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Investigation of teacher candidates' attitudes towards multicultural education and their focus of control according to different variables

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Abstract

In this research, the relationship between the levels of locus of control of teacher candidates who will be not only practitioners of the innovations in education, but will also have to work with students from different cultures, and the levels of Multicultural Proficiency Perceptions will be studied. On the other hand, as levels of teacher candidates' optimism increase, their attitudes towards innovations and working in different cultures are estimated to be more positive. Moreover, Attitude Scale towards Multicultural Education for Teacher Candidates developed by Yavuz and Anıl (2010) and "Locus of Control" are used in the research. The study group consists of 353 prospective teachers studying in different undergraduate programs. SPSS for Windows 20.0 program was used for data analysis. Kruskal Wallis, Mann Whitney - U and Spearman Correlation were used in the analyzes. It was found that the locus of control and multicultural attitudes of the participants did not differ according to their gender. According to the findings of the study, it is seen that as the teacher candidates tend to have internal locus of control, their attitudes towards multicultural education increase. In addition, it has been determined that the locus of control differ significantly according to the age and the undergraduate program in which they study. On the other hand, the attitudes of the participants towards multicultural education differed according to their age, undergraduate program and grade. In the light of these results, the importance of carrying out studies for the development of these two variables from the first stages of learning levels emerges.

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Keywords: Locus of Control, Multiculturalism, Teacher Candidates

1. Introduction

Lately, multicultural education has become one of the most controversial issue both nationally and globally. Permeability of borders, immigration and wars have made the stabile lives of people more nomadic and continue to make. The impact of this moveability which adumbrates itself in every foundation of a country should be examined cautiously, especially in terms of education. It is impossible for teachers and students,

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who are the most important factor of educational environment, to not to be affected by this moveability. (Çoban, Karaman & Doğan, 2010)

At the present time, due to the intercultural interaction, the ability and the awareness of living and working together of the individuals who have cultural differences come into prominence. Intercultural sensibility is a term which concerns the positive attitudes towards different cultures like interest, penchant of individuals. (Chen, 1997)

The importance of cultural diversity only can be taught with multicultural education. Banks and Deuze (2009) defined multicultural education by the help of taking every policies and applications in consideration. According to them, schools also should stand for the gender diversity and students who have variable characteristics (e.g. mental deficiency, hear or sight loss, or intellectual giftedness) besides the students who have different ethnic, social or religious background. Banks (2008) discussed the 5 significant dimensions of multicultural education;

1. Consolidation with the content
2. Forming the information
3. Reduction of prejudice
4. Equal pedagogics
5. Fortification of school culture

Çırık (2008), discussed the importance of focusing on differentiating the learning environments and the approval of different cultural characteristics that would make multicultural education possible. To make this possible, teachers should create learning environments that would make students interiorize; respecting other individuals from different cultures, annihilating prejudices about other cultures and divergences are richness. The suitability of teachers' characteristics for this differentiation is the key to this.

In schools which include students with different cultural characteristics, teachers, and students with different cultural characteristics take part in the education process interactively. However, problems relating to these discrepancies might appear (Yılmaz & Göçen, 2013; Dunn, 1997; Ozdemir & Arslangilay, 2017). An understanding of education in which cultural discrepancies are considered is the important matter. Teachers hold the most important position in this situation. A teacher is the person who applies the education programme besides carrying out evaluation and providing guidance (Polat, 2009, Rengi & Polat 2014). In this sense, a teacher is expected to enhance himself in terms of his field and have healthy and qualified affective characteristics (Dyno, 2010). Ustun (2011) examined the variables which could affect the levels of ethnical centralism and intercultural sensitivity in a research which was conducted with teacher candidates. Findings showed that the levels of intercultural sensitivity of teacher candidates

differentiate according to their fields, the accommodation units where they grew up, the type of high school which they graduated from, experiences in abroad and having friends from other countries and/or cultures.

