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The Effect of a Multicultural Education Course on Teachers' Attitudes towards Multicultural Education and Prejudices

Research Article

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ABSTRACT

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The present study aimed to find out whether a course on multicultural education affect teachers' attitudes towards multicultural education, cultural differences, prejudices and democracy education. To this end, a one-group pretest-posttest quasi-experimental design was employed. The sample of the study consisted of 20 teachers enrolled in a graduate program at a mid-sized public university in the Western Black Sea Region of Turkey. The Democracy and Multicultural Education Attitude Scale (DMEAS) was administered both at the beginning and at the end of the 14-week multicultural education course. Wilcoxon signed-rank and Kruskal-Wallis tests were used to compare the pre-test and post-test scores, to analyze the differences based on gender, place of residence and years of experience. The findings of the Wilcoxon signed-rank test revealed a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores regarding attitudes towards multicultural education, cultural differences, prejudices and democracy education. In addition, Kruskal-Wallis results indicated a significant difference for the gender and place of residence variables for the post-test. However, the results of Kruskal-Wallis showed that there was not significant difference in terms of years of experience. Based on the findings, it can be said that a multicultural education course added to the curricula could significantly improve the multicultural attitudes of the teachers and reduce their prejudices.

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Keywords:

Multicultural education course, attitude, prejudice, teachers, cultural differences

Introduction

Teachers with cultural competencies play a key role in transforming existing diversities in their classrooms into opportunities and eliminating educational inequalities. As agents of change, teachers are

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expected to act as guides in helping their students be open-minded to and accept the diversities that exist in the classroom environment (Van Driel, Darmody, & Kerzil, 2016). The results of the research explicate that teachers, who belong to the dominant culture, start to experience difficulties in the teaching process with the increase of students who are different from them in terms of culture and language (Acquah, Tandon, & Lempinen, 2016; Causey, Thomas, & Armento, 2000; Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2020). According to Siwatu and Starker (2010), teachers who cannot fully comprehend the connection between cultural differences and the sources of in-class student and teacher behaviors are inclined to prefer traditional teaching techniques when they are instruct students with diverse features. Thus, most teachers cannot establish meaningful relationships with students who are different from them cannot respond to the needs of the students due to cultural differences. The demographic change in the classrooms has revealed a need for today's teachers to have the attitudes and efficacies required to work effectively in the education and training process with the students who have diversities (Banks, 2016). To this end, it is essential for teachers to have a more critical perspective and be knowledgeable about diversities in order to face the challenges that may arise as a result of the increase in the number of students with cultural differences at all levels of education.

Lessons and activities related to multicultural education have become one of the fundamental requirements for both in-service teachers and teacher candidates (Young, 2020). Therefore, competencies regarding cultural differences and multicultural education should be integrated into both in-service teachers' professional development processes and teacher training programs. Because integrating cultural diversity goals, objectives, content and activities into the curriculum will increase awareness and sensitivity for individual differences (Shaya & Gbarayor, 2006).

Since all teachers are responsible for education and training in diverse societies, the need for educators to be equipped with multicultural attitudes and efficacies through in-service training and are ready to work with students from different cultural backgrounds comes to the fore (Banks, 2016; Howlett, Bowles, & Lincoln, 2017; Seel, 2011).

Multicultural Education

Multicultural education encompasses the improvement of individuals through the use of critical thinking in solving social problems and enhancing students' academic achievements in order to make society more democratic. Multicultural education also focuses on the equal representation of students with such diversities, which contributes to democratic society (Halvorsen & Wilson, 2010; Özen, 2015). In addition, the idea of multicultural education requires the support of the values of diversity and equal opportunity for students through understanding the contributions and perspectives of different races, ethnicities, cultures, languages, religions, gender, sexual orientation, physical abilities and disabilities in educational institutions (Gay, 2004; Gollnick & Chinn, 2016).

According to Banks (2019), multicultural education is an idea that includes students' ability to experience equality in education in schools regardless of their differences such as gender, ethnicity, race, language, social class, religion, giftedness or disability. Multicultural education, also defined as a reform movement, advocates that schools should be redesigned in order for students with cultural differences to have an equal chance to achieve school success. The National Association of Multicultural Education (NAME) (2009) describes the term as "a philosophical concept built on the ideals of freedom, justice, equality, equity, and human dignity It recognizes the role schools can play in developing the attitudes and values necessary for a democratic society."

