A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY ON THE PERCEPTIONS OF PRE-SCHOOL TEACHERS ON GENDER ROLES AND PRACTICES

Abstract: The aim of this study is to examine the perceptions of preschool teachers on gender roles and classroom practices in a comparative manner. Qualitative research method was used in this study. The participants of the study are preschool teachers working in Turkey and Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. In this study, convenience sampling method was used. The study group comprised 21 preschool teachers volunteering to participate and provided written consent. The data were collected through an interview schedule that comprised 9 semi structured questions. The results obtained from teachers in Turkey and Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus showed teachers showed gender stereotypical behaviors in their classrooms in both countries. According to the teacher perceptions, women are passive, fragile and emotional while men are independent and powerful. It can be concluded that teachers in both countries have practices aimed to prevent the development of gender prejudices in children.

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INTRODUCTION

Education plays an essential role in human life. Pre-school education is defined as the development and education phase including most of the cognitive, physical and social-emotional development (Berk, 2013). Differences of behaviour and personal characteristics between men and women are socially learnt and shaped. Children at pre-school age given gender-streotyped answers and act "properly" in accordance with their gender as expected by the society (Kanka, Wagner, Schober & Spiel, 2013). During the development phase, the child is introduced to rules and behaviour deemed appropriate to gender by the society and the family. Pre-school teacher is important as it is the first teacher figure apart from parents. The teacher attitudes and behaviours have permanent effects allowing the child to learn and internalise attitude and behaviour regarding gender roles (Avcı & Toran, 2012; Connell, 1998; Driscoll & Nagel, 2008; Meece & Daniels, 2008; İnceoğlu & Akçalı, 2018).

Gender denotes both innate physiological and biological traits for men and women. Accordingly, male and female gender traits change into gender roles due to the influence by social values and demonstrate differences in behaviour (Burr, 1998; Marshall, 1999; Todor, 2010). According to Organisation for Economic Co –operation and Development data (OECD), the majority of the pre-school and elementary school teachers in most countries are female (OECD, 2015). Cultural and economic conditions have shaped gender roles in teaching throughout history. Religious and moral values of the society have influenced its gender perceptions and expectations. In this respect, the trust in the protective and supportive nature of woman has resulted in the perception that the pre-school education profession is perceived as services aimed at providing care and protection for the child and in man not giving trust as much as the woman does in terms of fulfilling these services (Akman, Taskın, Ozden, Okyay & Corfu, 2014; Birey & Beyidoğlu Önen, 2013; Sak, Kızılkaya, Yılmaz & Dereli, 2015). In fact, teaching in general and specifically "pre-school teaching" is perceived as a woman's occupation in society.

The influence of stereotypical judgements regarding gender roles during teacher-student communication in the teaching-learning process is obvious. Teachers' behaviours and attitudes supporting sexist stereotypical judgements of the family and culture influence the games and toys children play, game friend choices, language properties they use and their problem-solving methods.

As reported by Berk (2013), teachers might act in a manner that helps continue the social gender roles taught at home and support stereotypical judgements. While manly behaviours of girls are sometimes perceived as being "strong" and is approved, feminine behaviours of boys are most often suppressed strongly. Savinskaya (2017) suggests preschool teachers to incorporate effective instructional strategies to promote pre-school students' knowledge in science, technology, engineering and mathematics and to engage their students in technology and mathematics activities. This may bridge gender-gap in the choice of professions.

CURRENT SITUATION IN TURKEY

Although Turkish education system complies with global gender equality policies, it still inherits inequal and discriminatory mentality (Sayılan, 2012). World Economic Forum has studied the level of gener inequality between men and women since 2016 but the situation was not pleasant for Turkey in 2017. This study covers 144 countries and health, politics, education and economy categories. In 2017, gender gap increased in 60 countries and decreased in 82 countries. The report indicates Turkey as one of the countries with the increased gap. Prime Ministry General Directorate of Women's Status, Ministry of Education and numerous other government offices, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (Turkish Industry & Business Association-TUSIAD, 2007), and universities carried out studies on gender roles in society (Demirgöz Bal, 2014; Göğüş Tan & Somel, 2005; İnceoğlu & Akçalı, 2018; Solak, 2017; World Economic Forum, 2017). The National Action Plan for Gender Equality aims to remove discrimination against women and to

develop a road map for inclusion of gender equality in all public policies. The National Action Plan covers critical areas identified in the Beijing Platform for "Women's Education and Teaching", "Women and Economy", "Women and Poverty", "Women and Health", "Participation in Authority and Decision Making Processes", "Women and Media", "Women's Human Rights", "Girls" and "Institutional Mechanisms in the Progress of Women." However, in 2007, a report was prepared to be used as a reference document on the institutional structures and policy experiences of EU countries in order to place gender equality in the master plans and programs (General Directorate of the Status of the Prime Minister, 2009; The General Directorate on the Status of Women of Prime Ministry, 2018).

