

TEACHERS' APPROACHES TO THE PRINCIPLES OF CRITICAL PEDAGOGY: A MIXED-METHOD STUDY

Abstract: Critical pedagogy is a pluralistic approach that emphasizes the individual and his/her creative potential (Freire, 2010). Today's schools are seen far from this process and the need for a renewal process becomes highly evident. The purpose of the current study is to investigate teachers' opinions at different levels of education about the principles of critical pedagogy in terms of other variables. To this end, the study employed the "explanatory sequential mixed design," one of the mixed-method approaches. In the quantitative dimension of the study, the participating teachers' opinions were elicited by using the "Principles of Critical Pedagogy Scale" developed by Yılmaz (2009). In the qualitative dimension, a semi-structured interview form was used to collect data. While 378 teachers participated in the quantitative dimension of the study, 16 teachers participated in the qualitative dimension. According to the findings of the study, it was found that the participating teachers' level of agreement with the principles of critical pedagogy is low in general. The findings obtained in the qualitative dimension of the current study have revealed that even the teachers positively evaluating the education system in different respects stated that rather than liberating individuals, the education system is an obstacle to their liberation.

Keywords: Critical pedagogy, teacher opinions, mixed-method

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INTRODUCTION

An advocate of radical education and a society without school, Illich (2009) and an opponent of compulsory education, Baker (2006) argue that schools are a tool that shapes the moral and social beliefs of the public in line with the interests of a dominant and elite class. According to libertarian educators, schools and curriculums under the control of the state train submissive, docile, and stereotype individuals obeying the ruling powers through education systems (Chomsky, 2007; Spring, 2010). Theorists of liberation pedagogy, in general, see education as a means of humanization because, in this conception, education should be a liberating tool, not a shaping tool. One of the movements classified as liberation pedagogy is critical pedagogy. Pedagogy, in its most basic sense is a branch of science that examines student-teacher relations in education, the position of schools as educational institutions in society, its relationship with education, and its models in the cultural domain. The ability of individuals to learn to see themselves in interaction with the world is at the root of pedagogy (Walker, 2010). Education should be to eliminate inequalities in society and bring freedom to the oppressed (Kincheloe, 2004; Freire, 2010; McLaren, 2011).

Most of the influential claims of critical pedagogy are made by contemporary critical educators. Critical educators such as Apple (2004), Giroux (2007), McLaren (2011) establish the relationship of education with the infrastructure (economic structure) under the influence of Marxism and the Frankfurt School, Gramsci (1999) and Althusser (2003) and state that education does not only takes place at school (İnal, 2010). For them, pedagogy is an essential tool for the establishment of political power and its legitimation. However, this practice focuses on the ideas of ruling classes and does not represent the existence of the oppressed classes (worker, women, disabled, ethnic groups, etc.) in educational materials (curriculums, textbooks, etc.) and ignores them and the representation of these classes in education is not considered possible in the existing education system (McLaren, 2011). Many of the critical pedagogues, especially Freire (2010), think that the new form of education, which the change of its system will form, will only be possible with an educational practice (praxis) that will be formed over the problems and languages of the oppressed class.

Critical pedagogy barrows the idea of the creative potential of man and the necessity of valuing this from Marxism and claims that the individual's potential can be revealed as long as he/she can socialize (Giroux, 2007) and sees education as dependent on society (Apple, 2017). Thus, the main conception to be adopted is that education should be "social". Pedagogy in "social" education which is based on the dialogic approach and critical thinking and where student and teachers' roles can change, believes that democratic education can be achieved to the extent to which the educated can get out of the subordinate role (Freire, 2010). The main goal in critical pedagogy is to create a social society and to use education to this end (Kanpol, 1999; Kessing-Styles, 2003; Kincheloe, 2004). Therefore, Kinchloe (2008) explains the basic assumptions of critical pedagogy as establishing the relationship between teacher and student on the grounds of liberation and positive change, the politics of education, the observance of justice and equality at every moment of education, and the recognition of power sources.

According to Althusser (2003), education is the most effective ideological tool and conveys the desired ideological forms to the student through teachers and books. Education is an area where power and ideology are integrated, an arena of struggle and reconciliation (Apple, 2004). Globalization and neoliberal policies have commodified education, making it an expensive and for sale commodity. In this direction, educational institutions are structured like businesses (İnal, 2010). Education focuses on the need for individuals to acquire knowledge and skills that can help them adapt to the information society, the learning society, and economic and technological developments. This situation leads to an increase in the importance given to education, and makes education a new investment area for capital and a profitable sector (Ercan, 1998). Freire (2010) defines this education style as "banking model of education". According to this system, education is positioned as "savings investment", students as "investment objects" and teachers as "investors".

In summary, critical pedagogy can be thought of as a conception of education and a way of life that cares about and advocates the liberation of the individual, believes that knowledge must be constructed through

the process of dialogue and questioning, and adopts the principle of raising a critical consciousness (Kincheloe, 2004; Ayhan, 2009; Freire 2010; İnal, 2010; Yıldırım, 2013).