Rotter (1966), considered the locus of control in social learning theory and identified it as internal and external. According to Rotter (1990), internal locus of control shows the belief of the results of individual's behaviours depend on his own behaviours and manners. In the other hand, external locus of control is the phenomenon in which results of individuals behaviours are in the control of someone else and results depend on luck, fate and fortune. When they are compared to individuals with internal locus of control, individuals with external locus of control are noticeably inadequate in terms of reaching and using information (Phares, 1976). The reason is, they try to find the power to solving problems outside. On the other hand, individuals with internal locus of control are highly adequate on producing options to trigger their internal dynamics for solving their own problems (Yeşilyaprak, 2004).

In our country and foreign countries, many researches are conducted on the relationship between the locus of control of teacher candidates and variables. In those researches, Oren (1991) stated that teacher's locus of control is related to self-acceptance, Piskin (1996) stated that it is related to self-concern, Onur (2003) stated that it is related to attitude towards learning a new language and self esteem, Basol and Turkoglu (2009) stated that it is related to way of thinking and Tabak, Erkuş and Meydan (2010) stated that it is related to intentiveness and taking risks as results. According to the findings of Oren (1991), individuals with internal locus of control have higher rates in terms of self acceptance and assumption of being accepted by other individuals when they are compared to the individuals with external locus of control. Their level of belief about being successful when solving problems and taking responsibility of their own actions are found higher likewise.

This study's aim is specified as a scrutinization of locus of control and intercultural competences of teacher candidates according to the variables (e.g. Gender, age, field and seniority) and the connection between them. At the present time, teachers are expected to raise individuals with internal locus of control and sensibility to different cultures. When the literature is reviewed, any study which discusses teacher candidates in terms of these two variables could not be found. It is clear that the geographical location of our country and the social events which happened as a result of cultural mobility should be taken into consideration in education environments. Therefore, specification of relationship between locus of control and intercultural sensibility of teachers shows the importance of this study. In addition, it is estimated to contribute to the body of literature.

1.1. Problem Sentences

- 1) Is there any relationship between the teacher candidates' multicultural perception and locus of control?
- 2) Does teacher candidates' multicultural perception differ according to variables of; gender, age, grade, department and the region where they grew in?
- 3) Does teacher candidates' locus of control differ according to variables of; gender, age, grade, department and the region where they grew in?

2. Method

2.1. Procedure

In this study, in which if the multicultural perception of teacher candidates differ according to their locus of control is researched, relational screening methods are used. Since the current situation is tried to be explained, it is planned as a descriptive research in the light of quantitative data and the results are presented.

Study group of this research consists of 353 teacher candidates who are currently studying different departments in faculty of education. SPSS for Windows 20.0 software is used for the analysis of data. Distribution of data was considered before the analysis by means of Komogorov – Smirnov test and it is revealed that the data was not distributed normally. Therefore, Kruskal Wallis, Mann Whitney – U tests, which are non-parametric tests, and Spearman Correlation are used in this research.

2.2. Study Group

The sample of this research consists of 353 teacher candidates who were studying in Uludag University during 2017 – 2018 fall semester. 77% of the teacher candidates who participated in the research were female and 22% were male; frequency information for other demographic data is given in Table 1. The participants were informed about the research and Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey (TMAS) and Rotter Locus of Control Scale are applied on the basis of voluntary principle.

Table 1. Distribution of Teacher Candidates According to Demographic Factors

	A	F	%	Total
Gender	Female	273	77.3	
	Male	80	22.7	
Age	17-22	151	42.8	353
	23-29	123	34.8	
	30+	79	22.4	
Department	Turkish Language and Literature	37	10.5	353
	Psychological Counseling and Guidance	50		
	English Language Teaching	33		
	Special Education	21		
	Sport Sciences	48		
	Social Sciences Teaching	54		
	Theology	25		
	Philosophy	43		
	Chemistry	42	.029	.491
	Grade	1 st Grade	50	14.2
	2 nd Grade	37	10.5	
	3 rd Grade	54	15.3	
	4 th Grade	54	15.3	
	Graduate	158	44.8	
Place of Residence	Metropolis	200	56.7	353
	Province	57	16.1	
	District	70	19.8	
	Village	26	7.4	
Region	Marmara Region	256	72.5	353
	Aegean Region	17	4.8	
	Eastern Anatolia Region	16	4.5	
	Central Anatolia Region	19	5.4	
	Southeastern Anatolia Region	5	1.4	
	Black Sea Region	18	5.1	
	Mediterranean Region	15	4.2	
	Abroad	7	2.0	
Other Country	Yes	43	12.2	353
	No	310	87.8	
Native Language	Yes	54	15.3	353
	No	299	84.7	

