Preservice Teachers' Intercultural Competence: A Comparative Study of Teachers in Switzerland and Turkey

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Abstract

Problem Statement: Every society consists of individuals different in terms of physical, psychological, and sociocultural characteristics. Differentiation in today's societies has increased due to globalization, intensified immigration, advancements in communication technologies, and the recent increase in value of subcultures within the dominant culture. Consequently, human communities that maintain different characteristics together have brought about the concept of multicultural societies. Within these societies, teachers play the principle role in maintaining the multicultural environment and managing its processes. Since teachers' successful implementation of these tasks depends on their level of intercultural competence, today's teachers should develop their intercultural competence.

Purpose of Study: The present study aims to determine the intercultural competence levels of preservice teachers from Switzerland and Turkey.

Methods: A descriptive survey model was used as the chief research approach. The study sample comprised 185 preservice teachers, 84 of whom were from Switzerland and 101 of whom were from Turkey. Data were collected by means of the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire and a personal information form.

Findings and Results: The intercultural competence levels of preservice teachers from Switzerland and Turkey were found to be middling. Preservice teachers perceived themselves to be the most competent in the dimension of 'cultural empathy,' which was followed by 'open-mindedness,' 'social initiative,' 'flexibility,' and 'emotional stability,'

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respectively. The variable of preservice teachers' university showed significant difference regarding the self-perception of intercultural competence. By culture, results revealed that preservice teachers from Switzerland had higher intercultural competence than those from Turkey, though such competence did not show significant differences according to gender and department.

Conclusions and Recommendations: The variable of nationality significant differed in preservice teachers' perceptions of intercultural competence. In Switzerland, whose preservice teachers' perceptions of such competence were higher, teacher training curricula include courses on multiculturalism and intercultural education, while in Turkey such courses are not offered even as electives. Understanding multiculturalism necessitates the renewal of preservice and in-service teacher training programs. Teacher training should align with international standards and topics, and include a systematic approach to promote intercultural competence.

Keywords: Intercultural competence, preservice teachers, intercultural education, multiculturalism

This study aims to compare the intercultural competence of preservice teachers from two countries whose national cultures, experiences with multiculturalism, and teacher training programs differ significantly.

For societies, one of the greatest challenges in the process of civilization is coming to terms with how their lifestyles, traditions, behaviors, and ideas culturally differ from those of other societies. In research, social scientists have studied distinctive cultural differences and sought to account for these differences within the systematic thinking of their fields. According to social scientists, cultural differences result from the idea of national spirit or ethos (e.g., the German spirit, American ethos), physical environment and living conditions (e.g., Eskimo culture, African culture, Mediterranean culture), social organization (e.g., urban culture, kinship system culture), religious beliefs, and economic relations, among others.

As a result, multicultural societies emerge (Çüçen, 2005). A multicultural society comprises two or more cultural categories within social structure categories of gender, nationality, social class, religion/sect, language, and sexual orientation, among other exceptional features (Banks & Banks, 2007; Parekh, 2000). In multicultural societies, complex, similar, and different cultural understandings based on cultural complexity are common. These cultural understandings are shaped by various factors such as age, gender, nationality, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, religious identity, sexual behavior, education, and history (Clark, 2003). Globalization, technology, and the rapid development of communication in the late 20th and early 21st century, as well as large migrations caused by economic and sociological reasons, have resulted in the formation of multicultural societies through the sustained interaction of similar but sometimes very different cultures (Kostova, 2009).

Switzerland, or more formally the Swiss Confederation, occupies a land area of over 41,000 thousand km2, a population of 7.4 million, and a population density of 182 people per square kilometer (Federal Statistical Office, 2010). The country is a federation with 24 cantons that, as prescribed by federal constitutional law, has been governed by direct democracy since 1848. The country has four official languages—French, German, Italian, and Romansh—all of which are equally recognized (Federal Constitution of the Swiss Confederation, Articles 1–4, 1999). All Swiss citizens must learn an official language of Switzerland other than their mother tongue; hence nearly all Swiss citizens are bilingual, at least. The country admits immigrants from nearly every country in the world. These immigrants also use their own mother tongues in their daily lives. Foreigners living in the country and temporary worker foreigners comprise 22% of the overall population. Although Switzerland does not have an official religion, the majority of the population is Christian (Catholic 44%, Protestant 35.2%). Muslims (4.3%) and Orthodox Christians (1.8%) are typically immigrants. The remaining percentage includes atheists and followers of various other religions (Federal Statistical Office, 2010).

Turkey is situated as a bridge between Asia, Europe, and Africa. It has an area of 783,562 km2, a population of over 73 million, and a population density of 93 people per square kilometer (Turkish Statistical Institute, 2011). The country has been governed by representative democracy since its establishment in 1923. Turkey, or formally the Republic of Turkey, is a unitary country with 81 cities. The only official language is Turkish (Constitution of the Turkish Republic, 1982), though many languages are also spoken in daily life, including Abkhazian, Albanian, Arabic, Armenian, Azerbaijani, Bosnian, Circassian, Georgian, Kurdish, Laz, Romaic, Syriac, and Zazaki. Though many Turkish citizens are ethnically Turkish, Armenians, Greeks, and Jewish people are recognized minorities. Albanians, Arabs, Assyrians, Azerbaijanis, Bosnians, Chaldeans, Circassians, Georgians, Kurds, Laz people, and Zazas also live in Turkey but are not recognized minorities (Önder, 2006; Şener, 2004). Since Turkey is secular, it does not have an official religion, though many Turkish citizens are Muslim. Most of these Muslims are Sunni Hanafi, while Alawites form the second largest Muslim subset. Atheists, Christians, and Jews constitute very little of the population (Kayabaş & Kütküt, 2011; Önder, 2006; Şener, 2004). Given the above diversity within their national borders, it is clear that both Switzerland and Turkey are multicultural countries.