When the studies conducted with critical pedagogy are examined; Yılmaz (2009) concluded in his study that teachers agree with the principles of critical pedagogy at a moderate level. In addition, it was stated that there was no significant difference between the participants according to gender. Yılmaz and Altınkurt (2011) concluded that there is a significant difference in favor of male participants in terms of gender. Aslan and Kozikoğlu (2015) concluded that pre-service teachers moderately agree with the principles of critical pedagogy and that male pre-service teachers agree more with these principles. Sarıgöz and Özkara (2015) found that pre-service teachers have little information about the principles of critical pedagogy. Terzi, Şahan, Çelik and Zöğ (2015) found a significant correlation between pre-service teachers' epistemological beliefs and the principles of critical pedagogy. Kesik and Bayram (2015) stated that teachers' critical pedagogy views vary depending on their state of membership to a union. Balcı (2016) found that only in the dimension of liberation, participants displayed strong agreement. Büyükgöze and Fındık (2018) reported that female teacher's more than male teachers and teachers having a graduate degree more than teachers having a bachelor's degree agree with the principles of critical pedagogy. Knight and Pearl (2000) revealed the difference between the concepts of democracy and critical pedagogy. Moss and Lee (2010) investigated teacher behaviours according to the philosophies of education. Golden (2010) sought an answer to the question "Is critical pedagogy possible?" Breuning (2011) investigated the definitions, basic objectives and goals of critical pedagogy proposed by 17 prominent pedagogues. Preece and Mencke (2013) examined Freire's problem-posing practices and critical pedagogy and democracy experiences by bringing praxis experiences to the fore. Halx (2014) examined whether the critical pedagogy approach in Latin America had positive results for the students who couldn't finish high school. Aliakbari and Allahmoradi (2012) and Mahmoodarabi and Khodabakhsh (2015) examined teachers' approach to critical pedagogy in Iran. Ro (2016) examined the drama approach and the critical pedagogy approach. Kennedy (2017) conducted research on low-income students and teachers who have just started the profession by establishing a critical dialogue circle between teachers at the school. In summary, when international studies are examined, it has been noticed that critical pedagogy, which was discussed more theoretically in the early 2000s, has been supported by practical studies more recently.

Critical pedagogy eliminates the hierarchical structure between teacher and student and advocates that both perform learning processes in education (Freire, 2010). Schools are seen as an environment where teachers and students can effectively question and criticize theory and practice (Giroux, 2007); it is stated that in classrooms that adopt critical pedagogy, authority and responsibility should be shared between teachers and students (Moreno-Lopez, 2005). Critical pedagogy requires cooperation, and it is not easy to achieve this in schools (Riasati and Mollaei, 2012). In the traditional conception of education, the definition and application of education are largely based on behavioural approach, and thus, it is seen as a process of behaviour changing at the desired direction (Ertürk, 1979). An education in which the oppressive and hierarchical communication between teacher and student is eliminated and individuals are liberated (İnal, 2010b) seems possible with a pluralist approach, that is, with critical pedagogy. Today's schools are anti-democratic; they are based on the views of dominant groups and the need for a renewal process becomes more evident as it is in the service of some authoritarian and anti-democratic groups such as neo-liberal administrations and companies (İnal, 2010). This renewal will be achieved through teachers, who have a substantial influence in shaping the education system, and students who are based on this system in the desired way. Therefore, it seems to be of great importance to determine teachers' opinions about and approaches towards critical pedagogy.

Moreover, in the literature review, it was found that there is limited research on critical pedagogy in Turkey and thus, it can be argued that more research is needed on the subject. As a result, the determination of teachers' approaches towards the principles of critical pedagogy is thought to be important in terms of its contributions to the literature and its educational and social effects. In this regard, the purpose of the current study is to investigate the opinions of teachers working at different levels of education on critical pedagogy in terms of other variables. To this end, answers to the following questions were sought:

1. Do the teachers' approaches to critical pedagogy vary significantly depending on;

- 1.1. Gender,
 - 1.2. Seniority,
 - 1.3. The residential area where they are working (place of work),
 - 1.4. Faculty graduated,
 - 1.5. Level of education at which they are teaching,
 - 1.6. Their education levels?
2. What are the teachers’ views of critical pedagogy?

METHOD

DESIGN

In the current study, the explanatory sequential mixed design, was used. This design starts with quantitative research and continues with qualitative research and here the main goal is to conduct an in-depth analysis and elaboration of the data collected with quantitative research by using quantitative research techniques (Creswell and Plano Clarck, 2014). In the quantitative dimension of the study, the teachers’ opinions were examined with the help of a scale considering different variables. In the qualitative dimension of the study, a semi-structured interview form was developed based on the findings obtained through the scale in the quantitative dimension.

PARTICIPANTS

In the quantitative dimension of the study, the participants were selected via the convenience sampling method (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2007). The participants in the quantitative dimension are 378 teachers working in the central and surrounding districts of the city of Antalya. Some demographic information about the participants is given in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic information about the participants

Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	207	54.8
	Male	171	45.2
Level of teaching	Primary school	120	31.7
	Middle school	141	37.3
	High school	117	31
Education level	Associate degree	18	4.8
	Bachelor’s degree	319	84.4
	Graduate degree	41	10.8
Place of work	Surrounding district	141	37.3
	Central district	237	62.7
Faculty graduated	Education faculty	258	68.3
	Science-Letters faculty	68	18
	Others	52	13.8
Seniority	1-10 years	78	20.6
	11-20 years	185	48.9
	21 and more	115	30.4

In the qualitative dimension of the study, the criterion sampling method, one of the purposive sampling methods, was used. In the criterion sampling method, criterion and criteria can be developed by the researcher (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016. p. 122). The main criterion adopted in the selection of the participants in the current study was to include the teachers that could represent the variables (gender, place of work, graduated faculty) for which significant differences were found in the quantitative dimension of the study. As the purpose of the explanatory design is to explain quantitative findings, the participants of

the qualitative dimension should also be the participants of the quantitative dimension (Creswel and Clark, 2014). In the construction of the sample to be used in the qualitative dimension of the study, participants were selected from among the participants involved in the quantitative dimension of the study according to some pre-determined criteria and on a volunteer basis. For convenience in data analysis, the participants were coded as follows:

Table 2. Participants of the qualitative dimension

Participant	Gender	Faculty Graduated	Place of Work
T1	Female	Others	Central
T2	Female	Since and Letters	Surrounding
T3	Male	Education	Surrounding
T4	Male	Others	Central
T5	Male	Others	Central
T6	Female	Science and Letters	Central
T7	Male	Others	Surrounding
T8	Male	Education	Central
T9	Male	Science and Letters	Surrounding
T10	Female	Education	Central
T11	Female	Science and Letters	Central
T12	Female	Education	Surrounding
T13	Male	Education	Central
T14	Male	Science and Letters	Central
T15	Female	Science and Letters	Surrounding
T16	Female	Education	Surrounding

DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTION TOOL: To determine the participating teachers’ views of critical pedagogy, the “Principles of Critical Pedagogy Scale” developed by Yılmaz (2009) was used. The five-point Likert scale consists of 31 items and three dimensions called education system, functions of school and libertarian school. There 15 items in the dimension of education system, 11 in the dimension of functions of school and 5 items in the dimension of libertarian school. Each item is responded to on a scale ranging from (strongly disagree; 1 point) to (strongly agree; 5 points). In the scale, 12 items are reverse coded. Higher scores taken from the scale indicate increasing scores of agreements with the principles of critical pedagogy while the opposite is true for low scores. The Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient calculated to determine reliability was found to be 0.75. It was found to be 0.88 for the dimension of the education system, 0.78 for the dimension of functions of the school, 0.61 for the dimension of the libertarian school. The total variance explained by the scale is 40% (Yılmaz, 2009). In the current study, the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient for the whole scale was calculated to be 0.82 and 0.89 for the dimension of education system, 0.73 for the dimension of functions of school and 0.73 for the dimension of libertarian school.

QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION TOOL: A semi-structured interview form was used to collect quantitative data. An interview is a method developed to cover all the questions related to research and it allows changing the sequence and sentence structure of questions and detailed analysis of some topics (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). The semi-structured interview form was developed considering the dimensions and items of the scale used in the quantitative dimension by the researchers. In the development process of the interview form, first, a draft form consisted of 11 items was developed. After expert review, piloting of the form was performed through the interviews conducted with two teachers. Then it was controlled by two experts in the field of educational programs and a Turkish teacher; thus, the final form was obtained.

DATA COLLECTION

The quantitative data were collected by the researchers in the spring term of the 2019-2020 school year. The participation was on a volunteer basis. The completion of the data collection tool lasted for 10-15 minutes. A total of 500 scales were administered, yet 415 scales were returned and 378 of them were found to be suitable for analysis. In order to collect quantitative data, face-to-face interviews were conducted in the same academic year. The interviews were conducted on a volunteer basis. The interviews lasting about 30-45 minutes were tape-recorded. The interviews were transcribed in the computer environment and then presented to the review of the participants to gain their consent on the correctness of the data. In the research process, the opinions of an expert specialized on qualitative research were sought in relation to the collection of the data, analysis of the data and reporting of the findings.

DATA ANALYSIS

QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS: In the analysis of the data, SPSS 22.0 program package was used. Arithmetic means and standard deviations were calculated to determine the teachers' views of the principles of critical pedagogy. In the interpretation of the values, the following intervals were used; very low "1-1.79", low "1.8-2.59", medium 2.6-3.39, high "3.4-4.19", very high "4.2-5.00". In the analysis of the data, the Levene test was first conducted to test the homogeneity of the groups and skewness and Kurtosis values were calculated to test the normality of the distribution. The groups whose skewness and Kurtosis values were found to be between +3 and -3 were accepted to show a normal distribution (Kalaycı, 2010). Non-parametric tests were used for the groups not showing normal distribution.

T-test was conducted to determine whether the teachers' opinions vary significantly depending on gender and place of work. In cases when group means were found to differ significantly in the t-test, effect size was calculated by using Cohen's d formula (Cohen, 1988). When the value calculated with this formula is 0.2 and lower, then the effect size is low, between 0.2 and 0.5, it is medium, between 0.5 and 0.8, it is high and between 0.8 and 1.3, it is very high. ANOVA was used to determine whether the teachers' opinions vary significantly depending on the variables of seniority, faculty graduation, level of teaching, and education level. When a significant difference was found, Tukey HSD test was used to determine the source of the difference.

QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS: The data collected with the semi-structured interview form were subjected to descriptive analysis. In descriptive analysis, the data obtained can be organized according to themes or presented considering the questions asked during the interview process and direct quotations are frequently given to strikingly reflect participants' opinions (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). Moreover, while analysing the data, the researchers were consistent in their coding and two randomly selected interview forms were coded by the second researcher, who is experienced in qualitative research, and thus the inter-coder consistency was calculated. In the calculation of the inter-coder coefficient, the formula $P = [Na / (Na + Nd)] \times 100$ (Miles and Huberman, 1994) was used and the inter-coder consistency was found to be 81.81% for the first interview and 69.56% for the second.

In the qualitative dimension of the study, direct quotations from the opinions of the participants were presented in the findings section of the study to establish the reliability and validity of the study and the data were described in detail to ensure the transferability of the results. In order to prevent misunderstandings that could occur during the interviews, the participants' statements were presented to them in summary. In order to keep the names of the participants, the teachers were given codes as T1, T2... . In the research process, the opinions of an expert specialized on qualitative research were sought in relation to the collection of the data, analysis of the data and reporting of the findings.

