An Investigation of the Relationship between Prospective Teachers' Attitudes towards Multiculturality and Refugee Students

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Abstrac

Multiculturalism refers to the existence of different social groups in society. Multiculturalism advocates a society in which no culture is dominant. Multiculturalism is a fact of life for many people. Multiculturalism and globalization affect how people organize the world around them and how they see themselves and others. Multicultural education offers an educational program that concerns not only specific minorities but also all social groups. Today, with the effect of globalization, teachers and students can participate in educational activities all over the world. This situation requires educators to approach multicultural education positively in order to ensure equality of opportunity in education. In this study, it is aimed to examine the relationship between prospective primary school teachers and pre-school teacher candidates' attitudes towards multiculturalism and refugee students. The article summarizes the information on multicultural education, which is one of the reflections of globalization on education, and refugee students and equal opportunities in education. The research was carried out with the relational survey model, one of the quantitative research methods. In the study, it was determined that the sum of multicultural attitudes increased the general level of attitude towards refugee students. Another result of the research is that the sum of multicultural attitudes increases the level of communication, adaptation and efficiency. In the study, the communication scores of the preschool teaching department were also found to be higher than the communication scores of the primary school teaching department.

Keywords: Prospective teachers, Multiculturality, Refugee students

Introduction

Multiculturalism is the coexistence of different cultures with their own unique behaviors, values and communication styles, and social groups with different characteristics in society (Chu, 2005). Multiculturalism can be accepted or rejected, but it cannot be ignored because it is a fundamental element of the world we live in. Multiculturalism is an inevitable phenomenon. The definitions of human rights, democracy and justice theories regarding this phenomenon, which have not yet fully reached the reality, remain in the abstract. When we talk about a society structure where democracy promotes society, social justice includes equality of opportunity, attitudes towards marginalized groups or the right to freedom of expression is mentioned, we pass from abstraction to the reality needed (Seglow, 2003).

In recent years, with mass migration, societies have turned into multicultural societies where different social groups live together. In parallel with the migrations and social changes, the concepts of pluralism, diversity and multiculturalism have come to the fore. Multiculturalism refers to the existence of culturally diverse groups in a society. Multiculturalism advocates an understanding of society that gives equal status to different cultural groups and where no culture is dominant. Multiculturalism is a wealth for society (Baycan-Levent, 2007).

The concept of multiculturalism has been considered as a fundamental idea in social sciences. It is one of the concepts used by various researches and the most expressed in social theories. The concepts of multiculturalism, multicultural society, and multicultural policy were included in the Canadian academic lexicon in the 1960s. Multiculturalism is generally defined in sociological sources as "a system of beliefs and behaviors that recognizes and respects the existence of all different groups in a society, values them, accepts sociocultural differences, encourages and enables the contributions of different groups to society". According to this approach, multiculturalism empowers everyone in society (Grishaeva, 2012).

Immigrant multiculturalism can be seen as a risk factor for the cultural security of the majority society. In societies where immigrants are seen as potential carriers of illegal movements and a burden on the welfare state, multiculturalism also poses perceived risks to immigrants. Accordingly, in times of turmoil, these perspectives on multiculturalism come to the fore again (Kaya, 2013).

Multiculturalism is considered one of the most effective practices of cultural diversity. Cultures play a central role in shaping the determining factors in the construction of identity. Multicultural education policies are supported by the opportunity of each minority to bring a social culture to its members. Providing the necessary conditions for the development of these groups is important for the protection of their rights (García-Peter & Villavicencio-Miranda, 2016).

Multiculturalism is a fact of life for many people. It is difficult to ignore the increase in intercultural contact due to factors such as the speed of communication in the global world, migration, international corporate and Multiculturalism and globalization affect how people see themselves and others and how they organize the world around them. Multiculturalism can be defined as the experience of two or more cultures coexisting and internalizing these cultures. Multicultural individuals are individuals who exhibit multicultural efficiency, that is, they are fed from different cultures in their media preferences, language use, friend selection and value system and exhibit appropriate cultural behaviors. Multicultural identity is also referred to as the state of being connected to different cultures. Although the concept of multiculturalism is typically used to acknowledge the different cultures of immigrant groups, it can sometimes be used to acknowledge the existence of indigenous peoples in colonial countries. One of the assumptions behind multicultural ideology is that public recognition of one's culture and opportunities for multicultural interactions is crucial to well-being. Support for this argument is found in consulting, training, institutional, and developmental contexts (Benet-Martínez, 2012).

