

## **Gender-Aware Media Literacy Training: A Needs Analysis Study for Prospective Teachers**

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### **Abstract**

The main objective of this study is to determine the training needs of prospective teachers for gender-aware media literacy training. In this study, within the scope of which qualitative research methods were employed, case study model was used. The study group was designated by using maximum variation sampling method, as one of the purposeful sampling methods. The study group of the research consisted of 32 prospective teachers in total (16 female students, 16 male students), receiving education in Gazi University Faculty of Education. Data was collected through a semi-structured interview form generated by the researchers and the form includes six headings and thirteen open-ended questions. In the process of analyzing data obtained as a result of the interviews performed face-to-face, content analysis method was used. In the light of the findings obtained from the research, it has become evident that prospective teachers are in need of training concerning the issues of accessing exact and reliable information, inquiring the reliability of information and sources, analyzing media messages, media editing, media literacy, gender equality and analyzing sexism in the media.

**Keywords:** *Gender equality, media literacy, prospective teachers, training needs analysis.*

**DOI:** 10.29329/epasr.2018.137.1

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## **Introduction**

Within the context of education, the concept of need is described as a difference or deficiency between the current states of learners and acceptable norms (Tyler, 2014). Study of needs analysis in the determination of training objectives so that the content and activities are able to be projected and also in ensuring these training objectives to be able to address the actual needs has a significant role in terms of programme development study. In this sense, the detection of needs relevant to the society, individual and subject area will provide important data in setting the targets expected to be materialized by education (Demirel, 2015).

In this study, for the purpose of determining the needs of the society and subject area with regard to gender equality and media literacy, the literature has been reviewed, and in order to determine the individual's needs, data obtained through the interviews carried out with the prospective teachers participated in the research have been analyzed.

## **Needs of the Society and Subject Area on the Gender-Aware Media Literacy Training**

While biological sex indicates the traits which cannot be changed apart from exceptional circumstances, social gender is the concept that can alter, be altered and including the process of construction in meaning (Vatandaş, 2007). Therefore, inequalities between woman and man are not natural and biological, and are constructed socially (Erol, 2014). Although women, constituting the half of Turkey's population, are equal by law, the equality for rights cannot be realized in practical terms. The main reason for this is the perception towards woman which is still prevailing within the society. The stereotypes existing in the society, biological traits such as pregnancy and so on, cause woman to meet with some obstacles in their rights for accessing to education and being employed (Tuskan, 2012).

In today's world, there has been a great of documents imposing legal and political liability and obligations for the countries, corporations and individuals to protect the human rights and support these rights. In the period following the World War II, important actions in the field of international law were taken for enhancing the current state of all the groups, especially including women, which had been exposed to discrimination. That the United Nations (UN) adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948 and signed the Convention on the Political Rights of Women in 1952 is considered as a crucial step with regards to the fact that women have the right for exercising universal human rights at an equal rate, to carry this new concept onto the international scene and promote the status of women. Also, 'Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women' (CEDAW) was adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly (The European Students' Union, 2008). Turkey, together with all these conventions, has also accepted to fulfil the legal acts and obligations within the scope of the Beijing

Declaration and Platform for Action in the Fourth World Conference on Women which was held in Beijing in 1995 (TBMM Kadın Erkek Fırsat Eşitliği Komisyonu, 2012a).

Gender equality in education means that female and male children are not subjected to any gender-based discrimination for the access to the opportunities, sources and services presented within the process of education, benefit from these opportunities at an equal rate and are treated equally (ETCEP, 2016). United Nations (UN) considers gender equality and the empowerment of women as the basic aspects of human development. Besides this, in the Human Development Report published by the UN Development Programme (2016), women have lower Human Development Index (HDI) than men do, on the average and in all regions. In the Global Gender Gap Report which the World Economic Forum published in 2017, the gender equality oriented progresses of 144 countries were investigated and Turkey was at the 131st rank among 144 countries in the overall assessment and at the 101st rank in terms of accessing to education. Additionally, the studies conducted as relevant to gender in education in Turkey (Engin-Demir and Çobanoğlu, 2012; ERG, 2015; Esen, 2013; ETCEP, 2016) reveals that education of gender equality is required in the trainings for teachers. Results of the researches carried out at both international and national level underline once and again that gender equality awareness is essential in terms of the public education.

Media also plays a fundamental role in the constitution and maintenance of perceptions and stereotypes related to gender in the society and in the reinforcement of disparities and/or inequalities. Media releases gender-related constructs into circulation in a way that it is not based on the principle of equality in social relations and is gendered; and again, through these constructs, it reproduces the unequal positions or roles of the women (Aydın, 2014; Çimen, 2011; Erol, 2014; Ertung, 2013; Erzurum, 2014; Kalaycı, 2015; Sevim, 2013). Social gender inequality, the delivery of messages including cultural stereotypes in media in a continuing and recurring way can lead to the occurrence of some mindsets over time (Silverblatt, Smith, Miller, Smith and Brown; 2014). Kellner and Share (2007) stated that a training which would sensitize individuals to discrimination and disparities based on race and sex, in terms of the development of multicultural understanding and democracy, and additionally would enable understanding the role of media in the increase or decrease of this discrimination and inequalities might be important. In this regard, critical media literacy will enable learners to enhance their skills to ensure their being good citizens by providing them with the competency in resisting the manipulative nature of media and also being an active participant in social life (Kellner and Share, 2007). Also, media and information literacy will enable the inequalities existing and the ideologies and stereotypes generated by the media in social structures and in individuals' minds to be criticized and questioned (Eryaman, 2006; Grizzle, 2014).

