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The Attitudes of Teachers towards Multicultural Education

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to determine the teachers' attitudes toward multicultural education. This is a survey study and the participants of the study were 248 teachers who are teaching Turkish to the Syrian immigrants in Sanliurfa. The data for this study was collected through a 5-point Likert scale called "Teachers' Multicultural Attitude Scale". According to findings, it is determined that teachers have positive attitudes towards multicultural education. Their attitudes do not differ in a statistically significant way according to their gender, mother tongue, and professional seniority. Literature teachers were found to have more positive attitudes than class teachers. Based on the findings, it can be suggested that more research is needed on how to develop, alter teaching methods and programs according to multicultural education and why teachers of certain subjects have a more positive attitude towards multicultural education. Also, studies that investigate if teachers' attitudes towards multicultural education affect students' academic achievement, social adaptation processes and so on may provide useful information. The participation of teachers in cultural exchange programs, formal education, courses may be useful to raise their awareness and competency on multicultural education.

Keywords: *Multicultural education, attitudes, differences.*

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Introduction

Statement of Research Background and Goals

In a rapidly globalizing world, the boundaries between countries become obscure, and people from various cultures interact with increasing communication possibilities. As in every field, the effects of globalization are felt in education. Now, students and teachers are not limited to their own countries but can participate in educational activities all over the world. This requires educators to have positive attitudes about the concept of multicultural education, which is defined as being respectful and tolerant to different cultures in order to ensure equality of opportunity in education without discrimination of religion, language, and race. As indicated in some studies, numerous teachers are not adequately prepared concerning the plan of learning conditions for students from various social, cultural backgrounds (Gay, 2002; Smith, 2009; Kaya, 2014; Basarir, Sari, & Cetin, 2014). According to some studies done on the topic in Turkey (Basarir, Sari, & Cetin, 2014; Basarir, 2012; Basbay & Bektas, 2009; Basbay & Kagnici, 2011; Coban, Karaman, & Dogan, 2010; Kaya, 2014; Yazici, Basol, & Toprak, 2009) multicultural education has not been fully comprehended yet, it has been understood as an issue limited to race or ethnicity; leaving out the individual differences like social class, sex, religion and so on.

This study was carried out in the province of Sanliurfa where 63,613 Syrian students were educated. In the success of education, the attitudes of the teachers who give Turkish education to these students regarding the multicultural education concept are considered important. Because taking individual differences into account in organizing the educational environment is at the heart of multicultural education. In the constructivist education approach applied in schools, it is aimed to teach by individual differences. Considering that most of the new teachers are employed in different regions than their own, the importance of the subject can be better understood. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine the attitudes of teachers toward multicultural education. It is hoped that the results will provide important information for educators to gain positive attitudes about multicultural education and to determine the content of the training to be organized in order to increase their knowledge and competencies because teachers' sensitivity to culture and their ability to create a multicultural classroom environment is essential.

The research asked the following questions:

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1. What are the attitudes of teachers toward multicultural education?
2. Are there any differences in attitudes according to gender, seniority, branch and mother tongue?

Review of Literature

Education is a deliberate tool and form of the cultural process (Erturk, 1998) and its purpose is to transfer cultural values to individuals or societies in a planned, programmatic manner. However, education and schools need to consider the diversity of people and students in society (race, ethnic origin, class, gender, language, physical disability, etc.) and to develop appropriate educational programs, teaching methods, processes, and mechanisms. Multicultural education, a concept that we have met in the eighties and has recently gained importance, is an ideology and concept that includes policies and practices related to the schooling of human diversity in a society (Grant & Millar, 1992). In order to make the description of multicultural education correct, it is necessary to discuss concepts such as race, ethnicity, and culture.

