



Preparing Pre-service English Language Teachers to Teach at Unprecedented Times: The Case of Turkey

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Abstract

COVID-19 has impacted education negatively to a certain extent by suspending schools and universities, ending face-to-face and practical education, and causing a rapid transition to distance education. These changes have led to several negative effects on teachers and students such as anxiety, stress, and depression, which demonstrates the importance of teacher preparedness to teach at unprecedented times such as COVID-19. Therefore, assessing and evaluating teacher preparedness has become significant. One way to do this is to evaluate teacher education programs with a new perspective developed considering the effects of COVID-19 on education. Therefore, the present study aimed to find out how teacher education programs can prepare teachers to teach at unprecedented times by focusing on the English language teacher education program (ELTEP) of Turkey. It was designed as a qualitative study in which the ELTEP of Turkey was used as the data collection tool. The collected data were content analyzed. The findings have shown that the ELTEP of Turkey can prepare pre-service English language teachers to teach at unprecedented times through three psychological courses, five technology courses, and 21 pedagogical courses. The findings were discussed, and suggestions for further studies were made.

Keywords:

COVID-19; English language teacher education program; teacher preparedness

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INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 has affected education (Al Lily, Ismail, Abunasser, & Alqahtani, 2020; Ciğerci, 2020; Keswani, Sethi, Repici, Messmann, & Chiu, 2020; Krishnamurthy, 2020) because schools and universities were locked down (de Oliveira Araújo, de Lima, Cidade, Nobre, & Neto, 2020; Sá & Serpa, 2020; Toquero, 2020) to avoid the spread of COVID-19 which is very contagious and fatal without a vaccine (Krishnamurthy, 2020). Also, teachers and students were forced to stay at home due to social and physical distancing which was advised to be used for slowing down the spread of COVID-19 even though it is not advantageous to education and student engagement (Carlson, 2020). Therefore, the suspension of schools and universities and social and physical distancing resulted in the end of all in-person teaching (Sani, Hamza, Chedid, Amalendran, & Hamza, 2020; Thapa et al., 2020) and practical education (Dilmaç, 2020; Thapa et al., 2020) for a while and in a rapid transition from face-to-face education to distance education (Plancher, Shanmugam, & Petterson, 2020) though schools, universities, and teachers prepared their courses in face-to-face education format.

The changes COVID-19 brought about in education made both teachers and students adapt the changing model of education (Keswani et al., 2020) despite several challenges in implementing distance education and the negative impacts of this implementation on student during COVID-19. In terms of challenges, teachers had to digitalize and deliver the contents of their course virtually through digital tools such as Zoom in a very short time (Alqurshi, 2020; Basilaia & Kvavadze, 2020; Krishnamurthy, 2020; Nasr, 2020; Sá & Serpa, 2020) although they had little formal training (Krishnamurthy, 2020; Sá & Serpa, 2020). In this transition to distance education, institutions' familiarity with e-learning affected teachers negatively if the institutions did not make sufficient e-learning preparations and have tools (Louis-Jean & Cenat, 2020). Teachers had to change the way they assessed and evaluated their students (Alqurshi, 2020; Cahapay, 2020; Nasr, 2020). Students had to take their courses online though they did not prefer distance learning (Lee & Zhang, 2020) and have necessary digital devices (Sá & Serpa, 2020), the access to the internet (Thapa et al., 2020), and technological skills required for distance education (Dilmaç, 2020; Yates, Brindley-Richards, & Thistoll, 2020).

Besides the challenges in implementing distance education, the changes COVID-19 created led to different effects on students (Basilaia & Kvavadze, 2020; Radwan & Radwan, 2020) and teachers (Kaden, 2020; Krishnamurthy, 2020; Radwan & Radwan, 2020). Both teachers and students lacked regular communication (Sani et al., 2020; Uluöz, 2020), interaction (Alqurshi, 2020), contact (Yates et al., 2020), and socialization (Dilmaç, 2020). Student engagement (Nepal & Rogerson, 2020; Yates et al., 2020) and motivation to learn (Ciğerci, 2020; Dilmaç, 2020) were influenced negatively due to COVID-19, which concerned teachers a lot. Both students and teachers experienced negative emotions such as anxiety and stress during the lockdown (Al Lily et al., 2020; de Oliveira Araújo et al., 2020; Ciğerci, 2020; Murphy, Eduljee, & Croteau, 2020; Sani et al., 2020; Uluöz, 2020). Therefore, the impacts of COVID-19 on students made

understanding their needs (Toquero, 2020) and individualizing instruction for them (Kaden, 2020) more significant.

