

A STUDY ON CLASSROOM TEACHERS' SELF-EFFICACY IN CONDUCTING RELIGIOUS CULTURE AND MORAL KNOWLEDGE LESSONS

UM ESTUDO SOBRE A AUTOEFICÁCIA DE PROFESSORES EM SALA DE AULA NA CONDUÇÃO DE AULAS DE CULTURA RELIGIOSA E CONHECIMENTO MORAL

Article received on: 8/29/2025

Article accepted on: 11/28/2025

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The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest

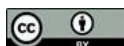
Abstract

This study examines the self-efficacy levels of classroom teachers in conducting Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge (RCMK) lessons. The RCMK course is important for individuals' spiritual and cultural development and is taught by classroom teachers in cases where subject-specific teachers are unavailable. The research was conducted with 184 classroom teachers working in Elazığ, and a validated and reliable scale was used as the data collection tool. Analyses performed using the SPSS program revealed that teachers' self-efficacy perceptions regarding the RCMK course were slightly above the moderate level. Teachers found themselves competent in terms of knowledge and application skills but indicated a need for support in some areas. The findings suggest that strengthening both pre-service and in-service training programs could enhance teachers' effectiveness in delivering the RCMK course. This study aims to guide future efforts to improve teachers' competencies in this area.

Keywords: Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge (RCMK).

Resumo

Este estudo examina os níveis de autoeficácia de professores de sala de aula na condução de aulas de Cultura Religiosa e Conhecimento Moral (CRCM). O curso de CRCM é importante para o desenvolvimento espiritual e cultural dos indivíduos e é ministrado por professores de sala de aula nos casos em que professores da disciplina específica não estão disponíveis. A pesquisa foi realizada com 184 professores de sala de aula que atuam em Elazığ, e uma escala validada e confiável foi utilizada como instrumento de coleta de dados. As análises realizadas com o programa SPSS revelaram que as percepções de autoeficácia dos professores em relação ao curso de CRCM estavam ligeiramente acima do nível moderado. Os professores se consideraram competentes em termos de conhecimento e habilidades de aplicação, mas indicaram a necessidade de apoio em algumas áreas. Os resultados sugerem que o fortalecimento dos programas de formação inicial e continuada pode aumentar a eficácia dos professores na ministração do curso de CRCM. Este estudo visa orientar esforços futuros para aprimorar as competências dos professores nessa área.



Palavras-chave: *Cultura Religiosa e Conhecimento Moral (CRCM).*

1 INTRODUCTION

Religious education is the manifestation and development of the religious sentiment that an individual brings with him from birth (Keyifli, 2013). Along with the transmission of cultural and spiritual values in religious education, religious education has taken its share in education in different ways by societies. In our country, the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course begins in the fourth grade of primary school. Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge (DKAB) is taught by students from the Primary School Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Education Departments, graduates of Faculties of Theology, or by teachers with a Bachelor of Theology degree and educational training (Yazıbaşı, 2017). However, in fourth-grade primary schools, if subject teachers are unable to teach due to a valid excuse, classroom teachers may teach these courses (MEB Journal of Announcements, 2004). Self-efficacy is a concept that refers to individuals' ability to successfully complete a specific task and their beliefs about it (Bandura, 1997). This concept is a significant factor affecting individuals' motivation, learning processes, and performance. In the field of education, teachers' self-efficacy perceptions play a decisive role in determining lesson planning, teaching strategies, and methods (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Research has revealed that teachers' self-efficacy beliefs have a significant impact on increasing students' academic achievement and making the teaching process more effective (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). In this context, the conduct of classroom teachers' religious education courses has sparked debate about their competence in religious education. Johnston et al. (2017), in their study assessing classroom teachers' competence in religious education, concluded that they lacked sufficient skills in this area. Similarly, Smith et al. (2019) concluded that the training classroom teachers receive in religious education is often inadequate, which could impact students' religious knowledge and understanding. Conversely, Jones (2020) argues that various training programs should be developed to enhance classroom teachers' competence in religious education. Indeed, in our country, because classroom teachers are required to teach specialized courses, the Classroom Teaching Undergraduate Program published by the Council of Higher Education (YÖK, 2019) also teaches

specialized courses to prospective classroom teachers during their undergraduate education (YÖK, 2019). When the Classroom Teaching Undergraduate Program is examined specifically for the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course, it is taught to prospective classroom teachers during the sixth semester under the name of Teaching Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge (YÖK, 2019). The literature review did not identify the self-efficacy of teachers who graduated from the Classroom Teaching Undergraduate Program and began their professional careers when they took Religious Culture and Appropriateness (RQM) courses when needed. Providing appropriate education during this period is crucial for the healthy development of the belief system established in childhood (Nas, 2018). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine the self-efficacy of classroom teachers who teach the RQM course, which is part of formal education, to develop a healthy belief system in children. We believe that the examination of the results obtained in this study by authorities will be important for decisions made regarding the RQM course.

2 METHOD

2.1 Research method

This study is a descriptive study designed using the survey model, a quantitative research method, to determine classroom teachers' self-efficacy perceptions regarding the delivery of the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge (REC) course. The survey model is a type of research that aims to explain and describe events or situations as they are (Karasar, 2009; as cited in Özgen, Köşker & Yalçın, 2015). In this study, teachers' current self-efficacy in the delivery of the REC course was determined and analyzed according to various variables.

2.2 Sample and limitations of the research

The study sample consisted of 184 classroom teachers working in Elazığ province during the 2023-2024 academic year. Convenience sampling was used in sample selection. The study results are limited to data obtained only from the participating classroom teachers, and therefore, caution should be exercised when making

generalizations. Limitations of the study include the fact that the participants were limited to the province of Elazığ, that time-dependent changes could not be monitored due to the cross-sectional nature of the study, and that the subjective evaluations of the participants were influential in the data collection process.