Concepts such as race, ethnicity, and culture are often mistakenly used. The race is used to describe biological and genetic characteristics that distinguish communities from one another. The race is the human community with similar physical characteristics, such as outer appearance, skin color, hair type, bearing the same hereditary characters, from the same lineage. In other words, it is a concept that refers to the classification of individuals according to racial groups based on their visible characteristics (APA, 2017). Throughout human history, racial differences have been used to justify the use of dominant groups over others (Ramsey, Williams, & Vold, 2003). Ethnicity is mainly used to describe the sociological and anthropological characteristics of groups such as tradition, traditions, religious practices, and the use of language (Quintana, 1998). In other words, ethnicity is the collective identity of a social group and it is the status of belonging to this group as a result of the acceptance of the practice and value judgments of the culture to which an individual belongs (APA, 2017). In addition to having common cultural origins, ethnic groups have similar physical characteristics and socioeconomic status, and can often be marginalized and excluded by the dominant group. Culture can be defined according to many factors such as national origin, gender, religion, occupation, geographical region, sexual orientation, generation, ability, physical barriers, and leisure activities.

A culture is a form of common understanding of the way a particular society or social group thinks, feels and behaves (Brown, 1963). It is a system of value and belief that affects traditions, customs, value judgments, social institutions, psychological processes and organizations in a society (APA, 2017). The basic assumptions and values that affect (but do not determine) the behavior of each member and the behavior of other people and are shared by a group, are lifestyle, beliefs, policies, worldviews, social relations, traditions and values, procedures and behavioral conventions (Spencer-Oatey, 2008; Nieto, 2004). Culture shows itself in literature, lifestyle, the way of living, value systems, tradition, custom and belief systems (UNESCO, 2017). Culture, which is used as an inclusive concept that includes all the values that a society has produced throughout history, has a common belief, understanding, interpretation, values, and concepts, which have common values, enable the meaning of the life of a particular group, shape the lifestyles of the group (Fay, 2001). A collective understanding (Hofstede, 1994), which separates people from a group or a category from others, is a series of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors that are shared, passed from one generation to the next (Matsumoto, 1996).

The perception, interpretation, evaluation, and behavior of each culture are unique (Goodenough, 1976), and culture is an aid in predicting how individuals behave in certain situations (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998). Culture is not static, it is a situation that only people belonging to that culture transfer to each other. The culture, which is a dynamic concept, is the incarnation of the learned and transferred practices, values, beliefs, that is, commonly accepted worldview that is included in the religious and spiritual traditions of a society (APA, 2017). Culture is alive, changes and develops continuously. Culture does not exist from anything, it is created by changing and creating existing conditions (Mullings, 1986). The culture, as old as the history of humanity, culture, the sum of the material and spiritual beings created by a society, the historical accumulation of that society is observed in a variety of ways such as literature, art, forms of behavior, lifestyles, value systems, tradition, custom, costume, it is the identity that separates society from others. Culture, which is a dynamic process, is shaped and changed depending on environmental relations, which includes policy and power. All children internalize the values of their culture at different levels, and in many cases, each individual socializes in multiple cultures. However, the spread of mass communication tools, advances in information technology, geopolitical changes, etc. have influenced national states, causing the world to become a global village. Globalization has caused the nations to become interdependent and directly or indirectly affected the lives of individuals. In this context, the concept of multiculturalism appears.

Multiculturalism is a term used to describe the cultural diversity or the recognition of cultural differences and the unification of different cultures. Multiculturalism is a situation in which different races, language ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, age, class differences, education, religious/spiritual tendency, and other cultural dimensions are recognized (APA, 2017). It is the recognition and acceptance of different cultural beliefs, practices, languages, and lifestyles within a society (Murphy, 2012). Multiculturalism (Day, 2002), where cultural and racial diversity is recognized and cultural differences are considered to be rich, can be seen as an ideal system for each culture and civilization as it is based on equality and respect (Rattansi, 2011). In this concept, each culture is valuable, an

intercultural comparison is wrong, each culture must be considered in its own right, each culture has its own conditions and multiculturalism is a wealth (Polat & Kilic, 2013).

