

## Democratic Faculty of Education for Democratic Education

### *Demokratik Eğitim için Demokratik Eğitim Fakültesi*

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#### Abstract

The aim of the research is to reveal opinions of prospective teachers on democratic education and democratic behaviors of teaching staff at the universities, based on opinions of both university prospective teachers and teaching staff. Qualitative and quantitative research methods were used together. The sample of the study consists of 37 teaching staff and 152 senior students at the departments of Primary School Education, Science Education, Religious Culture and Ethics Education. To articulate the prospective teachers' opinions about democracy and democratic education, a semi-structured interview form and a questionnaire were developed to see their self-efficacy. The "Democratic Classroom Management Scale" was used to collect data for self-evaluation of the teaching staff's democratic behavior in the classroom. It was also adapted for the prospective teachers. Content analysis technique was used in analysis of the qualitative data. SPSS package program was used in analysis of quantitative data. In addition to frequency and percentage calculations, t test and ANOVA analyses were made. The study showed that the teaching staff considers their classroom practices democratic. However, the prospective teachers perceive the teaching staff moderately democratic. They, however, believe that they will grasp highly democratic attitudes in the class when they begin to teach.

**Keywords:** Democratic education, democratic teacher, democratic university

#### Öz

Araştırmanın amacı, öğretmen adaylarının demokratik eğitim konusundaki görüşlerini ve üniversite öğrenimlerinde öğretim elemanlarının ne kadar demokratik davrandıklarını hem öğrencinin hem de öğretim elemanlarının görüşlerine dayalı olarak ortaya çıkarmaktır. Nitel ve nicel araştırma yöntemleri birlikte kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın örneklemini 37 öğretim elemanı ve Sınıf Öğretmenliği, Fen Bilgisi Öğretmenliği, Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi Öğretmenliği bölümlerinde öğrenim gören 152 son sınıf öğrencisi oluşturmaktadır. Öğretmen adaylarının demokrasi ve demokratik eğitim hakkındaki görüşlerini ortaya çıkarmak için yarı yapılandırılmış bir görüşme formu ve öz yeterliklerini görmek için bir anket geliştirilmiştir. Öğretim elemanlarının sınıflarındaki demokratik davranışlarıyla ilgili kendilerini değerlendirmeleri için veri toplama aracı olarak "Demokratik Sınıf Yönetimi Ölçeği" kullanılmıştır. Öğrencilerin öğretim elemanlarını değerlendirmeleri için ölçek uyarlanmıştır. Nitel verilerin analizinde içerik analizi tekniği kullanılmıştır. Nicel verilerin analizinde SPSS paket programı kullanılmıştır. Frekans ve yüzde hesaplamalarına ek olarak t testi ve ANOVA analizleri yapıldı. Çalışma, öğretim elemanlarının sınıf içi uygulamalarını çok demokratik gördüklerini göstermiştir. Ancak öğrenciler öğretim elemanlarının sınıf içi uygulamalarını orta düzeyde demokratik görmektedirler. Öğrenciler, öğretmen olduklarında yüksek oranda demokratik davranacaklarını düşünmektedirler.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** Demokratik eğitim, demokratik öğretmen, demokratik üniversite

Received: 07.03.2019 / Revision received: 23.06.2020 / Approved: 03.08.2020

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#### Atf için/Please cite as:

Çam-Tosun, F., (2020). Democratic faculty of education for democratic education. *Kuram ve Uygulamada Eğitim Yönetimi*, 26(3), 495-518 doi: 10.14527/kuey.2020.011.

## **Introduction**

Democracy lies at the heart of the persons' relations with society and state since it comprises human rights, equality, freedom, law, freedom of thought and human values. Its indispensability rooted in its features such as political respect, respecting others, individual's trust in state institutions, sense of efficacy, knowledge and participation tendencies (Akyüzlü, 2005). Democracy needs people who understand and believe in democracy and who control their behaviors according to democracy's basic principles. The development of democracy in a society depends largely on understanding, skills and attitudes of people living in that society (Doğanay & Sarı, 2004).

The school is a special environment for the cultural gain of young people. According to Dewey (1899), the school has taken on a social role as one of the important institutions that bring dynamism to the society in general (as cited in Gutek, 2006). The culture of democracy that was adopted in schools will form the seeds of culture of democracy in society. Democracy is a lifestyle that can be acquired. However, it is also a type of ethos that is very hard to obtain only through learning. At this point, teachers have a special importance in teaching of democracy and quality of democratic education (Dadvand, 2015; Dworkin, Saha & Hill 2003; Englund, 2006; Thornberg & Elvstrand, 2012). Furthermore, it is acknowledged that teachers can make a democratic classroom environment only if they practice democracy in their social life (Cafoglu, 1997).

The fact that culture of democracy is a way of life must be recognized by all people. This cultural achievement will provide a good dialogue and a living environment no matter where it is and at what level of human relations are. The foundation of a peaceful, safe and respectful life depends on permeation of the culture of democracy within society. Dewey (1916) stated that schools are the microcosms of an admirable society and as such reflect its democratic ideals (as cited in Dadvand, 2015). In this context, an important dimension of democratic education is related to teachers (Topkaya & Yavuz, 2011). When teachers absorb democratic principles in their own lives, it becomes easier for them to transform these principles into students' life. It is unrealistic to expect democratic education from teachers who cannot implement democracy as a lifestyle (Karakutuk, 2001).