2.3 Measurement tools used in the research

The 24-item "Self-Efficacy Scale for Conducting Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Course," developed by the researchers to measure classroom teachers' self-efficacy for conducting the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Course, was used as the data collection tool in the study. The scale is a 5-point Likert-type format (1: Strongly Disagree, 5: Strongly Agree) and consists of four sub-dimensions: "Plan and Implementation," "Importance of Morality and Religion," "Values Education," and "Religious Information." The reliability of the scale was calculated using the Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient, with an overall value of $\alpha = 0.96$. The internal consistency coefficients of the subscales were found to be $\alpha = 0.924$, $\alpha = 0.877$, $\alpha = 0.856$, and $\alpha = 0.886$, respectively. The values obtained indicate that the scale is reliable and consistent.

2.4 Data analysis

In the analysis of the data, firstly, IBM SPSS 22.0 package program was used for exploratory factor analysis and reliability analysis, then IBM AMOS 24.0 package programs were used for confirmatory factor analysis. After factor analysis, the assumptions that needed to be met were tested to determine which tests (parametric/nonparametric tests) to apply. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to determine the normality of the distribution, and the data were considered normal because the skewness and kurtosis coefficients were between ± 2.0 (George & Mallery, 2010). In normally distributed data, the t-test was used to compare two independent groups. One-way ANOVA was used to compare more than two unrelated groups. Post-hoc analysis was used to determine the source of the difference. The Bonferroni test was used when variances were found to be homogeneous, and the Tamhane's test was used when they were not. The Levene statistic was used to determine whether variances were

homogeneous. A significance level of 0.05 was used as a criterion in interpreting whether the obtained values were significant or not.

3 FINDINGS

3.1 Findings regarding demographic characteristics

Demographic data of the teachers participating in the study are shown in Table 1 as percentage and frequency values.

Table 1

Findings Related to the Demographic Characteristics of Teachers (n = 184)

Variables		n	%
Gender	Female	110	59,78
	Male	74	40,22
Age	21-25	46	25,00
	26-30	30	16,30
	31-35	31	16,85
	36+	77	41,85
Age	undergraduate	149	80,98
	postgraduate	35	19,02
Professional Experience	1-5 years	74	40,22
	6-10 years	28	15,22
	11 years and above	82	44,57
Place of Duty	Village/Town	30	16,30
	District Center	61	33,15
	Provincial Center	93	50,54

When Table 1 was examined, it was determined that 59.78% of the teachers participating in the study were female, 40.22% were male, 25% were between the ages of 21-25, 16.30% were between the ages of 26-30, 16.85% were between the ages of 31-35, 41.85% were 36 years old and over, 80.98% had an undergraduate education, 19.02% had a postgraduate degree, 16.30% had 1-5 years of professional experience, 15.22% had 6-10 years, 44.57% had 11 years and over, 16.30% had a place of duty in a village or town, 33.15% had a place of duty in a district center, and 50.54% had a place of duty in a provincial center.

3.2 Exploratory factor analysis results

3.2.1 Examining the normality of the classroom teachers' self-efficacy scale items for conducting the religious culture and moral knowledge course

The survey was first applied to 197 people, and when the participants considered invalid were removed from the obtained data, Skewness and Kurtosis skewness/kurtosis values, histogram graph, Q-Q plot test, Kolmogorov-Smirnov values were examined to determine the distribution status of the scale data applied to the remaining 184 people.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of the Designed Scale Items

Items	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Item 1	1	5	3,89	0,87	-0,782	0,647
Item 2	1	5	3,73	0,96	-0,554	-0,286
Item 3	1	5	3,96	0,78	-0,638	0,740
Item 4	2	5	3,99	0,74	-0,311	-0,270
Item 5	2	5	4,26	0,58	-0,425	1,396
Item 6	2	5	3,99	0,72	-0,594	0,607
Item 7	2	5	3,88	0,79	-0,577	0,176
Item 8	2	5	3,93	0,74	-0,625	0,595
Item 9	1	5	3,97	0,78	-0,656	0,772
Item 10	2	5	4,01	0,71	-0,669	0,968
Item 11	2	5	4,17	0,65	-0,549	0,792
Item 12	1	5	3,22	1,14	0,080	-1,022
Item 13	1	5	3,76	0,89	-0,609	-0,010
Item 14	1	5	3,91	0,83	-0,721	0,589
Item 15	1	5	3,91	0,78	-0,694	0,883
Item 16	1	5	3,85	0,82	-0,744	0,641
Item 17	1	5	3,07	1,11	0,052	-0,917
Item 18	2	5	4,01	0,72	-0,737	1,063
Item 19	2	5	4,03	0,68	-0,351	0,138
Item 20	3	5	4,28	0,58	-0,102	-0,509
Item 21	3	5	4,30	0,53	0,161	-0,655
Item 22	2	5	4,07	0,67	-0,192	-0,370
Item 23	2	5	4,14	0,62	-0,373	0,769
Item 24	2	5	4,29	0,65	-0,610	0,463
Item 25	2	5	4,29	0,60	-0,379	0,231
Item 26	2	5	4,13	0,64	-0,239	-0,036
Item 27	2	5	3,91	0,83	-0,566	-0,063
Item 28	3	5	4,15	0,56	0,042	0,018
Item 29	3	5	4,19	0,55	0,051	-0,112
Item 30	3	5	4,20	0,58	-0,033	-0,269
Item 31	3	5	4,27	0,55	0,027	-0,429
Item 32	2	5	4,11	0,65	-0,351	0,263
Item 33	2	5	4,04	0,72	-0,517	0,376
Item 34	2	5	4,05	0,68	-0,482	0,577

Item 35	2	5	3,91	0,72	-0,387	0,155
Item 36	2	5	4,01	0,73	-0,610	0,607
Item 37	2	5	3,99	0,69	-0,195	-0,283

The distribution of the data obtained within the scope of the study was considered normal because the Skewness (skewness) and Kurtosis (kurtosis) coefficients were between ± 2.0 (George and Mallery, 2010).

3.2.2 Results of exploratory factor analysis of the scale study on classroom teachers' self-efficacy in conducting the religious culture and moral knowledge course

To apply EFA to the obtained data, the sample size must be sufficient. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) score measures whether the sample size is sufficient for the study. The KMO coefficient range is as follows (Kartal & Bardakçı, 2018).