Globalization of the concept of multiculturalism, which forms the basis of diversity and pluralism, seems to be the continuation of the era of enlightenment and humanism (Dussel, 2008). Multiculturalism is a concept that replaces the national identity based on ethnic, religious and linguistic homogeneity that shapes individuals' thinking, feeling, and behavior. This concept involves the integration of different social and ethnic groups, such as race, ethnicity, culture, etc. It is used to describe a multinational modern society where cultural inequality is perceived as a richness in which social inequalities can be caused due to race, ethnicity, and culture (Lahana, 2017). Multiculturalism is a condition in which individuals in a society are allowed to form their own personalities within the framework of western norms, regardless of their characteristics such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation (Hoffman, 1996). Education is an important tool in achieving this situation because the concept of multiculturalism requires ignoring the differences, questioning the education programs shaped by the nation-state with the effect of the majority culture and determining new education programs (Polat & Kilic, 2013).

Multicultural education is the reform movement aiming to ensure that all students enjoy equal education and to create equal educational conditions for all students regardless of race, gender, culture, language, religion, social class (Kaya & Aydin, 2013). It aims to create an educational environment for all students in equal conditions that respect diversity (Basbay & Kagnici, 2011). In order to create an egalitarian, correct, fair, inclusive pluralist and transformational society, under the guidelines of multicultural education, students need to be enabled to communicate actively and interactively with different cultures through social, civic and political activities (Gay, 2018). Multicultural education allows students to understand the culture of their own community, to remove cultural boundaries that are like a wall with other cultures, and to build a society that is common to all (Banks, 1993). It is important in terms of creating a system where everyone will be satisfied, living in peace and contributing to social peace. There is a need for qualified teachers who can understand the problems of these different groups, who can communicate with them correctly, and help them to increase their academic success, and teachers have important duties in this context (Wells, 2008). The aim of multicultural education is to ensure equality of opportunity in education for all individuals and groups despite differences (Banks, 1993).

Due to reasons such as migration, wars, political and strategic partnerships of the countries, individuals from different races, ethnicities, and cultures had to come together. This situation has affected many social structures as well as educational policies, education system, and schools and has made it necessary to renew the education system and understanding to respond to these changes (Portera, 2011). In this context, multicultural education is used to describe educational practices that are influenced by the concept of multiculturalism. Cultural diversity expects something very different from school and education within a nation. Multicultural education is a concept developed to respond to the realities of a class of children from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Cahill, 2001). Multicultural education is necessary for the educational equality of students from different race, ethnic and social-class groups in schools and other educational institutions (Banks, 1993). With the principle of equality in education, multicultural education aims to create an educational environment where equal opportunities are provided to all students and other individuals learn to respect the differences of each other (Gunay, Kaya, & Aydin, 2014). Multicultural education is an approach that aims to educate individuals who are free-thinking, questioning, recognizing their own culture, self-criticizing, and respecting different ways of thinking and lifestyle (Polat & Kilic, 2013). It is aimed to eliminate prejudice and discrimination in multicultural education, to develop an inclusive and integrative identity of the child, to reach a democratic maturity, to help them to see differences as a richness and to make them understand the other (Banks, 1992; Johnson & Johnson, 2002). Multicultural education is essential for freedom in today's ethnically disintegrated and troubled world, and traditionalists and multiculturalists must come together (Banks, 1992).

Multicultural education which is the reflection of multiculturalism; is the acknowledgment of diversities such as race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, sex, age, disability, class status, education, religious/spiritual belief and other social and cultural constructs and designing a formal learning environment that respect all these differences (APA, 2002). As a sociological concept, it requires accepting the differences such as race, ethnic origin, class, gender, language, value, belief system, experience, and sexual preference, not as a reason for fragmentation but as a source of social integration and richness (Basbay & Bektas, 2009). In this context, it can be described as a phenomenon that will be constructed within the framework of a common agreement, which will encourage cultural diversity in the educational and teaching atmosphere. In addition, it needs to incorporate the positive racial characteristics into the class atmosphere and to combine them (Basbay & Bektas, 2009). Multicultural education is to build the learning and teaching process in a structure that encourages cultural multiplicity. The establishment of such an educational environment, increasing the awareness of individuals and conducting studies for multiculturalism is the joint responsibility of all individuals involved in this process (Basbay & Kagnici, 2011).