The Prime Ministry Directorate General on the Status of Women proposes that gender equality is a human rights issue and an important condition of the social justice. A "Project for Improving Gender Equality in Education" funded by from the European Union and the Republic of Turkey, is a situation assessment and needs analysis initiative, aiming demonstrate the current situation concerning social gender equality and gender-sensitive school environment at 40 pilot schools (ETCEP, 2016).

Data obtained is expected to form the groundwork for preparation of "Social Gender Equality Assurance Tool for Schools (SGEATS)" and the relevant activities for educational programs (Gender Mainstreaming Law, 2015). The 2016 data foresees 170 years required for women to be able to obtain equal professional compensation with men, this figure is estimated to be 217 years in the 2017 data (Solak, 2017; TUSIAD, 2007; World Economic Forum, 2017)."Preschool Education and Elementary Educational Institution Standards (Institutional Standards)" system has been developed so teachers and administrators at all academic levels gain insight of the educational service.

Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) was established in 1983. Fighting for independence, Turkish Cypriots, both men and women demonstrated a high solidarity level. Tombak and Topdal (2014) reported the socio-economic and physical restructuring process of the Island has increased the number of working women. Most women in TRNC work outside home. Women attained a significant place in society by joining work life, gaining economic independence, increasing self-confidence and being directly involved in the production process.

The 1962 European Human Rights Convention, The 1996 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the 2004 Civil and Political Rights Convention are the primary conventions in TRNC regarding social gender and human rights. Besides, Center for Women's Studies (KAEM) at Eastern Mediterranean University (DAU) carries out numerous studies as the first and only research and education centre in the area of social gender academically.

The Department of Social Gender Equality, expected to be established in TRNC, is one of many other initiatives to realise all (survey, information sharing, cooperation etc.) to be performed for increasing public awareness in the social gender field. (www.lefkosabelediyesi.org; www.mevzuat.kamunet.net). The school environment created to help children realise their value as individuals before learning discriminatory attitude and behaviour regarding gender and starting to believe that the traditional attitude to gender roles cannot be changed. It is assumed that teachers' gender beliefs influence their practices and interactions with children and may affect children's gender behaviours in pre-school (Emilson, Folkesson, and Linberg, 2016). The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions and in-class practices of preschool teachers regarding social gender roles in the context of social and cultural comparison.

CURRENT SITUATION IN TRNC

THEORETICAL/CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Gender roles are defined as psychosocial roles in which individuals are characterized as either women or men. Although the concepts of social gender and gender are two different concepts, it is not possible to evaluate these two concepts independently. Generally, the expectations of society from women and men are shaped by their biological and physical characteristics. Taking these characteristics into consideration, behaviors deemed appropriate for a gender constitute the stereotypes of the gender roles of the individuals in the society. These stereotypes are among the most powerful factors that cause inequality between men and women in society (Oakley, 1991).

Acquisition of gender roles is explained from different perspectives by Biological Theory, Social Learning Theory, Cognitive Development Theory, Gender Schematic Theory and Psychoanalytic Theory. The Social Learning Theory developed by Albert Bandura argues that the children gain gender roles by modeling and identifying with the people in the immediate vicinity (Bandura, 1978). The Gender SchemaTheory was developed by Sandra Lipsitz Bern (1981).

This theory emphasizes that gender roles have been observed, analyzed, and schemes for gender have been developed by the child. According to this theory, which explains the social gender roles in the light of cognitive development, the child places the behaviors specific to women and men in the schemas. For example, the ability to be physically strong can be placed on the male schema by the child or the emotional feature can be placed on the female schema. It is important to recognize that each individual who is important in gaining gender roles has strengths and weaknesses, talents and interests of his own. For example, in some societies women are thought to be unsuccessful in mechanical or managerial tasks such as car repairs. But every man can not achieve success in these works. Failing to make generalizations and evaluating individual characteristics is a key element of creating an unbiased environment.

