



Analyzing the relationship between prospective teachers' democratic tendencies and their respect for differences levels

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to determine prospective teachers' democratic tendencies and respect for differences levels; to examine the relationship between their democratic tendencies and respect for differences levels and to determine whether their democratic tendencies and respect for differences levels change according to gender, grade level and department. This study was conducted with 316 students studying at Yüzüncü Yıl University, Faculty of Education. As data collection tools, "Prospective Teachers' Democratic Tendencies Scale" developed by Akbaşı, Yanpar-Yelken and Sünbül (2010) and "Respect for Differences Scale" developed by Öksüz and Güven (2012) were used in this study. In data analysis; t-test, Anova and Pearson Product Moments Correlation Coefficient were used. As a result of the study, it was found that prospective teachers' respect for differences and democratic tendencies are at high level. A positive and significant relationship was found between total score of prospective teachers' respect for differences levels and democratic tendencies. Prospective teachers' democratic tendencies don't change according to gender, grade level and department, but in the sub-dimension "freedom of expression" it turned out that male students showed more democratic tendencies. In this study, it was found that female students are more respectful to differences than males and 4th grade students are more respectful to differences than first year students. It was also found that the students of Turkish and Foreign Languages departments are more respectful to differences than the students of secondary school science and mathematics department and CEIT department.

Keywords: democratic education, democratic tendencies, respect of differences, prospective teachers

1. Introduction

Teachers have great responsibilities to train qualified individuals who are required to realize social development and to ensure social welfare (Ertürk, 2013, p.23) ^[1]. In order to educate qualified teachers with the role of being leader and model, it is necessary to give importance to teacher education. In this sense, teachers need to develop positive democratic tendencies and democratic education understanding in order to create a democratic society (Akbaşı, Yanpar-Yelken, & Sünbül, 2010) ^[2]. Famous educator, John Dewey (1997) ^[3] emphasized the importance of democratic education by stating that "Educational mentality must be based on humanistic and democratic understanding that the public accepts. Education should have democratic understanding against the authority of traditional education and it should be humanistic against hardness and oppression of traditional education".

As educational institutions, it is expected from the schools in a constantly changing and developing world to educate the individuals who are critical and free in thinking, sensitive to social problems and have democratic values. In this context, since the last century, attention has been drawn to the relation between democracy and education, and the school has been defined as an environment in which democratic values are gained and maintained (Şişman, 2006) ^[4]. Developing democratic understanding in education and creating democratic learning environment depend on the teachers who are one of the most important actors of education. Teachers have important responsibilities in this context and first of all

they must have a democratic attitude. Thus, the determination of the democratic tendencies of prospective teachers has importance in terms of training individuals who have democratic values and promote these values within a democratic understanding of education.

1.1 Democratic Tendencies

Democracy is the ideal form of government that societies try to achieve in the historical process (Diker, 2012) ^[5]. When the world societies are examined, it is seen that the quality of societies' life styles is closely related with the existence of an advanced democracy as well as the economic development (Karahana *et al.*, 2006) ^[6]. Democracy as a form of government is defined as "the use of power based on the sovereignty of the people." and in social terms, it is defined as a philosophy of life or as a way of life (Hotaman, 2010) ^[7]. Indeed, John Dewey used the phrase "Democracy is more than a form of government; democracy is a form of life that requires living together." (Dewey, 1996) ^[8]. Either way, democracy can be gained by the individuals through democratic education. Democratic education is the education in which the principles of democracy and democratic values are applied to individuals through learning experiences (Hotaman, 2010) ^[7]. Thus, the goal in democratic education is to educate the strong democratic citizens who will gain the democratic consciousness and demonstrate democratic behaviors in their daily lives by creating a culture of democracy in the schools. Social relations in the changing and developing world have

also changed. Today's world requires people to live together freely. This social order will be possible with the individuals who have a democratic understanding. The basic necessity of keeping up with new social relations in the globalizing world is the creation of democracy culture. Education institutions as well as families have an important place in the formation of democracy culture. Through education, individuals with democratic values can be trained (Diker, 2012) ^[5].