0.00-0.49 = insufficient sample

0.50-0.59 = poorly representative sample

0.60-0.69 = moderate

0.70-0.79 = good

0.80-0.89 = very good

0.90-1 = excellent

Another characteristic required for data to be applicable to EFA is the integrity of the population. This level is measured using the Test of Sphericity developed by Bartlett. In this context, the KMO and Bartlett Test results for the scale are given in Table 3.

Table 3

KMO and Bartlett's Test Scores of the Draft Scale

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO)		0,938
	Chi-square	3617,193
Bartlett's Test	Degrees of Freedom (df)	276
	p	0,001

Table 3 shows the "Self-Efficacy of Classroom Teachers in Conducting the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Course." When the data for the draft scale prepared for the scale development were examined, it was determined that the KMO value

was 0.938, and the Bartlett Test was significant. Therefore, the sample size was excellent, and the test was completely consistent. When the factors forming the scale were first configured, principal component and varimax techniques were applied as rotation, and the factor loading values of the scale items were taken into account. A loading of 0.30 was used as the basis for item factor analysis. Furthermore, care was taken to ensure that the difference between the loadings of items on the first factor and those on other factors was 0.10 or higher (Büyüköztürk, 2004). Thus, overlapping items were removed from the scale (3, 4, 5, 12, 17, 18, 22, 23, 33, 34, 35, 36, and 37), resulting in a scale with 24 items and four factors. The results of the EFA, which was repeated to obtain the final result of the scale, are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

EFA Results Regarding Scale Items

Ölçek Maddeleri	Fac 1	Fac 2	Fac 3	Fac 4
1. I can plan appropriately for the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	0,660			
2. I believe I am competent in planning the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	0,637			
6. I can use activities appropriate for the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	0,703			
7. I can use materials appropriate for the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	0,807			
8. I can use methods appropriate to the subject in the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	0,792			
9. I can conduct the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course according to the student level.	0,643			
10. I can create a classroom environment appropriate for the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	0,725			
11. I can conduct the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course without creating any problems of alienation among students.			0,560	
13. I follow new teaching approaches in the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	0,721			
14. I can grade the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course according to skills.	0,754			
15. I can assign appropriate performance tasks in the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	0,728			
16. I can use assessment techniques appropriate for the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	0,682			
19. I can help students identify different beliefs and interpretations.			0,714	
20. I can encourage students to respect different beliefs and interpretations.			0,864	
21. I can help students define moral values.			0,736	
24. I can explain the life of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).				0,805
25. I can help students recognize the exemplary moral values of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).				0,773

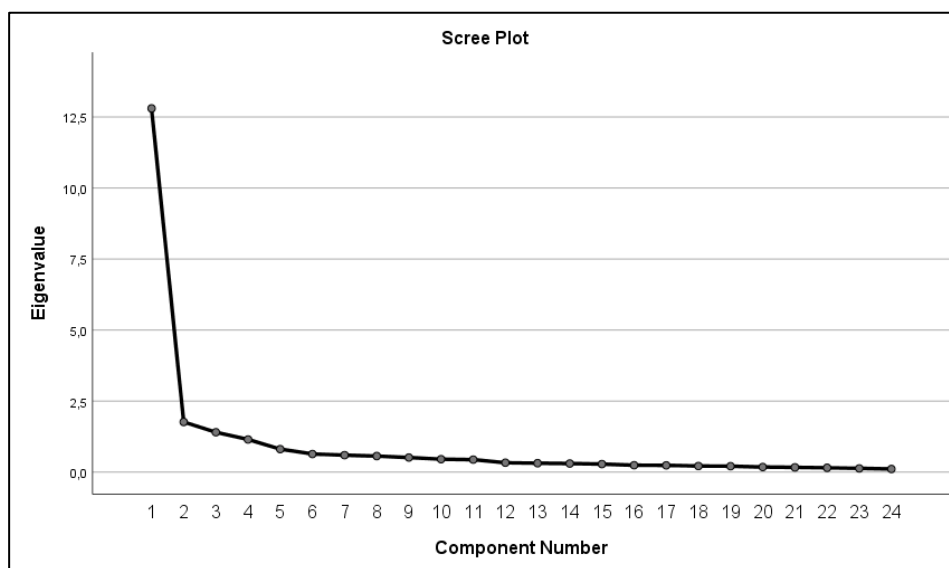
26. I can help students explain the principles of faith, worship, and morality in Islam.					0,604
27. I can help students outline the content of prayers and surahs appropriate to their level.					0,554
28. I can be a suitable role model for my students.				0,542	
29. I can help students realize the positive impact of faith and worship in shaping behavior.				0,670	
30. My students understand the importance of religion in developing good morals.				0,864	
31. My students can establish the connection between religion and cleanliness.				0,845	
32. I can stimulate interest in the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.				0,681	
Eigenvalue		12,801	1,765	1,402	1,148
Explanatory Variance		53,338	7,353	5,842	4,785
Total Variance %		53,338	60,691	66,533	71,318
Cronbach's Alpha	toplam =0,96	0,924	0,877	0,856	0,886

Fac1: Planning and implementation **Fac 2:** The importance of morality and religion **Fac 3:** Values education **Fac 4:** Religious Information

When the principal component analysis table of the 4-factor structure given in Table 4 was examined, it was determined that the factor loadings were in the range of 0.542-0.864, the eigenvalues of the 4 factors were between 12.801 and 1.148, the total variance explained was 71.318%, and the reliability of the scale/sub-dimensions was high (General $\alpha=0.960$ of the scale, respectively $\alpha=0.924$, $\alpha=0.877$, $\alpha=0.856$, $\alpha=0.886$). The line graph of the eigenvalues of the scale items is given in Graph 1.