Although some previous research (Eccles & Blumenfeld, 1985) proves that teachers have no effect on gender roles acquisition, there are now studies that demonstrate the influence of teachers

on gender roles after the family (Gray & Leith, 2004, Sayman, 2007, Streitmatter, 1994).

METHODS

MODEL

A qualitative research method was used to conduct a comparative study of the perception and in-class practices of preschool teachers regarding social gender roles. Data collection methods such as observation, interview, stories, myths, sample events and narration are used, and a qualitative process is followed to demonstrate, in a realistic and integrative manner and in a natural setting, the perceptions and events related to an issue. Qualitative research aims to provide a better understanding of human behaviour in its natural environment (Sönmez & Alacapınar, 2014; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011).

PARTICIPANTS

In this study, convenience sampling method was used. The participants comprise school teachers who are in collaboration with the researchers of this current study as part of the teaching practice courses.. The study group comprised 21 preschool teachers (11 from Turkey and 10 from TRNC) volunteering to participate and provided written consent. Teachers in the study group work with children aged 3-6 years.

DATA COLLECTION TOOL

The interview questions were developed by the researchers and piloted by two experts from the field of pre-school teaching. The interview schedule was revised based on the feedback came from the experts. Accordingly, 9 open-ended questions aiming to understand the influence of gender perceptions of teachers on the environment created in their classrooms and the conducted activities. An interview schedule developed by the researchers was used as the data collection tool. The schedule, aiming to learn about the social gender perceptions and opinions of preschool teachers, was constructed based on the relevant literature of the field.

DATA COLLECTION

The interview questions were distributed to preschool teachers via e-mail or social media tools sent by the researchers. Pre-interviews were conducted with the participants before they were sent the questions via e-mail or social media tools, to ensure the clarity and understandability of the questions. A consent was obtained from the participants on the clarity and the understandability of the questions. After the consent, the teachers were asked to deliver their written answers to the interview questions. Administration phase lasted for 2 weeks.

VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY ASSESSMENT OF THE DATA COLLECTION TOOL

To interpret the findings obtained from a qualitative study objectively, the researcher needs to employ certain additional methods such as participant review and peer review. Three researchers reviewed the relevant literature and prepared draft questions by taking into account the study goals. After the items were drafted, the researchers collectively examined the proposed items and finalized the schedule. A peer-review method was used for the data reliability assessment and data validation (Creswell, 2014; Merriam, 2009).

The reliability of the analyzed data was calculated using Miles and Huberman's (1994) Reliability Formula = Number of agreements / Number of agreements + Disagreements. The reliability score was found to be 92%. The obtained reliability test result is above 70% and the reliability of the test is considered to be achieved (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis process was the content analysis in grouping data around specific concepts and themes, coding the data with similar digits, organizing them in an easy-to-understand manner and interpreting them. The qualitative data obtained has the following four phases;

- Data coding,
- Determining the themes,
- Organizing codes and themes,
- Defining and interpreting findings (Creswell, 2014; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011).

Each interview question here constitutes the study themes. Each participant was given a separate code to ensure their anonymity (e.g. T1T denotes teacher number 1 from Turkey, while code T1C denotes the teacher from TRNC- Cyprus).

RESULTS

The data collected from the teachers were summarized in tables. These tables contain statements placed in sub-themes and the frequency by which the respondents expressed from Turkey and TRNC.

Table 1. Gender roles of male and female teachers

Sub-themes	Sample statements	Expression frequency Turkey TRNC
Two genders are equal except for biological differences	Of course, gender differences might be obvious in situations demanding physical strength or skills (T4T) In my opinion, both genders are equal, and there are only biological differences between the two genders (T1C)	1 1
Two genders are equal	Roles should not vary based on gender, both genders are equal in any case (T1T) In my opinion gender roles must be equal. I	7 2

	mean a woman can do whatever a man can do. (T2C)	
Both genders have different social gender roles	The male is strong, is the head of household and makes a living, brings money when he works; the female takes care of the house and the kids, she has a passive role (T4T) Gender roles of women are mostly about sensitivity, being emotional, dependence while gender roles of men are about leadership, dominance and independence. (T4C)	3 4

Table 1 shows responses to the questions "What are the gender roles that men and women should have? What are the gender roles in marriage or relationship? How should they be?" One teacher from Turkey and one teacher from TRNC think that both genders are equal except for biological differences. 7 teachers from Turkey and 2 teachers from TRNC think that both genders are equal.