An individual living in a democratic society must have democratic behavior. Demonstrating democratic behaviors requires both knowledge of democracy and democratic skills. It is therefore expected that educated individuals will have the qualities to gain democratic knowledge and skills. This is possible with the regulation of all components of education according to democratic principles, which is called as "democratic education" (Korkmaz & Erden, 2013) ^[9]. Democracy and education are closely related concepts. They can also be seen as a prerequisite for the other to be formed and being effective (Ektem & Sünbül, 2011) ^[10]. In the field of education, democratic education is most integrated with John Dewey. Dewey described the democracy as being synonymous with the education. Dewey emphasizes the concept of education integrated with democracy while revealing the relationship between democracy and education (Bakir, 2012).

One of the most important functions of educational institutions is to train individuals with democratic values. Democracy is maintained and developed in societies that have embraced democracy as a way of life and have created democratic principles at every moment of their lives. Continuation of democracy is possible with the individuals who have democratic consciousness (Gömleksiz & Çetintaş, 2011) ^[11]. The ability to create a democracy culture in a society depends on the fact that the teaching-learning activities in that society are based on democracy (Ektem & Sünbül, 2011) ^[10]. Democracy is a way of life and it is important for individuals to be active in this process for their democracy in a democratic culture. First of all, in order to create democracy culture, teachers must have a democratic understanding and create a democratic learning environment (Bayındır, İnan, & Demir, 2010) ^[12].

Developing democracy consciousness in individuals is possible with the schools where democracy culture is largely alive. In particular, the democratic values and democratic tendencies of teachers have an important role in the acquisition of democratic knowledge, skills and values of students (Sarı & Sadık, 2011) ^[13]. These knowledge, skills and values can only be achieved by creating a democratic classroom setting. In a democratic classroom, democracy should be put into practice in the direction of democratic principles (Kayabaşı, 2011) ^[14]. In brief, educational institutions play an important role in the formation of democracy consciousness in individuals. Democracy culture must first be kept alive in educational institutions. In today's world where individual differences are important and the individual is in the forefront, preserving and maintaining the differences seems possible in individuals who grow up in a democratic culture (Şişman, Güleş, & Dönmez, 2010) ^[15]. In a world where people have to continue their lives with other people, it is inevitable to maintain individual differences. The

culture of democracy requires maintaining and respecting for those differences.

1.2 Respect for Differences

It is not possible to ignore the human being in scientific research because the basic component of almost every structure in the world is human being. However, human being has a variable structure and this variability leads us to the concept of "difference (diversity)" (Boydak-Özan & Polat, 2013) ^[16]. The concept of "difference" has various interpretations within itself (Sürgevil, 2008) ^[17]. The concept of "difference" according to the Turkish Language Association dictionary is defined as "being different, diversity" and in the context of philosophy it is defined as "a characteristic that separates every event or phenomena based on natural, social and consciousness from all others" (<http://www.tdk.gov.tr>, 08.06.2015). There are various features that differ people from others as individuals or groups (Sürgevil, 2008) ^[17]. Differences in people can be grouped in various ways. Memduhoğlu (2010) ^[18] points out these areas of differences such as demographic differences (race, ethnicity, gender, region/city, age and experience), social/cultural differences (religion and philosophical beliefs, political views, values held and adopted, level of education, economic situation) and personal differences (personality, physical and mental abilities, knowledge and skills, etc.).

Everything in the nature finds meaning in its opposite. Your own values, beliefs, thoughts and personal characteristics have meaning with different characteristics. Differences in this sense have an important role in human life. As a matter of fact, the differences among people are much more than similarities. Every individual is different within himself/herself and has different characteristics (Memduhoğlu, 2007) ^[19]. So in a world where human being exists, individual differences are inevitable. Respecting differences is a sense of respect for people. Ensuring individual/social harmony requires acceptance and respect for differences as they are.

We live in an age where cultural differences are increasingly important. In such an era, it is important to be aware of cultural differences and their effects on societies (Polat, 2012) ^[20]. The basic condition of peace in global terms is respect for differences. Disregarding differences can lead to serious problems among various civilizations (Memduhoğlu, 2007) ^[19]. So, the differences among people or societies should be seen as a diversity and wealth, not as a cause of separating individuals and societies. While differences may be advantageous in some cases, in some cases may be seen as a source of disadvantages or disagreements. The important thing is to be aware of the differences and to respect for these differences.