The education of media literacy is presented as an elective course at any grades of the secondary school in Turkey. Teachers giving this course, although they teach at different branches, have not received any training related to this subject during their undergraduate education. This case has led to the result that

debates on which branch teachers need to give the course of media literacy comes until today. According to Işkın and Kesten (2016), however there have been some certain attempts to enable media literacy training to gain the due consideration for almost ten years, expected results could not be reached. On the other hand, conditions such as the inadequacy of materials used within the scope of the course of media literacy, the lack of teacher training in this field and the reality that the efficiency of course is limited to teachers' efforts and requests are regarded as obstacles to the effectiveness of media literacy education (TBMM Kadın Erkek Fırsat Eşitliği Komisyonu, 2012b).

Studies analyzing the effect of gender education (Esen, 2013; Özcan, 2012) and of media literacy education (Barut, Demirer, Erbaş, Dikmen and Sak, 2016) on prospective teachers are available, as well. However, in these studies, media literacy and gender-related issues have been dealt with separately. In addition to this, the number of studies addressing gender and media literacy together is quite few (Erdoğan, 2010; Sevim, 2013). Also, in literature, there are two needs analysis studies concerning the subjects of gender equality and media literacy. One of these two studies is the study of needs analysis for training needs of secondary school students that are related to the Instruction Schedule for Gender Equality by Acar Erdol and Gözütok (2017); and the other one is the study of needs analysis concerning prospective teachers' skills for media literacy, that was carried out by Barut, Erbaş, Dikmen, Sak and Demirer (2014). Any study discussing the training needs of prospective teachers as related to the issue of gender equality has not been encountered in the body of literature.

In conclusion, it is seen that gender inequality is an important problem both in the society and in the field of education. Media has also an important role in the maintenance and reoccurrence of the stereotypes and biases regarding gender in society. In this sense, raising the awareness of the individuals constituting the society on gender equality and gender representations in media and enabling them to gain awareness are required.

### **Needs of the Individual on the Gender-Aware Media Literacy Training**

In this part, a needs analysis research concerning the needs of the individual is included. In the research, the needs of prospective teachers for 'Gender-Aware Media Literacy Training' will be tried to be introduced.

The main objective of the research is to determine the training needs of prospective teachers for gender-aware media literacy training. Within the scope of this main objective, answers to the following questions have been sought:

Of the prospective teachers;

1. What are their opinions on the access to the content of media?
2. What are their opinions on analyzing the content of media?
3. What are their opinions on the concepts of media and media literacy?
4. What are their opinions on the concepts of gender and gender equality?
5. What are their opinions on sexism in media?
6. Why do they consider the issues of gender and media literacy required in teacher training as a prospective teacher?

## **Method**

### **Research Model**

This research has been structured in accordance with qualitative research paradigm, with the object of determining the training needs of prospective teachers for media literacy that is aware towards gender equality. In this study, case study design which is one of the qualitative research methods has been employed. Case study is a research model preferred when the main research questions are 'how' and 'why'; the researcher has little or no control over the behavioural cases and a current phenomenon within the context of real life is focused on (Yin, 2014). Case treated through in the research is composed of the needs of prospective teachers for being trained in media literacy which is gender-aware, especially in terms of gender equality.

### **Working Group**

The research was performed on 32 prospective teachers in total, who have been receiving education in the departments of Elementary School Mathematics Teaching (n=4), German Teaching (n=4), Science Teaching (n=2), Turkish Language and Literature Teaching (n=2), Paint and Art Teaching (n=2), French Teaching (n=5), Preschool Teaching (n=2), English Teaching (n=4), Special Education Teaching (n=5) and Turkish Teaching (n=2) in Gazi University Faculty of Education in the fall term of the academic year 2017-2018. These prospective teachers were tried to be selected by maximum variation sampling method, from purposeful sampling methods, which is specific to qualitative researches. While the study group was being determined accordingly, in order that the variety could be ensured, students' gender and the departments in which they have been receiving education were taken into consideration. The 50% of the students (n=16) participated in the research is female and the rest 50% (n=16) is male students.

### **Role of Researchers**

One of the researchers is a faculty member in the field of Curriculum and Instruction and lectures in educational sciences to the students in the faculty of education. The other researcher has had an academic study on media literacy in master's program. This situation has provided convenience in terms of reaching the prospective teachers participated in the research, the designation of interview form and the realization of interviews with the prospective teachers by sound recording, and also the interpretation of the experiences related to media which prospective teachers have had till then.

### **Data Collection Instrument**

In the research, data were collected by means of a semi-structured interview form that had been designated by the researchers. While preparing the interview form, the researchers had primarily reviewed the relevant literature; and then, the necessary arrangements for the form were made in line with the remarks and suggestions put forward by the three faculty members from educational sciences. In an attempt to test the functionality of questions in the arranged form, the pilot scheme of the form was practised on two students and the interview form was finalized by the rearrangement of interview questions. The interview form was dealt with under six headings as (i) access to the content of media, (ii) analyzing media messages, (iii) media literacy and (iv) gender concepts, (v) noticing sexism in media, (vi) the necessity of media literacy and gender equality issues in teacher training. The interview form consists of 13 open-ended questions for detecting training needs of students. The interviews have been carried out face-to-face with the prospective teachers and taken 20 minutes averagely. During interview, by gaining consent from the students initially, sound recording was conducted and afterwards, those records were turned into text.