2.3. Measures and covariates

2.3.1. Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey

Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey (TMAS), which is developed by Yavuz and Anıl

(2010), consists of 28 items and 8 of which are inverse. The 5-point Likert style scale is a single-factor scale which ranges from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree”. The score of Cronbach's Alpha of the original form of this scale is ($\alpha = .93$) while in this research, it is calculated as ($\alpha = .87$). The high scale score of participants is interpreted as positive attitudes towards multicultural education while low scale scores are interpreted as negative attitudes towards multicultural education.

2.3.2. Rotter Locus of Control Scale

Locus of Control Scale is a 29-item matrix style survey designed by Rotter to measure the general expectations related to differences of senses which are determined by talent, luck and faith in 1966. In our country, credibility and validness study of Locus of Control Scale is conducted by İhsan Dağ (1991). According to this study, test-retest credibility score of Locus of Control Scale is .83, credibility score measured by KR-20 is .68 and Cronbach Alpha score is .70. In convergent validness study related to the scale, .69 correlation rate is obtained between the subjects' interview locus of control score average and locus of control scale scores. As a result, it can be seen that the Turkish form of locus of control scale is a scale with acceptable validity indicators which has sufficient credibility score just like the original version of it (Dağ, 1991). In scale, it is expected to answer each question according to one of options: A or B. Each question has a value of having internal or external locus of control between 0 and 1. High score from scale shows the individual has external locus of control while low score shows the individual has internal locus of control. Cronbach Alpha score of the original form of this scale is ($\alpha = .72$) and in this study it is calculated as ($\alpha = .71$). The high scores which are obtained from the scale indicate external locus of control belief and the low scores indicate internal locus of control belief (Şar, 1997).

3. Results

In this part of the research, findings obtained from the research and interpretation of the findings are included.

Table 1. Teacher Candidates' Locus of Control and Their Attitude towards Multicultural Education

Variables	X	Ss
Locus of Control	.67	.10
Attitude towards Multicultural Education	4.15	.43

When the distribution given in the Table 2, it can be seen that teacher candidates' average score of locus of control scale is (.67). Considering that the high score points to

having external locus of control, it can be stated that teacher candidates who formed the study group relatively have external locus of control.

The average score of Teacher Multicultural Attitude Scale is (4.15). According to this result, it can be stated that teacher candidates have positive attitudes towards multicultural education.

Table 3. Spearman Correlation Results According to Teacher Candidates' Multicultural Attitude and Locus of Control

		Attitude towards Multicultural Education	Locus of Control
Attitude towards Multicultural Education	Correlation	1.00	-.10*
	Coefficient		
	Sig. (1 Tailed)		
	N	353	353
Locus of Control	Correlation	-.10*	1.000
	Coefficient		
	Sig. (1 Tailed)	.02	
	N	353	353

P<.05*

According to the Table 3, it can be stated that there is a inverse relationship between the teacher candidates' locus of control and their attitude towards multicultural education (p<.05). In other words, as the teachers have more positive towards multicultural education, they tend to have internal locus of control.

Table 4. Mann Whitney – U Results According to Teacher Candidates' Attitude towards Multicultural Education and Gender Variables

	n	Row Avg.	Row Total	U	P
Female	273	181.63	49589.0	9655.00	.22
Male	80	161.19	12895.00		

P<.05*

According to Table 4, it is discovered that participants' attitude towards multicultural education does not differ according to their genders, U = 9655, p>.05.