Three teachers from Turkey and 4 teachers from TRNC believe that both genders have different gender roles. Teachers from both Turkey and TRNC indicated that the role of women in society is associated with being passive, fragile and emotional while man is associated with being independent and strong

Table 2. In-class activities aimed at developing gender roles at an early age

Sub-themes	Sample Statements	Expression Frequency Turkey TRNC
There are in-class activities	Initiatives focusing on the family, its members and unity of the family (T2T) Occupations and their qualities, demonstration with roleplaying (T4T) Blue Day (Anti-bullying week), children- both boys and girls- dress in blue regardless of gender. Pink Day (Breast Cancer Awareness Day) children-both boys and girls- dress in pink regardless of gender. (T1C)	7 9
There are no in-class activities	We do not have such in-class activities (T1T) I don't do any in-class activities.(T3C)	4 1
Gives consideration to gender in in-class activities	Of course, I take into account gender and personal traits (T7T) During the game, I guide and support the children in their selection of accessories based on their gender. (T9C)	5 3
Does not consider gender in in-class activities	I do not. I prepare my activity based on what I need to teach them. (T5T)	5 7

	During in-class activities, the children in my class play both with dolls and cars. What matters is what they want. (T8C)	

Table 2. provides an analysis of the combined responses of teachers to the questions of "Do you have in-class activities that aim to help develop gender roles at an early age? Can you please give details with examples?" and "Do you give consideration to children's genders during in-class activities/practices?" It was seen that teachers in both countries consider gender issues during in-class activities. Nevertheless, it was observed that some teachers did not have such practices. The responses of participants in Turkey suggest that teachers who take gender into account in in-class activities and those 'who do not' were equal. Except for one teacher, teachers in TRNC indicated that they organized activities aimed at developing gender roles at an early age and it was seen that most of them take children's genders into account during these events.

Table 3 Creating an environment suitable for gender roles

Sub-themes	Sample Statements	Expression Frequency Turkey TRNC
Making seating arrangements based on children's gender	Yes I do. Because girls have better social and language skills compared to boys, it influences the seating arrangement. (T8T) I arrange it so that every table has both boys and girls (T3C)	2 4
Not taking gender into account for seating arrangements	I do not take gender into account (T11T) There are no rules for the seating arrangement. They can sit with any friend they like (T10C)	9 5
Not organising any activity to eliminate prejudices regarding gender roles	I don't (T6T) We haven't had any activity related to that (T7T) I don't have such intention(T9T) I don't specifically aim for that (T3C)	5 1
Organizing activities to eliminate prejudices regarding gender roles	In the class, we talk to students about family, society and occupations in relation to gender (T2T) I pay attention to game centers in the class. I try to make sure every child makes use of all materials.(T8C)	3 5
Implementing wrong practices perceived to be correct when trying to eliminate prejudices related to gender roles.	During activities, we distinguish between clothes for girls and boys when we talk about outfits. (T1T) For toilet training, we send boys and girls to separate restrooms. (T4C)	3 5

Table 3. provides an analysis of the combined teacher responses to the questions "Do you think gender is important in terms of the seating arrangement in class? How do you make the seating arrangement?" and "What kind of efforts do you have for creating an environment suitable for gender roles of children in the class?". Nine teachers from Turkey indicated they did not take gender into account while two took gender into consideration for seating arrangements. Five teachers from TRNC did not take gender into account while four did. Five teachers from Turkey did not have any practices for eliminating prejudice related to gender roles, three had practices to help prevent the formation of such prejudice. The responses by three teachers were interpreted as

having activities related to wrong practices. Looking at teacher data from TRNC: five teachers had practices aimed at eliminating prejudices, one teacher did not have such practices and five teachers had activities related to wrong practices perceived to be correct in society.