In addition to the successful implementation of multicultural education, there may be obstacles such as educational policy, curriculum, resources, teacher attitudes and behaviors, such as curriculum, teaching materials, learning and teacher styles, teachers 'and managers' perceptions and behaviors, goals, norms, and school culture change (Gay, 2004; Banks, 1993). Multicultural education is an important part of quality education and the most important burden in

practice falls on teachers. In addition to the changes in curriculum, textbook, etc., teachers' persuasion about the importance and necessity of this subject is very important for success (Gay, 2004). For the success of multicultural education, it is important that teacher and teacher candidates gain the knowledge and skills they need to design learning environments for students from different cultures (Basbay & Bektas, 2009).

Educational practices cannot be successful without the approval and input of teachers. Multicultural education expects teachers to change identity, become transformative individuals, and learn from each other (Liu & Lin-Tzu-Bin, 2011). Three main competencies, namely teachers' own and other cultures' meanings and academic-multicultural competences, are one of the approaches developed to explain teachers' cultural sensitivity (Basbay & Bektas, 2009). Another approach is based on the developmental stages in the professional development process of the teacher towards novice to expertise (Washington, 2003). Another approach looks at the teacher's personal and class level qualifications and at the institution/school level qualifications (Banks, 1992). It is important for teachers to be aware of their cultural identity and prejudices, to learn the world views of groups from different cultures and to try to develop methods and techniques that are sensitive to differences (Basbay & Bektas, 2009). Villegas and Lucas (2002) state that teachers need to be competent and responsible to realize the necessary changes in order to make schools more equal, having a positive view towards students with different backgrounds, aware of sociocultural differences. In summary, in a class consisting of students from different cultures, the teacher needs to have the above-mentioned values, necessary knowledge, and equipment, in other words, to have multicultural competence in the dimensions of awareness, knowledge, and skills (Basbay & Bektas, 2009).

Method

Research Model

The research was carried out with a survey model. This model is based on data collection from a wide mass (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012). Thus, the results of the research can be generalized. Survey models generally aim to explore and explain the existing situation or reality. The survey model is based on the logic of reviewing all current or past data about the object, the phenomenon, the event, the individual. The analyzes made in this type of research are often descriptive. The researcher has no intervention on the sample and reports the existing features, conditions, relationships, and trends. Survey models are divided into general survey models and case study survey models. General survey models aim to make estimates and generalizations about the population through sampling. Since these models are particularly useful for determining trends in the population, data are collected from as large a sample as possible. General survey models can be examined in two groups as a single survey model and correlational survey model. The single survey model focuses the research on a single variable and examines its state at a given time or the change in a given period. This can be done cross-sectionally and longitudinally. For example, measuring the level of knowledge of a classroom about a subject on a day is a cross-sectional survey and longitudinal survey is the measurement of changes in the level of knowledge about the subject for one year. This research employs the single survey model with cross-sectional data.

Participants

The population of the study consisted of 524 teachers who taught Turkish to the Syrian migrants in Sanliurfa province in the spring of 2017. All of the teachers were provided with data collection tools. Out of the returned forms, the wrong forms were eliminated, and 248 forms remained. Of the participants, 115 (46.4%) were male and 133 (53.6%) were female (Table 1).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Participants

Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	115	46.4
	Female	133	53.6
Seniority (Years)	1	155	62.5
	2	46	18.5
	3 and above	47	19.0
Branch	Classroom	149	60.1
	Turkish	49	19.8
	Literature	50	20.2
Mother Tongue	Turkish	172	69.4
	Kurdish	76	30.6

Data collection tool

Teachers' Multicultural Attitude Scale, which was developed by Ponterotto et al. (1998) to measure teachers' attitudes towards multicultural education, and adapted into Turkish by Toprak (2008), was used. The original English version of the scale was developed as a five-point Likert scale. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was found to be $\alpha = 0.86$. There are 20 items in the scale, seven of which are reversed.