Multicultural education offers an educational program that covers not only specific minorities but also all social groups. It refers to each social group with its own unique culture and the different relationships and attitudes that these groups develop. Multicultural education policy is determined in accordance with the needs and values of the society. The ideal of education means the formation of a new citizen who will live in a multicultural society, and it is important to raise children with a multicultural education rather than additional programs. Schools play an important role in promoting multiculturalism. Multinational schools are concrete educational institutions where children are taught the right behaviors (Barakoska, 2013).

Multiculturalism can be defined as an immigration-oriented population movement that occurs in the form of people leaving that country for various reasons, living in another country for a long time and working in that country to earn economic income (Laczko & Aghazarm 2009). Among the main reasons that push people to migrate can be

people's desire to live in better conditions than where they live, or situations that negatively affect the living conditions of people such as natural disasters, terrorism, war, etc. (Akman, 2020; Başar, Akan & Çiftçi, 2018). People who leave their country and settle in another country are called asylum seekers or refugees.

Regardless of the reason for leaving their country, refugees leave their career, status, friends and even families, their houses and the lands that have belonged to their families and themselves for generations which also means their experiences to settle to a country they do not know (Boylu & Işık, 2019). In recent years, the number of refugees and asylum-seekers have been rapidly increasing around the world. While 20 million people all around the world were forced to emigrate at the beginning of the 21st century, this number is increasing every year (Erdem, 2017). Turkey has received high immigration due to political disruption in our neighbouring states after 2010. The highest immigration to our country came from neighbouring Arab countries (Yurdakul & Tok, 2018).

Internal conflicts that started in 2011 Syria and losses of life due to armed conflicts have deprived the individuals in the country to meet their fundamental needs (accommodation, food and safety). Therefore, Syrians preferred the border neighbour Turkey as their initial target of the intense migration flows and Turkey has faced such an intense migration for the first time in the country's history. The Syrian refugees have spread all across Turkey especially to the cities near the border (Agcadağ Çelik, 2019). As a result of the migration movement that started in 2011, the number of asylum-seekers in our country reached 3.696.919 in August 2021. This number corresponds to 4.49% of our total population (Göç İdaresi Genel Müdürlüğü, 2021).

The refugees who are forced to build a new life in the country they arrive by leaving their life in their country behind experience difficulties in finding a job to earn their living, benefit from suitable education opportunities, benefit from health services and get support and experience political problems in these topics (Kardeş and Akman, 2018). In addition to that, refugees cause the multicultural structure of the country with their language, religion, ethnic origin,

race, gender, age, disability and socioeconomic status (APA, 2002) to create a new multicultural environment.

Another multicultural environment is the educational institutions. The Syrian refugees' children in the education age have led Turkey to experience various problems since these children were educated in our country (Boylu and Işık, 2019). Every individual has the right to education according to the UN Declaration of Human Rights, Article 26 (United Nations, 2019). According to this education right of the individuals, equality and multicultural education opportunities must be provided at schools for all the students (Banks, 2013).

Although the related government departments in Turkey take the necessary steps for the Syrian children to benefit from the educational institutions (Demirağ, 2018), there are various reasons for Syrian children not to attend schools. These are problems such as pushing the children to work or begging from young ages due to financial difficulty, the communication problem due to lack of Turkish knowledge of Syrian refugees and lack of Arabic knowledge of teachers, belief to experience bullying, discrimination, prejudice, violence and alienation at school for not knowing Turkish (Gencer, 2017). While the language problems of these children cause communication problems, this also causes educational problems due to a lack of common language perception between the children and their teachers (Başar et al., 2018).