FINDINGS/RESULTS

WHAT ARE THE TEACHERS' APPROACHES TO CRITICAL PEDAGOGY IN TERMS OF VARIOUS VARIABLES?

In this section, the participants' level of agreement with the principles of critical pedagogy in the dimensions and in general was analysed. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Participants' approaches to critical pedagogy

Variable	n	\bar{x}	Ss
Critical Pedagogy (General)	378	2.94	.52
Education System	378	3.05	.66
Functions of School	378	3.03	.58
Libertarian School	378	2.73	.63

As can be seen, the participants' level of agreement with the principles of critical pedagogy is "low" in general (\bar{x} =2.94). The lowest level of agreement was found for the dimension of libertarian school (\bar{x} =2.73), followed by the dimension of functions of school (\bar{x} =3.03) and education system (\bar{x} =3.05). When the results for the individual items were examined, the highest level of agreement was found for the item "schools should work to establish social justice" (\bar{x} =3.98) while the lowest level of agreement was found for the item "discipline is an indispensable part of schools" (\bar{x} =1.84). When the results for the individual items in the dimensions were examined, the highest levels of agreement were found for the items "the results of the centralized exams in the education system are not an indicator of student success" (\bar{x} =3.70) and "power relations in the society are influential on education" (\bar{x} =3.52) in the dimension of education system while the lowest levels of agreement were found for the items "school destroys the individual and society" (\bar{x} =2.34) and "schools are places where inequality is reproduced" (\bar{x} =2.66). In the dimension of functions of school, the highest levels of agreement were found for the items "school should work to establish social justice" (\bar{x} =3.98) and "when criticized by students, the teacher should question himself/herself" (\bar{x} =3.84) while the lowest levels of agreement were found for the items "discipline is an indispensable part of schools" (\bar{x} =1.84) and "school is an essential institution" (\bar{x} =1.81). In the dimension of libertarian school, the highest levels of agreement were found for the items "teachers should share authority and responsibilities in class with students" (\bar{x} =3.68) and "school should be a place for the liberation of students" (\bar{x} =3.57) while the lowest levels of agreement were found for the items "education is a must to have a good standing in the society" (\bar{x} =2.09) and "people should work hard to have a good standing in the society" (\bar{x} =2.13).

Independent samples t-test was conducted to determine whether the teachers' views of critical pedagogy vary significantly depending on gender and the results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Gender-based comparison of the teachers' views of critical pedagogy

Variable	Groups	n	\bar{x}	Ss	sd	t	p
Critical Pedagogy (General)	Female	207	3.00	.47	376	2.64	.040*
	Male	171	2.86	.57			
Education System	Female	207	3.10	.61	376	1.59	.049*
	Male	171	2.99	.71			
Functions of School	Female	207	3.11	.52	376	2.85	.058
	Male	171	2.94	.63			
Libertarian School	Female	207	2.80	.62	376	2.23	.219
	Male	171	2.65	.65			

*p<.05

As can be seen in Table 4, the teachers' views of critical pedagogy vary significantly depending on gender in general and in the dimension of education system (p<0.05). Yet, no such significant difference was found

for the dimensions of functions of school and libertarian school ($p>0.05$). The mean level of agreement of the female teachers with the scale items ($\bar{x}=3.00$) is higher than the mean level of the male teachers ($\bar{x}=2.86$). When the groups in which significant differences were found because of t-test were examined in terms of effect size, the Cohen’s d value showing the variation of agreement by gender in general was found to be 0.27, which corresponds to a medium effect size [$r=0.13$, (13%)]. The effect size values calculated for the dimensions are as follows: ($\delta= 0.16$) for the dimension of education system, ($\delta= 0.29$) for the dimension of functions of school and ($\delta= 0.23$) for the dimension of libertarian school. These values show that gender has a small effect size in the dimension of education system [$r=0.08$, (8%)] and medium effect sizes in the dimensions of functions of school [$r=0.14$, (14%)] and libertarian school [$r=0.11$, (11%)].

ANOVA test was used to determine whether the teachers’ views of critical pedagogy vary significantly depending on seniority and the results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Seniority-based comparison of the teachers’ views of critical pedagogy

Variable	Groups	Source of the Variance	Sum of Squares	sd	Mean Square	F	p	Difference
Critical Pedagogy (General)	0-10 Years	Between-groups	.601	2	.306	1.113	.330	
	11-20 Years	Within-groups	102.964	375	.275			
	21 Years & Longer	Total	103.575	377				
Education System	0-10 Years	Between-groups	.328		.164	.375	.688	
	11-20 Years	Within-groups	164.130		.438			
	21 Years & Longer	Total	164.458					
Functions of School	0-10 Years	Between-groups	.453		.227	.662	.516	
	11-20 Years	Within-groups	128.348		.342			
	21 Years & Longer	Total	128.801					
Libertarian School	0-10 Years	Between-groups	3.124		1.562	3.875	.022*	0-10 Years/21 Years & Longer
	11-20 Years	Within-groups	151.141		.403			
	21 Years & Longer	Total	154.265					

* $p<.05$

As can be seen in Table 5, the teacher’s level of agreement with the scale items does not vary significantly depending on seniority [$F(2 - 377) = 1.113$, $p>0.05$]. This is also true for the dimensions of education system and functions of school. When the teachers’ mean agreement scores are examined, it is seen that mean score of the teachers with 1-10 years of teaching experience is ($\bar{x}=2.99$), that of the teachers with 11-20 years of teaching experience is ($\bar{x}=2.95$), and that of the teachers with 21 or more years of teaching experience is ($\bar{x}=2.88$). But the teachers’ level of agreement with the items in the dimension of libertarian school was found to be varying significantly depending on seniority [$F(2 - 377) = 3.875$, $p<0.05$]. Tukey test was run to determine the source of this difference. The reason for this significant difference was found to be the difference between the mean agreement score of the teachers with 1-10 years of teaching experience ($\bar{x}=2.89$) and that of the teachers with 21 or more years of teaching experience ($\bar{x}=2.63$).