### **Data Analysis**

Content analysis method was used in the analysis of data obtained in the research. In the method of content analysis; data gathered from written or verbal expressions are coded and classified in a systematic manner, and following that the correlations among data are established, it is attempted to realize the statistical inference (Marvasti, 2004). In this regard, data obtained by means of sound recordings were turned into text. Later, written data were coded, composed under sub-themes according to the similarity in meaning and then, those created sub-themes were collected under main themes. Finally, correlations among themes which had been created as based upon data were attempted to be explained. In order to ensure the reliability, all data were coded by the two researchers. On the codifications made by the both researchers, the formula of  $\text{Reliability} = \text{Consensus} / (\text{Consensus} + \text{Dissensus}) \times 100$  (Miles & Huberman, 1994; as cited in Merriam, 2009) was applied. Matching percentage of the two codifications made was calculated as 81%.

### Validity and Reliability

Validity in qualitative research is related to the conformity of research results with to the extent of which they are correct and the general framework of the research; as for the reliability, it means that research results are free of any sort of prejudice and error, and as well, they can be repeated by different researchers (Yin, 2009; McMillan, 2004). In this sense, in order to raise the internal validity of the research, during the interview, the participants were reassured about the fact that their opinions would be used only in that research and their identities would kept confidential; and so, that they could express their opinions frankly and free heartedly was tried to be achieved. Accordingly, it was aimed that data provided during the interview would reflect the real case. For the purpose of raising the external validity of the research, the research process was explained in detail. To increase the internal research reliability, findings revealed as a result of content analysis were conveyed without being interpreted. All dealings in the process of research were presented in a detailed manner, so as to increase the external research reliability. The obtained data and codifications are reserved by the researchers in a way that they can be examined again.

### Findings

In this part, data obtained as a consequence of the interviews for the sub goals in the research are presented in order, accompanied with the main themes and sub-themes.

### Access to the Media Content

Prospective teachers' opinions under the theme of accessing to the media content have been presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Prospective Teachers' Opinions on the Access to the Content of Media

<b>Question 1: Which sources do you generally use while exploring a subject?</b>				
Theme		Sub-themes	N	
Source of Information		Internet	31	
		Book	7	
		Library	4	
		A specialist	4	
<b>Question 2: Do you question the reliability of information which you access?</b>				
Theme		N	Sub-themes	N
Questioning the Reliability of Information	I do not question (why?)	19	Not paying attention to the assignments	10
			Not having knowledge on this matter	6
			Not need	5
	I question (how?)	13	Comparing the sources/information	8
			Paying attention to its author / references	4
			Paying attention to not including any comment	2
			Checking whether it is current, or not	1

As it is seen in Table 1, almost all prospective teachers (n=31) generally prefer to use the internet while they are exploring a subject. Among the websites which are mostly used by the prospective teachers, Wikipedia is the leading one (n=22). However, due to the fact that access to Wikipedia was denied, it has been observed that a considerable majority of prospective teachers searches in any website (n=18), and this is followed by corporational / official web sites (n=3), scientific publications (n=2) and Ekşi Sözlük (n=1), respectively. Prospective teachers have stated that they benefit from the reference books (n=7), library (n=4) and specialists in the subject area (n=4), apart from the internet, while they are searching for a subject.

Opinions expressed by the three prospective teachers as related to the sources of information from which they get benefit while exploring a subject are in the following:

*Mainly I use the internet. Searching in the internet is easier and more convenient... As website, we used to apply to the Wikipedia before. But, I began not to use it for some unfortunate cases. Now, I use whichever site appears at the first ranks, when I type the topic title, since given sites generally become prominent in this case (E11).*

*Internet was the source for me to search formerly; and now, since we came here to the university, I have been paying more attention to use the books as our university has a magnificent library (K6).*

Prospective teachers have been asked whether they question the reliability of sources or information to which they have accessed, and directed 'why' if they do not question and 'how' if they question. More than half of the prospective teachers (n=19) have stated that they do not question whether the information or source they have accessed to is reliable or not, and also that they generally do not pay much attention to the reliability of information in the assignments (n=10); and some of them have indicated that they do not have any knowledge about this matter (n=6) and that they do not need to do so (n=5). As for the prospective teachers who question the reliability of information (n=13), they have expressed that they are sure about the reliability of information or its source by comparing the sources/information (n=8), paying attention to its author or references (n=4), observing that the information is not commented on (n=2) and checking its being current (n=1).

Opinions shared by the prospective teachers for questioning the reliability of information or source to which they access are in this way:

*No, I do not observe. I have never had such a need for observing this so far. More precisely, I have not needed much to investigate or check these criteria. Generally, we have been given assignments and we have gotten it over with, too (E3).*

*I mean, I do not know; I have no idea about it (K3).*

*I usually pay attention to the source I use in order to access the reliable information; and then, I compare this information with the one(s) in different sources. I try to find out the similarities and/or common grounds, as far as possible (K13).*

### Analyzing the Content of Media

The answers which prospective teachers have given to the questions related to the theme of analyzing media content are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Prospective Teachers' Opinions on Analyzing the Content of Media