Neoliberal policies have increased their influence in universities due to globalization. Democracies are only meaningful when genuine options are offered to citizens both at the conceptual and practical level. The role of universities in identifying and discussing such options is being widely obviated by neo-liberal interference (Hyslop-Margison & Thayer, 2009). According to Giroux (2010), as a core political and civic institution, higher education no longer is committed to

addressing social problems. Instead, it has become an institution in its drive to become a primary accomplice to corporate values and power makes social problems both irrelevant and invisible. However, universities have vital roles such as conducting research on issues related to social agendas, raising students with a critical perspective, practicing public benefit and using academic knowledge for the development of new technologies (Giroux, 2009).

A culture of democracy should be established in universities, which are the most appropriate and promising educational institutions for both the intellectual and civil development of the country (Boyer, 1996), in order to create an education that the entire society and all children can benefit from (Apple, 2011). Issues such as democratization of universities and how neoliberal policies transform universities have been studied for a long time (Apple, 2004, 2011; Boyers, 1996; Crowley and Apple, 2010; Giroux, 2002, 2010). Studies related to the democratic environment of universities in Turkey has been conducted towards the end of the 1980s (Gömleksiz, 1988). It is seen that the democratization process of universities has not progressed as much as expected in the present day.

In this study, the behaviors of democratic teaching staff in the classroom are discussed. Democratic teacher ensures students' participation in determining study methods and objectives of the course (Robins & De Cenzo, 1998). The teacher creates rules with students. The teacher does not discriminate and ensures that everyone is equal. He/she helps the student take responsibility (Edwards, 1997). In short, the teacher accepts the student as a citizen of the class just like himself. Can teaching staff establish such classes? What do prospective teachers learn from these classes in the context of democracy? What do the prospective teachers think about their self-efficacy?

### **Literature Review**

In the Turkish context, the first study on the democratic education in universities was carried out by Gömleksiz (1988) at Hacettepe University. Gömleksiz (1988) designed his research to articulate the behaviors of students and teaching staff at Faculty of Education and how they perceive each other's behaviors in terms of democratic classroom environment. The study showed that the faculty members and the students were highly involved in democratic principles but did not adequately demonstrate appropriate behaviors in the classroom environment. Similarly, Çankaya and Seçkin (2004) compared attitudes of students at Faculty of Education and teachers regarding to democratic values. The research articulated that most of the teachers and the prospective teachers who participated to the study did not have sufficient democratic values. The research conducted by Demirtaş (2004) showed that teaching staff were insufficient in showing democratic classroom management because students could not criticize teaching staff, believed that their opinions were not respected well enough, did not feel that they were respected as individuals, and found the self-renewal potential of faculty members limited. Duman and Koç (2004) compared students' percep-

tions about the democratic attitudes and behaviors of teaching staff. The paper revealed that students thought teaching staff demonstrated democratic attitudes and behaviors at middle and lower levels. In their study, Şentürk and Oyman (2014) articulated opinions of students at Eskişehir Osmangazi University and Hacettepe University about democratic classroom management. It found that the students define democracy as “equal rights and freedom and being ruled in a political system of representatives elected by the nation” (p. 941-942).

The question of “how prospective teachers who would train future generations will show democratic attitudes?” is largely related to the question of “how can they reflect this in the classroom environment.” The question is also related with teaching staff’s democratic classroom management. Lastly, the democratic attitudes of teaching staff in classrooms and social life also impact on prospective teachers’ adoption of democratic behaviors. In studies that investigate relationship between university students and teaching staff, (Bayram, 1992; Deryakulu, 1992; Erdoğan, 1990; Erginer, 1997; Gömleksiz, 1988) it has been found that teaching staff could not create a democratic environment, teaching staff taught with instructor-centered methods, the classes were only information-based and students were not encouraged to share their opinions and to ask questions (Bayram, 1992; Bolat, 1990; Deryakulu, 1992; Erdoğan, 1990; Erginer, 1997; Gömleksiz, 1988; Samancı & Yıldırım, 2015; Türkoğlu, 1993). In addition, there are studies showing that prospective teachers perceive democracy mostly with concepts such as freedom, equality, citizenship, and active participation, and their attitudes towards democracy are positive (Elkatmış & Toptaş, 2015; İbret, Receptoğlu, Karasu Avcı & Receptoğlu, 2018; Kartal, Öksüz, Baba Öztürk & Güven Demir, 2018; Özen, 2015). There are also studies on the democratic participation of university students in their university life. According to these studies, university students were found to have democratic concepts, but their participation levels were low (Akbulut Taş & Karataş Coşkun, 2017; Akın, Çalışkan & Engin Demir, 2016; Doğanay, Çuhadar & Sarı, 2007; Dündar, 2013; Sarıçam, Kaya & Yetim, 2016).

When the literature is examined; McLeish’s study conducted in 1973, showed that one of the predictors of change like attitude and value in students was the democratic structure of the university. In their studies Thornton and Jaeger (2007) examined campus ideologies and cultural forms that addressed five dimensions of civic responsibility. One of them is knowledge and support of democratic values, systems and processes. The study revealed that individual ideologies on civic responsibility are also aligned with the dominant cultural equipment and with participants’ own professional roles. Bryant, Gayles and Davis (2012), in their works provide evaluations about the relationship between civic values and behaviors and the forms of college involvement. According to Barnhardt, Sheets and Pasquesi (2015) the campus life of students impacts their civic values and social responsibility perceptions. Certainly, universities are places to develop critical thinking and reflection, academic freedom and nurturing of independent thought (McCowan, 2012). Boyer (1996) explained the democracy

in universities with scholarship of engagement. After Boyer' studies, Cook and Nation (2016) examined university engagement strategies through the lenses of community psychology and community development to identify challenges and opportunities in teaching, research, and service to promote democratic ideals. Universities can contribute to the advancement of democratic principles through building community capacity to address problems through the collective actions of their citizens.