T-test was conducted to determine whether the teachers’ views of the principles of critical pedagogy vary significantly depending on place of work (Table 6). The teachers’ level of agreement with the principles of critical pedagogy was found to be varying significantly depending on place of work ($p<0.05$). The teachers working in the schools located in the central districts of the city were found to have a more positive perception ($\bar{x}=2.97$) than the teachers working in the surrounding districts ($\bar{x}=2.88$). In the dimensions of education system and functions of school, a significant difference was found in favour of the teachers working in the central districts. In the dimension of libertarian school, although the mean score of the teachers working in the central districts ($\bar{x}=2.97$) was found to be higher than that of the teachers working in the surrounding districts ($\bar{x}=2.88$), this difference is not statistically significant ($p>0.05$).

Table 6. Results of the t-test conducted to determine whether the teachers’ views of the principles of critical pedagogy vary significantly depending on place of work

Variable	Groups	n	\bar{x}	Ss	sd	t	p
Critical Pedagogy (General)	Surrounding	141	2.88	.59	376	-1.66	.009*
	Central	237	2.97	.47			
Education System	Surrounding	141	3.00	.73	376	-1.29	.011*
	Central	237	3.08	.61			
Functions of School	Surrounding	141	2.94	.65	376	-2.42	.037*
	Central	237	3.09	.53			
Libertarian School	Surrounding	141	2.70	.66	376	-.81	.165
	Central	237	2.75	.62			

*p<.05

When the groups in which significant results were found in the t-test were examined in terms of effect size, the Cohen’s d value for the level of agreement with the principles of critical pedagogy in general was found to be 0.17, which corresponds to a small effect size [r=0.08, (8%)]. The effect sizes for the dimensions are as follows: (δ= 0.10) for the dimension of education system, (δ= 0.25) for the dimension of functions of school and (δ= 0.08) for the dimension of libertarian school. These results show that the variable of place of work has small effects sizes on the dimensions of education system [r=0.05, (5%)] and libertarian school [r=0.04, (4%)] and a medium effect size on the dimension of functions of school [r=0.12, (12%)]. ANOVA test was run to determine whether the teachers’ views of the principles of critical pedagogy vary significantly depending on faculty graduated and the results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Investigation of the teachers’ views of the principles of critical pedagogy according to faculty graduated

Variable	Faculty	Source of the Variance	Sum of Squares	sd	Mean Square	F	p	Difference
Critical Pedagogy (General)	Education	Between-Groups	2.284	2	1.142	4.227	.015*	Education Faculty/Others
	Science and Letters	Within-Groups	101.292	375	.270			
	Others	Total	103.575	377				
Education System	Education	Between-Groups	2.093		1.046	2.417	.091	
	Science and Letters	Within-Groups	162.365		.433			
	Others	Total	164.458					
Functions of School	Education	Between-Groups	2.685		1.242	3.992	.019*	Education Faculty/Others
	Science and Letters	Within-Groups	126.116		.336			
	Others	Total	128.801					
Libertarian School	Education	Between-Groups	2.438		1.219	3.011	.050	Education Faculty/Others
	Science and Letters	Within-Groups	151.847		.405			
	Others	Total	154.265					

*p < .05

As can be seen in Table 7, the teachers’ views of the principles of critical pedagogy vary significantly depending on faculty graduated [F(2 – 377)=4.227, p<.05]. Tukey HSD analysis was conducted to determine the source of the difference. As a result of the analysis, the mean agreement scores of the teachers having graduated from an education faculty (\bar{x} =2.97) is higher than that of the teachers having graduated from other faculties (\bar{x} =2.74). In the dimension of functions of school, the mean score of the teachers having graduated from an education faculty (\bar{x} =3.06) was also found to be higher than that of the teachers having graduated from other faculties (\bar{x} =2.82). In the dimension of libertarian school, the mean score of the teachers having graduated from an education faculty (\bar{x} =2.78) was also found to be higher than that of the teachers having graduated from other faculties (\bar{x} =2.54).

ANOVA test was run to determine whether the teachers’ views of the principles of critical pedagogy vary significantly depending on level of teaching and the results are given in Table 8.