In summary, one of the most important conditions for survival in today's continuously changing and competitive environment is to respect for the differences and to benefit from these differences. Respect for differences is important both for the welfare of the society and for the happiness of the individual (Memduhoğlu, 2007) ^[19]. Different people working in schools bring different cultures, individual characteristics and abilities to the schools. These differences may lead to disagreements and conflicts in some cases, as well as offering the schools

some advantages (Memduhoğlu, 2011) ^[21]. In this respect, education programs have functions such as reducing conflicts in society, abolishing discrimination, respecting differences and creating consciousness of unity for national interests in an increasingly globalized world (Şişman, 2006). Therefore, teachers who will implement these education programs in classroom environment should respect for the differences and have to be models for the students in this respect.

Training prospective teachers effectively is possible with their being respectful for the others' differences such as social class, religion, ethnicity, gender, culture, etc. (Atasoy, 2012) ^[22]. This makes it important to determine prospective teachers' respect for differences levels.

1.3 The Aim and Importance of the Study

The aim of this study is to determine prospective teachers' democratic tendencies and respect for differences levels; to examine the relationship between their democratic tendencies and respect for differences levels and to determine whether their democratic tendencies and respect for differences levels change according to gender, grade level and department. Accordingly, the following questions were addressed in this research:

1. What is the level of prospective teachers' democratic tendencies?
2. What is the level of prospective teachers' respect for differences?
3. Is there a significant relationship between prospective teachers' democratic tendencies and their respect for differences levels?
4. Do the prospective teachers' democratic tendencies differ significantly according to gender, grade level, and department?
5. Do the prospective teachers' respect for differences levels differ significantly according to gender, grade level, and department?

Developing democratic understanding in education and creating democratic learning environment depend on the teachers who are the most important actors of education. Teachers have important responsibilities in this context and first of all they should behave in a democratic attitude. The

"Democratic Tendency Scale" used in this study is based on criteria such as democratic perceptions, democratic educational environment and democratic teacher tendency in the class. Thus, the identification of the democratic tendencies of prospective teachers will shed light on the efforts to create a democratic understanding in education. It is also necessary for teachers to respect for differences and be model for students in this respect so that education can fulfill expected functions such as reducing conflicts in society, removing discrimination, respecting differences and creating consciousness of unity for national interests. Thus, determining prospective teachers' respect for differences levels is important for showing to what extent prospective teachers are respectful for individual differences.

2. Method

2.1 Research Model

This research is in correlational descriptive model. In correlational descriptive models, it is aimed to determine the existence and level of change between two or more variables (Karasar, 2013, p.81) ^[23]. Therefore, this model is considered to be proper for the purpose of this research.

2.2 Population and Sample

The study population of this research consists of 1624 students who are studying in the 1st and 4th grade level at Yüzüncü Yıl University, Faculty of Education in 2014-2015 academic year. Since it is impossible to reach the whole of the population in terms of time and possibilities in the research, it was aimed to take a sample from the study population. Stratified sampling method was used in the study. In stratified sample method, the population is divided into layers, and it is important that the number of individuals to be selected from each layer is determined by the ratio of that layer to the whole population (Kaptan, 1998, p. 122) ^[24]. Thus, in this study, the study population was divided into layers according to departments, the number of students from each department was determined based on the ratio of each layer in the whole population and a total of 316 students were sampled. The distribution of prospective teachers in the sample according to demographic variables is presented in Table 1:

Table 1: The Distribution of Prospective Teachers According To Demographic Variables

Demographic variable	Category	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	160	50.6
	Male	156	49.4
Grade level	1 st grade	152	48.1
	4 th grade	164	51.9
Department	Primary education department	90	28.5
	Secondary education social studies department	36	11.4
	Secondary education science and mathematics department	39	12.3
	Fine arts department	53	16.8
	CEIT department	32	10.1
	Turkish education department	33	10.4
Foreign languages department	33	10.4	

According to data in Table 1; 160 participants (50.6%) are female, 156 of them (49.4%) are male. 152 participants (48.1%) are first grade, 164 of them (51.9%) are fourth grade

students. 90 participants (28.5%) are studying at the department of primary education, 36 of them (11.4%) at the department of secondary education social studies, 39 of them

(12.3%) at the department of secondary education science and mathematics, 53 of them (16.8%) are at the department of fine arts, 32 of them (10.1%) are at the department of CEIT, 33 of them (10.4%) are at the department of Turkish education, 33 of them (10.4%) are at the department of foreign languages.