### **Purpose**

The aim of this research is to reveal the opinions of prospective teachers on democratic education and democratic behavior of teaching staff in universities based on opinions of both teaching staff and prospective teachers. This study also aims to reveal self-efficacy of prospective teachers in the last period of their trainings.

In this scope, following questions will be addressed.

1. What do prospective teachers think about democracy and democratic education?
2. What do the prospective teachers think about teaching staff's democratic classroom attitudes?
3. What do teaching staff think about democratization of classroom practices?
4. Do the opinions of teaching staff vary according to gender, having an administrative duty, title and years of service?
5. What is the self-efficacy of prospective teachers concerning democratic education?

### **Method**

In this study both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used. Qualitative research method was preferred because it focuses on understanding of a fact according to its social environment (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005). Quantitative research method was preferred to compare numerical data and produce the information explaining cause-effect relationships (Gali, Borg and Gali, 1996). In order to reveal prospective teachers' opinions about democracy and democratic education, an interview form, which is a version of the most widely used interview techniques for gathering qualitative data (Kuş, 2003), was used.

The quantitative aspect of the research was applied to expose opinions of both teaching staff and prospective teachers about teaching staff's democratic classroom practices and to reveal prospective teachers' self-efficacy on democratic education. Hence, by adopting the quantitative research approach, the survey was used to determine information types such as attitudes and opinions (Karasar,

2010; McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). This approach is preferred in order to describe an existed condition and to expose it.

### Participants

Population of this study was consisted of a total of 249 prospective teachers at the departments of Primary School Education (67), Science Education (76) and Religious Culture and Ethics Education (106). Purposeful sampling and easily accessible sampling were used. Senior students were particularly selected because they would be graduated soon. The sample size required for tolerable error was 152 by considering the acceptable error margin as 5% and the confidence level as 95%. The demographic characteristics of the prospective teachers are shown in Table 1.

Table 1.  
*Demographic Characteristics of the Prospective Teachers*

	Department	Gender	Mother's education	Father's education	Income	Geographical location						
	Primary School Education	Female	Primary School	Primary School	1000-2000	Marmara	Egean	Mediterranean	Black sea	Central Anatolia	Eastern Anatolia	Southeastern Anatolia
f	41	98	110	76	75	15	16	28	24	16	12	11
%	27	64,5	72,4	50	49,3	9,9	10,5	18,4	15,8	10,5	7,9	7,2

\*some of the prospective teachers did not inform of demographic characteristics: gender 1; Mother's education 10; Father's education 3; income 4; Geographical location 30 prospective teachers.

The population of the research related to the teaching staff consists of 41 teaching staff (1 professor, 3 associate professors, 26 assistant professors, 2 teaching staff and 9 research assistants) at Bayburt Faculty of Education. The sample size required for tolerable error was 37 by considering the acceptable error margin as 5% and the confidence level as 95%. The demographic characteristics of the teaching staff are shown in Table 2.

Table 2.  
*Personal Information about Teaching Staff*

	Gender		Administrative position		Title					Years of Service			
	Female	Male	Have	Have not	Professor	Associate Professor	Assistant Professor	Lecturer	Research Assistant	1-5	6-10	11-15	16 or above
f	10	27	18	19	1	3	22	2	9	14	8	5	10
%	27	73	48.6	51.4	2.7	8.1	59.5	5.4	24.3	37.8	21.6	13.5	27

### Data Collection Tools

The prospective teacher data collection tool was developed by the researcher consists of four parts. The first part is about personal information, the second part consists of open-ended questions that aim to reveal prospective teachers' opinions about democracy, democratic education and democratic behavior of the teaching staff. The third part has close-ended (selective) questions that aim to reveal the democratic self-efficacy of the prospective teachers. The last part has "Democratic Classroom Management Scale" (Yalçın, 2007) which was adapted to assess the democratization of classroom practices of teaching staff, was adapted for prospective teachers to evaluate teaching staff. The reliability of this scale was measured in and its Cronbach's Alpha was examined. In this study, The Cronbach Alpha coefficient was found as .93. This result shows that the scale is very reliable. After the literature search, the data collection tool was presented to the expert's opinion (2 associate professors; department of education management) and the scope validity was ensured. In addition, pilot practice was carried out with 5 prospective teachers. After the expert opinions and pilot practice, necessary corrections were made, and the data collection tool was finalized.

"Democratic Classroom Management Scale", which was developed by Demirtaş (2004) and adapted for teachers by Yalçın (2007), was used as data collection tool for evaluating the teaching staff's democratic classroom practices. The scale consists of 25 items and one factor. Demirtaş (2004) found The Cronbach Alpha coefficient as .76. Yalçın (2007) found The Cronbach Alpha coefficient as .86. In this research, The Cronbach Alpha coefficient analysis result was .83. Data was collected from the teaching staff with this scale.

### Data Analysis

Frequency, percentage, arithmetic mean and standard deviation values of the data regarding to prospective teachers' opinions about the teaching staff's democratic classroom practices were calculated first. Evaluations of teaching staff and prospective teachers were compared. Frequency percentages were given in the data related to self-efficacy. Content analysis technique was used in

analysis of the qualitative data obtained from the research. Codes were created from to prospective teachers' responses about democracy, democratic education and democratic practices of teaching staff. Categories were created from related codes. The theme was finally developed by creating a conceptual framework. Frequencies and percentages of the codes were calculated to see in which codes the participants concentrated. Opinions of the participants are given with direct quotations. End of the quotations, nicknames have been created to show who owns it. Letters indicates which department student study at. Respectively, letter S is for Department of Primary School Education, the letter F is for Science Education and the letter D is for Religious Culture and Ethics Education.