Table 4. Practices aimed at the elimination of prejudices related to gender roles

Sub-themes	Sample Statements	Expression Frequency Turkey TRNC
Organizing events/using materials related to this issue.	We usually do our activities using visual reading posters (T1T) When showing artist and scientists, I keep male and female ratio equal and aim to eliminate gender prejudices by avoiding sexist books or such event examples, and by not using female nurse or male fire-fighter visuals when teaching occupations (T10C)	6 7
Making explanations/Informing	I tell them that colours, toys or roles don't have gender. (T6T) I try to explain equality of genders to my students using an appropriate language. (T1C)	2 2
Parent-teacher meeting	This is one of the most problematic issues for me at the beginning of the semester. I organise a parent-teacher meeting in the first week to tell parents about this issue. (T11T) With the goal of increasing parents' awareness, we had organised a training session for families last year, and we plan to do the same this year as well. (T4C)	3 1

Table 4. shows that both in Turkey and TRNC, teachers preferred to organise activities and use materials to eliminate prejudices but that they did not prefer to make explanations or inform families on the issue of eliminating gender prejudices.

Table 5. Training and involving families for prevention of gender-related prejudices in children

Sub-themes	Sample Statements	Expression Frequency Turkey TRNC
We take action about it	I get in touch with families via meetings, training seminars, individual interviews, or home visits. (T4T) During the meetings, I discuss the issue and share materials with them both during meetings and home visits. (T7C)	8 5
We don't take any action about it	We cannot make any recommendations as we are not allowed to contact families (T6T) Unfortunately, we can only work with children as it's a private school. (T1C)	3 5

The responses to the questions of "Do you contact families to prevent the formation of gender-related prejudices in children? If yes, what do you do? in Table 5 shows that eight of the teachers from Turkey organised family training and involvement sessions, three took no action about it. Five

teachers from TRNC took action about it, and five took no action. According to the data, it is believed that teachers in Turkey placed more emphasis on training and involving families of children.

Table 6. Evaluation of the national educational policies and pre-school curriculum concerning their suitability for social gender roles

Sub-themes	Sample Statements	Expression Frequency Turkey TRNC
I find the national educational policies to be discriminative concerning social gender roles	Regarding educational policies, I believe that we have a male-dominant system (T1T) We are a male-dominant society (T2T) I find the educational policies to be traditional.(T7C) Our country has not yet gained the necessary perspective about the issue. People in this area, especially our ministers of education should have that perspective. (T5C)	7 6
I find the approach of the educational policies in my country to gender roles to be integrative.	I think they're positive (T5T) I do not believe that there's any gender discrimination at schools. (T11T) Today, the idea of gender equality has been widely accepted, and educational institutions act accordingly when they educate our children. (T4C)	2 3
Pre-school curriculum covers social gender roles	I try to make sure to prepare curriculum suitable for children's development, and I make necessary changes (T5T) It covers social gender roles. (T2C) It contains no prejudice (T3C)	9 7
Pre-school curriculum does not cover social gender roles	The curriculum of the Ministry of Education defines gains and indicators regarding all areas of development regardless of gender. No (T6T) No, it does not (T7T) In my opinion, the curriculum contains prejudice regarding gender roles.(T8C).	2 2

Teachers' responses to the questions of "How would you evaluate the approach of the preschool curriculum to social gender roles?" and "How would you evaluate the approach of the educational policies in our country to social gender roles?" are presented in Table 6. The majority of the teachers in Turkey and TRNC find the national educational policies to be discriminative regarding social gender roles, and believe that the preschool education curriculum is prepared appropriately concerning social gender roles.

DISCUSSION

The teacher perceptions in both countries on gender roles showed that some of the teachers supported gender equality while others believed that there are different social gender roles despite the gender equality. According to the teacher perceptions, women are passive, fragile and emotional while men are independent and powerful (Marshall, 1999; Torgrimson & Minson, 2005). In a study by Vatandaş (2007), women were believed to be loyal, kind, compassionate and considerate while men were competitive, feisty and authoritarian. The research data

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obtained from the analysis of the life stories of the four female educators show that the female instructors have a lot of confusion about their role as instructors and their motherhood experiences and have made a great effort to comply with the expectations of the other people (Knowles, Nieuwenhuis & Smit, 2009). In general, male and female gender characteristics in all cultures are influenced by the values of the society and therefore different gender behaviors are revealed. In this respect, while gender roles affect attitudes and behaviors in many cultures, it is noteworthy that stereotypes concerning gender roles in many cultures are similar. For example, weakness, naivety, submissiveness and compatibility in women; reactiveness, adventurism, punitiveness and toughness in men (Birey & Beyidoğlu Önen, 2013; Burr, 1998, Dökmen, 2004, Marshall, 1999, Torgrimson & Minson, 2005) are some of them. Gender prejudices are defined as beliefs about how men and women should behave differently, because of their different characteristics men and women (Acker, 1992; Payne, 1997). Prejudices regarding gender roles are among the most powerful factors that cause inequality between women and men in society (Oakley, 1991).