Graph 1

Line Graph of Eigenvalues of Scale Items



3.2.3 Internal consistency analysis of the scale

The item-total score correlation coefficient, which is based on examining the relationship between the score obtained from the scale items and the overall test score, is used. This method examines the correlation between each scale item and other items, demonstrating the scale's internal consistency. For each item to be consistent with the entire scale and achieve internal consistency, it must have a correlation coefficient of 0.25 or higher. If the obtained correlation coefficient is negative or less than 0.25, it means that it does not serve the same purpose as the other scale items and does not measure the same attitude (Gözüm & Aksayan, 2002). The item-total correlation coefficients for the 24 items obtained from the EFA are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Item-Total Score Correlation Coefficients of the Draft Scale

Item Number	r	Item Number	r
Item 1	0,655	Item 19	0,660
Item 2	0,677	Item 20	0,553
Item 6	0,720	Item 21	0,650
Item 7	0,754	Item 24	0,646
Item 8	0,803	Item 25	0,693
Item 9	0,797	Item 26	0,784
Item 10	0,796	Item 27	0,721
Item 11	0,653	Item 28	0,640
Item 13	0,748	Item 29	0,656
Item 14	0,793	Item 30	0,580
Item 15	0,783	Item 31	0,565
Item 16	0,788	Item 32	0,652

According to Table 5, since the item-total correlation coefficients for each item of the Classroom Teachers' Self-Efficacy Scale for Conducting the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Course varied between 0.553 and 0.803 and the item-total correlation coefficients were higher than the critical value of 0.25, it was determined that the items were consistent with the entire scale and provided internal consistency.

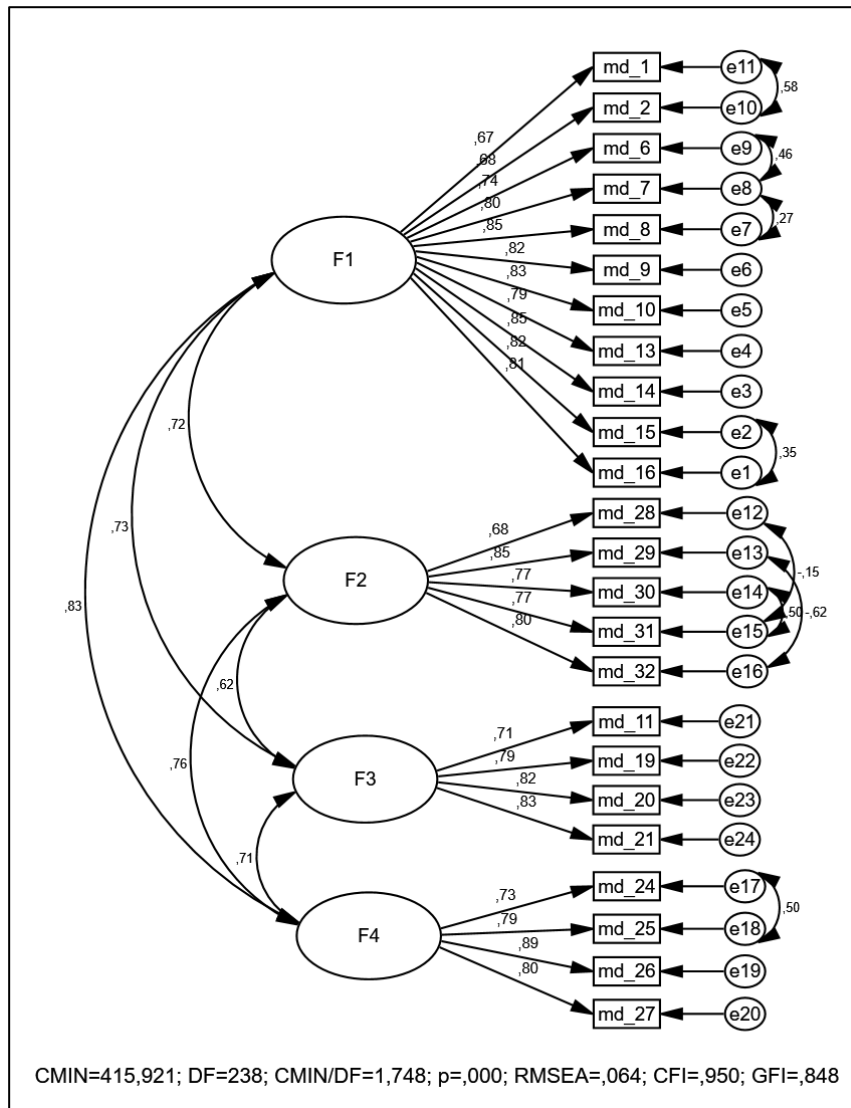
3.2.4 Results of confirmatory factor analysis of the scale

To analyze the fit of the Classroom Teachers' Self-Efficacy in Conducting Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Course scale with the factors, confirmatory factor analysis was applied to test the appropriateness of the distribution of 24 items into

four factors. Structural Equation Modeling was used for confirmatory factor analysis. The model of the 24-item and 4-factor structure created for structural equation is presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Multifactor Model of the Self-Efficacy Scale of Classroom Teachers for Conducting the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Course



Confirmatory factor analysis was applied to analyze the fit of the Classroom Teachers' Self-Efficacy Scale for Conducting Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Course with the factors. As a result of the application, it was observed that the calculated scores were close to the acceptance range, and improvement was implemented. For the improvement process, covariance values were examined, and from these values, the

variables with the highest values within the same factor were correlated. For modification, index scores were examined, and after correlations were made between the variables with the highest M.I. (Modification Index) values (e1<->e2, e7<->e8, e8<->e9, e10<->e11, e12<->e15, e13<->e16, e14<->e15, e17<->e18), the significance and fit coefficients of the model were found to be at the acceptance level. The modified version of the model is shown in Figure 2. The standard regression coefficients of the items in the confirmatory factor analysis are given in Table 6.

