérique européenne [BNUE], UNESCO [World Digital Library], Gallica) reached almost 10.000.000 in 2010 (Tessier, 2010).

Kırmızı (2012), Bozpolat (2010), Arslantürk and Saracaloğlu (2010), Demir (2009), Odabaş, Odabaş and Polat (2008), Gömleksiz (2004) and Nell (1988) focused on printed reading, but did not give any coverage to digital reading at all. In consideration of the foregoing, the problem statement of the study was determined as: “*Is the scale form developed in regard to teacher candidates’ printed and digital reading habits valid and reliable?*”

This research aimed to create a valid and reliable scale form for measuring teacher candidates’ printed and digital reading habits.

2. Method

The scale development method was employed in this study. In general, it determines construct validity through factor analysis as a statistical method (Gorusch, 1983). The “Exploratory Factor Analysis” was made in the study. The scale was divided into sub-factors and its construct validity was determined by ascertaining the factor loadings of all items in the scale through factor analysis.

“Factor analysis” is the technique used for determining the number of independent variables that contribute by explaining a variable depending on more than one variable as well as the factor loadings of such independent variables. One of the most important objectives of this analysis is to search the origin of dependency among variables. Based on such relationships, data are presented more meaningfully and in summary (Turgut and Baykul, 1992; Balcı, 1995, Cited by Semerci, 2003). Factor analysis is a multivariate analysis technique frequently used in many fields, such as social sciences (Tatlıdil, 1992, Cited by Semerci, 2003).

In addition, Cronbach’s Alpha reliability analyses were performed on the entire form and its sub-groups in order to test the reliability of the scale. Test-retest reliability analyses were carried out to measure the unchangeability of the scale in the course of time.

2.1 Preparing the Scale Items

Firstly, printed and digital reading habits required to be held by teacher candidates were searched in national and international literatures. A 40-item pool was created by using the questionnaire and scale forms used by Dökmen (1990), Gömleksiz (2004), Bozpolat (2010) and Kırmızı (2012).

The developed item pool was converted into a questionnaire form. Then the opinions of 4 experts were received in

regard to the questionnaire form. After that, all items rejected by the experts were removed from the questionnaire via Lawshe's technique, thereby creating a 25-item form. The 25-item form was administered to the pre-service teachers. The statistical analyses carried out indicated that the scale form consisted of 18 items and 3 sub-factors in total.

Sample

Five hundred twenty four teacher candidates (1st and 4th grades) from the departments of Turkish Teaching, Elementary School Teaching and Pre-School Teaching at Marmara and Kocaeli University were participated in this study. The study group consisted of 524 teacher candidates. The percentages of the sample was shown below:

Table 1. Percentages of the Sample

		%
Sex	M	76.9
	F	23.1
Age	18-20	45.6
	21-23	46.6
	24-26	6.9
	27 and 27+	1
University	Marmara	55.7
	Kocaeli	44.3
Department	Elementary School	33
	Pre-School Education	31.5
	Turkish Education	35.5
Grade	1 st	51.9
	4 th	48.1

2.2 Data Collection Tools

The Personal Information Form (5 items) and The Printed and Digital Reading Habits Scale (17 items) were used for data collection in the present study.

The Personal Information Form: The Personal Information Form was made up of 5 items (sex, age, university, department and grade).

The Printed and Digital Reading Habits Scale: This scale consisted of 17 items. It was a 5-point Likert-type scale. The choices in the scale were as follow "Strongly Agree (5)", "Agree (4)", "Slightly Agree (3)", "Disagree (2)", and "Strongly Disagree (1)". Accordingly, the teacher candidates were asked to select the most appropriate choice in regard to printed and digital reading skills.

The factors of this scale were divided into 3 sub-factors cited below:

- Factor 1: reading acquisitions: I am selective in reading. (10 items);
- Factor 2: printed reading: I read books. (4 items);
- Factor 3: digital reading: I read e-books. (3 items).

3. Findings

3.1 Reliability

The analyses showed that the scale had 4 factors. However, the reliability analysis of the 4th factor yielded poor results, and the factor included only 2 items. Thus, the items included in the 4th factor were excluded from analysis. Therefore, the analyses were made again from the very beginning.

Table 2. KMO Coefficient

KMO		.904
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approximate Chi-Square	3130.099
	sd	136
	p	.000

As seen in Table 2, the KMO value of "The Printed and Digital Reading Habits Scale" was .904. Since the KMO value was quite high, the factor loadings of the scale were able to be analyzed.

As the KMO coefficient comes close to 1, the data are considered fit for analysis. A KMO coefficient being equal to 1 refers to perfect fit. The KMO coefficient needs to be higher than 0.70 for the data to be fit for factor analysis (B üy ük özt ürk, 2007).

Bartlett's test yielded 3130.099. The result of Bartlett's test was found to be significant at the level of 0.001. According to Bartlett's test, there was a correlation between the variables and factor analysis was to be made on such variables (B üy ük özt ürk, 2007).