There are studies for teachers' culture sensitivity for teachers helping refugee children to fit into school (Soylu, Kaysılı, & Sever, 2020), teachers' experiences in the educational process with the Syrian children in their class (Agcadağ Celik, 2019; Başar et al., 2018; Erdem, 2017; Gencer, 2017; Taşkın & Erdemli, 2018) in the literature. However, there are only a few studies (Akman, 2020) that investigated teachers' attitudes towards refugee children with multiculturism. In addition to that, this study is conducted because of the need to investigate the attitudes of prospective teachers studying in pre-school teaching and primary school teaching departments which are the basic steps for the education towards refugee children and multicultural education.

Method

This research was carried out according to the correlational survey model, which is one of the quantitative research methods. The correlational survey model is a quantitative approach that includes the use of self-report measures of a carefully selected sample group (Converse, 1987). This model is a flexible approach that can be used to examine a wide variety of fundamental and applied research questions.

Participants

The participants of this research are (prospective primary and preschool teachers) undergraduate students studying at a university in Turkey. The scales used in the research were sent to the prospective teachers online (Google Forms). An information letter was written to the prospective teachers stating that they have the right to withdraw at any stage of the research. All necessary permissions were obtained before the study and ethical rules were complied with. The data of the research were collected in the spring term of 2020-2021. The demographic characteristics of the prospective teachers participating in the research are as in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution for Prospective Teachers'
Defining Properties

Demning 11 operates								
Groups	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)						
Gender								
Male	70	22.3						
Female	244	77.7						
	Program							
Pre-School Teaching	151	48.1						
Primary School Teaching	163	51.9						
	Grade							
2	101	32.2						
3	75	23.9						
4	138 43.9							

For gender, prospective teachers distributed as 70 (22.3%) male and 244 (77.7%) female. For program, prospective teachers distributed as 151 (48.1%) preschool teaching and 163 (51.9%) as primary school

teaching. For class, prospective teachers distributed as 101 (32.2%) as 2nd grade, 75 (23.9%) as 3rd grade and 138 (43.9%) as 4th grade.

Data Collection Tool

In this study, Multicultural Attitude scale developed by Yazıcı, Başol & Toprak (2009) reliability Cronbach's Alpha was found high as 0.752. In this study, Multicultural Attitude for Refugee Students scale developed by Sağlam and İlksen Kanbur (2017) reliability Cronbach's Alpha was found high as 0.927.

Data Statistical Analysis

The data obtained from this study were analysed in the computer environment with SPSS 22.0 statistical program. To identify the defining properties of the participant prospective teachers, frequency and percentage analysis was used while average and standard deviation statistics were used to assess the scale. To determine whether the research variables showed a normal distribution, kurtosis and skewness values were investigated.

Table 2: Normal Distribution of Scales

	N	Kurtosis	Skewness
Attitude Towards Refugee Students General	314	-0.436	-0.084
Communication	314	-0.267	-0.729
Adaptation	314	0.012	0.489
Efficiency	314	-0.473	0.380
Multicultural Attitude Total	314	0.282	-0.116

In the related literature, kurtosis and skewness values for the variable were considered as normal distribution for +1.5 and -1.5 (Tabacknick and Fidell, 2013) and +2.0 and -2.0 (Georgeo and Mallery, 2010). If the variable variance is unknown, t-test is applied; if the main mass does not show a normal distribution, non-parametric tests are applied (Field, 2009, p.42, 45, 345). Due to sufficient level of the sample for large numbers law and central limit theorem, the distribution was assumed as normal and the analyses were applied (Harwiki, 2013, p.879; Inal and Günay, 1993; Johnson and Wichern, 2002).

The relationship between the dimension that determines prospective teachers' scale level was investigated with correlation and regression analysis. Based on prospective teachers' defining properties, t-test, one-way variance analysis (ANOVA) and post-hoc (Turkey, LSD) analyses were applied to investigate the differentiation at scale level. Cohen (d) and Eta square (η 2) coefficients were used to calculate the impact size. The impact size shows whether the difference between the groups were at

significant level. Cohen value is assessed as 0.2: small; 0.5: medium; 0.8: large and Eta square value is assessed as 0.01: small; 0.06: medium; 0.14: large (Büyüköztürk et al., 2018).