Table 8. Investigation of the teachers’ views of the principles of critical pedagogy in terms of level of teaching

Variable	Level	Source of the Variance	Sum of Squares	sd	Mean Square	F	p	Difference
Critical Pedagogy (General)	Primary school	Between-Groups	.842	2	.421	1.536	.217	
	Middle school	Within-Groups	102.734	375	.274			
	High school	Total	103.575	377				
Education System	Primary school	Between-Groups	.853		.426	.977	.377	
	Middle school	Within-Groups	163.605		.436			
	High school	Total	164.458					
Functions of School	Primary school	Between-Groups	.431		.216	.630	.533	
	Middle school	Within-Groups	128.369		.342			
	High school	Total	128.801					
Libertarian School	Primary school	Between-Groups	2.610		1.305	3.227	.041*	Primary/Middle
	Middle school	Within-Groups	151.655		.404			
	High school	Total	154.265					

*p<.05

As can be seen in Table 8, the teachers’ views of the principles of critical pedagogy do not vary significantly depending on their level of teaching [F(2 – 377) =1.536, p>.05]. This is also true for the dimensions of education system and functions of school. Yet, a significant difference was found in the dimension of libertarian school [F(2 – 377) =3.227, p<.05]. Tukey HSD test was run to determine the source of this difference and the mean score of the teachers teaching at the middle school level (\bar{x} =2.81) was found to be higher than that of the teachers teaching at the primary level (\bar{x} =2.62).

ANOVA test was run to determine whether the teachers’ views of the principles of critical pedagogy vary significantly depending on their education degrees and the results are given in Table 9.

Table 9. Investigation of the teachers’ views of the principles of critical pedagogy in terms of their education degree

Variable	Degree	Source of the Variance	Sum of Squares	sd	Mean Square	F	p
Critical Pedagogy (General)	Associate’s degree	Between-Groups	.842	2	.421	1.557	.212
	Bachelor’s degree	Within-Groups	102.734	375	.274		
	Graduate degree	Total	103.575	377			
Education System	Associate degree	Between-Groups	.853		.426	1.578	.208
	Bachelor’s degree	Within-Groups	163.605		.436		
	Graduate degree	Total	164.458				
Functions of School	Associate degree	Between-Groups	.431		.216	.857	.425
	Bachelor’s degree	Within-Groups	128.369		.342		
	Graduate degree	Total	128.801				
Libertarian School	Associate degree	Between-Groups	2.610		1.305	2.091	.125
	Bachelor’s degree	Within-Groups	151.655		.404		
	Graduate degree	Total	154.265				

The teachers’ views of the principles of critical pedagogy were found to be not varying significantly depending on their education level [F(2 – 377) =1.557, p>.05]. Although statistically not significant, the mean score of the teachers having a graduate degree (\bar{x} =3.02) was found to be higher than that of the teachers having a bachelor’s degree (\bar{x} =2.94) and an associate degree (\bar{x} =2.76).

WHAT ARE THE TEACHERS’ VIEWS OF CRITICAL PEDAGOGY?

The findings in the qualitative dimension were obtained through the analysis of the participants’ responses given to the interview questions prepared on the basis of the quantitative findings. In the selection of the participants, a great care was taken for the inclusion of teachers from the groups for which significant differences were found in the quantitative dimension. In this connection, in-depth analysis of the data

obtained in the quantitative dimension of the study in relation to the variables of gender, work of place, faculty graduated was conducted. Then, to elaborate the opinions of the participants involved in the qualitative dimension of the study on these issues considering the sub-dimensions of the scale, a semi-structured interview form was developed and used in the qualitative dimension of the study. The findings obtained in the qualitative dimension were analysed under three themes called “education system”, “functions of the school” and “libertarian school”.

The participating teachers evaluated the education system from different perspectives in general. First of them is the evaluation of education system as an element ensuring the continuity of the society and the established order. In this regard, some teacher perspectives are given below; *“The education system is a structure that keeps the structures in society stable.”* (T1). *“The education system is designed to prepare individuals for society and to preserve and develop the social structure.”* (T7). *“The education system and schools are important tools for the state to spread its policies and direct the society.”* (T16). *“We include activities based on reasoning in education, although it is constantly changing, the last program is more contemporary.”* (T15). In another perspective, education system is evaluated as an obstacle to the development of the individual and society: *“The individual is constantly guided through schools and education systems, and robot-like and uniform social reactions and behaviours are created with a constant intervention in their subconscious (T10). “The education system makes individuals so like each other that when they leave educational institutions, they can reduce the adversities they may experience because they are the same as others in the society. This is not a positive thing, but it has such a benefit. It makes the kid feel normal inside the abnormal.”* (T8). *“Although today's education system puts emphasis on training free, creative individuals, we see that this is not done properly.”* (T9). *“The current system is completely aimed at pacifying people, young people and children.”* (T2). *“The education system is actually grounded on rote learning. Students don't know anything about daily life.”* (T5). *“Today's education system seems to try to make students memorize some things rather than making them learn. In terms of society, it is far from meeting the requirements of the age.”* (T6). Participating teachers state that the views of the existing government are generally effective in shaping the education system. In this regard, some teacher opinions are as follows: *“It is our politicians who determine the education system and policies.”* (T13). *“Policies that direct the education system are the reflections of the mind of the state. Politicians and governments vary all the time, but the state mentality is basically clear, and this mentality enters the education system (T10). “The views that direct the education system may be the political views of the government (T14). A participant teacher criticizing the adoption of approaches developed outside our country in shaping the education system also expresses his/her opinion as follows: “We take the west as an example in education life, now it is thought that we should not imitate the west, Finland is very important in education, they do this and they are successful in education; when we turn to ourselves, it is thought that we should not imitate them, and we should do it this way, then they tried to apply their own education policies in their own way. We admire the west. We want to be like them, which directs us.”* (T1). Some participants stated that the basic feature of the education system should be related to how it disciplines the individual and develops students in moral aspects. *“The student should be disciplined and ethical and this can be achieved only through education”* (T4). *“Our education system cannot be a good system unless it improves the individual morally, but I think moral education has become a part of the system in our country over time.”* (T12). When the opinions of the teachers expressed in the dimension of functions of school are examined, it is seen that the school's functions of “training good individuals” and “preparing students for life” are emphasized more strongly. In this regard, some teachers expressed their opinions as follows: *“The function of schools is to prepare the individual for life. They should help individuals to find ways of contributing to their own development and the development of the society”* (T2). *“School is responsible for preparing individuals for life (T15). “The function of the school is primarily to make students realize their self-efficacy and to support their development (T13). However, some teachers look at the school' function of preparing individuals for life critically and argue that it restricts the freedom of individuals and that it produces uncritical and stereotype individuals. Some teacher opinions in this regard are as follows: “The function of the school is to shape students as required. This function is directed by the cultural and religious values of the country, the dominant perception of raising children and gender roles”* (T8). *“The main function of the*