The original scale is based on two main studies. In the first study, the development of the items and the content validity studies have been completed. The 50 items, prepared by the research team consisting of a professor and three graduate students, were reviewed and then re-evaluated in a 31-item Likert-type 5-point scale. These items were applied to the senior graduate students who had knowledge about the subject for content validity. After this application, the scale which was reduced to 30 items was applied to 12 state and 9 private school teachers. These teachers stated that the scale measures important attitudes. The first study group consisted of 220 pre-service teachers and 201 teachers. The Cronbach alpha score of 30 items was 0.82 at this stage. As a result of the first study, other statistical operations were performed, and the scale was finalized. The second study includes measuring the validity and reliability of the scale. As a result of the first stage, the 20-item version of the scale was applied to 227 graduate students. As in the first study, the results of the second study confirm a strong single-factor model of general multiculturalism. The Cronbach alpha value of the scale was 0.86.

Data Analysis

Statistical analyses of the data were performed using the IBM SPSS software. The means and standard deviations of the items of the data collection tool were calculated. The items that are worded negatively were coded reversely. To find differences among attitudes, independent groups t-test and one-way analysis of variance with LSD post hoc method were employed.

Findings

The means and standard deviations of the items of the data collection tool are presented in Table 2 with the reverse coded form of the items that need to be coded in reverse.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Items

Items	\bar{X}	SD
Teaching methods should be adapted to meet the needs of culturally diverse student groups.	4.77	0.56
To be an effective teacher, you need to be aware of the cultural differences that exist in the classroom.	4.72	0.60
I find it important to teach a culturally diverse group of students.	4.65	0.65
I can learn a lot from students who have a culturally diverse background.	4.56	0.67
To teach students cultural differences only creates a conflict in the classroom.	4.47	0.80
The teacher's work becomes more valuable as the class differs culturally.	4.45	0.79
Multicultural awareness training can help me work more effectively with a diverse cultural community.	4.43	0.67
I am aware of the cultural background difference in my class.	4.36	0.61
Regardless of the nature of my class, it is important that students are aware of the multicultural difference.	4.34	0.69
Teachers are not required to take multicultural education.	4.31	1.02
I believe that the role of the teacher should be redefined in order to address the needs of the culturally diverse students.	4.23	0.83
Teachers have the responsibility to be aware of their students' cultural background.	4.14	0.92
As the class differs culturally, the teacher's work becomes more difficult.	3.99	1.21
It is not the teacher's responsibility to encourage one to be proud of his or her own culture.	3.88	1.03
Being aware of multiculturalism is not about the subjects I teach.	3.75	1.16
Students should learn to communicate in Turkish only.	3.66	1.21
I often meet family members to get to know students culturally.	3.65	0.93
Communication styles are often interpreted as behavioral problems when dealing with bilingual children (whose mother tongue is different).	3.26	1.13
Today's curriculum places extreme emphasis on multiculturalism and diversity.	2.88	1.16
Sometimes I think that there is a lot of emphasis on teachers' multicultural awareness and education.	2.75	0.93
Total Mean	4.06	0.30

According to teachers' attitudes, the highest mean belongs to the item "Teaching methods should be adapted to meet the needs of culturally diverse student groups" ($X=4.77$, $SD=0.56$), and the item "Sometimes I think that there is a lot of emphasis on teachers' multicultural awareness and education" has the lowest mean ($X=2.75$, $SD=0.93$). The total mean

score is $X=4.06$ ($SD=0.30$). Therefore, it can be said that teachers participating in the research have positive attitudes towards multicultural education.

Table 3 presents the independent groups t-test results to determine whether teachers' multicultural educational attitudes differ according to gender and native language.

Table 3. Independent Groups T Test Results

Variable	Category	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	t	p
Gender	Male	115	4.04	0.32	246	-1.15	0.25
	Female	133	4.08	0.29			
Mother Tongue	Turkish	172	4.05	0.31	246	-0.87	0.38
	Kurdish	76	4.09	0.29			

According to the findings, there is no statistically significant difference in attitudes according to gender and mother tongue.