Table 5. Mann Whitney – U Results According to Teacher Candidates' Locus of Control and Gender

	n	Row Avg.	Row Total	U	P
Female	273	172.33	47046.00	9645.00	.11
Male	80	192.94	15435.00		

P<.05*

According to Table 5, it is discovered that participants' locus of control does not differ according to their genders, $U = 9655$, $p > .05$.

Table 6. Kruskal Wallis Results According to Teacher Candidates' Attitude Towards Multicultural Education and Age

	n	Row Avg.	Sd	X ²	P
17-23	151	184.93	2	2.37	.30
23-30	123	166.00			
30+	79	178.97			

P<.05*

According to Table 6, it can be seen that teacher candidates' attitude towards multicultural education does not differ according to their ages significantly, $X^2 (Sd = 2, n = 353) = 2.37$, $p > .05$

Table 7. Kruskal Wallis Results According to Teacher Candidates' Locus of Control and Age

	n	Row Avg.	Sd	X ²	P
17-23	151	178.72	2	9.49	.00
23-30	123	158.16			
30+	79	203.04			

P<.05*

According to Table 7, it can be seen that teacher candidates locus of control does not differ according to their ages significantly, $X^2 (sd = 2, n = 353) = 9.49$, $p < .05$. Considering the row average, the 30+ age group has the highest score of internalizing internal locus of control.

Table 8. Kruskal Wallis Results According to Teacher Candidates' Attitudes Towards Multicultural Education and Grade

	n	Row Avg.	Sd	X ²	P
17-23	151	178.72	2	9.49	.00
23-30	123	158.16			
30+	79	203.04			

P<.05*

When the Table 8 is analyzed, participants' attitude towards multicultural education differs according to their grade significantly, $X^2 (sd = 4, n = 353) = 16.34$, $p < .05$. Considering the row averages, it can be stated that 1st grade students have the most

positive attitudes towards multicultural education and 4th, 2nd, 3rd grades and graduates follows.

Table 9. Kruskal Wallis Results According to Teacher Candidates' Locus of Control and Grade,

	n	Row Avg.	Sd	X ²	P
1 st Grade	50	205.34	4	7.91	.09
2 nd Grade	37	158.47			
3 rd Grade	54	173.77			
4 th Grade	54	155.24			
Graduate	158	180.91			

P<.05*

When the Table 9 is analyzed, it can be seen that participants locus of control does not differ according to their grades, X² (sd = 4, n = 353) = 7.91, p>.05.

Table 10. Kruskal Wallis Results According to Teacher Candidates' Attitudes Towards Multicultural Education and Department

	n	Row Avg.	Sd	X ²	P
Turkish Language and Literature	37	177.51	8	26.82	.00
Psychological Counseling and Guidance	50	215.59			
English Language Teaching	33	190.24			
Special Education	21	255.76			
Sport Sciences	48	184.75			
Social Sciences Teaching	54	164.98			
Theology	25	173.47			
Philosophy	43	159.38			
Chemistry	42	122.56			

P<.05*

According to Table 10, it can be stated that teacher candidates' attitudes towards multicultural education differs according to the department which they study in, X² (sd = 8, n = 353) = 26.82, p<.05. Table 10 indicates Special Education, Psychological Counseling and Guidance, English Language Teaching and Sport Sciences departments have more positive attitudes towards multicultural education than other departments.

Table 11. Kruskal Wallis Results According to Teacher Candidates' Locus of Control and Department

	n	Row Avg.	Sd	X ²	P
Turkish Language and Literature	37	158.47	8	20.03	.01
Psychological Counseling and Guidance	50	205.34			
English Language Teaching	33	130.15			
Special Education	21	194.67			
Sport Sciences	48	178.31			
Social Sciences Teaching	54	173.77			
Theology	25	223.26			
Philosophy	43	183.47			
Chemistry	42	156.06			

P<.05*

According to Table 11, it can be seen that teacher candidates' locus of control differs according to their departments which they are studying, X² (sd = 8, n = 353) =20.03, p<.05. Teacher 11 indicates that Theology, Psychological Counseling and Guidance, Special Education and Philosophy departments have more internal locus of control than other departments.