school in today's world is to train passive but seemingly free individuals who are obedient, not questioning and whose behaviours and reactions have been conditioned" (T10). Another perspective on the function of schools argues that the main function of school is thought to help students gain a status in life and thus to bring some professions to the fore while ignoring others. In this way, school encourages people just to have a job, not to know this job very well. Some teachers expressed their opinions in this regard as follows: *"The society doesn't just need teachers, doctors, judges, lawyers; we also need people to work in industry"* (T1). *"That is, there is no direct correlation between school success and success in life. A student who is successful at school may not be in his/her business life. Many children do not think whether the profession they would like is suitable for them"* (T3).

The main opinions expressed in the dimension of libertarian school are that school have negative effects in terms of liberating individuals and making them individuals critically approaching to life. These opinions are expressed by some teachers as follows: *"It is as if you are trying to put students into a mould, ignoring the individual differences and personal development of students. Achievement is always evaluated over the exam success"* (T2). *"The ideal student for society is someone who does not question, answers test correctly, never opposes the teacher and has memorized the subjects in the textbooks well"* (T8). *"Personal development of students is largely ignored. Achievement is evaluated over the exam success. We do not have a system to measure the real-life competences of students"* (T16). *"For teachers, school is a means of earning their living. They see it as a means of ensuring their life. But in fact, it should be a place where teachers can feel freer"* (T8). *"Parents are too much involved in education. They intervene in everything. This makes teachers afraid of doing as they wish. We are caregivers rather than teachers in that children spend time, and we take care of them."* (T4). Here, it is also emphasized that the teachers who cannot think critically cannot train students thinking critically: *"The teacher should be questioning, active, free and sensitive so that he/she can be a good role model to students"* (T10). *"In a school environment where teachers don't feel comfortable, it seems to be difficult to train qualified students"* (T11).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The current study investigated the opinions of the teachers working in the city of Antalya in the 2019-2020 school year about the principles of critical pedagogy. It was also investigated whether their opinions vary significantly depending on gender, seniority, place of work, faculty graduation, level of teaching and education level.

The participating teacher's level of agreement with the principles of critical pedagogy was found to be "low" ($\bar{X}=2.94$) in general. This finding is supported by Kesik and Bayram (2015) and Yılmaz (2009). Yet, in some research (Yılmaz and Altınkurt, 2011; Terzi et al., 2015; Aslan and Kozikoğlu, 2015; Taşgın and Küçüköğlü, 2017; Büyükgöze and Fındık, 2018), the level of agreement was found to be "medium". In the current study, the lowest levels of agreement were found for the dimensions of libertarian school, functions of school, and education system, respectively. Terzi et al. (2015), Aslan and Kozikoğlu (2015), Yılmaz (2009), Büyükgöze and Fındık (2018) also found the lowest level agreement for the dimension of libertarian school. In some research (Şahin, Demir and Arcagök, 2016; Yılmaz and Altınkurt, 2011), different results have been reported but low-level agreement with this dimension of the principles of critical pedagogy may indicate that teachers are not for changing the existing structure of schools or that they don't think that schools are an obstacle to the liberation of individuals and society. On the other hand, the findings obtained from the qualitative dimension of the study show that the teachers are of the opinion that the education system constitutes an obstacle to the liberation of individuals and society.

When it was investigated whether the teachers' views of the principles of critical pedagogy vary significantly depending on gender, it was found that the mean level of agreement of the female teachers is higher than that of the male teachers, yet this difference is not significant in the dimensions of the education system and libertarian school. Similar results have been reported by Terzi et al. (2015) and Büyükgöze and Fındık (2018). Yet, Yılmaz and Altınkurt (2011) and Balcı (2016) found a higher level of agreement for male teachers while no gender-based significant difference was found in some other research (Yılmaz, 2009; Sarıgöz and Özkara, 2015; Şahin et al., 2016). In the qualitative dimension of the study, the female

teachers emphasized the affective characteristics of students, made suggestions for changing the negative aspects of the education system and stated that the function of the school is to make students accustomed to different life situations and all these can indicate that female teachers are in a greater agreement with the principles of critical pedagogy. As women are considered among the disadvantaged groups of the society (Çakır, 2008; Gündüz, 2010; Alptekin, 2014; Özaydınlık, 2014; Nayır and Taneri, 2015), their feeling closer to critical pedagogy which presents a liberating perspective for the education of the oppressed and disadvantaged seems normal.