Multicultural education contributes to eliminating discriminatory attitudes of students and developing positive attitudes towards individuals from different cultural groups, and being more tolerant. In this way, it provides students with the opportunities to get to know their own and other cultures, help them gain

experience, increase interaction and create collaborative learning environments. Through multicultural education, it may also be possible to reduce the lack of information, rule out negative features such as fear, anxiety, and prejudice related to the differences that may occur in education and training environments (Acar-Çiftçi & Aydın, 2014; Köşker & Erdoğan, 2020).

Dimensions and Approaches of Multicultural Education

In line with the purpose of this study, to determine the effects of a multicultural education course on teachers' attitudes and prejudices, the framework introduced by Banks (1989) was taken as a basis. Banks (1995a) proposed five dimensions for multicultural education: content integration, the knowledge construction process, prejudice reduction, equity pedagogy, and empowering school culture and social structure. Content integration means teachers' use of examples and content from different cultures to illustrate critical concepts, generalizations and issues in their lessons. The knowledge construction is related to the contribution that teachers make for their students to understand, question and determine how the biased content and perspectives in the course affect the formation of knowledge in the learning process (Banks, 1996). Prejudice reduction includes lessons and activities used by teachers to help students develop positive attitudes towards different individuals and groups with diverse features. The results of the research revealed that if certain conditions exist in the teaching environment, students can develop more positive intergroup attitudes when exposed to lessons, units and teaching materials containing content related to different racial and ethnic groups (Banks, 1995b). Finally, empowering school culture and social structure occurs when the culture and organization of the school becomes an environment in which diverse students can experience equality and reach equal opportunities.

Within the dimensions listed by Banks (2019), four distinct approaches are suggested to integrate a multicultural understanding into education programs. Banks (1989) described the first approach, the Contribution Approach, as a commonly used approach and the easiest approach teachers can use to integrate the curriculum with multicultural content. The feature of the approach is that heroes from different cultures are selected and included in the curriculum. Apart from this inclusion, there is no change in the basic features of the curriculum. Therefore, the approach does not help students understand the differences as a whole. The second approach, the additive approach, entails the addition of concepts, themes, and perspectives of content related to differences without changing the curriculum's basic structure, objectives, and features (Banks, 1989). This approach is accomplished by adding a book, unit or lesson. The most crucial drawback of this approach is that it does not involve restructuring the curriculum, so the additions are often reflected from the perspectives of historians, writers, artists and scientists belonging to the dominant culture (Banks, 1989). Unlike the other two approaches, the transformation approach changes the basic structure of the curriculum, allowing students to view concepts, topics, themes, and issues from the perspectives of different cultures (Banks, 2019). The decision-making and social action approach, on the other hand, adds elements to the curriculum that require students to make decisions and act on the concept, problem or problem of cultural differences emphasized in the content (Banks, 1989). Furthermore, Banks (2019) asserts that in this approach, students collect data on the subject, analyze values and beliefs, synthesize their knowledge and values, and decide what actions to take to reduce prejudice and discrimination in their school, if any.

One of the most widely used dimensions is content integration. Content integration often causes issues related to diversities to be conveyed superficially and mainly from a theoretical aspect. However, cultural differences should be acquired through experiences and not conveyed in a random way (Deakins, 2009). Studies have revealed that stand-alone courses on multicultural education, designed to provide students with required experiences in diverse classroom environments, have positive effects on students' level of multicultural attitudes, efficacies, beliefs and knowledge (Ndemanu, 2012; Richardson, Volberding, & Zahl,

2020; Zygmunt-Fillwalk & Leitze, 2006). Accordingly, this study aimed to reduce prejudices, the second dimension, through a stand-alone multicultural education course.

Courses on Multicultural Education

Sleeter and Carmona (2017) consider courses that include theory and practice for multicultural education as progressive approaches because these courses criticize discriminatory attitudes, behaviors and practices in educational settings on the one hand and aim to change the education process altogether, as a reform movement. Therefore, it is quite important that courses or in-service training seminars on multicultural education, whose aim is to increase awareness of diversities and helping teachers to teach effectively in a culturally diverse society, are presented in various ways both during the teacher training process and after starting the teaching profession. Because when teachers gain experience in multicultural education through courses, they also have the opportunity to learn how students with cultural diversities in their classes are marginalized by society. In addition, they become alert and responsive to the impact of existing prejudice, discrimination and privilege. Therefore, the courses on cultural differences should also highlight how privileges and marginalization can change and affect individuals' perspectives (Richardson et al., 2020).