As a result of recent development in democracy, assimilation policies that try to standardize social differences have tended to give way to policies that recognize and support cultural diversity (Banting et al., 2006). Examples of policies that recognize cultural diversity are clear in the educational policies of multiculturalist and intercultural education. Multicultural politics support a positive attitude toward cultural diversity with the belief that many groups with different characteristics can coexist (Arends–Toth & van de Vijver, 2002). In the last quarter of the 20th century, countries from Western Europe have therefore begun to take intercultural education into consideration in order to increase the general awareness and acceptance of different cultures in their societies (Leeman, 2003). This understanding has also

affected teacher training programs. Switzerland is among these countries that have accepted multiculturalism in their societies.

Turkey also began to make reforms while adapting as member of the European Union. In 2005, primary education programs were renewed that reflected an understanding of multiculturalism and intercultural education. Though Turkey is still implementing reforms in line with multiculturalism and intercultural education, both aspects have recently gained importance. These policy reforms have also inspired different expectations from teachers and shifted the roles they must play. It is necessary to develop the multicultural competence of practitioners in order to put these reforms into practice.

Geert Hofstede (1980) developed a theoretical model using factor analysis to examine the results of a worldwide survey of employee values at IBM in the 1960s and 1970s. The model was one of the first to produce quantifiable results to explain observed differences among cultures. Along which cultural values, Hofstede's theory proposed four dimensions that could be analyzed: individualism–collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance (i.e., strength of social hierarchy), and masculinity–femininity (i.e., task orientation versus person-orientation). According to Hofstede's (1984) classification, Switzerland and Turkey report the following points for each dimension: individualism–collectivism (Switzerland 68, Turkey 37), uncertainty avoidance (Switzerland 58, Turkey 85), power distance (Switzerland 34, Turkey 66), and masculinity–femininity (Switzerland 70, Turkey 45). As can be seen, there is a significant difference between these points in the Swiss and Turkish cases. Every country has its own cultural characteristics, which influence their educational systems.

Individuals develop within cultures in which no individual acts independently of his or her culture (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2000). Culture can be defined as either a whole encompassing a group's survival and compatibility program (Banks & Banks, 2007) or, according to Kafesoğlu (1984), a society's spiritual values that shape its philosophy and the technology that emerges in the world as the reflection of these spiritual powers (cited in Arslanoğlu, 2000). As emphasized in these definitions, each society has a different culture. However, within a given society, individuals develop different cultures within their own groups on the basis of previous experiences, geographical region, economic activities, and socioeconomic status. From a multiculturalist perspective, the effectiveness of individuals in another culture depends on their interest in other cultures, sensitivity to cultural differences, and ability to reshape their behaviors to show respect to and for people from other cultures (Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992).

The role of intercultural relations is considerably high both in global and local terms. Human mobility at the global and local levels facilitates, if not makes inevitable, interpersonal communication (Kealey, 1989). In a world where boundaries are diminishing, conditions requiring human groups to live together are expected. Consequently, recognizing different countries' cultures to actualize mutual understanding and harmony has become increasingly important. In this respect, understanding and tolerating people from different cultures, as well as

acknowledging others' differences, are significant for intercultural acceptance (Unutkan, 2007). People need to respect and tolerate differences and adopt a "multiperspective philosophy strategy" by considering other individuals' perspectives apart from their own in order for different cultures to exist together in harmony (Fritz, Möllenberg, & Chen, 2002).

Differences sometimes lead to problems in interpersonal relationships and communication (Loosemore & Al Muslmani, 1999). The lack of recognition arising from cultural differences in societies results in prejudice toward other cultural groups and their members (Dong, Day, & Collaço, 2008). Countries have to maintain harmony for individuals with different characteristics regarding a multitude of issues, including nationality, religion, ethnicity, culture, education, age, gender, experience, values, and perceptions (McMahan et al., 1998). People must possess intercultural competence to cope with intercultural problems, (Dong et al., 2008) and be trained regarding intercultural awareness and competence to be competent in intercultural communication (Chen & Starosta, 1996; Leeman, 2003; Loosemore & Al Muslmani, 1999). Therefore, the educational system should help individuals to adapt to the world with increasing cultural variety, to live in harmony with other members of the society, and to recognize and tolerate other cultures (Cırık, 2008). The educational approach whereby such information and skills are acquired is called 'intercultural education' (Leeman, 2003).

Intercultural education is the reflection of educational policies and school practices through meeting the different educational expectations of the society in order to reduce prejudice, identity conflict, and power disputes in societies where ethnic, linguistic, religious, and sexual differences exist (Banks, 1999; Banks, 2009). Intercultural education assures a mixed-school approach based on an educational approach of democratic values in order to promote multiculturalism (Bennett, 2003). According to Fase (1994), the chief aim of intercultural education is to teach students to live together in a society with cultural variety (Leeman, 2003). Intercultural education is based on cooperative learning and dialog (Batelaan & van Hoof, 1996). Teachers have the principal role in the maintenance of this environment and its processes. Teachers' successful implementation of these tasks depends on their level of intercultural competence.