Findings

In this part of the research, the tables regarding the data obtained as a result of the analysis and the findings under the tables are given.

Table 3: Score Averages of Scales

	N	Av.	Ss	Min.	Max.	Kurtosis	Skewness	Alpha
Attitude Towards Refugee Students General	314	3.050	0.455	1.920	4.000	-0.436	-0.084	0.000
Communication	314	3.453	0.505	1.910	4.000	-0.267	-0.729	0.000
Adaptation	314	2.727	0.545	1.440	4.000	0.012	0.489	0.000
Efficiency	314	2.673	0.635	1.250	4.000	-0.473	0.380	0.000
Multicultural Attitude Total	314	73.599	7.015	47.000	91.000	0.282	-0.116	0.000

Prospective teachers agree at moderate level 3.050±0.455 to "attitude towards refugee students general", at high level 3.453±3.453 to "communication", at moderate level 2.727±0.545

to "compliance", at moderate level 2.673±0.635 to "competency" and at high level 73.599±7.015 to "multicultural attitude total".

Table 4: Correlation Analysis

		Attitude Towards Refugee Students General	Communication	Adaptation	Efficiency
Multicultural	r	0.335**	0.464**	0.117*	0.196**
Attitude Total	p	0.000	0.000	0.038	0.000

^{*&}lt;0.05; **<0.01; Correlation Analysis

When the correlation analysis between attitude towards refugee students general, communication, adaptation, efficiency, multicultural attitude total scores was investigated there was r=0.335 positive correlation between multicultural attitude total and attitude towards refugee students general (p=0.000<0.05), r=0.464 positive correlation

between multicultural attitude total and communication (p=0.000<0.05), r=0.117 positive correlation between multicultural attitude total and adaptation (p=0.038<0.05) and r=0.196 positive correlation between multicultural attitude total and efficiency (p=0.000<0.05).

Table 5: Effect of Multicultural Attitude on Attitudes Towards Refugee Students

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	ss	t	р	F	Model (p)	R ²
Attitude Towards Defugee	Constant	1.454	5.688	0.000			
Attitude Towards Refugee Students General	Multicultural Attitude Total	0.022	6.270	0.000	39.316	0.000	0.109
	Constant	0.994	3.725	0.000			
Communication	Multicultural Attitude Total	0.033	9.260	0.000	85.754	0.000	0.213

	Constant	2.058	6.365	0.000			
Adaptation	Multicultural Attitude Total	0.009	2.079	0.038	4.321	0.038	0.010
	Constant	1.365	3.675	0.000			
Efficiency	Multicultural Attitude Total	0.018	3.539	0.000	12.528	0.000	0.036

The regression analysis conducted to determine the cause-effect relationship between multicultural total and attitude towards student's general was found significant (F=39.316; p=0.000<0.05). The 10.9% of the total change at attitude towards refugee students' general level was explained by multicultural attitude total (R2=0.109). Multicultural attitude total increased multicultural attitude general level (B=0.022). The regression analysis conducted to determine the cause-effect relationship between multicultural attitude total and communication was found significant (F=85.754; p=0.000<0.05). The 21.3% of the total change at communication level was explained by multicultural attitude total (R2=0.213). Multicultural attitude total increased communication level (B=0.033). The regression analysis conducted to determine

the cause-effect relationship between multicultural attitude total and compliance was found significant (F=4.321; p=0.038<0.05). The 1% of the total change at compliance level was explained by multicultural attitude total (R2=0.010). Multicultural attitude total increased compliance level (β =0.009). The regression analysis conducted to determine the cause-effect relationship between multicultural attitude total and efficiency was found significant (F=12.528; p=0.000<0.05). The 3.6% of the total change at efficiency level was explained by multicultural attitude total (R2=0.036). Multicultural attitude total increased efficiency level (β =0.018).

The analysis results to investigate the differentiation of attitudes towards refugee students' scores for defining properties are given below.