The time spent by learners to learn new content is related to the successful outcome of the learning and teachers have positive attitudes when they remain in multicultural environments (Grant & Secada, 1990; Pavone, 2011). The results of several studies revealed that a multicultural education course offered independently from other lessons was effective in developing positive attitudes of teachers and teacher candidates regarding cultural diversities in the classroom and increased their efficacy levels (Cho & DeCastro-Ambrosetti, 2005; Garriott, Reiter, & Brownfield, 2016; Smith, Constantine, Dunn, Dinehart, & Montoya, 2006). According to Chang (2002) and Hurtado, 1996, students who completed elective or compulsory courses on multicultural education and diversities have more positive judgments on racism and minorities. Similarly, in other studies, it was revealed that courses on cultural differences reduce prejudiced attitudes (Hogan & Mallott, 2005), the individuals exposed to such courses want to attend different courses on similar subjects (Laird, Engberg, & Hurtado, 2005), and have a more respectful attitude towards diversities (Ndemanu, 2012).

Present Study

Turkey's population is currently composed of various ethnic groups. The diversities within the country have increased rapidly, especially due to the civil war that started in Syria in 2011 and the efforts to achieve the internationalization goals set by the Council of Higher Education over the last decade (Kasap, 2020). As a result, the changes that need to be made in the education system regarding differences have become a more critical issue. This change has also revealed the need to increase teachers' awareness in terms of the diversities that exist in their classroom settings (Aydın, 2013). However, we can say that both the teacher training programs implemented in Turkey and postgraduate opportunities or in-service training seminars for teachers are not enough to meet the needs of diverse student groups in the schools. When there are no courses on multicultural education, after graduation, teachers are required to address such issues as by managing diversity or teaching and adapting their curriculum to the needs of students with cultural differences through experiences. Thus, teachers should be taught how to integrate diversity-related issues into the relevant classroom content, achieve equal academic success for all their students, regardless of their differences, and raise their students' awareness of pluralism (Aydın, 2013).

In Turkey, several studies have recently been carried out regarding various aspects of multicultural education, e.g., attitude, efficacy, belief. When the studies conducted are examined, it is seen that the studies are mostly related to determining the level of multicultural attitudes and efficacies (Akman, 2020; Akyıldız, 2018; Arsal, Arsal, & Akçaoğlu, 2017; Ayten-Kasa & Köse; Karadağ & Özden-Özdemir, 2020). In addition, the studies mostly focused on revealing the relations with regard to such variables as gender Bakır, 2020; Çoban,

Karaman, & Doğan, 2010), place of residence (Arslan & Çalmaşur, 2017; Bulut & Başbay, 2014; Karacabey, Ozdere, & Bozkus, 2019; Karatas, 2015; Özdemir & Dil, 2013; Polat, 2012; Saracaloğlu, Evin, & Varol, 2004) and years of experience (Duran & Çalışkan, 2020; Rengi & Polat, 2014).

When the studies carried out in Turkey on multicultural education were examined, it was revealed that the number of experimental studies accounted for only 3.3% (Köşker & Erdoğan, 2020). Moreover, much attention has been given to the investigation of pre-service teachers' multicultural attitudes, beliefs and perceptions (Bulut & Başbay, 2014; Özbilen, Canbulat, & Hamurcu, 2020) and the studies probing the thoughts of in-service teachers are not sufficient. However, focusing research only on prospective teachers cannot provide reliable information about teachers' real-life experiences in the work environment (Agirdag, Merry, & Van Houtte, 2016). Such qualities as the class size, the administrative structure of the school, the cultural differences of the students in their classes and the goals of the course that the teachers are exposed to in the education process will play a decisive role regarding multicultural education in the classroom environment (Van Houtte, 2011).