<b>Question 3: How do you analyze a movie or a TV series in terms of the message it intends to convey? How do you distinguish the reality and the editing?</b>			
Theme	Sub-themes	N	
Analyzing the content of series / movie	Message	Not paying attention to the message	11
		Leaving an impression on someone	10
		Contribution of message	4
		Content editing	3
		No message is conveyed	2
		Not watching	2
	Editing	Fantastic / not reflecting the real life (fiction)	13
		Possible to happen / reflecting the real life (reality)	13
		It is not understood in general	1
<b>Question 4: Do you keep up with the news? How do you find out whether a news is biased, or not?</b>			
Theme	Sub-themes	N	
Analyzing the news (Finding out the biased news)	Taking a side	14	
	Expression/opinion/comment	11	
	Reflecting the events objectively	7	
	Not realizing much	2	
	Comparing	1	
<b>Question 5: What sort of methods are employed in the commercials in order to have an effect upon people's purchasing behaviours?</b>			
Theme	Sub-themes	N	
Analyzing the commercial	Colour / Visual quality	11	
	Flattery advertising	9	
	False representation	9	
	Giving a coverage to the celebrities	8	
	Making people feel a need	6	
	Belief / feeling	5	
	Sexism/sexual object/idealized image	5	
	Catch line	3	

As seen in the Table, a certain part of prospective teachers (n=11) has put forward that they do not examine or analyze the content presented in TV series and/or movies in terms of the messages these intend to convey. In addition to this, a considerable amount of prospective teachers (n=10) has pointed out that the messages are given to leave an effect; and some of them have expressed that what the content provides for or adds to them is important (n=4) and the message given can be understood from the editing of the content

(n=3). Two of the prospective teachers have mentioned about that no message is conveyed in series and/or movies and the other two ones have stated that they do not watch TV series and movies.

Considering how the prospective teachers analyze the series and/or movies in terms of the message these intend to convey, their statements are in the following:

*It is just for the sake of editing; Well, I suppose, just for the scenario, their acting, I mean. I criticize this sort of things. I do not notice too much, extra about it. Turkish TV series are a bit mockery, acting is too unnatural (E1).*

*Well, now, to tell the truth, I do not think TV series produced in our country convey a message. Because only sameness is in the ones shot in our country. Just you know, the usual ones; rich girl - poor boy, and so on (K8).*

Again, in an attempt to reveal the prospective teachers' opinions on the reality and editing in media, it has been sought an answer for how they distinguish fact from fiction; in other words, the reality from the editing in series/movie content. In response, prospective teachers have stated that the contents of series and movies which are fantastic and/or do not reflect the real life are an editing (n=13), and the contents which are possible to happen or occur in the real life and reflect the aspects of real life stand for a reality (n=13). One prospective teacher has also expressed opinion in the way that the reality and editing cannot be understood in general terms.

The answers given by the prospective teachers to the question of how they notice and realize the fact and fiction in the productions such as series and movies are as below:

*I take the possibility of its happening or to happen in the real life into the consideration. Well, I mean, I may see whether it is related or relevant to the real life, or not, by looking at my own life experiences (K1).*

*Fiction can be distinguished. Things unreal or beyond the reality rather appeal to me, in fact. I am a person with a vivid imagination and also enjoying imagination. I am not much interested in the realities (K4).*

Most of the prospective teachers participating in the research (n=18) have stated that they rarely keep up with the news. Many of them have expressed that they realize whether or not the news is biased by evaluating if the news gives weight to only one-side (n=14), the expressions/remarks/comments used in the news (n=11), and if the happenings are reflected in an objective manner (n=7), and also one of them by checking the news against through different sources. Two of the prospective teachers have also explained that they cannot understand the bias in the news much.

When considered how they realize a biased news, the opinions expressed by the two prospective teachers are in the following:

*That is to say, it can be clear. Especially if I mention about the case in Turkey, political things seem obvious; more particularly, it varies from one TV channel to the other. In fact there is one unbiased, but I am not sure - Can I give its name? I only watch ... channel for example, really unbiased there. In other channels, namely in major ones, the news are very sided. Especially in political matters. Only when it deals with the both sides at an equal rate, it becomes unbiased (K7).*

*I never watch the news from a single medium. Well, I follow it by several sources. Actually, as is known, there is a right-left wing controversy in the agenda of the country. I generally get the things in common from the opposing views. And in this way, I try to reach the most accurate one (E6).*

Additionally, the question of what types of methods are employed in the commercials in order to have an effect upon the people's behaviours for purchasing has been directed to the prospective teachers. In line with the answers they have given, colour / visual quality (n=11), flattery (n=9) and false representation (n=9) have been ranked as the first three. These are, respectively, followed by the themes of giving a coverage to the celebrities (n=8), making one feel a need (n=6), belief / feeling (n=5), sexism/sexual object/idealized image (n=5) and catch line (n=3).

The opinions expressed by the prospective teachers concerning the methods applied in commercials to create an effect on people's purchasing behaviours are given below:

*Colours significantly have an effect on human psychology. For this reason, green is safe; red appeals to the one and attracts his attention, and like this. I think they make benefit from this well in the commercials (K4).*

*Generally the celebrities; famous actors/actress, fashion models whom the young and people keep tabs on. You see, people put themselves into their shoes (E10).*

### **The Concepts of Media and Media Literacy**

Knowledge and opinions which the prospective teachers held on the concepts of media and media literacy are presented in the Table 3.