Table 6

Item/Factor Loading Values

	Relationships	Regression Weight	Standard Regression Weight	S.E.	C.R.	p
Item 16	<--- Plan and Implementation	1,147	0,813	0,116	9,906	***
Item 15	<--- Plan and Implementation	1,103	0,825	0,11	10,033	***
Item 14	<--- Plan and Implementation	1,201	0,846	0,117	10,251	***
Item 13	<--- Plan and Implementation	1,202	0,789	0,124	9,664	***
Item 10	<--- Plan and Implementation	1,012	0,834	0,1	10,136	***
Item 9	<--- Plan and Implementation	1,101	0,822	0,11	10,01	***
Item 8	<--- Plan and Implementation	1,087	0,854	0,105	10,336	***
Item 7	<--- Plan and Implementation	1,085	0,795	0,112	9,719	***
Item 6	<--- Plan and Implementation	0,923	0,741	0,101	9,148	***
Item 2	<--- Plan and Implementation	1,131	0,682	0,086	13,141	***
Item 1	<--- Plan and Implementation	1	0,668			
Item 28	<--- The importance of morality and religion	1	0,684			
Item 29	<--- The importance of morality and religion	1,232	0,847	0,124	9,896	***
Item 30	<--- The importance of morality and religion	1,158	0,766	0,121	9,592	***
Item 31	<--- The importance of morality and religion	1,116	0,77	0,124	9,03	***
Item 32	<--- The importance of morality and religion	1,373	0,804	0,146	9,426	***
Item 24	<--- Religious Information	1	0,734			
Item 25	<--- Religious Information	0,997	0,793	0,067	14,817	***
Item 26	<--- Religious Information	1,178	0,885	0,101	11,661	***
Item 27	<--- Religious Information	1,399	0,802	0,132	10,616	***
Item 11	<--- Values education	1	0,709			
Item 19	<--- Values education	1,159	0,786	0,118	9,831	***
Item 20	<--- Values education	1,018	0,819	0,1	10,204	***
Item 21	<--- Values education	0,944	0,83	0,091	10,323	***

When Table 6 is examined, it is seen that the calculated regression coefficients are statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). Furthermore, it was determined that the factor loading

values were between 0.668 and 0.885 and the binary relationships were significant ($p < 0.05$). The fit indices obtained as a result of the modification of the confirmatory factor analysis of the Classroom Teachers' Self-Efficacy Towards Conducting the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Course scale are shown in Table 7.

Table 7

Model Fit Indices

Fit Index	Perfect Match	Acceptable Compliance	Good Fit
X^2/sd	$0 \leq X^2/sd \leq 4$	$0 \leq X^2/sd \leq 5$	1,748
RMSEA	$0 \leq RMSEA \leq 0,05$	$0,05 < RMSEA \leq 0,08$	0,064
SRMR	$0 \leq SRMR \leq 0,05$	$0,05 < SRMR \leq 0,10$	0,069
NFI	$0,95 \leq NFI \leq 1,00$	$0,90 \leq NFI < 0,95$	0,891
NNFI (TLI)	$0,97 \leq NNFI \leq 1,00$	$0,90 \leq NNFI < 0,95$	0,940
CFI	$0,95 \leq CFI \leq 1,00$	$0,90 \leq CFI < 0,95$	0,950
IFI	$0,95 \leq IFI \leq 1,00$	$0,90 \leq IFI < 0,95$	0,950

Table 7 shows the reference ranges for the fit values of the model for verifying the 4-dimensional, 24-item structure of the Classroom Teachers' Self-Efficacy for Conducting Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Course scale, according to Hu and Bentler (1999). The scale's X^2/sd value was calculated as 1.748, and this calculated value is within the perfect fit values. Similarly, the RMSEA (0.064), SRMR (0.069), NFI (0.891), NNFI (0.940), CFI (0.95), and IFI (0.95) values calculated based on the responses to the scale items in the figure are within the perfect fit values. The fit of the model obtained as a result of exploratory factor analysis was confirmed through structural equation modeling. In addition, CR (Composite reliability) was preferred for the reliability of the factors belonging to the Classroom Teachers' Self-Efficacy Towards Conducting the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Course scale. For convergent and discriminant validity, AVE (Average Explained Variance) is recommended, and for convergent validity, $AVE > 0.5$ and $CR > 0.7$ is recommended. (Gürbüz, S. (2019). Educational Data CR and AVE values of the factors in the Classroom Teachers' Self-Efficacy Towards Conducting the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Course scale are given in Table 8.

Table 8*Reliability and Validity Values of Factors*

Scale Factors	AVE	CR	Cronbach Alfa
- Planning and Implementation	0,624	0,947	0,924
- The Importance of Morality and Religion	0,602	0,882	0,877
- Values Education	0,620	0,866	0,856
- Religious Knowledge	0,648	0,880	0,886

According to the results in Table 8, all factors have high reliability according to Cronbach Alpha values, CR values are above 0.70, AVE values of the factors are lower than CR values and AVE values are above 0.5, indicating that the factors have convergent validity.

3.3 Findings regarding the normality of the scale and factors**Table 9***Descriptive statistics of scale/sub-dimension scores*

Scales	Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Min	Max	\bar{X}	Ss
Self-Efficacy for Conducting Religious Culture and Ethics Course	184	64	120	97,15	12,44
- Planning and Implementation	184	21	55	42,84	7,23
- The Importance of Morality and Religion	184	15	25	20,91	2,38
- Values Education	184	12	20	16,79	2,05
- Religious Knowledge	184	10	20	16,61	2,37

According to Table 9, the total score of the Classroom Teachers' Self-Efficacy Towards Conducting the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Course scale is between 64-120 with an average of 97.15 ± 12.44 ; the total score from the Plan and Implementation dimension is between 21-55 with an average of 42.84 ± 7.23 ; the total score from the importance of morality and religion sub-dimension is between 15-25 with an average of 20.91 ± 2.38 ; the total score from the values education sub-dimension is

between 12-20 with an average of 16.79 ± 2.05 ; the total score from the religious knowledge sub-dimension is between 10-20 with an average of 16.61 ± 2.37 .

Table 10

Scale/Sub-Dimension Scores

Scale/Sub-Dimensions	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Distortion	Kurtosis
	Test İstatistisi	sd	p		
Self-Efficacy for Conducting Religious Culture and Ethics Course	0,127	184	0,001	-0,078	0,278
- Planning and Implementation	0,112	184	0,001	-0,483	0,616
- The Importance of Morality and Religion	0,268	184	0,001	0,388	-0,562
- Values Education	0,236	184	0,001	0,136	-0,687
- Religious Knowledge	0,178	184	0,001	-0,329	-0,058

According to Table 10, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results were examined to determine whether the total scores of the Classroom Teachers' Self-Efficacy for Conducting the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Course scale and its sub-factors showed a normal distribution. It was determined that the scale and sub-dimension scores were not normally distributed ($p < 0.05$). However, considering the skewness and kurtosis coefficients, which were plotted using other indicators of normal distribution, such as a histogram, a normal Q-Q plot, and boxplots, the data were deemed to have no excessive deviation from a normal distribution. Since the skewness and kurtosis coefficients of the data were between ± 2.0 (George and Mallery, 2010), they were considered normal.