Spindler and Spindler (1993) state that the individual experiences and sociocultural status of teachers determine their teaching behaviors. Candidate teachers who receive courses on multiculturalism might develop an understanding of basic concepts that can influence their attitudes in the future, which would in turn affect students' academic performance (Delpit, 1996; Howard & del Rosario, 2000). An analysis of the High Pedagogical School Fribourg (Switzerland) Teacher Education Program has revealed that some of program's courses are directly related to multiculturalism and intercultural education (Diversité et pluralité, education interculturelle), while supplementary related content is implicitly promoted in other courses. At the Faculty of Education at Kocaeli University (Turkey), teacher education program does not offer courses directly related to multiculturalism and intercultural education, but the content related to multiculturalism and intercultural

education is implicitly promoted in other courses. It is considered that this difference in teacher education programs might differentiate the cultural competence levels of teachers in two different countries.

Societies with different cultures need multicultural education practices in order to assist individual development and equip these individuals with multi-perspective ways of thinking. In order for multicultural education to succeed, teachers are expected to be skilled in creating a welcoming atmosphere, instructing topics of student differences, raising students' potentials to the maximum, and forming a democratic environment for students with different languages, religions, ethnicities, and socioeconomic statuses (Bennett, 2003). For this reason, today's teachers should develop their intercultural competence.

The key role in intercultural education belongs to the teacher, who will implement the educational program, evaluate learning, and both choose and use appropriate methods, techniques, and learning tools. Hence, it is essential for teachers to be equipped with intercultural competence. Studies of both university students (Sultana, 1994) and preservice teachers (Neuharth–Pritchett, Reiff, & Pearson, 2001) have demonstrated that information regarding the outcomes of multicultural education is unsatisfactory.

In multicultural societies, a certain level of intercultural competence is essential for effective communication among individuals. Currently, since even the farthest distances have become nearer and intertwined, individuals from each society and culture encounter situations in which they communicate with each other. As the relationships among societies increase, effective mutual communication becomes more important. A natural consequence of this is that individuals' intercultural competence must be raised in order for mutual communication to be maintained effectively (Altundağ, 2007).

Intercultural competence refers to the craft of forming intercultural links, internal as well as external, to a society and evaluating each link on the basis of one another, be it on behalf of the individual or others. This type of competence also incorporates the ability to acknowledge that perspectives vary between cultures within the scope of critical and rational interpretations (Byram, 2000).

Intercultural competence constitutes several interactive dimensions. Byram (2000) posits that attitude, knowledge, interpretation, and the abilities to relate, explore, and communicate skills in addition to a critical awareness of culture or political education constitute intercultural competence. Somewhat similarly, the present study views intercultural competence as an ability to deal with people from different cultures in a respectful way, view and perceive cultural distinctions, and acknowledge them and react accordingly, both in spoken and behavioral terms. This type of competence also encompasses awareness, maintenance, and the advancement of one's local cultural values (Luka, 2009). As such, in this study, intercultural competence comprises five dimensions: cultural empathy, open-mindedness, social initiative, emotional stability, and flexibility (van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2000; van Oudenhoven & van der Zee, 2002; van der Zee, Zaal, & Piekstra, 2003).

Cultural empathy is related to the recognition of the behaviors, ideas, and emotions of individuals from different cultural histories (van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2000; Leone, et al., 2005). Ruben (1976) defined cultural empathy as "the capacity to clearly project an interest in others, as well as to obtain and to reflect a reasonably complete and accurate sense of another's thoughts, feelings, and/or experiences". Cultural empathy can be defined as 'reading' other cultures (van der Zee, Zaal, & Piekstra, 2003). The ability of cultural empathy means one's competence reflecting his understanding of the emotional states of people in the target culture, therefore the psychological barriers of the target culture can be decreased. The ability of cultural empathy is important for coping with cultural problems adequately, effectively and satisfactorily. Cultural empathy does not mean to cast aside one's native culture, but a rational understanding and acceptance of the cultural differences shown in the target culture (Zhu, 2011). In order for individuals to work effectively with people from other cultures, they need to understand these cultures in the right way. Individuals who have high degrees of cultural empathy can understand and differentiate behaviors, ideas, and emotions of other groups, while individuals with low cultural empathy have difficulty identifying behaviors, ideas, and emotions of groups with different cultural histories (van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2000; van der Zee, Zaal, & Piekstra, 2003; van Oudenhoven & van der Zee, 2002).

Open-mindedness refers to people's lack of prejudice and openness to communication when they encounter people outside of their own cultural group. Like cultural empathy, open-mindedness is considered significant to understanding other cultures' values and rules and coping with them (Leone, et al., 2005). Being open-minded helps individuals be curious about others and open-minded people are willing to listen others. Also open-minded people have interest in cultural differences (Callen, 2008). Open-mindedness is of great importance for encountering new values of target culture (Williams, 2009). Individuals with high levels of open-mindedness act without prejudice toward other groups and are open to new opinions, whereas individuals with low open-mindedness act with prejudice toward other individuals and groups (van Oudenhoven & van der Zee, 2002; van der Zee, Zaal, & Piekstra, 2003).