Table 12. Kruskal Wallis Results According to Teacher Candidates' Attitude Towards Multicultural Education and Region Where They Grew in

	n	Row Avg.	Sd	X ²	P
Marmara Region	256	171.02	7	11.13	.13
Aegean Region	17	135.59			
Eastern Anatolia Region	16	220.09			
Central Anatolia Region	19	189.66			
South-eastern Anatolia Region	5	218.10			
Black Sea Region	18	194.33			
Mediterranean Region	15	205.07			
Abroad	7	229.29			

P<.05*

According to the Table 12, it can be stated that participants' attitudes towards multicultural education does not differ according to the region where they grew in, X² (sd = 8, n = 353) =11.13, p>.05

Table 13. Kruskal Wallis Results According to Teacher Candidates' Locus of Control and Region Where They Grew In

	n	Row Avg.	Sd	X ²	P
Marmara Region	256	178.78	7	8.63	.28
Aegean Region	17	168.26			
Eastern Anatolia Region	16	157.25			
Central Anatolia Region	19	200.82			
South-eastern Anatolia Region	5	95.6			
Black Sea Region	18	205.5			
Mediterranean Region	15	138.8			
Abroad	7	180.36			

P<.05*

According to Table 13, participants' locus of control does not differ according to the region where they grew in significantly, X^2 (sd = 7, n = 353) = 8.63, p>.05.

4. Discussion

The main purpose of this study is to examine prospective teachers' perspectives on multicultural education. Additionally, differentiation in terms of perspectives and "locus of control according to gender, age, class, department and region are also discussed. When the results of the study considered, it can be seen that there is a inverse and significant relationship between the teacher candidates' attitude towards multicultural education and locus of control. In other words, as the teacher candidates have more positive attitudes towards multicultural education, they tend to have internal locus of control. This result shows that internal locus of control is more effective than external locus of control in order to create an effective teaching environment and different cultural structures within the school or classroom. This finding is consistent with the study which Polat (2009) conducted. According to Rotter (1990), internal locus of control indicates the belief of result of individual's behaviours are related to his own attitude and acting. An individual with this belief is not expected to consider the characteristic of another individual from other culture as it is his fault. On the contrary, he may be expected to react with sensitivity and decency. Studies (Akca, Ulutas, ve Yabancı, 2018; Anderson ve ark., 2005; Öksüz, ve Baba Öztürk, 2016; Senior, 2002; Demir, ve Başarır, 2013) have shown that students with high internal locus of control have high levels of intrinsic motivation, personal control and self-efficacy. They take more responsibility in the study process, and they are more effective in acquiring and using the necessary knowledge. Therefore, this finding indicates that the prospective teacher candidates are in a correct starting point when they are employed in the profession (Çiftçi and Aydın, 2014).

It is discovered that participants' locus of control does not differ according to their genders. Valentiin (2006), Sardoğan, Canani and Karahan (2006) found similiar results in their researches. The fact that the gender variable did not make a difference during

the acquisition of both locus of control and multicultural characteristics could be interpreted as promising for the new generation youth, contrary to previous studies. In the past, internal locus of control used to point to a requirement of having sensitivity and building consciousness and this was explained with the female gender roles. Similarly, there was a tendency to believe in considering cultural differences in a relativist way was a part of female's relativist perspective. On the other hand, findings shows that, new generation who are educated to be teachers have equal characteristics in this sense and this is a very significant and important finding.