Although research findings from several countries report that multicultural education courses and the theory of multicultural education delivered through content integration have positive impacts on the multicultural attitudes and efficacies of teachers and teacher candidates (Agirdag et al., 2016; Arsal, 2019; Chung, 2018; Nadelson et al., 2012), the number of studies published on the effects of a stand-alone multicultural education course on teachers' attitudes towards multicultural education is quite limited (Hicks, Berger, & Generett, 2005; Jennings & Smith, 2002; Ruales, Van Petegem, Tabudlong, & Agirdag, 2021). Moreover, to the best of my knowledge, there are no studies examining the effects of an independent multicultural education course on teachers' multicultural attitudes and prejudices in Turkey. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to contribute to the limited literature by determining the effect of a stand-alone multicultural education course on teachers' attitudes towards multicultural education and cultural differences and their prejudices towards multicultural education. In addition, this study aimed to examine the factors that may be associated with such practices. To this end, this study sought answers to the following research questions.

1. What is the effect of a stand-alone multicultural educational course on teachers' attitudes towards multicultural education?
2. What is the effect of a stand-alone multicultural educational course on teachers' prejudiced attitudes towards multicultural education?
3. What is the effect of a stand-alone multicultural educational course on teachers' attitudes towards cultural differences and democracy education?
4. Are there differences in total scores regarding multicultural education by gender, place of residence and years of experience?

Method

Research Design and Participants

In this study, a one-group pre-test-post-test design was used to determine the effect of a stand-alone multicultural education course on teachers' attitudes toward multicultural education and racism. Behavioral researchers most frequently use the one-group pre-test - post-test design to determine the effect of an intervention on a designated participant group (Cranmer, 2017). The researchers also utilize the design "to evaluate the effectiveness of educational programs, the restructuring of social groups and organizations, or the implementation of behavioral interventions" (Cranmer, 2017, p. 1114).

The participants in this study consisted of in-service teachers enrolled at the Education Management Inspection Planning and Economy graduate program at a mid-sized public university in the Western Black Sea Region of Turkey in the 2020-2021 academic year. Twenty-four participants completed the pre-test; however, four students dropped the course after the first two weeks of the semester and the remaining 20 teachers filled in the post-test. In the study, demographic data were gathered to present the context for examining participants' attitudes towards multicultural education concerning their educational background. Demographic characteristics of the participants are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics

Characteristic	n	%
Gender		
Women	9	45
Men	11	55
Teaching Specialty		
English Language Teaching	3	15
Turkish Language Teaching	7	35
Psychological Counselling and Guidance	1	5
Classroom Teaching (1 st to 4 th grades)	5	25
Science Teaching	1	5
Special Education	2	10
Physical Education and Sports	1	5
Experience		
1-5 years	4	20
6-10 years	6	30
11-15 years	3	15
16-20 years	4	20
21-25 years	3	15
Place of Residence		
City Centre	7	35
District / Town	10	50
Village	3	15

Course Design

The current study was conducted during a stand-alone graduate course referred to as EBAT-512 Foundations of Multicultural Education (FME). The researcher, also the course instructor, taught FME for 3 hours a week for 14 weeks.

FME has been offered as an elective course to graduate students enrolled at the department of educational sciences, educational administration program. The program aims at supporting administrators and teachers to improve their knowledge and skills in the field.

The researcher has several studies on multicultural education and cultural diversity. This course is designed to provide the students (teachers and school administrators) with the opportunities to start developing their knowledge, skills, competencies and attitudes in the process of becoming a multicultural educator. The course provides the teachers with an introduction and overview of the field of multicultural education. In addition, the FME course guides teachers in meeting the academic, social, cultural and emotional needs of students. The course also aims at providing teachers with opportunities to begin developing the knowledge, skills, efficacy and attitude in the process of becoming multicultural educators and assisting them to think critically and reflectively regarding decisions that need to be made as a classroom teacher to meet the academic, social, cultural, and emotional needs of all students. In the course, information is given about the

features of multicultural education, its purposes, issues such as race, class difference, gender, disability, as well as designing multicultural activities.

Along with other materials, Multicultural Education Issues and Perspectives by (Banks & Banks, 2010) was used the main course book. In addition, pre-chosen articles selected for article critique assignments and presentations and other course materials (videos and web sites) to provide opportunities to envisage multicultural perspectives from different angles are used in the course. Topics and other sources discussed within the 14-week semester are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Course syllabus