Table 6: Differentiation of Attitude Towards Refugee Students' Scores for Defining Properties

Demographic Properties	n	Attitude Towards Refugee Students General	Communication	Adaptation	Efficiency
Gender		Av±SS	Av±SS	Av±SS	Av±SS
Male	70	3.036±0.496	3.408±0.528	2.716±0.587	2.736±0.693
Female	244	3.055±0.443	3.466±0.498	2.730±0.534	2.655±0.617
t=		-0.294	-0.846	-0.184	0.941
p=		0.769	0.398	0.854	0.347
Program		Av±SS	Av±SS	Av±SS	Av±SS
Preschool Teaching	151	3.093±0.378	3.543±0.418	2.723±0.467	2.687±0.621
Primary School Teaching	163	3.011±0.514	3.369±0.562	2.730±0.611	2.660±0.649
t=		1.590	3.090	-0.121	0.384
p=		0.109	0.002	0.903	0.701
Grade		Av±SS	Av±SS	Av±SS	Av±SS
2	101	2.991±0.494	3.383±0.525	2.670±0.557	2.634±0.668
3	75	3.028±0.473	3.389±0.549	2.759±0.595	2.643±0.593
4	138	3.106±0.409	3.539±0.452	2.750±0.509	2.717±0.633
F=		2.019	3.642	0.803	0.612
p=		0.134	0.027	0.449	0.543
PostHoc=			3>1, 3>2 (p<0.05)		

There was no significant difference for prospective teachers' attitudes towards refugee students general, communication, compliance, competence scores for gender (p>0.05). Preschool teaching department's communication scores (x=3.543) were found higher than primary teaching department's communication scores (x=3.369) (t=3,090; p=0,002<0.05; d=0.349; η2=0.030). There was no significant difference prospective teachers' attitudes refugee students general. Prospective teachers' communication scores showed significant difference for grade (F=3.642; p=0,027<0.05; η 2=0.023). The reason for that is the prospective teachers in the 4th grade has higher communication scores than the communication scores of prospective teachers in the 2nd grade (p<0.05). The prospective teachers in the 4th grade have higher communication scores than the communication scores of prospective teachers in the 3rd grade (p<0.05). There was no significant difference for prospective teachers' attitudes towards refugee students general, adaptation, competence scores for grade (p>0.05).

The analysis results to investigate the differentiation of multicultural attitude scores for defining properties are given below.

Table 7: Differentiation of Multicultural Attitude Scores for Defining Properties

Demographic	n	Multicultural
Properties		Attitude Total
Gender		Av±SS
Male	70	72.186±7.068
Female	244	74.004±6.961
t=		-1.920
p=		0.056
Program		Av±SS
Preschool Teaching	151	74.907±6.800
Primary School Teaching	163	72.387±7.013
t=		3.229
p=		0.001
Grade		Av±SS
2	101	73.000±7.077
3	75	72.893±7.214
4	138	74.420±6.822

F=	1.701
p=	0.184

Prospective teachers' multicultural attitude total scores showed no significant difference for gender (p>0.05). Prospective preschool teachers' multicultural attitude total scores (x=74.907) were found higher than primary teaching department's multicultural attitude total scores (x=72.387) (t=3,229; p=0,001<0.05; d=0.365; η 2=0.032). Prospective teachers' multicultural attitude total scores showed no significant difference for grade (p>0.05).

Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

When the correlation analyzes between the total scores of attitude towards refugee students, communication, adaptation, efficiency, multicultural attitude are examined; a moderately positive correlation was found between multicultural attitude total and general attitude towards refugee students, moderately positive correlation between multicultural attitude total and communication. low positive correlation between multicultural attitude total and adaptation, and low level positive correlation between multicultural attitude total and efficiency. Multicultural attitude increases the overall attitude towards total refugee students, total communication, total adaptation and total efficiency.

The communication scores of the prosepective pre-school teachers for refugee students were found to be higher than the prospective primary school teachers. Prospective pre-school teachers' multicultural attitude total scores were found to be higher than primary school teacher candidates. It can be argued that this difference in communication and multicultural attitude dimensions scores is due to the fact that preschool teachers interact more with the family during their professional processes. When the grades are examined according to their levels, the communication scores of the prospective teacher who continue their education in the 4th grade are higher than the prospective teachers who continue their education in the 2nd and 3rd grades. It can be said that the Teaching Practice course that the prospective teachers attend in the 4th grade has an effect on this situation.