Social initiative signifies an individual's effective handling of social situations and tendency to initiate social interaction. Individuals with these skills are expected to communicate with and befriend individuals from other cultures easily (Leone, et al., 2005). Social initiative is significant for intercultural competence, because intercultural competence is supported by social initiative (Bisballe, 2006). Individuals with high social initiative tend to be active in taking responsibility and are extroverted when it comes to other cultures, while individuals with low social initiative tend to be less responsible and prefer to stay in the background (van Oudenhoven & van der Zee, 2002; Leone, et al., 2005).

Emotional stability refers to an individual's state of preserving his or her emotional dignity and calmness during conflicts and other situations made stressful due to cultural differences(van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2000; van Oudenhoven

& van der Zee, 2002). In other words, emotional stability is a person's ability to cope with negative emotions and anxiety (Costa & McCrae, 1992).When working in and/or with another culture, it is important to cope with emotional and psychological situations (van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2000; van Oudenhoven & van der Zee, 2002; Leone, et al., 2005). Various factors (e.g., political system, operations, lack of meaning and resources, setbacks) may prevent individuals from working in and/or with other cultures similar to how they work in their own cultures. When the lives of individuals in other cultures do not occur as in their own culture, the situation may lead to tension, aggression, anxiety, social isolation, economic problems, and personal conflicts. Individuals who can preserve their emotional stability in such cases tend to stay calm and collected in stressful situations (van Oudenhoven & van der Zee, 2002; van der Zee, Zaal, & Piekstra, 2003), and they are capable of withstanding delays in satisfaction of needs, coping with an acceptable amount of frustration. Also they can make long term plans and revise his/her expectations in terms of demands of the situations (Aleem, 2005). However, individuals who cannot preserve their emotional balance may exhibit severe emotional reactions toward stress (van Oudenhoven & van der Zee, 2002; van der Zee, Zaal, & Piekstra, 2003).

Flexibility is defined as the willingness to value and move across different cultural and social peer groups and environments (Carter, 2010). Flexibility refers to a person's ability to adapt to new and unknown situations. When working in and/or with another culture, the individual should be able to change his or her strategy since behaviors may not always work in the new environment (van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2000; Leone, et al., 2005). Flexibility is regarded as an important ability for individuals' successful adaptation (Yamazaki & Kayes, 2004). Individuals with high flexibility can cope with new and unknown situations and adapt to unexpected situations in other cultures. By contrast, individuals who are not flexible enough can perceive new and different situations to be dangerous; since they tend to choose familiar and trustworthy behaviors, they have difficulty adapting to unexpected situations (van Oudenhoven & van der Zee, 2002; van der Zee, Zaal, & Piekstra, 2003).

Method

Research Design

The present study is a comparative descriptive study that aims to determine the intercultural competence of preservice teachers from Switzerland and Turkey. A descriptive survey model was used as this study's main research approach.

Research Sample

The study population comprised students (N = 780 students) from the High Pedagogical School Fribourg (n = 300 students) in Fribourg canton of Switzerland and primary and preschool education department students (n = 480) from Kocaeli University's Faculty of Education in Turkey.xxx

The High Pedagogical School Fribourg, at which periods of study last 3 years, includes two departments: PS1 and PS2. Students who will be teaching preschool (preschool grades 1–3) and the first stage of the primary school (grades 1–2) attend PS1, while preservice teachers to teach stages 2 and 3 (grades 3–6) attend PS2. The School of Pedagogy gives instruction in two languages: French and German. The study population included preservice teachers from the French section only. Each year, approximately 100 students enroll in this school in order to receive education in French. The total number of students studying in this school in French is 300. There are seven departments in Kocaeli University's Faculty of Education, at which periods of study last 4 years. Only students from preschool and primary education departments were included in this study. The number of students studying preschool education is 160, while the number of students studying primary education is 320.

Purposive sampling was used to choose the sample of the study, because the development of intercultural competence is acquired by at the end of the educational process and for this reason, students in their final year at each school were included in the sample. In the PS1 and PS2 departments of the High Pedagogical School Fribourg, 84 preservice teachers were studying in their final year, while 101 preservice teachers were studying at the primary school and preschool education departments of Kocaeli University's Faculty of Education. In sum, the study sample included 185 teacher candidates.

Research Instruments and Procedures

Questionnaire (MPQ) (van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2000; van der Zee, et al., 2003; van Oudenhoven & van der Zee, 2002) was used as a data collection instrument. The MPQ comprises five dimensions: cultural empathy, open-mindedness, social initiative, emotional stability, and flexibility. The original instrument contains 91 items: 20 items regarding emotional stability, 17 items regarding social stability, and 18 items each regarding flexibility, cultural empathy, and open-mindedness. However, many researchers, including the instrument developers, have eliminated some items in order to use them for measurement in different studies. The adaptation of the instrument into Turkish was performed by Polat (2009).

For factor analysis, the items found to be in dimensions different from those of the original instrument were excluded. Thus, 33 items of the questionnaire were used, 11 of which measure cultural empathy, while six measure social initiative, seven measure emotional stability, five measure open-mindedness, and four measure flexibility. The overall alpha reliability coefficient of the intercultural personality scale was found to be 0.82; the reliability coefficients of the dimensions were calculated to be 0.87 for cultural empathy, 0.73 for social initiative, 0.65 for emotional stability, 0.66 for open-mindedness, and 0.67 for flexibility.