COVID-19-related issues such as digitalizing course contents and curricula for distance teaching, delivering courses via distance education, and dealing with student engagement and motivation raise a significant question about how prepared teachers are to teach, adapt their instruction, and contribute to their students' learning at unprecedented times such as COVID-19. One way to check whether they are prepared to teach at such times is to evaluate teacher education programs with a new perspective developed depending on the impacts of COVID-19 on education including schools, universities, teachers, and students. This type of teacher education program evaluation can help understand the strengths and weaknesses in teacher education programs in terms of preparing preservice teachers to teach at unprecedented times.

In accordance with this purpose, the present study aimed to evaluate the English Language Teacher Education Program (ELTEP) of Turkey with the new perspective explained. It tried to answer the following questions in relation to this aim:

1. Can the content of the ELTEP of Turkey contribute to the preparation of preservice English language teachers (PELT) to teach at unprecedented times?
 - a. If so, what is/are the course/courses in the content of the ELTEP of Turkey?
 - b. What do PELTs study in the course/courses?

METHOD

Research design

Qualitative research was utilized to design the present study because researchers can explore a human or social issue by obtaining a detailed and complex understanding of the issue under research (Creswell, 2007, 2014). Regarding the effects of Covid-19 on people including education, understanding whether English language teacher education can provide PELTs with necessary skills and knowledge to deal with the effects of the rapid transition to distance teaching can be considered a human and social issue, so a qualitative study can help explore this issue by providing the complex and detailed understanding of the issue.

Data collection tool

The data was collected from the *English Language Teacher Education Program* of Turkey which was developed and prepared by the Higher Education Council of Turkey in 2018.

Data analysis

Content analysis was used to analyze the document according to the framework suggested by Yıldırım and Şimşek (2013). The document was read many times and three codes were derived from the document. The data were presented without the comments of the researcher after being organized depending on the codes. The researcher interpreted the data in accordance with their description.

Trustworthiness

To make the content analysis trustworthy, the document was also content analyzed by one of the researcher's colleagues who conducted several qualitative studies. After having content analyzed the document, they came together, compared their analyses, and dealt with the differences in consensus with each other.

FINDINGS

The findings were presented under three codes derived from the document in content analysis: (a) psychological training, (b) technological training, and (c) pedagogical training.

Psychological training

The ELTEP of Turkey offers three psychological courses to PELTs. Table 1 below shows these courses.

Table 1:

Compulsory and Elective Psychological Courses in the ELTEP of Turkey

Compulsory courses	Elective courses
Educational psychology	Child psychology
Guidance at schools	

Compulsory psychological courses

As Table 1 indicates, there are two psychological courses that PELTs need to take. These courses are educational psychology and guidance at schools.

- 1. Educational psychology:** In this course, PELTs learn the theories of development, development areas, development processes, and individual differences in development. The course also focuses on the basic terms related to learning, factors affecting learning, learning theories in terms of education and training processes, and motivation in learning.
- 2. Guidance at schools:** PELTs study the philosophy, purpose, principles and program of developmental guidance model as well as the services and interventions of psychological counseling and guidance in the course. They also learn the role and functions of teachers in classroom guidance and the preparation and implementation of psychological counseling and guidance's plans and programs in classes. The instructional, occupational, personal, and social competences that students will acquire in terms of psychological counseling and guidance are also focused on.

Elective psychological courses

In addition to compulsory courses, PELTs is offered one elective psychological course: child psychology.

- 1. Child psychology:** PELTs can be informed about the basic concepts of child psychology, the development areas and properties of early and late childhood, and children in family and at school. The course also trains them on children with special needs and the adaptation and behavior problems in childhood.

Technological training

The ELTEP of Turkey has five courses for the technological training of PELTs: information technology, instructional technologies, and open and distance education. Table 2 below shows these courses.

Table 2:

Compulsory and Elective Technology Courses in the ELTEP of Turkey

Compulsory courses	Elective courses
Information technology	Open and distance education
Instructional technologies	Material design in English language teaching
Approaches in teaching and learning English	

Compulsory technology courses

As seen in Table 2, PELTs need to take three compulsory technology courses. Information technology, instructional technologies, and approaches in teaching and learning English are these courses.