Week	Topic	Article Critique, Videos and Discussion
1	Multicultural Education: Expectations, definition and goals.	Article: Multicultural education and its reflections
2	The historical and educational foundations of Multicultural Education	Video: Dr. James A. Banks--Founder of Multicultural Education
3	The Dimensions of Multicultural Education and the School as a Social System	Article: Teachers' Attitudes toward Multicultural Education: Case of Çankırı Province
4	Influence of social class on education	Video: Momondo: The DNA Journey Ancestry
5	Cultural Issues in Education, in Society, and in Persons	Article: Determination of Teachers' Multicultural Competence Perceptions
6	Multicultural Teaching and Learning	Video: Don't Put People in Boxes
7	Cultural Issues in Education, in Society, and in Persons	Article: Multicultural Education in Turkey and Teachers' Competencies In Multicultural Education
8	The influence of ethnic content knowledge on academic achievement?	Video: Tv show: What would you do? (Turkish Version)
9	Race, Class, Gender, Language, Disability, and Classroom Life.	Article: Refugee Children and Adaptation to School: An Analysis through Cultural Responsivities of the Teachers
10	Social Class and Educational Equality - Teachers, Curriculum, and Teaching Practices	Video: A Tale of Two Schools
11	Gender Bias in Today's Classroom: The Curriculum	Article: Instructional Environment and Teacher Competencies in the Context of Multiculturalism
12	Strategies for Creating Gender-Fair Classrooms.	Finding Solutions to the selected cases from TeacherServer.Com
13	Language Diversity and Schooling	Article: Multicultural Education and Turkey: Current Situation, Prospects, Possibilities
14	Special Education in a Diverse Society	Finding Solutions to the selected cases from TeacherServer.Com

Instruments

In this study, the Democracy and Multicultural Education Attitude Scale (DMEAS) was administered both at the beginning and at the end of the study as a pre-test and a post-test to determine the effect of the course. The test scores from each administration were compared to reveal the effect of the multicultural course on the teachers' multicultural attitudes and prejudiced attitudes towards multicultural education and cultural differences.

The Democracy and Multicultural Education Attitude Scale (DMEAS): The scale was developed by (Toraman, Acar, & Aydın, 2015) to reveal the attitudes towards multicultural education, prejudices, cultural differences and democracy education. The items in DMEAS were designed from "I completely agree" to "I completely disagree" on a five-point Likert scale. The DMEAS is comprised of 5 sub-dimensions: attitude

towards multicultural education (ATME - 7 items), prejudiced attitude towards multicultural education (PATME - 7 items), attitude towards democracy education (ATDE) (5 items), attitude towards democracy (ATD - 5 items) and attitude towards cultural differences (ATCD - 3 items). The reliability values were calculated as .83 for ATME, .80 for PATME, .79 for ATDE, .78 for ATD, .71 for ATCD and .87 for the scale as a whole. The authors reported that factor loadings of items ranged from .51 to .80 and five-factor structure explained 56.73% of the variance (Toraman, Acar, & Aydın, 2015). Examples of items include: "I contribute to the internalization of cultural differences in my lessons," "I include "Democracy Education" in my lessons," and "The implementation of multicultural education in schools bothers me." The DMEAS has also been determined to be a reliable measure with reliability values ranging from .71 to .83 (Toraman et al., 2015). In this study, the overall Cronbach value was calculated as .77. As for the sub-dimensions, the reliability scores were determined as .89 for ATME, .76 for PATME, .88 for ATDE, .43 for ATD and .96 for ATCD. According to Kline (1979) "There should be at least twice as many subjects as variables in factor-analytic investigations." (p. 40). Therefore, confirmatory factor analysis could not be conducted in this study.

Procedures and Data Analysis

The data was gathered through Google Forms. The researcher informed the participants about the study with a presentation before distributing the link for the online survey. The link for the pre-test remained online for the first two weeks of the semester. The same procedure was followed at the end of the semester, and the URL link was sent to the participants two weeks before the semester ends.

In the preliminary analyses, the assumptions for the parametric tests were checked. SPSS 25 was used to conduct the related analysis. As seen in Table 3, the results of the normality assumption tests for the overall scores revealed that the distribution was not normal for the post-test. Therefore, non-parametric statistics, Wilcoxon signed-rank and Kruskal-Wallis tests were used to compare the mean scores.

Table 3. Tests of normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre-test scores	.08	20	.200	.98	20	.950
Post-test scores	.22	20	.015	.89	20	.024

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval from the research ethics board was received for the present study (Document Issue No: 2021-86). The participants were informed about the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses, the aims and risks of the study before filling in the survey. In addition, the participants were required to sign an informed consent statement by choosing "I agree to participate."