The data collection instruments were prepared in two versions: French and Turkish. During the preparation of the French form, native speakers of French (i.e., Erasmus students at Kocaeli University studying intensive Turkish at the time of the

study) were consulted and asked to translate the instrument from English to French. In addition, both the original English and French versions were sent to University of Fribourg's Educational Sciences Department, where its appropriateness to Swiss French was ensured. The compatibly of the two data collection instruments were confirmed by a French instructor working at Kocaeli University, and the data collection instruments were finalized. The Likert-type scale ranged from 1 to 5, where 1 = definitely disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = undecided, 4 = agree, and 5 = definitely agree.

Data were collected via the Internet. The students at the High Pedagogical School Fribourg and Kocaeli University's Faculty of Education were each sent an email requesting that they complete the form provided by a link to the database within the specified period. In sum, 84 students from the High Pedagogical School Fribourg and 101 students from Kocaeli University's Faculty of Education submitted completed forms, thus data collected from 185 students were processed.

Data Analysis

In order to identify the preservice teachers' intercultural competence, the arithmetic means were calculated. Meanwhile, in order to determine whether intercultural competence and its dimensions varied according to the variables of nationality, gender, and department, a t test was carried out. When interpreting the arithmetic means, the interval 1.00–1.79 was evaluated to be 'very low,' 1.80–2.59 to be 'low,' 2.60–3.39 to be 'middling,' 3.40-4.19 to be 'high,' and 4.20–5.00 to be 'very high.'

Results

The arithmetic mean and t test results related to perception of intercultural competence and its dimensions by preservice teachers from Switzerland and Turkey are provided in Table 1. The preservice teachers from Turkey and Switzerland perceived their intercultural awareness to be middling (M = 3.59). The dimension in which preservice teachers perceived themselves to be most effective cultural empathy, followed by open-mindedness (M = 3.62), social initiative (M = 3.55), flexibility, (M = 3.36) and emotional stability (M = 2.98).

Table 1

Preservice Teachers' Self-Perception of Intercultural Competence.

Intercultural competence and dimensions	N	M	SD
Cultural empathy	185	4.07	.34
Open-mindedness	185	3.62	.56
Social initiative	185	3.55	.62
Flexibility	185	3.36	.67
Emotional stability	185	2.98	.52
Intercultural competence	185	3.59	.29

As shown in Table 2, a significant difference was observed in the perceptions of intercultural competence according to country (t = -4,547, p < 0.01). The intercultural

competence levels of preservice teachers from Switzerland (M = 3.69) were higher than those of preservice teachers from Turkey (M=3.50).

Table 2

The Intercultural Awareness Perception Levels of Preservice Teachers From Switzerland and Turkey.

Intercultural competence and dimensions	Country variable	N	M	SD	t	p
Cultural empathy	Kocaeli University	101	3.91	.18	-8.003	.00
	High Pedagogical School Fribourg	84	4.25	.38		
Emotional stability	Kocaeli University	101	2.99	.50	.129	.90
	High Pedagogical School Fribourg	84	2.98	.55		
Flexibility	Kocaeli University	101	3.36	.57	.111	.91
	High Pedagogical School Fribourg	84	3.35	.77		
Open-mindedness	Kocaeli University	101	3.58	.47	-1.051	.29
	High Pedagogical School Fribourg	84	3.67	.65		
Social initiative	Kocaeli University	101	3.39	.57	-3.951	.00
	High Pedagogical School Fribourg	84	3.74	.63		
Intercultural competence	Kocaeli University	101	3.50	.24	-4.547	.00
	High Pedagogical School Fribourg	84	3.69	.32		

In order to test whether the variable of university made a difference in perceptions of the dimensions of intercultural competence, a t test was conducted. According to t test results, the university made a significant difference in the dimensions of cultural empathy (t = -8.003, p < 0.01) and social initiative (t = -3.951, p < 0.01); while it did not yield a significant difference in the dimensions of emotional stability (t = .129, p > 0.05), flexibility (t = 0.111, p > 0.05) and open-mindedness (t = -1.051, p > 0.05). In the dimension of cultural empathy, preservice teachers from Switzerland (M = 4.25) had higher perceptions than those from Turkey (M = 3.91). A similar situation was clear regarding the dimension of social initiative, since these levels of preservice teachers from Switzerland (M = 3.74) were higher than those from Turkey (M = 3.39).

Table 3

The Preservice Teachers' Perception of Intercultural Competence According to Gender.

Intercultural competence and dimensions	Gender	N	M	SD	t	p
Cultural empathy	Male	32	4.05	.28	-.368	.71
	Female	151	4.07	.35		
Emotional stability	Male	32	3.18	.51	2.457	.02
	Female	151	2.94	.52		
Flexibility	Male	32	3.45	.67	.610	.54
	Female	151	3.35	.67		
Open-mindedness	Male	32	3.62	.58	.008	.99
	Female	151	3.62	.56		
Social initiative	Male	32	4.05	.62	-.566	.57
	Female	151	4.07	.62		
Intercultural competence	Male	32	3.62	.31	.719	.47
	Female	151	3.58	.29		

The variable of gender did not show any significant difference in the cultural competence of preservice teachers (t = 0.729, p > 0.05). However, in the dimension of emotional stability, gender created a significant difference (t = 2.457, p < 0.05); the emotional stability perceptions of men preservice teachers (M = 3.18) were found to be higher than those of women preservice teachers (M = 2.94).