Table 3. Eigenvalue and Cumulative Percentage of the Factors

Factor No	Eigenvalue	Cumulative Percentage
1	5.77	33.96
2	1.92	45.25
3	1.35	53.22

Table 3 demonstrates the eigenvalues of “The Printed and Digital Reading Habits Scale”. According to the analysis results, the scale items were divided into 3 sub-dimensions, and the sum of such 3 sub-dimensions explained 53.22% of the printed and digital reading habits of the teacher candidates.

Table 4. Arithmetic Average and Standard Deviation of the Items

Items	N	Mean	sd	Items	N	Mean	sd
s1	524	4.05	.965	s16	524	4.42	.789
s4	524	3.42	1.176	s17	524	4.55	.713
s5	524	3.15	1.147	s18	524	4.42	.789
s6	524	2.52	1.081	s19	524	4.50	.662
s7	524	2.40	1.213	s20	524	4.39	.748
s13	524	2.82	1.127	s21	524	4.29	.798
s14	524	2.47	1.170	s22	524	4.45	.770
s15	524	4.36	0.895	s23	524	4.08	.973
				s24	524	4.12	.836

As seen in Table 4, the averages of the 18-item scale varied between 2.40 (minimum) and 4.55 (maximum). Moreover, the standard deviation values of the scale varied between .662 (minimum) and 1.213 (maximum).

Table 5 presents the factor analysis results concerning “The Printed and Digital Reading Habits Scale”. According to the factor analysis, the distribution of the scale items divided into 3 dimensions by dimensions is as follows; 1st dimension: 10 items; 2nd dimension: 4 items and 3rd dimension: 3 items.

The item analysis results employed when determining the validity of the scale are provided below.

Table 5. Factor Analysis

Items	Factors	Factor Loadings
s15	1	.75
s16	1	.75
s17	1	.73
s18	1	.71
s19	1	.63
s20	1	.52
s21	1	.51
s22	1	.75
s23	1	.75
s24	1	.73
s1	2	.53
s4	2	.66
s5	2	.70
s6	2	.78
s7	2	.53
s7	3	.79
s13	3	.76
s14	3	.65

3.2 Validity Analyses Regarding Item Distinctiveness

The distinctiveness of the items included in each factor was investigated. According to the results of item analyses, it was found to be significant at 0.05 significance level ($p < 0.05$) in all items of the dimensions F1 “Reading Acquisitions”, F2 “Printed Reading”, and F3 “Digital Reading”. These findings were interpreted as follows: The items in the scale had a high reliability and could make a distinction between the graders of the scale in terms of the characteristics intended to be measured.

Table 6: Independent Groups T-Test Results for the Entire “Printed and Digital Reading Habits Scale”

	Upper Quarter			Lower Quarter			Comparison		
	μ	sd	n	μ	sd	N	sd	t	p
F1	4.95	0.71	141	3.63	0.45	141	280	33,86	0.000
F2	4.17	0.40	141	2.32	0.48	141	280	34,54	0.000
F3	3.62	0.44	141	1.63	0.33	141	280	43,09	0.000

The table 6 presents distinctiveness results concerning 3 factors of “The Printed and Digital Reading Habits Scale”. It was found that all factors of the scale displayed significant relationships at the significance level of 0.001 in terms of distinctiveness levels.

3.3 Findings Concerning Reliability

Tables 7-11 present item analysis results for all sub-dimensions of “The Printed and Digital Reading Habits Scale”.

Table 7. Relationships between the Dimensions of “The Printed and Digital Reading Habits Scale”

	Total		F1		F2	
	r	p	r	p	r	p
Reading Acquisitions		0.85		p<0.01		
Printed Reading	0.69	p<0.01	0.42	p<0.01		
Digital Reading	0.51	p<0.01	0.12	p<0.01	0.52	p<0.01

Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient: 0.82

Table 7 shows reliability results regarding “The Printed and Digital Reading Habits Scale” as well as the results of item analyses covering factor dimensions. According to the analysis results, the Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient of the scale was 0.82, which was a high value. The item-total analysis results demonstrated that the correlation values of all dimensions were significant at the level of 0.01.

Table 8 present the Cronbach’s Alpha levels of all dimensions as well as relevant item analysis results.

Table 8. The Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient of the Dimension “Reading Acquisitions (F1)” of “The Printed and Digital Reading Habits Scale”

F1			
Reading Acquisitions	Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient	Item Remaining
s18	.738	.873	
s19	.731	.876	
s22	.727	.874	
s17	.677	.878	
s16	.642	.880	
s20	.684	.877	
s15	.600	.883	
F1			
Reading Acquisitions	Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient	Item Remaining
s21	.565	.885	
s24	.554	.886	
s23	.490	.894	

F1 Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient: 0.89

As seen in the Table 7, the Cronbach’s Alpha of the dimension “Reading Acquisitions” of “The Printed and Digital Reading Habits Scale” was found to be 0.89. Item remaining was not considered necessary as the removal of any item from the dimension “Reading Acquisitions” would not increase the Cronbach’s Alpha value more.