1. **Information technology:** PELTs study and learn information technologies and data-processing thinking, problem-solving concepts and approaches, algorithms and flow charts, and the basic concepts of software and hardware. In addition, they are trained on computer systems, the features of operating systems, contemporary operating systems, file management, office programs, desktop publishing, database management systems, and web design. They are also taught the use of internet in education, communication and collaboration technologies, secure internet use, the effects of computers and the internet on children and youth, and informatics ethics and copyrights in this course.
2. **Instructional technologies:** The course teaches information technologies in education, the classification of instructional technologies, the theoretical approaches related to instructional technologies, new trends in learning approaches, and contemporary literacies to PELTs. Furthermore, they learn instructional technologies as tools and material design, designing instructional materials, designing thematic instructional materials, and the criteria to evaluate instructional materials as well as creating a discipline-specific objects handler in the course.
3. **Approaches in teaching and learning English:** The course is a pedagogical course, but it can be related to the technological training of PELTs because of technology-based teaching methods and approaches such as computer-assisted language learning. In this course, PELTs are taught on the implications of various technology-related learning and teaching approaches in teaching English with in-class practices.

Elective technology courses

As Table 2 indicates, there are two elective technology courses: open and distance education and material design in English language teaching.

1. **Open and distance education:** If PELTs choose this course, they can be trained on the basic concepts and philosophy of open and distance education, learner and guidance roles, technologies used, and the management of education in addition to classroom management and its components. They can also learn open education sources around the world, massive open online courses, individualized learning environments, problems and their solutions in open and distance education, and open and distance education practices in teacher training. Moreover, the course focuses on the identification of learning strategies for different learning situations and the development of individual instructional materials and student support services.
2. **Material design in English language teaching course:** PELTs can be taught the use of discipline-specific instructional technologies, the types and use of software, and the design and development principles of materials to be used in teaching English in this course. They can also study and learn how to identify material needs, to design 2D and 3D instructional materials, to prepare worksheets as well as VCD, DVD, MP3 and MP4 instructional materials, and to evaluate in-class practices of different instructional materials.

Pedagogical training

The ELTEP of Turkey offers 21 pedagogical courses that can prepare PELTs to teach at unprecedented times. These courses are given in Table 3 below.

Table 3:

Compulsory and Elective Pedagogical Courses in the ELTEP of Turkey

Compulsory courses	Elective courses
Teaching principles and methods	Program development in education
Approaches in teaching and learning English	Individualization and adaptation of teaching
English language teaching programs	Evaluation of in-class learning
Classroom management	New approaches in English language teaching
Teaching foreign languages to young children 1 and 2	Adult education and life-long learning
Teaching English skills 1 and 2	Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
Measurement and evaluating in education	Education of hospitalized children
Course content development in English language teaching	Inclusive education
Testing in English	Learning difficulty
Special education and inclusion	

Compulsory pedagogical courses

According to Table 3, there are 12 compulsory pedagogical courses that PELTs are supposed to take in the ELTEP of Turkey.

1. **Teaching principles and methods:** PELTs are taught the basic concepts of teaching principles and methods, and the principles, models, strategies, methods, and techniques of education and training. They also study how to choose and organize content, to determine objectives and goals, and to plan instruction. Additionally, they learn methods and approaches related to teaching and

evaluating in-class learning achievement as well as teaching, learning, and achievement in learning in effective schools.

2. **Approaches in teaching and learning English:** PELTs learn the meaning, history, purpose, and basic principles of teaching and learning English. The implications of learning and teaching approaches in teaching English, in-class practices, the components of effective English language teaching, and contemporary issues in teaching English with a social, economic, and cultural perspective are also taught to PELTs.
3. **English language teaching programs:** The course educates PELTs on the basic concepts of teaching programs and the historical development of English language teaching programs. It teaches the approach, content, target language skills, learning and sub-learning areas, and cross-curricular relations of the current English language teaching programs. In addition, PELTs learn the distribution of objectives according to grades, the relationships of English language teaching programs with each other in primary, elementary, and high schools, and the other aspects of English language teaching programs (i.e. assessment and evaluation approach and instructional methods, techniques, tools, and materials).
4. **Classroom management:** The course helps PELTs understand and learn the basic concepts of classroom management and the physical, social and psychological aspects of classrooms. PELTs are trained on classroom rules and discipline and the models of classroom management and discipline. They study how to manage student behaviors and time, to motivate students, to interact and communicate with students, and to act as the leader of instruction in the classroom.
5. **Teaching foreign languages to young children 1 and 2:** These courses train PELTs on the differences between young learners (5-12 years old) and other learners at different age groups as well as the learning preferences and strategies of young learners. PELTs also learn how to develop activities and audio visual aids to language skills, vocabulary, and the structure of language, to choose and order teaching points relevant for the language proficiency and cognitive and emotional development levels of young learners, and to adapt and evaluate materials for these points.
6. **Teaching English skills 1 and 2:** These courses teach PELTs the different stages and techniques of teaching four language skills, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar and the principles and techniques of planning lessons for different proficiency levels. In addition, the courses can help PELTs to raise language awareness for and develop different teaching skills for student groups in different proficiency levels.
7. **Measurement and evaluating in education:** PELTs learn the place and importance of measurement and evaluation in education, the basic concepts of measurement and evaluation, and the psychometric features of assessment tools. In addition, how to develop and implement achievement tests, to evaluate test results and give feedback, to analyze test and item points, and to evaluate and grade are taught to PELTs in this course.
8. **Course content development in English language teaching:** The course informs PELTs about the theories and principles of developing course content and materials in English language teaching, the basic opposing ideas about using English language teaching course books, and the relationship between methods, ideology, and course book writers. PELTs also learn authentic materials, the