**Table 3.** Prospective Teachers' Opinions on the Concepts of Media and Media Literacy

<b>Question 6: What does the concept of media mean to you?</b>		
Theme	Sub-themes	N
Media	Product of Media	18
	Mass Medium	17
	Function of Media	10
	Means of Influence	6
<b>Question 7: What does the concept of media literacy mean to you?</b>		
Theme	Sub-themes	N
Media Literacy	No knowledge	11
	Figures interested in the media	10
	Department/Discipline	6
	Media staff/field of profession	4
	Using the internet actively and efficiently	1
	Being aware of the coverage in media	1
	Noticing the biased-unbiased news	1

As it is seen in the Table above, while the most of the prospective teachers (n=18) define the concept of media as the products of media (news, social media, programmes and commercials); nearly half of them (n=17) relates the mass media (television, internet, radio, newspaper, the press and telephone) to the concept of media. While defining the media concept, some of the prospective teachers (n=10) have emphasized the functions of media (informative, communicative, recreational and instructional) and some others (n=6) stated that media is a means of influencing.

Concerning the media concept, opinions expressed by the prospective teachers are as below:

*Media seems to me as a matter dealt with around the news. Those headlines, news, television, means of communication, etc. It seems to me a something expected to be announced to everyone. It brings something like to my mind. Like rather a means, not like a medium, the means itself (K5).*

*Internet, social media, news, and such sort of things; relevant concepts generally bring to my mind (E9).*

When the opinions on the concept of media literacy which have been put forward by the prospective teachers are analyzed, it is realized that a certain part of teachers (n=11) does not know the concept, and also some of them (n=10) are observed to have defined the media literacy by relating it to the figures interested in media. Besides these, they have described the media literacy as department/discipline (n=6), media staff/field of profession (n=4), using the internet in an active and efficient manner (n=1), the one who is aware of the coverage in media (n=1) and who recognizes the biased - unbiased news (n=1).

The prospective teachers have explained their opinions for the concept of media literacy in the following way:

*No, I have not heard about this concept. Is it something like in the way of which the meanings of words 'reader' and 'writer' fit for the meaning of concept? If it is so, I have media readership, but I do not have media authorship. Well, I think, I do not know (K3).*

*The ones who follow the media closely, who have an interest in and/or relation with the media, literate people, in short. This comes to my mind (E5).*

*As based on its name, it is like a discipline which reads, writes and analyzes the happenings in media; which analyzes the readers and the texts to be written (E4).*

### **The Concepts of Gender and Gender Equality**

The prospective teachers' opinions for the concepts of gender and gender equality have been presented in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Prospective Teachers' Opinions on the Concepts of Gender

<b>Question 8: Have you ever heard the concept of gender? What does it mean to you?</b>		
Theme	Sub-themes	N
Gender	Dominant (prominent) gender in the society	13
	Social perspective to gender	9
	Female and male roles	6
	Having no idea	3
	Discrimination	1
<b>Question 9: How do you define the concept of gender equality?</b>		
Theme	Sub-themes	N
Gender Equality	That women and men have equal rights	12
	Equality of woman and man	8
	That woman is able to do what the man can	8
	No knowledge	6
	Being physically different, not being totally equal	2

As is seen in the Table, considering the opinions on gender which have been provided by the prospective teachers, the definition of dominant gender in the society (n=13) is placed on the top. This is followed by the themes of social perspective to gender (n=9), female and male roles (n=6) and discrimination (n=1). Apart from this, three prospective teachers have also stated that they have no idea about the meaning of the concept mentioned.

The prospective teachers have expressed their opinions concerning gender in the following way:

*Biological sexes exist; woman or man. However, in social gender, only one has been admitted and the superiority of one of these is regarded. This is something really disturbing, and it should not be something like social gender (K1).*

*I do not know what it is, so I cannot express an opinion. Social one generalizes more; namely, it does not make dependent on a single concept. I could not put forward at all (E2).*

A significant part of prospective teachers has defined gender equality as the condition on which women and men have equal rights (n=12), while some of them have described it as the equality of woman and man (n=8) and some others as the case indicating that woman is able to do what the man can (n=8). Some part of the prospective teachers have expressed that they do not know the subject of gender equality (n=6), and two of the teachers have pointed out that women and men cannot be totally equal due to their physical differences.

As relevant to the concept of gender equality, the prospective teachers have stated their opinions in this way:

*Gender equality means that every individual has the same and equal rights, regardless of sex (K16).*

*The equality of woman and man. As a society; for example, woman also does whatever man does in the society. I think equality is this (K5).*

### **Sexism in Media**

As regards to the theme of sexism in media, the opinions expressed by the prospective teachers are given in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Prospective Teachers' Opinions on Sexism in Media

<b>Question 10: What do you think about the roles of woman and man projected in TV series and/or movies?</b>			
Theme	Sub-themes	N	
Sexism in TV series and/or movies	Woman	Weak / oppressed	15
		Housewife	9
		Strong	5
		Sexual object	5
		Victim of violence	4
		Coquette	4
		Improvement towards equality	3
	Man	Strong	13
		Dominant / superior	7
		Working	1
<b>Question 11: What do you think about the news related to the women?</b>			
Theme	Sub-themes	N	
Sexism in News	Violence	20	
	Sexual abuse	12	
	Less coverage in terms of women's success or gender emphasis	11	
	Sufferer/Victim	6	
	Social prejudices / stereotypes	5	
	Socio-political	3	
	No sexism	2	
	Not paying attention	1	

<b>Question 12: Do you think how the product and sex are related in the commercial?</b>		
Theme	Sub-themes	N
Sexism in Commercials	Stereotype	11
	Sexual object	7
	To whomever the product appeals, he / she acts in its commercial	6
	Idealized image	4
	The colour of the product	4
	Have no idea	3

As it is seen from the Table, most of the prospective teachers have stated that women are represented as weak / oppressed in the commercial films (n=15), but men are shown in the roles and characters which are strong and powerful (n=13). Furthermore, the prospective teachers have also pointed out that women are represented in the roles such as housewife (n=9), sexual object (n=5), victim of violence (n=4), coquette (n=4); men, on the other side, are represented in the roles such as dominant / superior (n=7), working (n=1). Unlike the others, the opinions expressed by a part of prospective teachers are in the way that women have been introduced in strong characters and roles (n=5), and also an improvement towards equality in these roles (n=3) is being seen.