Results

After the intervention process, a Wilcoxon signed-rank test was conducted to reveal whether there was a significant difference within the groups between pre and post-test scores. The result of the analysis for the overall scores is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Wilcoxon signed-rank test results regarding the overall test scores

Dimension	n	Pre-Test		Post-Test		df	z	p
		\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD			
Overall Test Scores	20	117.45	10.15	123.40	6.07	19	2.38	.02

The results revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the overall pre and post-test scores, $z=2.38$, $p=.02$ with a medium effect size ($r=.38$). Based on the statistically significant difference between the overall pre-test / post-test scores, another test was carried out to compare the groups in terms of attitudes towards multicultural attitude, prejudiced attitudes towards multicultural education and attitudes towards cultural differences. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Wilcoxon signed-rank results regarding the groups' multicultural attitude and efficacy

Dimension	n	Pre-Test		Post-Test		df	z	p
		\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD			
ATME*	20	26.10	3.28	33.10	2.22	19	3.93	.000*
PATME**	20	23.75	5.44	29.10	2.38	19	3.93	.000*
ATDE***	20	18.40	2.70	23.60	3.55	19	3.97	.000*
ATCD****	20	12.40	3.20	14.25	1.48	19	2.00	.045*

* $p<.005$ (ATME: Attitude Towards Multicultural Education, PATME: Prejudiced Attitude Towards Multicultural Education, ATDE: Attitude Towards Democracy Education, ATCD: Attitude Towards Cultural Differences).

When Table 5 is examined, it can be seen that there was a statistically significant difference with regards to ATME, $z=3.93$, $p<.000$ with a large effect ($r=.62$); PATME, $z=3.93$, $p<.000$ with a large effect size ($r=.62$); ATDE, $z=3.97$, $p<.000$ with a large effect ($r=.63$); and ATCD, $z=2.00$, $p=.45$ with a medium effect size ($r=.32$). These results indicated that the multicultural education course had a significant effect on participants' attitudes towards multicultural education, prejudice, democracy education and cultural differences.

In order to compare the results of the overall pre and post measures with regard to gender, years of experience and place of residence, Kruskal-Wallis tests were performed.

Table 6. The results of descriptive statistics with regard to gender-based on pre-test and post-test scores

Test		n	\bar{X}	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Pre-test	Female	9	117.22	10.95	104.00	132.00
	Male	11	117.64	9.98	97.00	135.00
	Total	20	117.45	10.15	97.00	135.00
Post-test	Female	9	126.89	3.33	121.00	131.00
	Male	11	120.55	6.42	110.00	129.00
	Total	20	123.40	6.07	110.00	131.00

Table 7. Kruskal-Wallis test results with regard to gender

Test	df	H	p
Pre-test	1	0.12	.732
Post-test	1	5.44	.020

The results presented in Table 7 demonstrated a statistically significant difference between female and male participants in favor of female teachers, $H(1)=5.44$, $p=.020$ for the post-test scores with a medium effect size ($r=.30$). On the contrary, there was not a significant difference between genders based on the pre-test scores, $H(1)=0.12$, $p=.732$.

Table 8. Kruskal-Wallis test results with regard to years of experience

Test	Statistic ^a	df1	H	p
Pre-test	2.09	4	7.15	.128
Post-test	2.29	4	2.46	.652

When Table 8 is examined, it can be seen that the difference among the years of experience was not significant both for the pre-test scores, $H(4)=7.15$, $p=.128$, and post-test scores, $H(4)=2.46$, $p=.652$.

Table 9. The results of descriptive statistics with regard to the place of residence based on pre-test and post-test scores

Test		n	\bar{X}	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Pre-test	City center	7	122.14	8.57	107.00	132.00
	District	10	117.30	10.63	97.00	135.00
	Village	3	107.00	3.00	104.00	110.00
	Total	20	117.45	10.15	97.00	135.00
Post-test	City center	7	127.57	2.23	124.00	131.00
	District	10	120.30	6.78	110.00	129.00
	Village	3	124.00	4.36	121.00	129.00
	Total	20	123.40	6.07	110.00	131.00