2.3 Data Collection Tools

In this research, as data collection tools, two scales were used that are "Prospective Teachers' Democratic Tendencies Scale" and "Respect for Differences Scale".

Prospective Teachers' Democratic Tendencies Scale: In order to determine the democratic tendencies of prospective teachers, a five-point Likert-type "Prospective Teachers' Democratic Tendencies Scale" developed by Akbaşlı, Yanpar-Yelken and Sünbül (2010) [2] was used. The scale has a one-dimensional but four-component structure (teacher democracy, student democracy, classroom management and freedom of expression). The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the total scale was found as 0.74; the reliability coefficients of the components were found as 0.83, 0.76, 0.61 and 0.62, respectively. In this study, Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the total scale was calculated as 0.75.

Respect for Differences Scale: In order to determine prospective teachers' respect for differences levels, a five-point Likert-type "Respect for Differences Scale" consisting of 30 items and developed by Öksüz and Güven (2012) [25] was used. The scale has a three-dimensional structure (knowledge-based differences, social category differences, value differences). The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of the total scale was calculated as 0.94. The factor load values of the scale ranged from .35 to .90; the total variance explained was determined as 59.25%. In this study, Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the total scale was calculated as 0.71.

2.4 Analysis of Data

Research data collected in this study were analyzed by using SPSS 18.0 statistic program. Mean and standard deviation values were used in order to determine prospective teachers' democratic tendencies and respect for differences levels. These values were interpreted as "1-1.79" very low, "1.80-2.59" low, "2.60-3.39" medium, "3.40-4.19" high, "4.20-5.00" very high. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used in order to determine the relationship between prospective teachers' democratic tendencies and respect for differences levels. The t-test was used in order to determine whether prospective teachers' democratic tendencies and respect for differences levels varied significantly according to gender and grade level, ANOVA was used to determine whether prospective teachers' democratic tendencies and respect for differences levels varied significantly according to department. If there was a significant difference in the ANOVA results, Bonferroni test as one of the post-hoc tests was used to determine from which groups this difference was originated. The level of significance in the analysis of the data was accepted as 0.05.

3. Results

3.1 Results Concerning First Sub-Problem

The mean and standard deviation values calculated based on teachers' answers concerning first sub-problem that is "What is the level of prospective teachers' democratic tendencies?" are presented in Table 2:

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics Concerning Prospective Teachers' Democratic Tendencies

Scale Dimensions	\bar{X}	Ss
Democratic tendencies (total scale)	4.18	0.51
Teacher democracy	4.01	0.52
Student democracy	4.34	0.88
Classroom management	4.66	0.56
Freedom of expression	3.81	0.90

According to data in Table 2, it is seen that the democratic tendencies of prospective teachers are at high level ($\bar{X}=4.18$). In the sub-dimensions, it was found that prospective teachers' tendencies concerning teacher democracy ($\bar{X}=4.01$) and freedom of expression ($\bar{X}=3.81$) were found at high level; classroom management ($\bar{X}=4.66$), and student democracy ($\bar{X}=4.34$) were found at very high level.

3.2 Results Concerning Second Sub-Problem

The mean and standard deviation values based on teachers' answers concerning second sub-problem that is "What is the level of prospective teachers' respect for differences levels?" are presented in Table 3:

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics Concerning Prospective Teachers' Respect for Differences Levels

Scale Dimensions	\bar{X}	Ss
Respect for differences (total scale)	3.98	0.47
Knowledge-based differences	4.04	0.57
Social category differences	4.07	0.62
Value differences	3.57	0.76

According to data in Table 3, it is seen that the prospective teachers' respect for differences are at high level in total scale ($\bar{X}=3.98$) and in the sub-dimensions of knowledge-based differences ($\bar{X}=4.04$), social category differences ($\bar{X}=4.07$) and value differences ($\bar{X}=3.57$). It was found that prospective teachers respect social category differences at most while they respect value differences at least.