format of choosing course content and materials, and the adaptation and the development of materials for language teaching. The course teaches the evaluation of English language teaching contents, materials, and course books, and the contemporary methods of content and material design to PELTs.

9. **Testing in English:** The course trains PELTs on the different types of exams and assessment methods used to assess and evaluate students at different ages and with different language proficiency levels and on the principles of assessing and evaluating language skills. It also teaches them the types of questions for assessing four language skills, vocabulary, and grammar, the techniques of preparing exams, the criteria of evaluating exams, and the preparation of different types of questions.
10. **Special education and inclusion:** PELTs are trained on the basic concepts, principles, and identification and evaluation of special education. They also study individualizing instruction, inclusion and special education services, and the features of different ability and inability groups. The instructional approaches and techniques to such groups and effective strategies in classroom management are also studied.

Elective pedagogical courses

Table 3 shows that the ELTEP of Turkey has nine elective pedagogical courses.

1. **Program development in education:** The course can inform PELTs about the basic concepts, foundations, features, and stages of program development. It can also train them on the kinds and basic components of programs and the classification of objectives and their relations with the components of the programs, the identification of learning needs. PELTs can learn content organization approaches, the procedure and models of program development, education program design approaches, and program evaluation models. In addition, program literacy, the functions and responsibilities of teachers in program development, new approaches and trends in program development, and the implementation of education programs are focused on in this course.
2. **Individualization and adaptation of teaching:** The course can give PELTs information about individualization and its importance in education, what should be done for individualization, and the determination of long-term and short-term learning objectives. It also focuses on the regulations for inclusion in classes and schools, the adaptation of instruction, and the development of curriculum-based, rough, and criterion-based assessment tools and evaluation rules.
3. **Evaluation of in-class learning:** PELTs can learn assessment and evaluation tools with their features as well as traditional and alternative assessment tools. They can be informed about the issues to be paid attention in student assessment and evaluation, the evaluation of students' learning outcomes, and grading.
4. **New approaches in English language teaching:** It can train PELTs on lesson design in English language teaching and different English language teaching approaches such as English for academic purposes. They can learn contemporary teaching approaches. In addition, the course can inform them about the use of technology in classes, the place of communication on the world, intercultural interaction, second/foreign language teaching, and the place of culture in language teaching.

5. **Adult education and life-long learning:** The course focuses on the definition, scope, and basic concepts of adult education as well as the definition, purpose, and historical development of life-long learning. It also gives PELTs information about adults and education and the approaches and models of adult education.
6. **Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD):** PELTs can be trained on the definition, features, symptoms, causes, and types of ADHD. They can learn how to deal with, train, and guide students with ADHD as well the social, emotional, and academic effects of ADHD on students.
7. **Education of hospitalized children:** PELTs can be informed about the development features, interests, needs, and psychological situations of hospitalized children according to their age groups. They can also be educated on how to interact with hospital staff, families, teachers and hospitalized children, and how to develop and prepare instructional plans such as games and for hospitalized children.
8. **Inclusive education:** This course teaches the definition, content, importance, approaches and standards of inclusive education and teacher roles in inclusive education to PELTs. In addition, they can learn inclusive education programs, materials, practices, and lesson preparation, values and attitudes. The features that differentiate students, effective interaction, language used, psycho-social support, differentiating and planning instruction, inclusiveness in lesson materials, and inclusive activities are also focused on in the course.
9. **Learning difficulty:** PELTs can be trained on the definition, features, classification, causes, factors, prevalence, and identification of learning disability in addition to supporting academic and nonacademic skills through scientific practices.