The participants' opinions about the principles of critical pedagogy were found to be not varying significantly depending on professional seniority. However, while the mean scores taken from the sub-dimensions of "education system" and "functions of the school" were found to be not varying significantly depending on professional seniority, a significant difference was found in the sub-dimension of "libertarian school" between the teachers having 1-10 years of professional experience and the teachers having 20 or more years of professional experience in favor of the teachers with 1-10 years of professional experience. This finding concurs with the findings reported in the studies by Yılmaz (2009) and Büyükgöze and Fındık (2018). According to Farr (1997), young teachers have a more "idealistic" approach. Accordingly, the fact that the time spent in teaching is inversely proportional to the rate of agreement with the items in the libertarian school dimension can indicate that teachers may get convinced over time that too much liberation is not good.

The teachers' level of agreement with the principles of critical pedagogy was found to be varying depending on place of work. The teachers working in the central districts have more positive views than the teachers working in the surrounding districts. In the dimensions of the education system and functions of the school, there is a significant difference in favour of the teachers working in the central districts. This might indicate that rather than having a potential to transform the society, teachers are affected by the environment in which they work. One of the teachers stated that "feeling normal inside the abnormal", indicating the importance of environment on the adaptation of the philosophy of critical pedagogy. The teachers working in the central districts seem to more prone to adopt the approach suggesting that schools can contribute to the liberation of the individual. Thus, it can be argued that some opportunities brought about by urbanization have had positive effects on both the lives of individuals and societies and the quality of schools.

The teachers' views of the principles of critical pedagogy were found to be varying significantly depending on faculty graduated in favour of the graduates of education faculties. Thus, it can be concluded that education faculties are more effective in imparting a critical perspective of education to their students. In the qualitative findings of the study, some expressions show that the teachers having graduated from education faculties are more inclined to adopt the approach of critical pedagogy. It is also remarkable that the teachers who graduated from education faculties stated that there are important shortcomings of schools in imparting self-expression, questioning, and gaining a critical perspective to students. This might be because the teachers who graduated from education faculties see themselves more competent and responsible for criticising the existing education system.

The teachers' views of the principles of critical pedagogy were found to be not varying significantly depending on the level of education at which they are teaching. This result concurs with the study by Büyükgöze and Fındık (2018). No significant difference was also found in the dimensions of education system and functions of school. Yet, a significant difference was found in the dimension of libertarian school in favour of the teachers working in middle schools. Critical pedagogy is more freedom-oriented and aims to train individuals who can question and criticize the process and student and teacher roles. This contradicts with the effort put to discipline students in our education system. Therefore, class teachers in primary level who more focus on the adaptation of new beginners to the school culture and inculcation of certain behaviours to children can be more distant to critical pedagogy.

The teachers' views of the principles of critical pedagogy were found to be not varying significantly depending on their education level. This contradicts with the study by Yılmaz (2009). Although not statistically significant, the mean score of the teachers having a graduate degree ($\bar{x}=3.02$) is higher than that of the teachers having a bachelor's degree ($\bar{x}=2.94$) and associate degree ($\bar{x}=2.76$). This indicates that with increasing education level, the level of agreement with the principles of critical pedagogy also increases.

As more sophisticated skills are involved in graduate education, the teachers having taken this education can be taught to have relatively more critical, liberal, and equalitarian perspectives. Moreover, getting involved in graduate education makes individuals more familiar with different theories and approaches of education.

When the current study results are evaluated in terms of characteristic features of critical pedagogy, it is seen that although critical pedagogy advocates social and educational equality and justice (Kincheloe, 2004) in the current study, the teachers ignored this feature of schools. Critical pedagogy argues that education is much affected by political decisions (Kincheloe, 2004). The participating teachers seem to be aware of this fact because they frequently emphasized the effect of the policies of governments on education. On the other hand, critical pedagogy sees education as a means of eliminating such external pressures by focusing on disadvantaged groups and individuals.

As an educational tool that accepts differences, critical pedagogy can produce solutions to social and some economic problems of society. In this respect, it can be a guide in solving important problems in today's education system. Teachers can develop their own original ideas independent of the ideological nature of the system. Teachers who adopt a critical pedagogical approach can promote the potential of education to transform individuals and therefore society through curriculum and other devices. Teachers' making students a part of the process through a process of dialogue as proposed by critical pedagogy can play a transformative role in society. In addition, as Apple (2004) stated, schools and teachers, as elements of the production devices of the society, can both help the production of subjects for the economic sector of the society and produce the cultural forms required by the economic sector. In the production process, schools play a fundamental role in the accumulation of cultural capital by reproducing knowledge as a form of capital.

As a result, it is seen that teachers, who have the role of practitioner about education and its functions, which concern almost the whole of the society, are not open to different perspectives. Even for those who express that they believe that education has a structure that provides social dynamism, it can be said that they do not produce alternatives other than the existing structure or they remain hesitant about approaching the alternatives produced. Considering the principles of critical pedagogy, it is possible for teachers to reach a positive perspective in opening free spaces for the individual and democratizing society, conducting in-school and out-of-school activities, and creating important gains for the society.

Considering the results of the current study, some suggestions can be made for further research and practices:

- The views of teachers working in private education institutions, who were not included in the current study as a participant, about critical pedagogy can be examined.
- Research can be conducted to foster a better understanding and discussion of the basic concepts of critical pedagogy.
- Critical pedagogy practices in the world can be examined and blended with the unique conditions in Turkey.
- Critical pedagogy lessons can be given in faculties that train teachers at universities.
- Further research can be carried out to establish a conception of education that can meet the needs of individuals and society rather than the needs of market and economy.
- Concepts can be created taking the principles of critical pedagogy into consideration for school subjects to be taught at different levels of education.

In order to determine the impact of education system on teachers, further research can be conducted to compare pre-service teachers and teachers' approaches towards the principles of critical pedagogy.

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