The results of one-way analysis of variance to determine whether teachers' multicultural educational attitudes differ according to branch and seniority are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of One-Way Variance Analysis

Variable	Category	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	F	p	LSD
Branch	Literature	50	4.15	0.27	2, 245	4.72	0.01*	Literature-Classroom
	Classroom	149	4.01	0.30				
	Turkish	49	4.10	0.32				
Seniority (Years)	1	155	4.04	0.32	2, 245	1.10	0.33	
	2	46	4.09	0.29				
	3 and above	47	4.10	0.28				

* $p<0.05$

According to the findings, while there was no statistically significant difference according to seniority, it was determined by the LSD post hoc method that the attitude average ($X=4.15$, $SD=0.27$) of the literature teachers was significantly ($p<0.05$) higher than the attitude average ($X=4.01$, $SD=0.30$) of the classroom teachers.

Conclusion and Discussion

It was determined that teachers who participated in the study had positive attitudes towards multicultural education. Therefore, it can be said that teachers who teach Turkish to Syrian migrants, exhibit harmonious attitudes towards multicultural education. The findings were conflicting in studies that conducted in Turkey sampling teacher candidates and teachers in multicultural education. In some studies (Coban, Karaman, & Dogan, 2010; Tortop, 2014), it was found out that teacher candidates and teachers had good knowledge, attitudes and competencies related to the subject, while some studies (Karacam & Koca, 2012; Polat, 2009; Basarir, Sari, & Cetin, 2014; Bulut & Basbay, 2014) found an opposite direction. Basbay and Kagnici (2013) argue that multicultural competencies should be provided to prospective teachers and that for this purpose, firstly, the teaching staff in the faculties of education should be equipped in multicultural education. Tortop (2014) states that teacher candidates' attitudes towards multicultural education are above mid-level and that this kind of perception is not very good for teachers. The differences in the findings obtained in different samples may be due to multicultural education practices.

According to the teachers' perceptions, it was found that the item "Teaching methods should be adapted to meet the needs of culturally diverse student groups" has the highest average. Similar findings have also been encountered in other studies. Coban, Karaman, and Dogan (2010) found that participants were tolerant and without prejudice considering cultural differences. In their study, Basbay and Bektas (2009) mentioned that teachers should be aware of the values of students, to have knowledge and skills to synthesize these differences, to update the teaching environment, learning and teaching methods and techniques to meet the needs of the students. They emphasize that educational opportunities should be created to enable students to internalize multiculturalism especially in faculties that train teachers. Yazici, Basol, and Toprak (2009) emphasize the need for teachers to provide learning support to respond to their individual differences and to inform them about teachers' awareness and multicultural awareness and education.

The item with the lowest average is "Sometimes I think that there is a lot of emphasis on teachers' multicultural awareness and education". Yazici, Basol and Toprak (2009) state that the reason for having a negative attitude towards multicultural education is that it can only be seen as an educational practice stemming from ethnic diversity. However, Karacam and Koca (2012) found that the participants defined the concept of multiculturalism as cultural, regional, ethnic and socioeconomic characteristics rather than religious, sexual orientation and gender contexts and they did not

have sufficient knowledge and awareness about the reflections of multiculturalism in education. Basarir, Sari, and Cetin (2014) stated that teachers have a lack of knowledge about multicultural education and teaching practices and that it is important to eliminate them. When the definitions of multicultural education made by Basarir, Sari, and Cetin (2014) were examined, it was determined that teachers focused on multiculturalism, race, ethnicity, language, religion and social class dimensions, whereas age, gender, disability, and sexual orientation were not considered within the scope of multiculturalism. Yazici, Basol, and Toprak (2009) stated that the concepts and discussions of multicultural and multicultural education are not sufficiently known in Turkey. These findings can be interpreted as a result of the lack of information on the subject and the need for further education.

As multicultural education requires, teachers need to accept individual differences as a richness and attempt to make instructive opportunities for all students to help them increase their academic and social success (Toprak, 2008). It is argued that, especially in countries where cultural differences are high, the teachers seem not to understand the students with different cultural backgrounds sufficiently, which may lead to some communication problems. Therefore, it is considered very important for the teachers to have a positive attitude towards multicultural education, have respect for social and cultural differences, value diversity, and respect students with different abilities and perspectives (Ozdemir & Dil, 2013).