Frequency, percentage, arithmetic mean and standard deviation values of the data about teaching staff's democratic classroom practices were calculated. Then, the t test was used to see whether arithmetic means differ according to variables of gender and administrative duty. The ANOVA was conducted to determine whether the arithmetic means differs according to variables of title and years of service. SPSS 23.00 package program was used in the analysis of these data.

## Results

### Opinions of Prospective Teachers' Concerning Democracy and Democratic Education

**Democratic classroom:** For the first research question, the question of "What is the feature of a democratic class?" was asked to the prospective teachers. Codes were created to determine the prospective teachers' opinions regarding the about democracy and democratic education. The created codes and the percentage frequencies of the responses are given in Table 3.

Table 3.

*Distribution of Code about Prospective Teachers' Opinions on the Features of a Democratic Class*

Code	f	%
Freely expressing opinions	67	44
Equality	59	39
Protection of rights and respect	46	30
Pluralism (deciding together and making a choice)	27	18
Setting and obeying the rules	21	14
Student, not the teacher, is dominant (equality of teacher and student)	18	12
Openness to differences (tolerance)	7	5



According to Table 3 the Prospective teachers mostly stated that the democratic class is a place where “Students express their opinions freely” (44%), “Students are never discriminated, that is, equal” (39%), “Students have rights and are respected” (30%). It is noteworthy that the number of students (12%) who stated that the teacher is also subject to the same rights and rules as the students, that is to say that the sovereignty does not only belong to the teacher, is pretty low. Some of the statements made by the students about are listed below:

*Every student must be treated equally, without distinguishing between rich and poor. (F-51)*

*A class in which teacher is not the only dominant person but also students have right to express their views. A class in which the concept of equality is prevailed and is not limited to the theory but also into the action. (S-5)*

*A class that everyone can express their thoughts clearly and freely is a democratic class. If no one judges anyone because of her views, instead respect to her, a democratic environment will emerge out of there. (D-42)*

**The most important factor of classroom discipline:** The question of “What are the most important factors in classroom discipline?” was asked to the prospective teachers. Prospective teachers were asked to rank the options given. The percentage and frequency distribution of the options are given in Table 4 according to the answers of the prospective teachers.

Table 4.

*Distribution of Prospective Teachers’ Opinions about the Most Important Factor for Class Discipline*

Codes	Science Education		Primary School Education		Religious Culture and Ethics Education		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Communication	32	61	21	52	24	43	77	52
Teacher	16	31	14	34	24	43	54	36
Student	1	2	3	7	2	4	6	4
Rules	3	6	3	7	5	9	11	7
Punishments	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1

In terms of the prospective teachers’ responses; they consider “communication” (52%) as the most important factor of the class discipline, which does not differ according to the departments. After communication, the most frequently preferred factor is “teacher” (36%). No one sees punishments in the first place except one. In terms of ranking of these factors, the prospective teachers generally selected following sequence:1. Communication 2. Teacher 3. Student 4. Rules and 5. Punishments.

**Ensuring discipline in the classroom:** The codes that were formed according to the prospective teachers' responses to the question of "how do you ensure the class discipline" and the percentages and frequencies of these codes are given in Table 5.

Table 5.  
*Code Distribution According to Prospective Teachers' Opinions about Ensuring Classroom Discipline*

Codes	f	%
Setting and obeying rules	66	43
Mutual communication	54	36
Teacher's position (authoritarian, serious)	33	22
Tolerance and love	29	19
Respect	17	11
Little punishments	10	7
Good class environment	6	4
Other (with impunity 2, friendship 4, threatening with lower grade 3, warning through eye contact 4, reward 2, empathy 4 and modeling 2)	21	14

Table 5 shows that when the candidates begin to teach, they usually believe in ensuring classroom discipline through setting rules (43%), mutual communication (36%) or authoritarian-rigorous teacher stance (22%). Unfortunately, three prospective teachers stated that they aim to ensure the class discipline by threatening prospective teachers with lower grade. Some of the statements of the prospective teachers are given below:

*I determine rules that should be followed with students because they will be more consistent with the rules that they set. (F-34)*

*I set the rules according to my students' level of readiness and let each of them know that classroom is a social field and that certain rules must be followed. (S-27)*

*I use moderate authoritative behaviors wherever necessary and I punish students moderately whenever necessary. (D-27)*

**Democratic classroom experience:** The prospective teachers were asked whether they had studied in a democratic class ever before. And, sub-questions were added to explain their responses. The vast majority of prospective teachers (61%) stated that they were partly studying in a democratic class. The prospective teachers pointed out that they have experienced some democratic practices including communicating with the teacher and sharing their opinions on the issues such as exams and election of the class president. On the other hand, 26% of the prospective teachers said they did not study in a democratic class. These prospective teachers expressed that their teachers were often discriminative or that did not

care about the prospective teachers' opinions and choices. A very small portion of the prospective teachers (12%) stated that they were studying in a democratic classroom. When asked about the reasons, they stated that teacher was concerning about them and tolerant (1), giving importance to prospective teachers' opinions (8), treating prospective teachers equally (5), was not authoritative (2), let prospective teachers to make a choice (2), class has no prejudices (2), which are not completely considered to be features of a democratic class. Some of the statements by the prospective teachers are listed below:

*In general, our teachers make decisions on behalf of us. (F-25)*

*Our teacher would not discriminate. He was just when grading exams. He would repeat the subject until we learn. Everyone had the right to speak. We love the teacher so much and respect him. (S-40)*

*In general, democratic practices were made during the election of a class prefect. In addition, since different courses were taught by a different teacher, some of them behaved fairly and others behaved biased. (D-30)*