Table 4

The Preservice Teachers' Intercultural Competence Levels According to Department.

Intercultural competence and dimensions	Department	N	M	SD	t	p
Cultural empathy	Pre-school education	35	3.94	.21	.791	.43
	Primary education	68	3.91	.19		
Emotional stability	Pre-school education	35	2.83	.46	-2.376	.02
	Primary education	68	3.07	.49		
Flexibility	Pre-school education	35	3.36	.56	.048	.96
	Primary education	68	3.35	.59		
Open-mindedness	Pre-school education	35	3.53	.50	-.649	.52
	Primary education	68	3.60	.48		
Social initiative	Pre-school education	35	3.42	.54	.306	.76
	Primary education	68	3.38	.59		
Intercultural competence	Pre-school education	35	3.48	.26	-.802	.42
	Primary education	68	3.52	.25		

The variable of department also did not reveal any significant difference concerning perceptions of intercultural competence (t = -0.802, p > 0.05). However,

the perceptions of emotional stability of preservice teachers studying in the primary education department (M = 3.07) were found to be significantly higher than those of preschool education students (M = 2.83) (t = 2.376, p < 0.05).

Discussion and Conclusion

According to Cogan and Pederson (2001), the 21st-century teacher should possess a perspective of multiculturalism and its competencies. Teachers with this philosophy should be tolerate and be flexible with different lifestyles, respect other citizens' rights, and display a strong position against discrimination (Spiecker & Steutel, 2001).

The intercultural competence of preservice teachers from Turkey and Switzerland were found to be middling. Preservice teachers perceived themselves to be the most competent in the cultural empathy dimension of intercultural competence, which was followed by open-mindedness, social initiative, flexibility, and emotional stability, respectively. As clear from these results, teacher training programs should be investigated in terms of intercultural education. Teacher training should align with international standards and topics, and cultural differences should be considered in a systematic approach. Thus, prospective teachers will enable the learning of intercultural differences, as well as related details (Lappan & Le, 2002).

The variable of nationality created a significant difference in preservice teachers' perception levels of intercultural competence. It was found that preservice teachers from Switzerland had higher intercultural competence than those from Turkey. The variable of university revealed a significant difference in the dimensions of cultural empathy and social initiative, though it did not create a significant difference in the dimensions of emotional stability, flexibility, and open-mindedness. As for cultural empathy, preservice teachers from Switzerland had higher levels of perception than those from Turkey, and similarly, the social initiative of preservice teachers from Switzerland was found to be higher than those from Turkey. This difference may stem from the different styles of government, social structures, and/or intercultural environments in which preservice teachers live, as well as the teacher education programs of the two countries.

In analysis, it was observed that Switzerland's High Pedagogical School Fribourg Teacher Education Program offers courses directly related to multiculturalism and intercultural education (Diversité et pluralité, education interculturelle), as well as offers related content in other courses within the scope of its hidden curriculum. Kocaeli University's Faculty of Education teacher training program, by contrast, does not offer any courses directly related to multiculturalism and intercultural education, though related content is covered in education courses in its hidden curriculum. Also, the curricula in Turkey do not sufficiently emphasize intercultural education (Cırık, 2008). As Arslan (2009) reported, the Turkish education system does not place importance on cultural differences, and its curricula and textbooks do not reflect a philosophy of intercultural education. The fact that such a philosophy has not developed in Turkey's education system might explain why intercultural competence levels of preservice teachers from Switzerland are higher.

Understanding multiculturalism necessitates the renewal of preservice and in-service teacher training programs (Cogan & Morris, 2001). Theorists of

multiculturalism recommend that variety be the primary theme for preservice teachers and course with primary multicultural content be offered as compulsory courses instead of as electives (Nieto, 2000; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Zeichner, 1993). In the teacher training curricula of Switzerland, there are courses on multiculturalism and intercultural education, while in Turkey no such courses are provided—even as electives. However, given the importance of multicultural education, its effects on teacher training programs are increasing. By comparison, for the majority of US education faculties, multicultural education courses have become compulsory (Larke & Larke, 2009).

Though gender did not reveal any significant difference in terms of perceptions of intercultural competence, gender did exhibit a significant difference regarding the dimension of emotional stability. Moreover, men preservice teachers were found to be more competent than women preservice teachers regarding the dimension of emotional stability.

Though the department of preservice teachers also did not show any significant difference in terms of the perception of intercultural competence, preservice teachers in primary education departments were found to be more competent in the dimension of emotional stability compared to preschool education students.

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Öğretmen Adaylarının Kültürlerarası Yeterlik Düzeyleri: İsviçre ve Türkiye Uluslarında Karşılaştırmalı Bir Çalışma

Atıf:

Özet

Problem Durumu: Çok kültürlü toplum; cinsiyet, ırk, sosyal sınıf, din/mezhep, dil, cinsel yönelim ve diğer istisna özelliklere dayalı toplumsal yapı kategorilerinden iki veya daha fazla kültürel kategoriyi içinde barındıran toplumlardır. Çok kültürlü toplumlarda kültürel çeşitliliğe dayalı karmaşık, benzer ve farklı kültürel anlayışlar yaygındır. Bu kültürel anlayışlar; yaş, cinsiyet, ırk, etnik özellikler, sosyo-ekonomik sınıf, dinsel kimlik, seksüel davranışlar, eğitim, tarih gibi pek çok faktörlerle şekillenmektedir.