3.3 Results Concerning Third Sub-Problem

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficients obtained from the scores of "Prospective Teachers' Democratic Tendencies Scale" and "Respect for Differences Scale" concerning the third sub-problem that is "Is there a significant relationship between prospective teachers' democratic tendencies and their respect for differences levels?" are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficients Concerning Democratic Tendencies and Respect for Differences Scales

Dimensions	Respect for differences (total)	Knowledge-based differences	Social category differences	Value differences
Democratic tendencies (total)	.242**	.179**	.355**	-.01
Teacher democracy	.195**	.154**	.294**	-.09
Student democracy	.135*	.06	.271**	-.00
Classroom management	.344**	.272**	.381**	.02
Freedom of expression	.119*	.129*	.124*	.08

p<.05 *, p<.01**

As seen in Table 4, a positive, low level and significant relationship was found between prospective teachers' democratic tendencies in total scale and respect for differences in total scale (r=.242; p<.01), and its sub-dimension of knowledge-based differences (r=.179; p<.01), while a positive, moderate level and significant relationship was found between prospective teachers' democratic tendencies and social category differences (r=.355; p<.01). Furthermore, a positive, low level and significant relationship was found between prospective teachers' respect for differences levels in total scale and democratic tendencies scale's sub-dimensions of teacher democracy (r=.195; p<.01), student democracy (r=.135; p<.05) and freedom of expression (r=.119; p<.05),

while a positive, moderate level and significant relationship was found between prospective teachers' respect for differences levels in total scale and classroom management (r=.344; p<.01).

3.4 Results Concerning Fourth Sub-Problem

The fourth sub-problem of the study was determined as “Do the prospective teachers' democratic tendencies differ significantly according to gender, grade level, and department?”. The t-test results concerning whether prospective teachers' democratic tendencies varied significantly according to gender and grade level were presented in Table 5:

Table 5: The T-Test Results of Prospective Teachers' Democratic Tendencies According to Gender and Grade Level

Dependent variables	Independent variables	N	\bar{X}	s	sd	T	p
Democratic tendencies (total scale)	Female	160	4.16	.55	314	.65	.52
	Male	156	4.20	.46			
	1 st grade	152	4.14	.53	314	1.25	.21
	4 th grade	164	4.21	.48			
Teacher democracy	Female	160	3.99	.54	314	.65	.51
	Male	156	4.03	.50			
	1 st grade	152	3.98	.57	314	1.04	.30
	4 th grade	164	4.04	.47			
Student democracy	Female	160	4.41	.99	314	1.47	.14
	Male	156	4.27	.74			
	1 st grade	152	4.29	.80	314	1.01	.31
	4 th grade	164	4.39	.95			
Classroom management	Female	160	4.67	.58	314	.40	.69
	Male	156	4.65	.54			
	1 st grade	152	4.63	.65	314	.88	.38
	4 th grade	164	4.69	.46			
Freedom of expression	Female	160	3.61	.93	314	4.02	.00
	Male	156	4.01	.83			
	1 st grade	152	3.78	.93	314	.63	.52
	4 th grade	164	3.84	.88			

p<.05

As seen in Table 5, prospective teachers' democratic tendencies in total scale and its sub-dimensions of teacher democracy, student democracy and classroom management do not show a significant difference by gender, but there is a significant difference in favor of male students in freedom of expression (t (314) = 4.02, p <.05). This finding suggests that gender in general does not have a significant effect on the democratic tendencies of prospective teachers, but it has

turned out that male students have a more democratic tendency in terms of freedom of expression. In addition, the democratic tendencies of the prospective teachers do not show a significant difference (t (314) = 1.25, p>.05) according to grade level in total scale and its all sub-dimensions. ANOVA results concerning whether prospective teachers' democratic tendencies varied significantly according to department were presented in Table 6:

Table 6: ANOVA Results of Prospective Teachers' Democratic Tendencies According to Department