### **Prospective Teachers' and Teaching Staff's Think About Teaching Staff's Democratic Classroom Attitudes**

For the second and third research questions, the "Democratic Classroom Management Scale" was applied to the teaching staff to reveal their opinions about how democratic their classroom practices are. The adopted version of the scale was used for articulating the prospective teachers' thought about teaching staff's democratic classroom practices. The findings from these two scales and comparison of these data are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. *Opinions of Academic Staff and Prospective teachers on Democratic Classroom Practice*

	Teaching Staff's Opinions										Prospective teachers' Opinions												
	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Most of times		Always		X	SS	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Most of Times		X	SS	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%			f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%			
I respect my students as individuals	-	-	-	-	1	2.7	6	16.2	<b>30</b>	81.1	<b>4.78</b>	.47	7	4.6	26	17.1	44	28.9	59	38.8	16	10.5	3.33 .02
My students freely express their personal opinions in the classroom environment.	-	-	-	-	2	5.4	13	35.1	<b>22</b>	59.5	<b>4.54</b>	.60	13	8.6	19	12.5	40	26.3	57	37.5	23	15.1	<b>3.38</b> 1.14
Before talking about the topic of the day, I ask students to share their views about and approaches towards the topic	1	2.7	2	5.4	11	29.7	<b>16</b>	43.2	7	18.9	3.70	.93	10	6.6	36	23.7	62	40.8	34	22.4	10	6.6	2.98 .99
I engage in dialogue with all of my students.	-	-	1	2.7	4	10.8	<b>20</b>	54.1	12	32.4	4.16	.72	14	9.2	36	23.7	46	30.3	45	29.6	10	6.6	2.98 1.10
I let students express their opinions during classes	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	29.7	<b>26</b>	70.3	<b>4.70</b>	.46	6	3.9	21	13.8	44	28.9	59	38.8	19	12.5	<b>3.36</b> 1.11
I encourage students to engage in classroom discussions.	-	-	-	-	2	5.4	16	43.2	<b>19</b>	51.4	4.45	.60	10	6.6	29	19.1	41	27	55	36.2	14	9.2	3.16 1.15
I think I give lectures in an exciting way.	-	-	-	-	5	13.5	<b>24</b>	64.9	8	21.6	4.08	.59	10	6.6	49	32.2	64	42.1	24	15.8	4	2.6	2.73 .91
I make distinctions among students.	-	-	1	2.7	6	16.2	3	8.1	<b>27</b>	73	<b>4.51</b>	.86	9	5.9	26	17.1	45	29.6	44	28.9	25	16.4	3.26 1.21
I behave like a dictator in the class.	-	-	-	-	4	10.8	11	29.7	<b>22</b>	59.5	4.48	.69	7	4.6	23	15.1	40	26.3	56	36.8	26	17.1	<b>3.46</b> 1.08
I threaten students with lower grades.	-	-	-	-	3	8.1	8	21.6	<b>26</b>	70.3	<b>4.62</b>	.63	11	7.2	20	13.2	49	32.2	45	29.6	25	16.4	3.30 1.18
I follow professional, cultural etc. fields and practice them in my profession.	-	-	-	-	4	10.8	<b>23</b>	62.2	10	27	4.16	.60	7	4.6	41	27	62	40.8	39	25.7	2	1.3	2.90 .90
I support students' right to "choose and determine what to do" in classroom activities.	-	-	2	5.4	6	16.2	<b>15</b>	40.5	14	37.8	4.10	.87	13	8.6	41	27	51	33.6	41	27	6	3.9	2.90 1.01

Table 6.  
Opinions of Academic Staff and Prospective teachers on Democratic Classroom Practice (Devami)

	Teaching Staff's Opinions										Prospective teachers' Opinions																			
	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Most of times		Always		X		SS		Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Most of Times		Always		X		SS			
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
I create democratic-positive atmosphere in classroom.	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>24</b>	64.9	12	32.4	4.21	.85	6	3.9	33	21.7	57	37.5	48	31.6	8	5.3	3.12	.94						
I trust in my students and share this with them.	-	-	-	-	4	10.8	<b>23</b>	62.2	10	27	4.16	.60	12	7.9	43	28.3	50	32.9	40	26.3	7	4.6	2.91	1.02						
I have prejudices about my students.	-	-	1	2.7	5	13.5	9	24.3	<b>22</b>	59.5	4.40	.83	4	2.6	22	14.5	44	28.9	58	38.2	23	15.1	<b>3.46</b>	1.04						
My students can criticize me whenever necessary.	1	2.7	1	2.7	11	29.7	<b>15</b>	40.5	9	24.3	3.81	.93	48	31.6	57	37.5	35	23	9	5.9	3	2	2.09	.97						
I evaluate my students' success fairly.	1	2.7	-	-	-	-	10	27	<b>26</b>	70.3	<b>4.62</b>	.75	7	4.6	22	14.5	41	27	68	44.7	13	8.6	<b>3.36</b>	1.02						
I humiliate students during class.	-	-	1	2.7	-	-	8	21.6	<b>27</b>	73	<b>4.56</b>	.98	2	1.3	9	5.9	41	27	61	40.1	38	25	<b>3.79</b>	.97						
I believe I create a relationship with my students based on mutual respect-love.	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>21</b>	56.8	16	43.2	4.43	.50	9	5.9	38	25	52	34.2	41	27	11	7.2	3.02	1.05						
I listen my students whenever necessary.	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	48.6	<b>19</b>	51.4	<b>4.51</b>	.50	3	2	19	12.5	52	34.2	54	35.5	21	13.8	<b>3.40</b>	1.06						
I let my students join discussions about decisions related to the classroom.	-	-	-	-	8	21.6	14	37.8	<b>15</b>	40.5	4.18	.77	12	7.9	31	20.4	51	33.6	45	29.6	12	7.9	3.07	1.09						
I endeavor to understand my students.	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	45.9	<b>20</b>	54.1	<b>4.54</b>	.50	10	6.6	35	23	62	40.8	41	27	4	2.6	2.96	.93						
I encourage students to collaborate in activities inside and outside of the class.	-	-	2	5.4	4	10.8	<b>16</b>	43.2	15	40.5	4.18	.84	15	9.9	40	26.3	50	32.9	41	27	6	3.9	2.88	1.03						
I am positive (not negative) when criticizing students.	-	-	-	-	1	2.7	<b>21</b>	56.8	15	40.5	4.37	.54	9	5.9	42	27.6	51	33.6	41	27	8	5.3	2.96	1.02						
I usually use teaching methods and techniques in which students are active.	-	-	1	2.7	11	29.7	<b>17</b>	45.9	8	21.6	3.86	.78	13	8.6	42	27.6	61	40.1	28	18.4	8	5.3	2.84	.99						