In the rapidly globalizing world, the borders between countries are becoming blurred and people from different cultures interact with increasing communication opportunities. As in every field, the effects of globalization are felt in education as well. Now students and teachers are not limited to their own countries, but can participate in educational activities all over the world. This situation requires educators to approach the concept of multicultural education positively, which is defined as being respectful and tolerant to different cultures in order to provide equal opportunities in education without discrimination. In the study, it was determined that teachers who teach Turkish to Syrian immigrants have positive attitudes towards multicultural education (Karacabey et al., 2019).

In a study, it was determined that teachers have a high level of knowledge about multicultural education. It is predicted that the high level of knowledge of teachers on this subject will contribute to more effective multicultural classroom practices. In the study, it was determined that teachers' attitudes towards cultural differences and their views on the necessity of multicultural education were positive (Yıldırım & Tezci, 2020).

Studies show that multicultural education practices are also important for children's anti-immigrant attitudes. Another important finding of a study in this direction is that teacher quality affects children's anti-immigrant attitudes (Hjerm et al., 2018).

In a study examining teachers' views on multiculturalism, it was determined that all teachers working in various schools had a very positive attitude towards multiculturalism. Based on this result, it was stated that teachers accepted and gave importance to multicultural education (Karatas, 2015).

In a study on how assimilating teachers' attitudes are, and how pluralistic they perceive the school climate and school policy, the lowest burnout levels are seen in pluralistic teachers working in pluralistic environments (Dubbeld et al., 2019).

The findings of another study show that the multicultural education attitudes of the participants are positive. In the study, it was determined that the multicultural education average score of the

teachers with low seniority was relatively higher than the other groups. This finding was interpreted as relatively young teachers were more tolerant of multiculturalism (Özdemir & Dil, 2013).

In a study, most of the teachers interviewed stated that different teaching methods should be used for student groups from different cultures. Teachers also stated that in order to bring school and classroom environments to a level where multicultural education can be applied appropriately, a transformation study should be carried out that covers every aspect of the school, from the school principal to the student portfolio (Tonbuloglu et al., 2016).

In a study in which prospective teachers' views on multicultural education were analyzed, the results reveal that prospective teachers' views on multicultural education are positive. Studies conducted both in Turkey and in the world reveal that teachers and teacher candidates have a positive perspective on multicultural education. However, in multicultural education, it is important to transform multicultural awareness, knowledge and skills into behavior rather than having positive views and attitudes (Demir & Basarır, 2013).

Many contemporary countries today experience multiculturalism. The progress of these societies can only be possible by including multiculturalism in education policy. Multiculturalism in education, democratization, respect for law and human rights and freedoms is the result of the technological, economic and cultural connection of the globalization process between societies. Many countries in the world have become multicultural. Every culture has its own characteristics that should be respected. Multiculturalism is a potential treasure for all societies. The aim of multicultural education is to raise individuals who value broad-mindedness and multicultural identity, respect cultural diversity and appreciate the achievements of other social groups. Multicultural education represents the future life perspective of humanity and continues to be among the main goals of education all over the world (Barakoska, 2013).

In the light of the results obtained, it can be said that multicultural education should have certain characteristics. Multicultural education should have an education program that can transform all members of the society into socially active members. In this curriculum, cultural learning styles should be a part of the learning environment in the classroom. Values, attitudes and behaviors that support ethnic pluralism should be promoted. It should support all students to develop a sense of citizenship. In addition, multicultural education should be made an indispensable part of the education program as a whole (Meyer & Rhoades, 2006).

In a well-developed multicultural education, it should be tried to ensure that prospective teachers' awareness, attitudes and behaviors towards all students in cultural diversity are egalitarian. It is important to make conscious planning so that teachers are prepared to work with students with different cultural characteristics, both individually and professionally. With this type of training, teachers will be able to work towards creating social arrangements that promote equality in multicultural pedagogy in school and out-of-school settings (Alismail, 2016).

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