The prospective teachers' opinions on the female and male roles that are reflected in TV series and/or movies are in the following:

*Generally, among the ones which I watch, the man is in a stronger position. And the girl is in a more oppressed one. In any TV series I have watched so far, I have never seen that woman is empowered and man is suppressed (K3).*

*Men in general are in the role of the mafia, in the character of policeman. A schema in which the man has a gun at hand, usually runs in and around gunfights, and has difficulty in taking care of his family and continually breaks up and then again makes up with his wife, on the other side, is designed (E10).*

With regard to the women-oriented news, it has been put forward by the prospective teachers that they mainly encounter with the news indicating violence against women (n=20), and this is followed by the news related to sexual abuse (n=12), the news on which the success of women is less screened or in which an emphasis upon gender is placed (n=11), the news related to the victimization of women (n=6), the news including social prejudices or stereotypes (n=5). Differently from these findings, some prospective teachers have also stated that women-related news are socio-political (n=3), and the two of them have expressed that sexism is not included in the news, and one has also explained that he has never paid attention in this respect.

*Rape, unfortunately, sexual abuses, their being up against the wall, not being able to act as they wish; in short, they are always sufferers. Even if they had been raped, they would be found guilty,*

*because they are supposed to either be out at a late hour or wear a mini skirt. In fact, our women are really sufferers (E7).*

*Seeing the women's being brought low in this way is a really terrible sensation. ... There are stories of success. For instance, an eleven-year-old girl has been introduced as the youngest inventor in America. Such kind of exalters exist, but very little in our country (K12).*

As for the opinions on the relation between product and sex in the commercial films, prospective teachers have mostly expressed that gender-related stereotypes are used in the commercials (n=11). When the other opinions are assessed, respectively, the representation of people as a sexual object in the commercials (n=7), acting of the person of relevant sex in the commercial as based on which sex the product appeals to (n=6), idealized image (n=4), and the colour of the product (n=4) are involved. Besides this, three prospective teachers have stated that they have no idea about it.

The opinions expressed by the prospective teachers, concerning the relation of product and sex in the commercials, are in that way:

*What the most obvious is that the women in the commercials try to present the things which feature their femininity, in this way as a sexual object. And as for the men, power, strength, ... Men are strong, their taking something with reason or logic... Except that, no commercials drawing the attention are available (E7).*

*In general, in many of the commercials on clothes, women are acted and all of them have to be thin (K11).*

*Indeed, I have never considered the commercials in terms of whether they include sexual discrimination, or not (E2).*

### **The Subjects of Gender Equality and Media Literacy in Teacher Training**

The prospective teachers' opinions about whether the subjects of media literacy and gender equality are necessary in teacher training have been presented in Table 6.

**Table 6.** Prospective Teachers' Opinions on the Necessity of the Subjects of Media Literacy and Gender Equality in Teacher Training

Theme	Sub-themes	N
Gender Equality and Media Literacy in Teacher Training (Why is it necessary?)	For students	22
	For raising all the society	11
	For equal treatment of students	4
	Not only for teachers, but for everyone	4

As media is in our lives	4
In order to raise individuals who are aware of gender equality	2
Taking an interest in social concerns	1
In order to make education free from sexism	1
For not knowing	1
In order to change the people through education	1

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All of the prospective teachers, especially by stating that the subjects of media literacy and gender equality are necessary in teacher training, and also a great majority of them (n=22) have explained that teachers must be aware of these subjects for their students. Again, a part of prospective teachers (n=11) has mentioned that these subjects are essential since teachers have a mission for raising all the society. In addition to these, they have put forward that the subjects of media literacy and gender equality are necessary in teacher training, in order to be able to treat female and male students equally (n=4); since it is necessary not only for teachers but also for each individual (n=4); as media takes its own place in our lives (n=4); in order to raise individuals who are aware of gender equality (n=2); since teacher must be interested in social concerns (n=1); in order to make education free from sexism and gender biased concepts (n=1), and finally, because of self-incompetency in these respects (n=1).

*Personally I think that teachers should receive training for this. And even, they should teach this to children, as well. In conclusion, if you are teacher, you must learn this, too. Because children grow up in the same way that they have been raised from. It can be easier to teach a child; teaching the equality, the concept of equality, and that women and men are equal, indeed. Therefore, I think it is much better for teachers to receive this course during their education (K11).*

*Especially for teachers, it is necessary to receive. Because we are the ones who raise the society, in fact. We have been shaping the future. Teachers raising the society, since they have raised the society in this way, in this manner ... The buck stops at teachers, that's all (E7).*