Table 6 shows that the majority of the teaching staff gave themselves the full score (5) on more than half of the statements (13 statements), and for the rest of the statements they mostly gave 4 points. Considering the statements following statements has the highest averages; “I respect to my students as individuals ( $M = 4.78$ ), I let students to express their opinions during classes ( $M = 4.70$ ), I evaluate my students’ success fairly ( $M = 4.62$ ), and I threaten students with lower grade ( $M = 4.62$ ).

It is striking that the negative statement of threatening students with lower grades was given a high score by the prospective teachers also. The statements which has lowest average by teaching staff are; “Before talking about the topic of the day, I ask students to share their views and approaches about the topic” ( $M = 3.70$ ), “My students can criticize me whenever necessary” ( $M = 3.81$ ), and “I usually use methods and techniques in which students are more active” ( $M = 3.86$ ). The prospective teachers find classroom practices of the teaching staff much less than the teaching staff. In terms of the teaching staff’s democratic classroom practices, the prospective teachers gave the highest scores to the following statements; “Teaching staff humiliate students during class” ( $M = 3.79$ ) “Teaching staff treat us with prejudices” ( $M = 3.46$ ) and “Teaching staff act as a dictator” ( $M = 3.46$ ).

In the prospective teachers’ evaluations, the lowest scores given to the following statements about the teaching staff are “We can criticize the teaching staff whenever necessary” ( $M = 2.09$ ), “Teaching staff use active teaching methods and techniques during classes” ( $M = 2.84$ ), and “Teaching staff encourage us to collaborate both inside and outside of the classroom” ( $M = 2.88$ ).

### Variables that Affect Opinions of Teaching Staff about Democratic of Classroom Practices

For the fourth research questions, t test and ANOVA were conducted to see if there were variables that affect the views of teaching staff concerning the democratic classroom practices. The t test results with respect to the teaching staff’s gender, democratic behaviors and having an administrative duty are shown in Table 7.

Table 7.

*T Test Results with Respect to the Teaching Staff’s Gender, Democratic Behaviors and Having an Administrative Duty*

	N	X	S.S	sd	t	p
Male	27	106.7407	7.46063	35	-2.34	.025
Female	10	117.2000	20.10970			
Have an administrative duty <sup>1</sup>	18	108.5556	6.3821	35	-463	.64
Don’t have an administrative duty <sup>2</sup>	19	110.5263	16.9258			

Table 7 shows that average number of female teaching staff is higher than males ( $M = 117.2$ ). There is a significant difference in .05 meaningfulness level in favor of female teaching staff according to gender variable,  $p < .05$ . That is, female teaching staff think they are more democratic during class. Averages of the teaching staff with and without administrative duties are very close to each other ( $M_1 = 108.55$ ,  $M_2 = 110.52$ ). When  $p = .64$ , it is  $p > .05$ . The fact that teaching staff has an administrative duty is at .05 significance level does not make any significant difference regarding the democratic classroom practices.

ANOVA was conducted to see if there was a meaningful difference between the teaching staff's years of service and democratic classroom practices. Frequencies, average and standard deviations of teaching staff whose years of service are different were calculated first. This distribution is given in Table 8.

Table 8.

*Descriptive Findings about Democratic Classroom Practices of Teaching Staff with Different Service Years and Titles*

Years of Service	N	X	S.S	Title	N	X	S.S
1-5	14	110.3571	18.61185	Professor	1	111.0000	.
6-10	8	107.2500	10.49830	Assoc. Prof.	3	102.3333	5.03322
11-15	5	110.2000	6.09918	Asst. Prof.	22	109.7273	7.32369
16+	10	110.0000	6.71648	Lecturer	2	115.0000	2.82843
Total	37	109.5676	12.78571	Research Assistant	9	110.2222	23.65786
				Total	37	109.5676	12.78571

When averages of the teaching staff's democratic classroom practices grouped according to years of service, the average among the groups were found to be so close to each other. The result of the test indicates that the homogeneity of the variances,  $p = .501$ , and  $p > .05$  was found, which shows that the variances of the groups were homogeneous. Considering average of the teaching staff, the lecturers have the highest average while the associate professors have the lowest average. Nonetheless, the averages are close to each other. The result of the test indicates that the homogeneity of the variances,  $p = .205$  and,  $p > .05$  were found, which shows that the variances of the groups were homogeneous. The ANOVA test is given in Table 9.