DISCUSSION

As COVID-19 caused schools and universities to be suspended (de Oliveira Araújo et al., 2020; Sá & Serpa, 2020; Toquero, 2020) and face-to-face education (Sani, et al., 2020; Thapa et al., 2020) and practical education (Dilmaç, 2020; Thapa et al., 2020) to be ended for a while, a rapid transition to online and distance education became a must to continue education in schools and universities (Plancher et al., 2020). Therefore, it has become significant for a teacher education program to introduce technologies that can be used in open and distance education to preservice teachers. Accordingly, the ELTEP of Turkey can introduce information technologies including the concepts, approaches and parts of information technologies and the use of the internet in terms of education, security, ethics, and its effects on children and youth to PELTs through information technology course. Instructional technologies course serves for similar purposes. They are introduced instructional technologies including their classifications and theoretical approaches and are taught how to use them to design course materials in this course. These courses can improve their knowledge and raise their awareness relating to information and instructional technologies that they can use in online and distance education. This can be promoted by approaches in teaching and learning English course in which they learn how technology-based teaching and learning approaches such CALL can be used in the classroom. In addition, open and distance education course can assist them to learn the features of open and distance education, their roles in open and distance education, the design and development of open and distance education materials, and the design and

delivery of open and distance education courses. Material design in English language teaching course can also enable them to design and develop English language teaching materials by using information and instructional technologies.

In addition, a teacher education program should also provide preservice teachers with the knowledge and experience required to design, develop, and deliver courses online considering the fact that COVID-19 made teachers digitalize and deliver their courses which they had prepared for face-to-face instruction online (Alqurshi, 2020; Basilaia & Kvavadze, 2020; Krishnamurthy, 2020; Nasr, 2020; Sá & Serpa, 2020) with little training (Krishnamurthy, 2020; Sá & Serpa, 2020) in a short time. The ELTEP of Turkey includes teaching principles and methods course which informs PELTs about the principles, techniques, and methods of teaching and the use of such information in course design and evaluation. Approaches in teaching and learning English course introduces approaches, methods, and techniques and their uses in teaching English in the classroom to them. Elective new approaches in English language teaching course can introduce different purposes of teaching English and how to teach English for those purposes to them. Both compulsory English language teaching programs and elective program development in education courses can improve their familiarity with and knowledge of the components, philosophy, features, and development procedures of such educational programs, while course content development in English language teaching course can contribute to their theoretical knowledge in course content development and enable them to practice their learning by developing course content to teach English. Also, they can practice planning lessons for teaching four language skills, vocabulary, and grammar for students at different ages with different language proficiencies and teaching four skills, vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar by implementing these plans in teaching English skills 1 and 2 courses. Classroom management course can equip them with the knowledge and awareness to use for managing students during instruction in the classroom.

COVID-19 also affected student assessment and evaluation (Alqurshi, 2020; Cahapay, 2020; Nasr, 2020) as schools and universities were locked down (de Oliveira Araújo et al., 2020; Sá & Serpa, 2020; Toquero, 2020), so traditional education was halted for a while (Sani, et al., 2020; Thapa et al., 2020), and education was digitalized (Alqurshi, 2020; Basilaia & Kvavadze, 2020; Krishnamurthy, 2020; Nasr, 2020; Sá & Serpa, 2020). This effect of COVID-19 has also made assessment and evaluation training significant for a teacher education program. In relation to this, the ELTEP of Turkey educates PELTs on how to assess and evaluate student learning by developing and implementing exams, grading and evaluating exam results, and giving feedback in measurement and evaluation in education course. The ELTEP also trains them on how to assess and evaluate student learning in four language skills, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar by developing and implementing discipline-specific exams, grading and evaluating those exams' results, and giving feedback in testing in English course. Elective evaluation of in-class learning course can add to their learning in assessment and evaluation by informing them on how to assess and evaluate student in-class learning through traditional and alternative assessment methods.