It is observed that teacher candidates' locus of control differs according to their ages significantly. The group with the most internal locus of control is those aged 30 and over. The relationship between age factor and internal locus of control is extremely significant because according to E. Erikson's psychosocial development characteristics, after the age of 25, identity confusion finishes and it is possible to talk about more productive personal characteristics. The fact that the study group representing the population has the affective characteristics required by the age is very important in terms of the qualities which will arise in education. (İnanç and Yerlikaya, 2017)

The findings show that teacher candidates' attitude towards multicultural education does not change according to the region variable significantly. This finding is quite significant considering that the perception of multiculturalism becomes more evident by being influenced by the environment and culture in which the individual lives. The fact that the study group comes from the Marmara region, which is mainly a region receiving immigration, requires them to come into contact with cultural differences in the environment in which they grow. This will be perceived as a normal and adaptable situation from being a situation which would degrade cultural differences in time. In this sense, it is normal that culture sensitivity has turned into a kind of personality for prospective teachers who grew up in an environment where differences are considered natural. Demircioğlu and Özdemir (2014) pointed to age variable differs in attitude towards multicultural education in a study which they conducted with pedagogical formation students.

It is discovered that teacher candidates' attitude towards multicultural education differs according to their grade in university. First grade students adopted the most positive attitude towards multicultural education, followed by 4th, 2nd, 3rd grades and graduates. When the study group's demographic distribution is taken into consideration, adult students up to 23 years of age can be seen. In this case, cultural sensitivity coincides with the previous result of this research. In fact the second group which adopted the most positive attitudes towards multicultural education consists of 4th grade students. On the other hand, the understanding that a teacher candidate should be more idealistic and should be more sensitive to culture in the first years of education may have caused by the negative effects of the environment in this sense within the university life.

Polat (2009) also mentioned the relationship between grade variable and cultural sensitivity. Whereas Demircioğlu and Özdemir (2014) stated opposite results in a similar study.

Another result of the research is that the attitudes of teacher candidates towards multicultural education differ according to their department. Accordingly, it can be said that the departments of Special Education, Psychological Counseling and Guidance, English Language Teaching and Sports Sciences have more positive attitude towards multicultural education than other departments. Similar findings were found in Onur and Bağçeli (2017), Çapri and Çelikaleli, (2008) and Başol and Türkoğlu (2009). As it is known, it is expected that the students studying in the special education and psychological counseling and guidance and especially the students who preferred to study in the social sciences should be more humane in the humanitarian profession.

It is understood that the locus of control of teacher candidates differ significantly according to their department which they are studying. Accordingly, Theology, Psychological Counseling and Guidance and Philosophy departments are seen to adopt internal locus of control more than other departments. When the concept of locus of control is considered as an evaluation of the responsibilities of the individual's behaviour from themselves, we expect the belief in internal intelligence to be high. The differentiation of teacher candidates in theology, psychological counseling and guidance and philosophy, as in the results obtained from the sensitivity to culture, can be explained by the internal intelligence factor. On the other hand, the importance given to spiritual values by the students who study theology may prove that why their behaviour is explained by the internal factors.

It was found that attitudes towards multicultural education and locus of control did not show a significant difference according to the geographical region where the participants spent most of their lives. Similar findings are stated in Durna and Şentürk's (2012) study. It was found that a large part of teacher candidates who are in the study group live in Marmara region (72.5%). In this sense, as a limitation of this study at the same time, the results of a study in which a large sample of teacher candidates from different regions are needed to compare these findings or to find a meta-analysis result.

5. Conclusions

When the results of this study are examined, it is quite meaningful to see that the culturally sensitive point of view has become a cultural personality (Van der Zee, Zaal and Piekstra, 2003) and this variable is related to another locus of control which has different personal characteristics.

It is very important for the teacher candidates to have these two important features for the future of education. In order to understand the prevalence of these findings, it may be suggested that more comprehensive studies should be conducted with students from different cultures, and mixed patterned studies on the place of variables such as self-efficacy, motivation, emotional intelligence and empathy within the cultural personality structuring besides the locus of control.

On the other hand, considering the importance of being sensitive to culture and self-supervision for teacher candidates, it can be said that individual or group guidance on these issues will be resulted positive from secondary school and high school.

It is believed that the in-service trainings about having internal locus of control and relativist beliefs may be beneficial for teachers who work in the regions where the cultural differences are intense.

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