Table 9.  
ANOVA Findings about the Teaching Staff's Years of Service, Titles and Democratic Classroom Practices

		Squares total	sd	Squares average	F	p
Years of Service	Among the groups	55.567	3	18.522		
	Inside of the groups	5829.514	33	176.652	.105	.957
	Total	5885.081	36			
Title	Among the groups	222.495	4	55.624		
	Inside of the groups	5662.586	32	176.956	.314	.866
	Total	5885.081	36			

Table 9 shows that there is no significant difference between the teaching staff's democratic classroom practices and years of service ( $p > .05$ ). In other words, the democratic classroom practices of a teaching staff at his 16th years of services and an instructor who is at the beginning of his professional life is not different. There is no significant difference between the titles of the teaching staff and the democratic classroom practices  $p = .866, p > .05$ .

### Self-Efficacy of Prospective Teachers Concerning Democratic Education

For last research question, a self-efficacy questionnaire was applied to the prospective teachers to see how democratic they would be in the classroom when they begin to teach. The data are presented in Table 10.

Table 10.  
The Results of the Prospective Teachers' Self-Efficacy Questionnaire

Statements	Yes		No		Partly	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
I determine the rules with students	<b>115</b>	75.7	7	4.6	29	19.1
I am also subject to the rules that are determined with students	<b>132</b>	86.8	7	4.6	12	7.9
I treat everyone equally.	<b>125</b>	82.2	6	3.9	20	13.2
I make students to respect to different opinions.	<b>135</b>	88.8	-	-	16	10.5
I have control over my prejudices.	<b>101</b>	66.4	3	2	47	30.9
I become authoritative.	43	28.3	27	17.8	<b>81</b>	53.3
I confirm that students have rights.	<b>140</b>	92.1	1	.7	10	6.6
I let students to express their opinions freely.	<b>135</b>	88.8	2	1.3	14	9.2



Table 10.  
*The Results of the Prospective Teachers' Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Devamı)*

Statements	Yes		No		Partly	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
I assign the class prefect or the head of an educational group through election.	<b>134</b>	88.2	4	2.6	12	7.9
I make decisions about the class with my students.	<b>123</b>	80.9	6	3.9	22	14.5
I believe that students can fulfill their responsibilities.	<b>102</b>	67.1	1	.7	48	31.6
I punish guilty and disobeying students.	31	20.4	24	15.8	<b>95</b>	62.5
I don't give extra freedom to students.	19	12.5	64	42.1	<b>67</b>	44.1
I put certain restrictions for students.	28	18.4	<b>62</b>	40.8	61	40.1
I make students to accept validity of the rules by force when necessary.	29	19.1	<b>62</b>	40.8	60	39.5

According to the responses given by the prospective teachers, majority of the prospective teachers said yes to the ten statements (at least 66.4%). The highest scored statements among these statements are "I confirm that prospective teachers have rights (92%)," "I let students to express their opinions freely (88%)," "I make students to respect to different opinions (88%)" and "I assign the class prefect or head of an educational group through election (88%)." The no statements with highest percentages are "I don't give extra freedom to the students (42%)," "I put certain restrictions for students (40%)" and "I make students to accept validity of the rules by force when necessary (40%)." The partly statements with highest percentages are "I punish the guilty and disobeying students (62.5%)," "I become authoritative (53%)," and "I don't give extra freedom to students (44%)".

## Discussion

One of the aims of this study is to reveal prospective teachers' opinions towards democracy. While prospective teachers describe the democratic class with the statements such as "letting students to express their opinions freely, protecting rights and respect, pluralism (make decisions together and choose them), teacher is not the only dominant but also the students (equality of teacher-student), openness to difference (tolerance)," they stated they will exhibit undemocratic behaviors in some cases. In the study made by Şentürk and Oyman (2014), prospective teachers stated that followings are among the features of a democratic education environment: "Students can express their thoughts without fear", "Teachers and students have equal rights" and "All thoughts are respected". Samancı and Yıldırım (2015) found that primary school prospective teachers considered creation of freedom of expression, treating justly, giving im-

portance to class participation about decision-making, and listening students actively as democratic attitudes and behaviors.

Prospective teachers consider communication as the most important factor in achieving class discipline. In terms of the important concepts in achieving the class discipline the students considered the communication in the first place, teacher in the second place, student in the third, rules in the fourth and punishment in the last place. However, when asked “how are you going to ensure the class discipline?” the first place is given to putting rules and obeying them. The most common expression in prospective teachers’ responses is “authoritarian, serious, hard teacher position.” When the prospective teachers begin to teach, they plan to become authoritarian teachers as they observe during their education. Unfortunately, teachers’ inappropriate attitudes and behaviors sometimes cause children to experience some negativity about democratic education and so hinders emergence of democratic behaviors. According to the studies conducted in the Turkish context, authoritarian structure of teachers’ attitudes towards students is common and becoming stronger day by day (Gürşimşek & Göreğenli, 2004; Özdemir, 2009).

Only 12% of the prospective teachers stated that they have studied in a democratic class. Schools, however, are expected to be institutions not only to give information about what democracy is, but also to enable democracy to be adapted into life by students and to be selected as a democratic lifestyle by them in the future (Kıncal & Işık 2003). The training of individuals who have transformed democratic values into a way of life is possible in the school environment, but only with the help of teachers who have adopted these values. Therefore, teachers need to have not only an understanding of democratic society, values, behavior and attitudes but also need to practice this knowledge and understanding in the classroom. Otherwise, pure information about democracy would not work out in the long term (as cited in: Topkaya & Yavuz, 2011; Ravitc, 1991). Teachers should guide students through their behaviorism classroom. Teachers must respect rational, spiritual and self-identity of their students (Celep, 2002).