Bireylerin bir başka kültürde etkili olabilmesi; diğer kültürlerle ilgilenmesine, kültürel farklılıkları fark edebilecek kadar duyarlı olmasına ve sonrasında da davranışlarını diğer kültürlerden insanlara saygı gösterecek biçimde yeniden biçimlendirmesine bağlıdır. İnsanların farklılıklara hoşgörü ve saygı gösterip, farklı kültürlerin uyum içerisinde yaşayabilmesi için bireylerin kendi bakış açılarının yanı sıra başka bireylerin de bakış açısını göz önünde bulundurması gereken "çok bakışlı anlayış stratejisini" benimsemesi gerekmektedir.

Bireylerin kültürlerarası iletişimde yeterli olabilmeleri için bireylerin kültürlerarası farkındalık, kültürlerarası duyarlılık ve kültürlerarası yeterlilik konularında eğitim almaları gerekmektedir. Bu bilgi ve becerilerin kazandırıldığı eğitim yaklaşımı ise kültürlerarası eğitim olarak isimlendirilmektedir. Kültürlerarası eğitim; etnik, ırksal, dil, din, cinsiyet vb kültürel özelliklere bağlı farklılıkların olduğu toplumlarda; önyargı, kimlik çatışması, güç çekişmelerini azaltmak için, toplumun farklı beklentilerine cevap veren eğitim politikası yada kültürel çoğulculuğu teşvik etmek için demokratik değerlere dayalı eğitim-öğretim yaklaşımı ya da eğitim eşitliğini sağlamayı taahhüt eden karma okul anlayışı olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Kültürlerarası eğitimde başarılı olmak için öğretmenlerin sınıf ortamında olumlu iklim yaratabilme; dil, din, etnik köken, sosyo-ekonomik düzey gibi farklılıklara sahip öğrenciler için demokratik ortam oluşturabilme ve öğrenci farklılıklarına yönelik eğitim verme ve öğrencilerin potansiyellerini en üst düzeye çıkartabilme konularında becerikli olması beklenmektedir. Bu nedenle günümüz öğretmenlerinin kültürlerarası yeterliklerinin geliştirilmesi gerekmektedir.

Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven'e göre kültürlerarası yeterlik kültürel empati, açıklık, sosyal girişim, duygusal denge ve esneklik olmak üzere beş boyuttan oluşmaktadır. Kültürel empati, farklı kültür geçmişinden gelen bireylerin davranış, düşünce ve duygularını tanıma olarak nitelendirilmektedir. Açıklık, bireylerin kendi kültürel grupları dışındaki insanlarla karşılaştıklarında önyargısız ve iletişime açık olmasıdır. Sosyal girişkenlik, bireylerin sosyal durumlara etkin bir şekilde yaklaşmasını ve girişimde bulunma eğilimlerini ifade etmektedir. Duygusal denge, kültürel farklılıklara bağlı olarak gelişen çatışmalarda ve stresli durumlarda bireylerin duygusal dinginliğini korumasını, sakin kalabilme derecesidir. Esneklik ise, bireylerin yeni ve bilinmeyen durumlara alışabilme yeteneğini ifade etmektedir.

Araştırmanın Amacı: Ülkelerin bireysel, toplumsal, kültürel ve ekonomik ihtiyaçlarına dayalı olarak öğretmen yetiştirme sistemleri değişebilmektedir. Bu araştırmanın amacı, öğretmen yetiştirme programları farklı iki ülke olan İsviçreli ve Türkiyeli öğretmen adaylarının kültürlerarası yeterlik düzeylerini saptamaktır.

Araştırmanın Yöntemi: Tarama modelinde karşılaştırmalı betimsel bir araştırmanın verileri toplamak için çok kültürlü kişilik ölçeği ve kişisel bilgi formu kullanılmıştır. Fribourg Pedagoji Yüksek Okulu ve Kocaeli Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi öğrencilerine toplu elektronik mektup gönderilerek belirtilen süre içerisinde veri tabanı bağlantısındaki (linkindeki) verileri doldurmaları istenmiştir. Fribourg Pedagoji Yüksek Okulundan 84 öğrenci, Kocaeli Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesinden ise 101 öğrenci ölçekleri doldurarak göndermiştir. Toplam 185 öğrencinin ürettiği veri üzerinde işlem yapılmıştır.

Araştırmanın Bulguları: Araştırmanın Bulguları: Türkiyeli ve İsviçreli öğretmen adayları genel olarak kültürlerarası yeterliklerini orta düzeyde algılamaktadırlar (M=3.59). Öğretmen adaylarının kültürel yeterliliğin alt boyutlarından kendilerini en yetkin gördükleri boyut kültürel empati (M =4.07) iken, bu boyutu sıra ile açıklık(M =3.62), sosyal girişkenlik (M=3.55), esneklik (M=3.36) ve duygusal denge (M=2.98), izlemektedir. İsviçreli öğretmen adaylarının kültürlerarası yeterlilik algı düzeyleri (M=3.69), Türkiyeli öğretmen adaylarının kültürlerarası yeterlilik algı düzeylerine (M=3.50) göre daha yüksektir (t= -4.547, p<.01).