3.4 Findings regarding the comparison of classroom teachers' self-efficacy scale/factor scores for conducting the religious culture and moral knowledge course with some variables

Table 11

Comparison of Classroom Teachers' Self-Efficacy Scale/Factor Scores for Conducting the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Course According to Teachers' Gender

Scale/Sub-Dimension	Gender	n	$\bar{X} \pm Ss$	t	df	p
Self-Efficacy for Conducting Religious Culture and Ethics Course	Female	110	95,9±11,8	-1,678	182	0,095
	Male	74	99,02±13,2			
- Planning and Implementation	Female	110	42,15±7,01	-1,587	182	0,114
	Male	74	43,87±7,5			
- The Importance of Morality and Religion	Female	110	20,74±2,3	-1,193	182	0,234
	Male	74	21,17±2,49			
- Values Education	Female	110	16,7±1,98	-0,709	182	0,480
	Male	74	16,92±2,17			
- Religious Information	Female	110	16,31±2,14	-2,148	182	0,033*
	Male	74	17,07±2,64			

*P<0,05

Independent sample t-testi

According to Table 11, when comparing the self-efficacy scale/factor scores of classroom teachers for conducting religious culture and ethics courses according to teachers' gender, only the Religious Knowledge dimension scores show a statistically significant difference according to teachers' gender ($t=-2.148$ $p<0.05$). Looking at the means, men's religious knowledge self-efficacy scores (17.07 ± 2.64) are significantly higher than women's scores (16.31 ± 2.14).

Table 12

Comparison of Classroom Teachers' Self-Efficacy Scale/Factor Scores for Conducting the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Course According to Teachers' Ages

Scales	Age	n	$\bar{X} \pm Ss$	V.K	K.T	Sd	K.O	F	p
Self-Efficacy for Conducting Religious Culture and Ethics Course	21-25	46	98,55±11,1	G.A	575,14	3	191,71	1,245	0,295
	26-30	30	95±11,85	G.İ	27.723,90	180	154,02		
	31-35	31	94,33±12,43	Top	28.299,04	183			
	36- +	77	98,29±13,32						

- Planning and Implementation	21-25	46	43,37±6,36	G.A	160,76	3	53,59	1,024	0,383
	26-30	30	41,74±7,03	G.İ	9.418,35	180	52,32		
	31-35	31	41,33±7,37	Top	9.579,11	183			
	36- +	77	43,56±7,73						
- The Importance of Morality and Religion	21-25	46	21,29±2,3	G.A	26,96	3	8,99	1,607	0,189
	26-30	30	20,3±2,31	G.İ	1.006,47	180	5,59		
	31-35	31	20,46±2,44	Top	1.033,43	183			
	36- +	77	21,11±2,4						
- Values Education	21-25	46	17,11±2,09	G.A	12,56	3	4,19	0,994	0,397
	26-30	30	16,47±1,88	G.İ	758,17	180	4,21		
	31-35	31	16,42±2,15	Top	770,73	183			
	36- +	77	16,88±2,07						
- Religious Information	21-25	46	16,79±2,17	G.A	10,48	3	3,49	0,617	0,605
	26-30	30	16,5±2,12	G.İ	1.019,12	180	5,66		
	31-35	31	16,13±2,44	Top	1.029,60	183			
	36- +	77	16,76±2,57						

* p<0,05

One-way Variance (Oneway ANOVA)

According to Table 12, the self-efficacy scale/factor scores of classroom teachers for conducting religious culture and moral knowledge courses do not show a statistically significant difference according to the teachers' ages ($p>0.05$).

Table 13

Comparison of Classroom Teachers' Self-Efficacy Scale/Factor Scores for Conducting the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Course According to the Teachers' Educational Status

Scale/Sub-Dimension	Education	n	$\bar{X} \pm Ss$	t	df	p
Self-Efficacy for Conducting Religious Culture and Ethics Course	Licence	149	97,2±12,33	0,107	182	0,915
	Postgraduate	35	96,95±13,08			
- Planning and Implementation	Licence	149	42,82±7,17	-0,096	182	0,924
	Postgraduate	35	42,95±7,66			
- The Importance of Morality and Religion	Licence	149	20,95±2,34	0,455	182	0,650
	Postgraduate	35	20,75±2,58			
- Values Education	Licence	149	16,82±2,09	0,418	182	0,676
	Postgraduate	35	16,66±1,93			
- Religious Information	Licence	149	16,62±2,34	0,039	182	0,969
	Postgraduate	35	16,6±2,57			

*P<0,05

Independent sample t-testi

According to Table 13, the self-efficacy scale/factor scores of classroom teachers for conducting religious culture and moral knowledge courses do not show a statistically significant difference according to the teachers' educational background ($p>0.05$).

Table 14

Comparison of Classroom Teachers' Self-Efficacy Scale/Factor Scores for Conducting the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Course According to the Professional Experience of the Teachers

Scales	Professional Experience	n	$\bar{X}\pm Ss$	V.K	K.T	Sd	K.O	F	p
Self-Efficacy for Conducting Religious Culture and Ethics Course	1-5 year	74	97,02±11,23	G.A	620,66	2,00	310,33	2,029	0,134
	6-10 year	28	93,18±13,06	G.İ	27.678,37	181,00	152,92		
	11-+ year	82	98,63±13,09	Top	28.299,04	183,00			
- Planning and Implementation	1-5 year	74	42,65±6,51	G.A	176,76	2,00	88,38	1,701	0,185
	6-10 year	28	40,83±8,04	G.İ	9.402,35	181,00	51,95		
	11-+ year	82	43,7±7,52	Top	9.579,11	183,00			
- Importance of Morality and Religion Education	1-5 year	74	20,86±2,32	G.A	16,74	2,00	8,37	1,490	0,228
	6-10 year	28	20,29±2,06	G.İ	1.016,69	181,00	5,62		
	11-+ year	82	21,18±2,52	Top	1.033,43	183,00			
- Values Education	1-5 year	74	16,86±2,02	G.A	11,09	2,00	5,55	1,322	0,269
	6-10 year	28	16,22±2,15	G.İ	759,64	181,00	4,20		
	11-+ year	82	16,93±2,05	Top	770,73	183,00			
- Religious Information	1-5 year	74	16,67±2,14	G.A	20,01	2,00	10,01	1,794	0,169
	6-10 year	28	15,86±2,37	G.İ	1.009,59	181,00	5,58		
	11-+ year	82	16,83±2,55	Top	1.029,60	183,00			