Table 9. The Cronbach’s Alpha Values of the Dimension “Printed Reading (F2) of “The Printed and Digital Reading Habits Scale”

F2	Printed Reading	Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient	Item Remaining
s6		.429	.594	
s5		.547	.507	
s4		.430	.596	
s1		.349	.643	

F2 Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient: 0.66

As seen in Table 9, the Cronbach’s Alpha of the dimension “Printed Reading” of “The Printed and Digital Reading Habits Scale” was found to be 0.66. Item remaining was not considered necessary as the removal of any item from the dimension “Printed Reading” would not increase the Cronbach’s Alpha value more.

Table 10. The Cronbach’s Alpha Values of the Dimension “Digital Reading (F3) of “The Printed and Digital Reading Habits Scale”

F3	Digital Reading	Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient	Item Remaining
s7		.30	.48	
s13		.30	.48	
s14		.41	.30	

F3 Cronbach Alpha Coefficient:.53

As seen in Table 10, the Cronbach's Alpha of the dimension "Digital Reading" of "The Printed and Digital Reading Habits Scale" was found to be 0.53. Item remaining was not considered necessary as the removal of any item from the dimension "Digital Reading" would not increase the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient more.

3.4 Test-retest Reliability

"The Printed and Digital Reading Habits Scale" was administered to 24-person group twice at the intervals of two weeks. In this way, the relationship between two applications was detected. Table 10 presents test-retest results.

Table 11. Group T-Test Results Concerning Test-Retest for "The Printed and Digital Reading Habits Scale"

	Mean	N	t	df	P
total-rfsstop	3.67	76	-1.664	23.000	0.110
	3.67	76			
f1toplam-rf1ss	2.986	76	0.000	23.000	1.000
	2.986	76			
f2toplam-rf2ss	3.827	76	-1.000	23.000	0.328
	3.833	76			
f3toplam-rf3ss	2.984	76	-1.735	23.000	0.096
	2.997	76			

As is seen in Table 11, no significant difference was determined at the significance level of 0.05 between the total scores obtained from the factors and the average scores obtained from the entire scale, according to the dependent-groups t-test results. That revealed that the scale was reliable in the sense of exchangeability in the course of time.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, a scale that could measure the printed and digital reading habits of faculty of education students from Marmara University and Kocaeli University and reveal their views and thoughts about printed and digital reading was developed. Based on the related literature as well as questionnaires and scales employed in previous studies, a 40-item pool was created. The 40-item scale was presented to 4 experts to receive their opinions. Fifteen items were removed through Lawshe's technique. The 25-item scale was administered to 524 students. Those items whose factor loadings were below .50 were excluded from analysis. The Varimax rotated principal components analysis was conducted.

According to the first analysis results, the KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy) value was found to be .904, and Bartlett's test yielded 3130.099. Accordingly, the result of Bartlett's test was found to be significant at the level of 0.001. According to Bartlett's test, there was a correlation between the variables, and factor analysis was to be made on such variables.

The factor analysis indicated that the scale consisted of 3 sub-factors and 17 questions. The Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficients of 3 sub-dimensions of the scale were found to be .89, .66, and .53 respectively. The alpha reliability coefficient of the entire scale was found to be .82. These results showed that the scale was reliable both as a whole and in terms of sub-dimensions. Thus, it was a reliable scale. On the other hand, the fact that the Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of the overall scale was higher than the coefficients of the sub-dimensions meant that the scale could be used both as a multidimensional scale and as a one-dimensional scale (Bozanoğlu, 2004). The scale contained items with a factor loading value higher than 0.45.

In consideration of the foregoing, it is safe to say that it is a valid and reliable scale.

The related literature includes many similar studies. However, these studies are usually about printed reading habits while some are limited to questionnaire forms.

The items of scale forms used by Kırmızı (2012), Bozpolat (2010), Arslantürk and Saracaloğlu (2010), Demir (2009), Odabaş, Odabaş and Polat (2008), Gömleksiz (2004) and Nell (1988) examined only printed reading attitudes, interests, habits, and reading comprehension skills of university students attending various departments. In addition, UNESCO (2014), CNL (2014), National Endowment for the Arts (2007) and Clark and Foster (2005) focused on current reading habits at an international level by age, sex, type of book read, etc. Thus, the above-mentioned studies and the present study have some aspects in common. The difference of the present study from the above-mentioned studies is that it also addressed the digital reading habits of teacher candidates.

Dökmen (1994), which was similar to the current study, was limited to only a questionnaire study. It was intended for adults and children and aimed to examine reading habits. Though Dökmen (1994) is similar to this study in terms of reading habits, the present study is different in terms of digital reading.

4.1 Recommendations

This study aimed to determine the attitudes of teacher candidates towards reading. Based on the research results, the following recommendations may be put forward:

1. Research measuring the printed and digital reading habits of elementary school and middle school teachers may be conducted.
2. Research measuring the printed and digital reading habits of elementary school and middle school students may be conducted.
3. Research measuring the printed and digital reading habits of academics may be conducted.
4. Reading competency scales may be developed by working on larger samples.
5. New research may be conducted based on demographic data (status of having a library, frequency of reading, frequency of going to library, status of having a computer, frequency of using the Internet, etc.).

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