### **Conclusion and Discussion**

In this study, it has been aimed to determine the training needs for the prospective teachers, as related to the subjects of gender equality and media literacy. The research findings reveal that prospective teachers mostly use the internet as a source of research. This result is also consistent with the results of other researches that have been conducted on this subject (Ata and Yıldırım, 2016; Karaman, 2010). By the virtue of easy-access to the internet, it is the most preferred source of information by the users. However, on the ground that the internet environment is a medium in which even the ordinary users can convey the information easily, by its structure, it may involve false and unreliable information (Çelik, 2014). For this reason, which websites on the internet the prospective teachers use while searching for information and whether they take the cognizance of the reliability of the information they access, or not, have been

attempted to be detected. Most of the prospective teachers have stated that they used to benefit from the Wikipedia as a source of information before access to that source was denied. That the Wikipedia, which is one of the top websites all around the world, is an online encyclopaedia whose content is generated by the users has led to some certain debates concerning to what extent its content can be reliable and correct. However, much as this topic is controversial, it is considered by the university students as a source of knowledge and information (Selwyn and Gorard, 2016). As a result of the ban on the access to the content of Wikipedia, many of the prospective teachers connect to any websites in reaching the information. This case shows that prospective teachers are in need of training in terms of accessing to the reliable information on the internet. Ozan, Kurt and Odabaşı (2014), in their studies which they have conducted on the prospective teachers in the Department of Computer and International Technologies Education, found out that prospective teachers were not informed and/or conscious enough in respect of the use of Wikipedia and other Web 2.0 means.

In the research, most of the prospective teachers have stated that they do not question the reliability of information or source they have reached on the Internet, and among the reasons for these, that their searches are related to the assignments given, they do not know how to question the reliability of information and they do not need such a questioning procedure is included. As for the prospective teachers who question the reliability of information accessed, they have stated that they compare the sources or information, pay attention to the author or its references and to their being current and not involving any comment. Although these methods applied by the prospective teachers or the points of which they take the cognizance are important steps for assessing the media content with a critical approach, they are not adequate. These results indicate that most of the prospective teachers do not have enough competency and awareness towards analyzing the reliability of information they access. In the study carried out by Ata and Yıldırım (2016), it was revealed that prospective teachers check the validity and reliability of information on the Internet while they are searching for their assignments, and question the reliability and objectivity of the information source by various methods.

When the opinions expressed by the prospective teachers within the scope of the theme of accessing to the media content are evaluated generally, it can be said that they are in need of training for how the reliable information sources on the internet can be accessed to, how the reliability of information and sources accessed can be inquired, and also in respect of observing the codes of conduct in the attempts related to access to information and spreading the information.

In the scope of the theme related to the analysis of media content, the prospective teachers' opinions have been tried to be detected, in order to see how they analyze the content of media in general terms. Firstly, how they analyze the TV series or movies in terms of the message intended to be conveyed has been reviewed; and as a result, that most of the prospective teachers do not have enough knowledge on analyzing

the media messages has revealed. Moreover, they have stated that contents possible to occur or exist in the real life are fact; the ones which do not reflect the aspects of real life are fiction. These findings also demonstrate that prospective teachers are not able to analyze the messages in media content adequately from a critical perspective and do not have enough knowledge on media reality and media editing. Since all inscriptive, audio-visual messages in media are the outcome of editing and in order to analyze the media messages, it is required to have knowledge on by whom, for whom, for which purpose, through which methods, and etc., these media messages are built (Türkoğlu, 2007).

In addition, again under the theme of analyzing the content of media, most of the prospective teachers stating that the bias in a news can be understood from the single side overemphasized or supported have put forward that such a case is a political bias. Considering the opinions on how to recognize a biased news in general, it has been realized that prospective teachers regard the news as mainly verbal or written texts; and they do not deal with the issues such as the newswriter, the source of the news or by whom the news is prepared and with the images used in the news adequately, in terms of impartiality. What will be recognized as a news, how the news will be reported and interpreted, what is correct or false are determined by the journalists' worldview, ethos and value judgments. News bureau executives and media owners can be more effective in news building. In this sense, in which way the individuals keeping tabs on the news media perceive the impartiality is of capital importance (Çaplı, 2016).

When the prospective teachers' opinions for the methods employed in the commercials in order to leave an impression on people's purchasing behaviour are analyzed, it is observed that they have exemplified the components to be encountered frequently in television commercials as colour/visual quality, flattery, false representations, the coverage of celebrities and etc. In general, it can be pointed out that prospective teachers have gained awareness towards the methods of influencing / manipulation involved in commercials. Nevertheless, it is obvious that they need more knowledge about new media advertising, product-image relation in commercials, and social prejudices and stereotypes reflected in commercials. To know about the factors such as attention drawing and persuasion in advertising is considered highly important so that the consumer is able to give the right decision and can base his/her decisions on logical grounds (Şahin, 2011).

In the scope of the theme relevant to the analysis of media content, when the opinions expressed by the prospective teachers are generally reviewed, it can be stated that they are in need of training for learning how the meaning is established in media, and how media messages are analyzed from a critical perspective. Media builds the meaning by making use of visual, auditory and written methods in order to communicate through texts. In this meaning building process of the media, several standards of judgment, personal experiences and ideologies become a part. Therefore, both discovering the language of media representations and learning how to analyze these are significant in order to comprehend what sort of meaning media texts bear (Hoechsmann and Poyntz, 2012).

While explaining the concept of media, prospective teachers have provided examples mostly related to the products of media, mass media and the function of media. Also, some of them have stated that media is a means of influence. In the body of literature, more than one definition are available for the concept of media. The word of media is primarily associated to the mass media such as newspaper, television, radio and so on; secondly to the news, advertisements, digital games, movies and similar media content; and thirdly to the media producers such as reporters, photographers and etc. (UNESCO, 2012). The prospective teachers, in parallel with these definitions, describe the media as a means/medium and mediator, as well. Furthermore, in the research conducted by Gedik (2015), it was determined that prospective teachers mentioned about the informative and recreational ones of all the functions of media and perceived media as a means of communication, recreation and technology.