The opinions of both the teaching staff and the prospective teachers about the teaching staff’s democratic classroom practices were reported. Before comparing these two scales, the assessments of teaching staff and the prospective teachers were discussed separately. Accordingly, the teaching staff gives themselves an average of 4.32 points out of 5.00 on the scale. This average shows that the teaching staff perceives their classroom practices very democratic. Gömleksiz (1988) found that 69% of the teaching staff teach with the principles of democracy. In this respect, the studies conducted since 1988 have parallelisms indicating that teaching staff considers they teach in a democratic classroom environment. In the present research, the prospective teachers gave 3.10 points out of 5.00 to the teaching staff. It can be stated that they observe the teaching staff moderately democratic. Similarly, Gömleksiz’s (1988) study showed that the students did not agree with the teaching staff about their democratic classroom practices. In the

study conducted by Şentürk and Oyman (2014), 44% of the prospective teachers at Hacettepe University and Eskişehir Osmangazi University stated that teaching staff had democratic classroom management skills, while 19% considered partly and 37% of the students did not think that the teaching staff has democratic skills.

The teaching staff gave highest averages to the following statements: “I respect to my students as individuals”, “I let students to express their opinions during classes” and “I threaten students with lower grade”. Unfortunately, one of the highest averages is a negative behavior which is also scored highly by the prospective teachers. On the other hand, the statements with the lowest averages are: “Before talking about the topic of the day, I ask students to share their views and approaches about the topic” and “My students can criticize me whenever necessary”. In Gömleksiz’s (1988) research, teaching staff gave the lowest score to the “Majority can make a decision and govern; the thoughts can freely be organized.” In this context, it seems that while some progress has been made in the field of democratic rights since 1988, some issues still need to be taken seriously.

In terms of the democratic classroom practices of the teaching staff the prospective teachers gave the highest scores to the following negative statements: “Teaching staff are biased towards us and “Teaching staff acts like a dictator in the class”. According to the prospective teachers, practices of the teaching staff in the classroom are reminiscent of the authoritarian teacher model. The statements scored lowest by the prospective teachers about the teaching staff are: “We can criticize the teaching staff whenever necessary” and “Teaching staff use active teaching methods and techniques in classes”. In Gömleksiz’s (1988) study, students gave the lowest score to statements of “Avoiding claim that people who think differently are in error, allowing students to make a decision when planning class activities, using grades as a forcing tool, and making necessary changes in direction of criticism” (p. 87-88). The common point of both studies is that “the teaching staff is open to criticism and recommendations.” It is obvious that there is not much difference since 1988. Duman and Koç (2004) revealed that students thought teaching staff demonstrated democratic attitudes and behaviors at middle and lower levels. Kayabaşı (2011) also revealed that students believed that teaching staff practiced democratic principles at the “medium level.”

The study also has showed that the teaching staff’s democratic class practices have changed at the level of significance according to gender. Female teaching staff think they are more democratic in the class. There is no significant difference between the democratic class practices and having an administrative duty, years of service and title.

After receiving the prospective teachers’ opinions about the teaching staff’s democratic classroom practices, they filled the self-efficacy questionnaire. The majority of prospective teachers said yes to ten of the statements about what they would do when they begin to teach. The highest acceptance rates of these statements are: “I confirm that students have rights”, “I let students to express

their opinions freely”, and “I make students to respect different opinions”. In the studies conducted by G mleksiz (1988) and Kayabaşı (2011) it was also revealed that students have adopted democratic principles. In the present study, the students most often say no to the following statements: “I don’t give extra freedom to students”, “I put certain restrictions for students” and “I make students accept validity of the rules by force when necessary”. Even though the statements that the students say yes are very important, the ones they say no and partly are also so important because electing a class president has become a very nonfunctional and showpiece. The democratic classroom does not emerge only from the election of a class president. Statements such as “I make prospective teachers to accept validity of the rules by force when necessary”, “I become authoritative,” and “I punish,” “I put restrictions” require violation of democratic concepts such as equality, value, participation, judgment, rights, speech, and freedom. It is clear that the prospective teachers are ready to practice the behaviors that they give low scores for the teaching staff.

When teachers give importance to preliminary learning, culture, and pedagogical strategies, it would increase the productivity of the school in democracy education. In order to reach democratic life standards, it is important for all prospective teachers to cooperate with each other, to participate in the class discussions and in determination of class rules. In democratic education environments, prospective teachers need to acquire characteristics of thinking, questioning, deciding, and approaching to the events in multifaceted and critical way. Teachers have too many tasks in helping students to acquire these qualifications (Oğuz, 2004). Teacher, who adopts democratic management, shares all responsibilities and authorities with the students regarding the class management. It also contributes students to form a democratic consciousness when they involve in the management and decision-making process about the class management (Alicıg znel, 1999). The concept of democracy, which is an endeavor to be taught abstractly, can be thought concretely when students see themselves as being democratically treated by teachers in classroom. As a result, students can improve their democratic attitudes (Kepenekçi Karaman, 2000).

As a result, in democratic societies, individuals are respectful, helpful, tolerant, collaborative, ethical, and responsible toward each other. Societies want to be a democratic society because these values are important in terms of its future and ensuring human rights. The development of democratic life depends on democratic formation of classes and schools. In order to create a democratic society, teachers and schools must first believe in democracy and be democratic. Thus, democratic teachers and schools will provide a democratic lifestyle to the students. If students are not accepted as citizens in schools, they will not accept the democracy when they grow up. For this reason, students should be seen as citizens in the classroom and should be treated as a citizen. This approach is valid for every level of educational institution from primary school to university

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