As mentioned above, teachers play an important role in the implementation of multiculturalism in formal learning environments. Gay (2002) argues that teachers who do not have the necessary training are not sufficiently prepared to set up a teaching environment for students from different cultures. With this in mind, they need to be made aware of the biological, sexual, racial, religious, social, financial, and political differences of students, and they need to accept and take these differences into account while creating better learning environments that welcome all these differences. These differences need to be accepted as a richness rather than a problem (Basbay & Bektas, 2009). Therefore, considering the differences arising from these diversities is an important principle to consider when preparing learning and teaching environments. On the other hand, ignoring them would be a great mistake (Coban, Karaman, & Dogan, 2010). To summarize, learning and teaching environments should be organized in a manner sensitive to multicultural education (Turkan, Aydin, & Uner, 2016).

In Turkish literature, it is argued that there are not enough studies on multiculturalism and teachers who work in the classroom where individuals with different cultural backgrounds need to be aware of these values, have knowledge of them. They should not consider these as a problem to be overcome but use them to enrich the teaching environment. Therefore, they need to have been educated in such a manner, to that end educational faculties have important duties (Basbay & Bektas, 2009). However, Gunay and Aydin (2015) stated in their content analysis study that the studies on the subject are relatively new but it has been gaining popularity since 2009. That could be related to the fact that there are many Syrian refugees in formal education in Turkey.

Basarir, Sari, and Cetin (2014) state that when multicultural education is defined by the participants of their study, they focused on the dimensions of race, ethnicity, language, religion and social class, but not on age, gender, disability or sexual orientation. That is not surprising given the fact that it is a relatively current issue. Another reason for not applying multicultural education may be because the course content is not suitable for multicultural education in Turkey. The findings of some other studies show the same results (Basarir, 2012; Toprak, 2008). Some other reasons for the unsuccessful implementation could be student resistance, the lack of institutional support and guidance in implementing multicultural education, ignorance, and the reluctance of faculty members about multicultural teaching strategies in addition to teachers' lacking knowledge on multicultural education and its practices. (Basarir, Sari, & Cetin, 2014).

According to Ozdemir and Dil (2013), the attitudes of the teachers who took part in their study towards multicultural education were positive. This could be because of the training they had received prior to service. They also found that gender and seniority do not have a significant effect on teachers' attitudes, while a significant difference according to the faculty was determined. Besides, the attitudes of the graduates of education and science and literature faculty are more positive than graduates of the technical ones while Yazici, Basol, and Toprak (2009) support the findings related to the gender, they found that low senior teachers are more positive than others. Demir and Basarir (2013) in their study, in order to have a multicultural perspective, teachers need support. Kaya (2014) in his study found out that teacher trainees either did not have enough or had no courses in the field of pluralistic thinking, adopting democratic values, human rights, respecting different cultures and providing education in different cultural environments during their undergraduate education. It was determined that the participants did not know the concept of pluralism and did not have much knowledge about multicultural education. In addition, teacher trainees did not have enough education to understand the students from different groups and to teach in such classes. As multicultural education will contribute to social peace, it is a very important value in the globalizing world, and it is important to focus on this issue (Kaya, 2014).

According to the study conducted by Keskin and Yaman (2014), in textbooks prepared in accordance with the social studies program, the gains related to the multicultural education are given through activities, which shows multicultural education is not directly and sufficiently reflected in Turkish education programs. Nonetheless, teachers

and teacher trainees are found to have a positive attitude and knowledge that supports multicultural education. However, some of the concepts are misunderstood. For example, there is a tendency to keep political and religious views, gender roles, sexual orientation, economic situation, and disability out of the definition (Arslan, 2016). In a study, it is stated that the attitudes of teacher trainees towards multicultural education are dependent upon their knowledge or their awareness about multicultural education (Turkan, Aydin, & Uner, 2016). Polat and Kilic (2013) state that individuals are raised in a dominant culture in Turkey and to train the community, teachers play an important role. Therefore, their attitudes and awareness about the diversity have the utmost importance but teacher education in multiculturalism and issues related teacher qualifications are mostly ignored.