* $p<0,05$ one-way variance (*Oneway ANOVA*)

According to Table 14, the self-efficacy scale/factor scores of classroom teachers regarding conducting the religious culture and moral knowledge course do not show a statistically significant difference according to the teachers' professional experience ($p>0.05$).

Table 15

Comparison of Classroom Teachers' Self-Efficacy Scale/Factor Scores for Conducting the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Course According to the Teachers' Place of Duty

Scales	Place of Duty	n	$\bar{X} \pm Ss$	V.K	K.T	Sd	K.O	F	p
Self-Efficacy for Conducting Religious Culture and Ethics Course	Village - Town	30	97,4±11,21	G.A	22,00	2,00	11,00	0,070	0,932
	District Center	61	96,66±13,85	G.İ	28.277,04	181,00	156,23		
	Provincial Center	93	97,39±11,96	Top	28.299,04	183,00			
- Planning and Implementation	Village - Town	30	42,2±6,05	G.A	22,97	2,00	11,49	0,218	0,805
	District Center	61	42,68±8,18	G.İ	9.556,14	181,00	52,80		
	Provincial Center	93	43,16±6,98	Top	9.579,11	183,00			
- Importance of Morality and Religion Education	Village - Town	30	21,07±2,47	G.A	1,46	2,00	0,73	0,128	0,880
	District Center	61	20,96±2,35	G.İ	1.031,97	181,00	5,70		
	Provincial Center	93	20,83±2,39	Top	1.033,43	183,00			
- Values Education	Village - Town	30	17,1±1,98	G.A	5,87	2,00	2,93	0,694	0,501
	District Center	61	16,58±2,19	G.İ	764,87	181,00	4,23		
	Provincial Center	93	16,83±2	Top	770,73	183,00			
- Religious Information	Village - Town	30	17,04±2,5	G.A	6,84	2,00	3,42	0,606	0,547
	District Center	61	16,46±2,33	G.İ	1.022,76	181,00	5,65		
	Provincial Center	93	16,59±2,37	Top	1.029,60	183,00			

* $p < 0,05$ one-way variance (*Oneway ANOVA*)

According to Table 15, the self-efficacy scale/factor scores of classroom teachers regarding conducting the religious culture and moral knowledge course do not show a statistically significant difference according to the teachers' place of duty ($p > 0.05$).

Table 16

Descriptive Statistics of Classroom Teachers' Self-Efficacy Scale/Factor Scores for Conducting the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Course

Self-Efficacy Scale for Conducting Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Course		\bar{X}	Ss	
Plan and Implementation	1. I can plan appropriately for the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	3,89	0,87	
	2. I believe I am competent in planning the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	3,73	0,96	
	6. I can use activities appropriate for the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	3,99	0,72	
	7. I can use materials appropriate for the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	3,88	0,79	
	8. I can use methods appropriate to the subject in the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	3,93	0,74	
	9. I can conduct the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course according to the student level.	3,97	0,78	
	10. I can create a classroom environment appropriate for the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	4,01	0,71	
	13. I follow new teaching approaches in the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course..	3,76	0,89	
	14. I can grade students according to their skills in the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	3,91	0,83	
	15. I can assign performance tasks appropriate for the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	3,91	0,78	
	16. I can use assessment techniques appropriate for the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	3,85	0,82	
	The importance	28. I can be a suitable role model for my students..	4,15	0,56
		29. I can help students realize the positive impact of faith and worship in improving behavior.	4,19	0,55
		30. My students understand the importance of religion in developing good morals.	4,20	0,58
		31. My students can establish the connection between religion and cleanliness.	4,27	0,55
		32. I can spark interest in the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	4,11	0,65
Values	11. I can conduct the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course without creating any problems of alienation among students.	4,17	0,65	
	19. I can help students recognize different beliefs and interpretations.	4,03	0,68	
	20. I can help students respect different beliefs and interpretations.	4,28	0,58	
	21. I can provide students with definitions of moral values.	4,30	0,53	
Religious	24. I can explain the life of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).	4,29	0,65	
	25. I can help students recognize the exemplary moral values of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).	4,29	0,60	
	26. I can help students explain the principles of faith, worship, and morality in Islam.	4,13	0,64	
	27. I can help students outline the content of prayers and surahs appropriate to their level.	3,91	0,83	

Table 17

The Final Version of the Self-Efficacy Scale for Classroom Teachers to Conduct the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Course

Self-Efficacy Scale for Conducting Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Course		Definitely	I disagree	I'm undecided	I agree	I strongly agree
Plan and Implementation	1. I can plan appropriately for the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	1	2	3	4	5
	2. I believe I am competent in planning the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	1	2	3	4	5
	3. I can use activities appropriate for the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	1	2	3	4	5
	4. I can use materials appropriate for the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	1	2	3	4	5
	5. I can use methods appropriate to the subject in the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	1	2	3	4	5
	6. I can conduct the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course according to the student level.	1	2	3	4	5
	7. I can create a classroom environment appropriate for the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	1	2	3	4	5
	8. I follow new teaching approaches in the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	1	2	3	4	5
	9. I can grade students according to their skills in the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	1	2	3	4	5
	10. I can assign performance tasks appropriate for the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	1	2	3	4	5
	11. I can use assessment techniques appropriate for the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	1	2	3	4	5
The Importance of	12. I can be a suitable role model for my students.	1	2	3	4	5
	13. I can help students realize the positive impact of faith and worship in improving behavior.	1	2	3	4	5
	14. My students understand the importance of religion in developing good morals.	1	2	3	4	5
	15. My students can establish the connection between religion and cleanliness.	1	2	3	4	5
Values	16. I can stimulate interest in the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course.	1	2	3	4	5
	17. I can conduct the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course without creating any problems of alienation among students.	1	2	3	4	5
	18. I can help students become familiar with different beliefs and interpretations.	1	2	3	4	5
	19. I can help students respect different beliefs and interpretations.	1	2	3	4	5
Religious	20. I can help students define moral values.	1	2	3	4	5
	21. I can explain the life of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).	1	2	3	4	5
	22. I can help students recognize the exemplary moral values of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).	1	2	3	4	5
	23. I can help students explain the principles of faith, worship, and morality in Islam.	1	2	3	4	5
	24. I can help students outline the content of prayers and surahs appropriate to their level.	1	2	3	4	5