Table 10. Kruskal-Wallis test results with regard to the place of residence

Test	df	H	p
Pre-test	2	0.96	.329
Post-test	2	3.87	.049

The results presented in Table 10 demonstrated a statistically significant difference with regard to the participants' place of residence, $H(2)=3.87$, $p=.049$ for the post-test scores with a low effect size ($r=.20$). On the contrary, the difference was not significant for the pre-test scores, $H(2)=.955$, $p=.329$. Post hoc comparisons for the pre-test scores using Games-Howell revealed that the mean score for the teachers living in a city center ($M = 122.14$, $SD = 8.57$) was significantly different from village residents ($M = 107.00$, $SD = 3.00$). In addition, the mean score for district ($M = 117.30$, $SD = 10.63$) was significantly different than village ($M = 107.00$, $SD = 3.00$). However, the scores of teachers residing in a city center ($M = 122.14$, $SD = 8.57$) did not significantly differ from the teachers living in a district ($M = 117.30$, $SD = 10.63$).

Discussion

This study aimed to examine the effects of a graduate-level multicultural education course on teachers' attitudes towards multicultural education and cultural differences and prejudices against multicultural education. In addition, the effects of the course on democracy and democracy education were investigated in the study. Gollnick (1995) posits that in order for a course to be designed in accordance with multicultural education, it should include cultural aspects such as race, ethnic origin, the language of students with differences.

The results of the research revealed that the course has significant effects on teachers' attitudes towards multicultural education, cultural differences, democracy education and reduction of prejudicial attitudes. According to these findings, it can be said that a multicultural education course that will be added to the program offered in the field of educational sciences significantly improves the multicultural attitudes of the participants and reduces their prejudices. The findings obtained are also supported by Banks' theory regarding the approaches he has determined for multicultural education (Banks & Banks, 2010).

The findings also showed that a stand-alone multicultural education course designed for teachers significantly affects attitudes towards multicultural education and cultural differences positively. These findings are similar to the results of other studies investigating the effect of courses or in-class practices on

multicultural education (Hicks, Berger, & Generett, 2005; Jennings & Smith, 2002; Richardson et al., 2020; Ruales, Van Petegem, Tabudlong, & Agirdag, 2021). The reason for this could be the emergence of attitudes as a result of the individual's experiences or observations. Change or formation in attitudes can occur in many ways, and it is especially important to provide more experiences and observations in changing attitudes through learning (Seel, 2011). In addition, according to Grant and Secada (1990), the time spent by learners to learn new content and the time they are exposed to this content is related to the successful outcome of the learning. Other researchers also stated that teachers' attitudes towards multiculturalism increase when they are in environments with high cultural diversity and exposed to multicultural content (Pavone, 2011). Therefore, it can be claimed that through a course on multicultural education, which can create opportunities for new experiences, we might contribute to the formation of positive attitudes towards cultural differences.

The findings of the study also indicated that the course significantly increased the participants' attitudes towards democracy education. According to Gay (2004), multicultural education aims to achieve equal academic success and be productive citizens in a democratic society for all students regardless of their cultural background. Özen (2015) also affirms that multicultural education is directly related to the education of democratic citizens because it emphasizes the equal representation of students with such diversities as language, religion, race and sexual orientation in the education process, and the concepts of multiculturalism and democracy intersect many times. In this sense, multicultural education can be regarded as a means to a democratic society, and a change in attitude concerning democracy education can be achieved through a course on multicultural education; thus, promoting the idea that such courses might enable students to acquire the knowledge, skills and behaviors they need in order to become a member of a democratic society (Halvorsen & Wilson, 2010).

Another finding of the study showed that teachers' prejudicial attitudes towards multicultural education significantly decreased. Prejudice reduction is a meticulous and organized process. In this process, it is aimed to reduce or remove learners' negative attitudes regarding prejudice and discrimination in a way that encompasses cultural diversities. The findings obtained from the studies revealed that the courses that present the content about cultural differences are effective in reducing the prejudices of the learners and can help them develop more positive attitudes (Banks, 1995). In line with the findings of this study, Hogan and Mallott (2005) also asserted that courses on diversity help reduce the prejudiced thinking that individuals develop against other cultures. To this end, it can be stated that with the help of a stand-alone course, the prejudicial reactions of teachers, even after a few years of experience, can be diminished to a level that they could equally embrace students with diversities.