COVID-19 impacted students' learning because of not having devices such as computers (Sá & Serpa, 2020) and access to the internet (Thapa et al., 2020), and being used to online and distance education (Lee & Zhang, 2020) as well as the lack of necessary skills (Dilmaç, 2020; Yates et al., 2020), regular communication (Sani et al., 2020; Uluöz, 2020), interaction (Alqurshi, 2020), contact (Yates et al., 2020), and

socialization (Dilmaç, 2020). It stemmed in decreasing students' engagement (Yates et al., 2020) and motivation to learn (Ciğerci, 2020; Dilmaç, 2020), and experiencing negative emotions such as anxiety and stress during the lockdown (Al Lily et al., 2020; de Oliveira Araújo et al., 2020; Ciğerci, 2020; Murphy et al., 2020; Sani et al., 2020; Uluöz, 2020). Considering the impacts of COVID-19 on students, training preservice teachers on the diversity in students – that is, young learners, adult learners, and students with special needs – has become essential in a teacher education program. This training is given by the ELTEP of Turkey in three interconnected ways: (a) knowing the features of these learner groups, and the methods, approaches, and techniques of teaching these groups, (b) meeting the learning needs of these groups, and (c) supporting these groups psychologically. In the first way, PELTs can receive several elective and compulsory psychological and pedagogical courses that are designed for these learner groups in the ELTEP of Turkey and which include attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, education of hospitalized children, learning difficulty, adult education and life-long learning, and teaching foreign languages to young learners 1 and 2. These courses can educate PELTs on the characteristics of each learner group and how to teach each group so that they can know how to deal with each learner group in terms of teaching.

In the second way, the ELTEP of Turkey can support PELTs to deal with the learning needs of each learner group appropriately to enhance teaching and learning in each group. The courses mentioned in the previous paragraph can assist them to find out and understand the learning needs of each learner group, which has become important in online and distance education during COVID-19 lockdown (Toquero, 2020). Finding out the learning needs of each learner group should be followed by meeting those needs to improve teaching and learning in each group. Three courses (one compulsory psychological, one elective psychological and one elective pedagogical course) in the ELTEP of Turkey can contribute to PELTs at this point. Compulsory special education and inclusion course can enable them to teach students with special needs by individualizing instruction, using appropriate instructional approaches and methods, and knowing the features of ability and inability student groups. Elective inclusive education course can allow them to differentiate their instruction according to the features that differentiate students by incorporating inclusiveness in their lesson plans, teaching materials, and activities. Elective individualization and adaptation of teaching course can help them to learn and understand how they can individualize and adapt their teaching for their students, which COVID-19 has rendered significant for effective student learning in online and distance education (Kaden, 2020).

In the third way, three psychological courses (two compulsory and one elective) in the ELTEP of Turkey can help PELTs to support their students in distance education psychologically. Psychological support to students gained importance during COVID-19 as COVID-19 caused a decrease in their engagement (Yates et al., 2020) and motivation to learn (Ciğerci, 2020; Dilmaç, 2020), and negative emotions including anxiety and stress in them (Al Lily et al., 2020; de Oliveira Araújo et al., 2020; Ciğerci, 2020; Murphy et al., 2020; Sani et al., 2020; Uluöz, 2020). Compulsory educational psychology course can enhance the knowledge of and raise the awareness of PELTs on the theories of development in human, the factors affecting learning, individual differences in learning, and motivation to learn. Compulsory guidance at schools course can allow them to take an active role in psychological counselling and guidance activities for their students. Elective child psychology course can enhance their familiarity with the psychological features of early and late childhood and raise their awareness of the adaptation and

behavior problems that children may exhibit as well as children with special needs. As a result of these courses, PELTs can provide psychological support to their students in distance education.

CONCLUSION

The literature review in this study has indicated that the impacts of COVID-19 on education, teachers, and students require a sound psychological, technological, and pedagogical preparation for teachers to continue education and enhance student learning in distance education at unprecedented times such as COVID-19. Therefore, teacher training has gained more significance. With regard to this, the findings of the present study have shown that the ELTEP of Turkey can prepare PELTs to teach at unprecedented times such as COVID-19 through three psychological courses, five technology courses, and 21 pedagogical courses.

Though this study is limited to the ELTEP of Turkey, it can provide a new perspective to future program evaluation studies that can be conducted with different ELTEPs of different countries in terms of to whether their ELTEPs can prepare PELTs to teach at unprecedented time. Such evaluation can provide teacher educators and teacher education program developers with the opportunity to find out the strengths and weaknesses of their teacher education programs with regard to this aspect so that they can improve their ELTEPs by working on their weaknesses to prepare their PELTs to teach at unprecedented times.

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