According to the findings, there is no statistically significant difference in attitudes according to gender. In a similar study, Yazici et al. (2009) found that teachers' attitudes towards multicultural education did not differ according to gender. Bulut and Basbay (2014) found that there was no gender difference in teachers' perceptions of multicultural competence in their studies. Coban, Karaman, and Dogan (2010) found that in the "political view dimension", women had a more positive view of the individuals who grew up in the city about sexual orientation. Polat (2009) found that the variables such as the type of education and gender of the prospective teachers, socioeconomic status, the number of cities and siblings they live in had a significant effect on the multicultural education tendencies. Bulut and Basbay (2014) found that teachers' perceptions of multicultural competence vary according to where they live, and that teachers who spend most of their lives in settlements where cultural diversity is widespread have increased their perception of multicultural competence. Depending on the contradictory findings, it can be said that candidate teachers' and teachers' perceptions of attitudes and competencies towards the subject, rather than demographic variables such as gender, attitudes and perceptions in the society, personal experiences, familiarity with multiculturalism may have a more positive effect.

According to the findings, there was no statistically significant difference in attitudes in terms of mother tongue and seniority. However, according to the seniority variable, Bulut and Basbay (2014) found that teachers with higher seniority perceived their competence perceptions about multicultural competence and awareness, knowledge and skills as lower than those with less seniority. Similar findings were found in the studies of Polat (2012) and Yazici et al. (2009). Depending on this finding, it can be said that the teachers who have just started their profession are more equipped for the subject and have higher awareness due to technology and environmental changes. In other words, it can be thought that the social and technological changes and the attitudes and competencies of teacher and teacher candidates towards multicultural society, multiculturalism and multicultural education change in a positive way.

It was determined that literature teachers have more positive attitudes than classroom teachers. Yazici et al. (2009) found that teachers' attitudes towards multicultural education differed according to their branches. Tortop (2014) found that participatory attitudes towards multicultural education did not differ according to the section studied. Polat (2009) found that there was a significant difference in the perceptions of pre-service teachers, primary school teachers and preschool teachers in English, primary school mathematics and pre-school education. According to the findings, it is possible that teachers who study in language departments such as literature and English have high perceptions of awareness and competence related to the subject, so they may be more familiar with different cultures and have knowledge of different cultures. In other words, because they know different languages, they can be advantageous in recognizing and understanding different cultures and finding the lessons of teaching different cultures in school programs may be the reason for their positive perceptions about the subject (Bulut & Basbay, 2014).

Suggestions

It can be suggested that teaching methods should be organized according to multicultural education. For this purpose, it can be thought that teacher candidates should be given practical lessons in order to gain knowledge and competence in preparing for multicultural education and training environment. In addition, the Ministry of National Education and universities can cooperate and organize in-service training, seminars, panels, and workshops. Sample lesson plans, implementation plans, visual, written material and various teaching materials can be provided to teachers. Teachers can be encouraged to participate in cultural exchange programs.

Attention should be paid to the multicultural awareness and education of teachers. For this purpose, it can be thought to update the programs in universities in order to educate pre-service teachers in a multicultural manner and to take courses such as democracy, human rights, and multicultural education.

It should be investigated why literature teachers have more positive attitudes than classroom teachers. According to the findings obtained by qualitative research methods, measures to improve the attitudes of all teachers towards multicultural education can be taken.

Training programs should be prepared in a way to consider individual differences according to multicultural education. Training managers should also implement regulations that will enable multicultural education.

The use of a data collection tool of foreign origin may have prevented an understanding of the issues specific to Turkey as well. Therefore, the development of an original data collection tool can be suggested. Qualitative research is needed in order to establish the theoretical infrastructure that may be based on the development of this tool.

It can be suggested to investigate how teachers' attitudes towards multicultural education affect student achievement. Thus, the importance and impact of multicultural education can be better understood.

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