The study's findings also displayed a significant difference with regard to the place of residence based on the post-test scores. The results of several research studies affirmed that participants living in big cities have higher multicultural attitudes when compared to the individuals living in districts or villages (Bakır, 2020; Bulut & Başbay, 2014; Çoban, Karaman, & Doğan, 2010; Hong, Troutman Jr, Hartzell, & Kyles, 2010). According to the findings of these studies, it can be said that the more the life experiences of teachers in multicultural societies, the higher the attitudes they bear towards multiculturalism and multicultural education. However, this study revealed that after taking a 14-week multicultural education course, the difference became significant. The reason for this might be that after the learners were provided with the multicultural content throughout the course, and the awareness of the learners living in the city centers raised significantly because of they are more exposed to multicultural environments than other participants. The result signals that diversity coursework with exposure to diversities can help develop multicultural attitudes more effectively.

The results of the study regarding the effect of the gender variable revealed a significant difference for the post-test but a non-significant difference for the pre-test. While some studies investigating the effect of

gender on multicultural education showed that gender significantly affects the attitudes regarding diversities (Arslan & Çalmaşur, 2017; Çoban et al., 2010; Columna, Foley, & Lytle, 2010; Ford & Quinn, 2010; McCray & Beachum, 2010; Saracaloğlu, Evin, & Varol, 2004), some other studies indicated opposite findings (Bulut & Başbay, 2014; Karacabey, Ozdere, & Bozkus, 2019; Karatas, 2015; Özdemir & Dil, 2013; Polat, 2012). With regard to the significant difference in favour of female teachers at the end of the intervention, we might assert that women are more sensitive to cultural diversities. However, it can be noted that the gender variable is affected by other variables such as socio-economic status, region or city of residence and multicultural competence. Because of this a definite assessment cannot be made in evaluating multicultural attitudes in terms of gender.

The last finding obtained in the study revealed that years of experience have no significant effect on attitudes towards multicultural education. The studies investigating seniority also reached contradictory results. Although some studies reported similar findings to this study (Duran & Çalışkan, 2020; Karacabey et al., 2019; Karatas, 2015; Özdemir & Dil, 2013), some other studies indicated that years of experience significantly affected the attitudes towards cultural diversities (Bulut & Başbay, 2014; Evola, 2012; Rengi & Polat, 2014; Washington, 1981). Accordingly, it can be said that it is not clear whether the time spent in the teaching profession affects teachers' attitudes towards cultural differences and multicultural education.

Conclusion, Implications and Limitations

The findings obtained in this study showed that a multicultural education course for teachers was effective in increasing teachers' attitudes towards multicultural education, cultural differences and democracy education and reducing their prejudices. Agirdag et al. (2016) argue that the studies about multicultural education mostly focus on teacher candidates and in-service teachers' attitudes, efficacies and beliefs about the processes of multicultural education are largely neglected. It is very important for the teachers who graduated from faculties that do not offer courses on cultural differences in teacher training programs to correctly manage the differences they encounter in their classes after starting their profession and achieving equal academic success for all their students. Gorski (2000) emphasizes that teachers have a double responsibility to develop attitudes towards cultural diversities and reduce prejudices that affect students' experiences, especially towards the affective domain and contribute to their cognitive development. Accordingly, it is necessary to offer courses on multiculturalism through graduate programs or in-service training in order to increase teachers' attitudes towards multicultural education and to reduce their prejudices. These teachers can also contribute to changing the perspective of society by improving the understanding of differences in their classrooms.

This study, to the best of my knowledge, which is the first experimental study conducted in Turkey with teachers, has a few implications. Firstly, policymakers and developers of teacher training programs should emphasize the importance of multicultural education by taking steps to increase the attitude, efficacy and awareness of both in-service teachers and teacher candidates through the courses to be added to the programs. Secondly, since the results of this research and similar research shed light on in-service and pre-service teacher training processes, updates should be made in the current education programs in line with the findings. Because as the cognitive hierarchy model of human behavior suggests, attitudes act as antecedents of behaviors (Fulton et al., 1996). Therefore, by altering the attitudes, it might also be possible to change teachers' observable behaviors towards diversities.

This study has some limitations inherent to the one-group quasi-experimental studies. One of the limitations of this design is the absence of a control or comparison group. Another limitation of the study is that the random sampling method was not used; this limited the study's ability to establish a causal relationship between the intervention and the results. The current study is limited to the teachers taking the

fundamentals of multicultural education course. Finally, the use self-report survey, the limitations of which are well documented in the social science literature.

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