Öğretmen adaylarının öğrenim gördükleri üniversite değişkeni, kültürel yeterliliğin alt boyutlarından kültürel empati (t= -8.003, p<.01) ve sosyal girişkenlik (t= -3.951, p<.01) boyutlarında anlamlı farklılaşma yaratırken; duygusal denge (t= 0.129, p>.05), esneklik (t=0.111, p>.05) ve açıklık (t= -1.051, p>.05) boyutlarında anlamlı farklılaşma yaratmamıştır. Kültürlerarası yeterliliğin kültürel empati boyutunda İsviçreli öğretmen adayları (M=4.25), Türkiyeli öğretmen adaylarına (M=3.91), göre daha yüksek algı düzeyine sahiptirler. Benzer durum kültürlerarası yeterliliğin sosyal girişkenlik boyutunda da söz konusudur. İsviçreli öğretmen adaylarının (M=3.74), Türkiyeli öğretmen adaylarına (M=3.39) göre sosyal girişkenlik düzeyleri daha yüksektir.

Cinsiyet değişkeni öğretmen adaylarının kültürlerarası yeterlik algılarından anlamlı farklılaşma yaratmamıştır (t= 0.729, p>.05). Bay öğretmen adaylarının kültürlerarası yeterliliğin duygusal denge boyutuna ilişkin algı düzeyleri (M=3.18), bayan öğretmen adaylarının algı düzeylerine (M=2.94) göre daha yüksektir(t= 2.457, p<.05). Öğretmen adaylarının öğrenim gördükleri bölüm değişkeni kültürlerarası yeterlik algısında anlamlı farklılaşma yaratmamıştır (t= -0.802, p>.05). Ancak sınıf

öğretmenliği bölümünde öğrenim gören öğretmen adaylarının kültürlerarası yeterliliğin duygusal denge boyutuna ilişkin algı düzeyleri (M=3.07), okul öncesi eğitim öğretmenliği bölümünde öğrenim gören öğretmen adaylarının algı düzeylerine (M =2.83) göre anlamlı şekilde daha yüksektir (t= 2.376, p<.05).

Araştırmanın Sonuçları ve Önerileri: Araştırma sonucunda İsviçreli ve Türkiyeli öğretmen adaylarının kültürlerarası yeterlik düzeylerinin orta düzeyde olduğu bulunmuştur. Öğretmen adaylarının kültürel yeterliliğin alt boyutlarından kendilerini en yetkin gördükleri boyut kültürel empati iken, bu boyutu sıra ile açıklık, sosyal girişkenlik, esneklik ve duygusal dengenin izlediği görülmüştür. Öğretmen adaylarının öğrenim gördükleri üniversite değişkeni öğretmen adaylarının kültürlerarası yeterliklerine ilişkin algı düzeylerinde anlamlı farklılaşma yaratmıştır. İsviçreli öğretmen adaylarının kültürlerarası yeterlilik algı düzeyleri, Türkiyeli öğretmen adaylarının kültürlerarası yeterlilik algı düzeylerine göre daha yüksek olduğu saptanmıştır. Cinsiyet ve öğrenim görülen bölüm değişkeni öğretmen adaylarının kültürlerarası yeterlik algılarında anlamlı farklılaşma yaratmamıştır.

Görüldüğü üzere her ülkedeki öğretmen yetiştirme programlarının kültürlerarası eğitim açısından sorgulanması gerekmektedir. Öğretmen eğitiminin uluslararası düzeyde standartlara bağlanması ve sistematik bir yaklaşımla kültürel farklılıkları içeren konulara yer verilmesi gerekmektedir. Böylece geleceğin öğretmenlerinin yeterliklerinde kültürlerarası farklılıkların bilgisi yanında; bu konulara ilişkin detayların öğrenilmesini de sağlayacaktır. Yapılan incelemelerde İsviçre Fribourg eğitim Yüksekokulu öğretmen yetiştirme programında çok kültürcülük ve kültürlerarası eğitimle doğrudan ilgili dersler (Diversité et pluralité, education interculturelle) olduğu gibi diğer öğretim derslerinde de örtük program yaklaşımı ile içeriğin sunulduğu görülmüştür. Türkiye'deki Eğitim Fakültesi öğretmen yetiştirme programlarında ise çok kültürcülük ve kültürlerarası eğitimle ilgili doğrudan bir dersin bulunmadığı ancak öğretim dersleri içerisinde örtük program yaklaşımı ile içeriğin yayıldığı saptanmıştır. Çok kültürlülük anlayışı, hizmet öncesi ve hizmet içi öğretmen yetiştirme eğitim programlarının yenilenmesi gerekliliğini ortaya koymaktadır Çok kültürlülük kuramcıları, öğretmen adayları için çeşitliliğin programın ana konusu olmasını, seçmeli değil zorunlu olmasını, diğer derslerle birlikte verilmesini önermektedirler. İsviçre öğretmen yetiştirme programlarında çok kültürlülük ve kültürlerarası eğitimle ilgili zorunlu dersler bulunurken Türkiye öğretmen yetiştirme programlarında lisans düzeyinde henüz seçmeli ders bile bulunmamaktadır. Türkiye'deki öğretmen yetiştirme programlarında kültürlerarası eğitimle ilgili derslerin konulması öğretmen adaylarının kültürlerarası yeterliliklerinin gelişmesine katkı sağlayacaktır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: kültürlerarası yeterlilik, öğretmen adayı, kültürlerarası eğitim, çok kültürlülük.