A majority of prospective teachers participating in the research define media literacy as figures interested in and/or relevant to the media, department/discipline and a profession. Considering that the prospective teachers' opinions on the concept of media literacy are analyzed in general, it reveals that they do not have enough knowledge about this subject. According to Silverblatt et. al (2014, pp. 4-6), media literacy requires being able to deal with the source of information from a critical point of view, to interpret all sorts of media messages critically and independently. In this respect, it is necessary to handle a questioning for recognizing by whom the media message has been built, the aim of this message and why and how it has been generated, the one or ones constituting the target audience of the message, and so on. Following this definition, it was seen that many of the prospective teachers participating in the research did not regard the concept of media literacy as a process of critical thinking and questioning, and also could not establish the relation between media and literacy concepts in a satisfactory way. In the study which Deveci and Çengelci (2008) conducted on the prospective social studies teachers, it was found out that they explained the concept of media literacy as based on various views such as following the agenda, keeping up with the developments, commenting on the news and etc. Also, in the study by Gedik (2015), it was seen that prospective Turkish-language teachers perceived media literacy as comprehending, reading, interpreting and analyzing the events reflected in the media in a proper manner, using up-to-date technologies, keeping a tab on book, magazine, newspaper, television, radio, internet and similar sources. In Ata and Yıldırım's (2016) study, prospective teachers brought the concepts of questioning on media messages, being aware of media messages, analyzing media messages forward, while defining the concept of media literacy.

Within the scope of the research, prospective teachers were asked to explain what the concept of gender meant to them. They defined gender as dominant (prominent) sex in the society, the social perspective towards sex, female-male roles and discrimination. Social gender has been artificially shaped through discourse, language, practices, behaviours and relations, i.e., by the process of socialization (Adaçay, 2014); and points out a historical, cultural and social construction process (Köysüren, 2016; Vatandaş, 2007).

From these definitions, when the definitions provided by the prospective teachers as related to gender are taken into consideration, it can be stated that they do not have enough knowledge on the subject of gender. Moreover, when they were asked to express their opinions on gender equality, they explained in the way that women and men have equal rights, the equality of woman and man, both men and women can do the same thing. According to the United Nations, gender equality signifies that women and men have not only equal rights and duties in the society, but also equal opportunities and gains in every sphere of life (The European Students' Union, 2008). The opinions of prospective teachers on gender and gender equality shows that training needs for this subject are the point in question. Additionally, the results of different studies carried out on prospective teachers within the scope of gender equality (Aslan, 2015; Seçgin and Tural, 2011) revealed that training needs of prospective teachers in this subject still exist.

Concerning the sexism in media, prospective teachers' opinions have been examined. At this point, it is possible to state that prospective teachers have a general awareness towards sexism in media products such as TV series, movies, and etc. The results of the researches conducted for the representations of women and men in series and/or movies (Aydın, Kurt and Karbay, 2014; Ünür, 2015) show parallelism with the opinions expressed by the prospective teachers, as well. Furthermore, concerning the news towards women, most prospective teachers have put forward that they encounter with the news including violence towards women, sexual abuses, and that the stories of success are less reported in the news or gender emphasis is placed on. In literature, the studies made on this subject in Turkey have demonstrated that woman-related news regenerate gender inequalities (Çelenk, 2010; Erol, 2014; Erzurum, 2014; Evin, 2016). On the other side, for the relation between the product and sex in the commercial films, prospective teachers have been asked for their relevant opinions and a part of them has stated that the product is associated to the stereotypes. Other ones have pointed out that both woman and man are shown as a sexual object, the idealized images (ideal body weight and height, physical appearance, beauty, and etc.) are presented, the colour of the product is related to the sex. Mengü (2004) indicated that female identity in advertisements was built from a male-dominated point of view. According to Ertung (2013), the 'ideal woman' and 'ideal man' profiles introduced by means of media are shown as objects inconsistent with the reality, unattainable and excellent; and this phenomenon causes a feeling of insufficiency for the ones in front of the screen. When the opinions relevant to the questions that have been directed to the prospective teachers participating in the research under the theme of sexism in media are generally examined, it can be said that they are aware of sexism in media (in series/movie, news and commercial films). Yet, it is considered essential for them to analyze this sexism in media from social, socio-cultural, socio-economic and socio-political perspectives and in the sense of education, to be aware of the problem areas in the subject of gender and to be able to find a solution.

In conclusion, following the necessary explanations presented to the prospective teachers about gender equality and media literacy, they have been asked for their opinions on the necessity of these subjects

in teacher training. When assessed in general terms, opinions about this issue demonstrate that prospective teachers regard the subjects of gender equality and media literacy as necessary on account of the fact that the profession of teaching bears both individual and social responsibilities.

In this study, in an attempt to determine the objectives, content and instructional activities and/or practices of 'Gender-Aware Media Literacy Training', the training needs of prospective teachers have been tried to be based on a scientific ground. In consequence of literature review and research conducted, it has become evident that training needs related to the subjects of media literacy and gender equality are present, on the part of prospective teachers. However, since the research has been conducted by qualitative methods, the generalization of the results is out of question. Training needs of prospective teachers can be analyzed on broader samplings, both in gender equality and media literacy.

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