Note: There is no reverse item in the scale.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study was conducted to examine in detail the self-efficacy perceptions of classroom teachers regarding the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge (REC) course. The findings of the study revealed that teachers generally had an above-average level of self-efficacy in teaching REC. This result is consistent with similar previous studies (Johnston, Watson & Preece, 2017; Smith & Johnson, 2019).

Based on the view that teachers' self-efficacy levels strengthen planning, instructional strategies, and classroom practices (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), research findings indicate that teachers feel competent, particularly in the planning and implementation of the Religious Culture and Applied Behavior (RCA) course. This can be interpreted as the theoretical and practical training that prospective teachers receive during their undergraduate education positively impacts teachers' professional competence. Furthermore, the emphasis placed on practice in teacher training programs can be said to strengthen teachers' professional skills (YÖK, 2019). In this context, it is clear that current educational policies and curricula positively contribute to teachers' classroom practices.

One of the striking findings of the study is that male teachers have a higher perception of self-efficacy than female teachers in the religious knowledge dimension. This finding is consistent with the findings that male teachers perceive themselves as more competent in their self-efficacy regarding differentiated instruction (Yıldız, 2023) and that gender roles can influence perceptions in education (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). It is clear that educational policies and programs need to be developed to increase female teachers' self-efficacy, particularly in the Religious Knowledge (RCM) course. Developing specific training and support programs that support gender equality is crucial at this point.

It was found that teachers' self-efficacy levels did not differ according to variables such as age, educational background, professional experience, and region of duty. A review of the literature reveals that the teaching-learning process evaluations of primary school classroom teachers teaching the Religious Culture and Applied Sciences (RQM) course indicate that competencies are associated with indicators of the instructional process rather than demographics such as gender and age (Kaya, 2018). Furthermore, the lack of significant differences in self-efficacy among teachers based on age, seniority,

educational background, and place of duty also suggests that teachers' perceptions are shaped more by personal beliefs and professional experiences (Hoy & Spero, 2005). While this suggests that teachers' perceptions of the Religious Culture and Applied Sciences course are generally similar, it suggests that factors such as professional experience or level of education do not significantly influence teachers' perceptions, suggesting that the overall quality of teachers' education and their personal characteristics are more decisive. This finding also suggests the need for a more detailed evaluation of the scope, frequency, and effectiveness of in-service training programs (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

While teachers generally use traditional teaching methods such as lectures and question-and-answer sessions in primary school DKAB courses (Süleymanoğlu, 2024), it is positive that they feel competent in fundamental educational processes such as using materials and selecting teaching methods. However, deficiencies in specific areas such as religious knowledge and values education highlight the need for ongoing support and in-service training. To ensure teachers' continued professional development, regular in-service training should be provided, and teaching materials should be diversified and updated.

The research also highlights the potential challenges teachers may face in conducting DKAB lessons. It's clear that teachers must be provided with the necessary pedagogical and methodological support to effectively conduct lessons, especially in classrooms with diverse beliefs and values. Teachers' sensitivity to cultural and spiritual differences will positively impact students' spiritual and social development.

The results revealed that classroom teachers generally have a positive sense of self-efficacy in teaching the Religious Knowledge (RCM) course, but they need support in specific areas, such as religious studies. Therefore, educational policies and teacher training programs should be developed to address these needs. Establishing periodic monitoring systems and ensuring ongoing training processes are crucial for enhancing teachers' professional competence.

Finally, this study provides important findings related to increasing the effectiveness of Religious Knowledge and Awareness (RCA) courses. Based on these findings, it is recommended that the quality and frequency of in-service training be increased, teachers' skills in using materials and methods be improved, and special

support programs be established for female teachers. Implementing these steps will help classroom teachers conduct RCA courses more effectively and efficiently.

In light of the research findings, the following recommendations are presented:

1. 1. The frequency and quality of in-service training for classroom teachers who teach Religious Studies should be increased. Comprehensive training programs should be organized to address teachers' deficiencies, particularly in the area of religious knowledge.
2. Diversifying and updating educational materials for the Religious Culture and Awareness course will support teachers in conducting classroom activities more efficiently. In this context, workshops should be conducted to improve teachers' material use skills.
3. Adding more practice-based courses to the Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge course in education faculties can help prospective teachers become more competent in their post-graduation course delivery processes.
4. In order to increase the self-efficacy of female teachers, especially in the religious knowledge dimension, educational policies that take gender differences into account should be developed and supportive guidance services should be provided.
5. Periodic monitoring systems should be established to evaluate teachers' self-efficacy and the support and training programs that teachers need should be made continuous.

Implementation of these suggestions will make significant contributions to classroom teachers' ability to conduct DKAB lessons more effectively and to support the spiritual development of students.

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Authors' Contribution

All authors contributed equally to the development of this article.

Data availability

All datasets relevant to this study's findings are fully available within the article.

How to cite this article (APA)

Bozkurt, E., Toker, O., & Şahin, C. (2025). A STUDY ON CLASSROOM TEACHERS' SELF-EFFICACY IN CONDUCTING RELIGIOUS CULTURE AND MORAL KNOWLEDGE LESSONS. *Veredas Do Direito*, 22(7), e224208. <https://doi.org/10.18623/rvd.v22.n7.4208>