It can be concluded that teachers in both countries have practices aimed to prevent the development of gender prejudices in children. A study conducted in Turkey by Yağan Güder (2014) on the perceptions of the social gender of preschool children, found that children had social gender prejudices. Another study by Bayramoğlu (2015) found that children had gender-based belief patterns. These research studies emphasize the need for teachers to pay attention to the behavior, body language and discourse of their practice with children, and to implement practices that do not involve discriminatory patterns.

Some teachers from TRNC in this study made seating arrangements in the classroom based on gender rather than taking into children's preferences. Majority of the teachers in TRNC and some of the teachers in Turkey indicated that they had in-class activities aimed at eliminating children's gender prejudices. According to Temiz and Cin (2017) teachers in Turkey actively work on eliminating sexist patterns, judgments and prejudices in preschool children. The finding that

neither groups of participants from Turkey and TRNC make explanations or inform families frequently in eliminating gender-related prejudices as a method is contrary to the literature surveyed on the field. As a result, it can be argued that majority of the teachers in Turkey and TRNC prefer to do activities and use material related to the issue; and that they do not like to use the method of making explanations or inform families frequently. In line with other studies conducted in this area, preschool teachers need to do activities aimed at increasing awareness and informing families.

Activities organised by teachers aimed at family training and their involvement would allow the family factor to act as a role model in the development of social gender roles and to have a healthier effect on children. There are many studies that emphasize the effects of parents on the gender perceptions of children (Aksoy & Baran, 2017; Aydilek Çiftçi, 2011; Baran, 1995; Burr, 1998; Eser, 2008; Murray, 2004, Yağan & Güder, 2014,). However, the characteristics of the mother and father which constitute the social and economic status (working-non-working, lower-middle-upper socioeconomic status, education level, family structure etc.) and the number of siblings at family, siblings, game and toy preference also affect the gender perceptions of children.

For this reason, teachers' involvement in family education and family involvement activities will allow parents, who are the role models for children, to create healthier effects for the perception of gender. Lemmer (2012) in his study also found that teachers' collaboration with parents reveals more positive outcomes.

Findings of the study by Sırmabıyıklı (2017) where textbooks for family training for the ages 0-18 were analysed with respect to gender roles, agree that most of the teachers in Turkey find the current educational policies in the country to be discriminative regarding social gender roles. Following the implementation of the National Action Plan for Social Gender Equality between 2008-2013 was prepared by the General Directorate on the Status of Women aiming to develop a roadmap for eliminating discrimination

against women and inclusion of social gender equality in all public policies. As part of this initiative, workshops such as "Women" and "Improvement of Social Gender Equality in Turkey" have been organised. The initiative also aims "rearrangement of educational programs, methods, textbooks and all other educational tools and content (The General Directorate on the Status of Women of Prime Ministry, 2009, 2018). It is also important for the teachers to participate in trainings and to organize workshops on the subject. If teachers continue to operate within the framework of professional development principles (Lessing & Witt, 2007) they will also be able to act to meet their educational needs for gender roles.

As indicated in the European Commission's Report (2010), Curriculum theorist Paechter (2003) draws attention to the fact that the official curriculum rarely emphasised gender equality and social gender prejudices are explicitly (mentioning the skills according to gender) or implicitly reflected. In TRNC, the Project for Social Gender and Peace Training was implemented in cooperation with POST Research Institute and Teachers Union of Cyprus and financed by Friedrich Ebert Stuffing in 2013. The aim was to contribute to the efforts for increasing social gender awareness of future generations and teachers/unionists (Birey & Beyidoğlu Önen, 2013). Besides, various unions, institutions, organisations, universities and NGOs both in Turkey and TRNC currently carry out projects in this area. In this regard, it can be argued that educational policies should be improved as part of the effort for increasing social gender equality and that steps currently taken in this direction are promising.

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