Descriptive Statistics					ANOVA Results						
Dimensions	Department	N	\bar{X}	Ss	Source of variation	Sum of squares	sd	Mean square	F	p	Significant difference
Democratic tendencies (total scale)	Primary education	90	4.16	.63	Between groups Within groups Total	2.684 78.227 80.911	6 309 315	.447 .253	1.767	.105	
	Sc. edu. social st.	36	4.15	.37							
	Sc. edu. sci & mth	39	4.04	.50							
	Fine arts	53	4.17	.53							
	CEIT	32	4.22	.49							
	Turkish education	33	4.41	.27							
	Foreign languages	33	4.14	.37							
Teacher democracy	Primary education	90	4.01	.59	Between groups Within groups Total	2.090 83.424 85.514	6 309 315	.348 .270	1.290	.261	
	Sc. edu. social st.	36	4.00	.44							
	Sc. edu. sci & mth	39	3.83	.45							
	Fine arts	53	4.02	.63							
	CEIT	32	4.05	.51							
	Turkish education	33	4.16	.36							
	Foreign languages	33	4.04	.38							
Student democracy	Primary education	90	4.41	1.21	Between groups Within groups Total	6.879 238.769 245.649	6 309 315	1.147 .773	1.484	.183	
	Sc. edu. social st.	36	4.22	.65							
	Sc. edu. sci & mth	39	4.14	.81							
	Fine arts	53	4.28	.82							
	CEIT	32	4.39	.58							
	Turkish education	33	4.68	.36							
	Foreign languages	33	4.23	.67							
Classroom management	Primary education	90	4.65	.62	Between groups Within groups Total	.977 97.232 98.210	6 309 315	.163 .315	.518	.795	
	Sc. edu. social st.	36	4.67	.39							
	Sc. edu. sci & mth	39	4.60	.57							
	Fine arts	53	4.60	.69							
	CEIT	32	4.65	.58							
	Turkish education	33	4.75	.43							
	Foreign languages	33	4.76	.56							
Freedom of expression	Primary education	90	3.63	.92	Between groups Within groups Total	10.469 247.502 257.970	6 309 315	1.745 .801	2.178	.045	6 > 1
	Sc. edu. social st.	36	3.89	.74							
	Sc. edu. sci & mth	39	3.79	1.02							
	Fine arts	53	3.90	.88							
	CEIT	32	3.90	.81							
	Turkish education	33	4.21	.86							
	Foreign languages	33	3.60	.95							

p < .05, Note: 1-Primary education department, 6-Turkish education department

As seen in Table 6, the democratic tendencies of the prospective teachers do not show a significant difference according to department ($F_{(6, 309)} = 1.767, p > .05$). In other words, the democratic tendencies of prospective teachers do not change significantly according to department. Similarly, the scale's sub-dimensions of teacher democracy, student democracy and classroom management do not show a significant difference by department, but there is a significant difference in freedom of expression ($F_{(6, 309)} = 2.178, p < .05$). As a result of the Bonferroni test to determine from which groups the significant difference originated, it was found that there is a significant difference between students of primary

education department and students of Turkish education department in favor of the students in Turkish education department.

3.5 Results Concerning Fifth Sub-Problem

The fifth sub-problem of the study was determined as "Do the prospective teachers' respect for differences levels differ significantly according to gender, grade level, and department?". The t-test results concerning whether prospective teachers' respect for differences levels varied significantly according to gender and grade level were presented in Table 7:

Table 7: The T-Test Results of Prospective Teachers' Respect for Differences According to Gender and Grade Level

Dependent variables	Independent variables	N	\bar{X}	S	sd	t	p
Respect for differences (total scale)	Female	160	4.04	.45	314	2.21	.028
	Male	156	3.92	.49			
	1 st grade	152	3.88	.48	314	3.50	.001
	4 th grade	164	4.07	.44			
Knowledge-based differences	Female	160	4.05	.54	314	.395	.69
	Male	156	4.03	.60			
	1 st grade	152	3.91	.60	314	3.84	.000
	4 th grade	164	4.16	.52			
Social category differences	Female	160	4.19	.59	314	3.470	.000
	Male	156	3.95	.64			
	1 st grade	152	4.00	.65	314	1.710	.088
	4 th grade	164	4.13	.59			
Value differences	Female	160	3.60	.78	314	.752	.45
	Male	156	3.54	.74			
	1 st grade	152	3.44	.71	314	2.824	.005
	4 th grade	164	3.68	.78			

p<. 05

As seen in Table 7, prospective teachers' respect for differences levels in total scale ($t_{(314)} = 2.21, p < .05$) and its sub-dimension of social category differences ($t_{(314)} = 3.470, p < .05$) show a significant difference according to gender in favor of female students, but do not show a significant difference by gender in sub-dimensions of knowledge-based differences and value differences. In addition, prospective teachers' respect for differences levels show a significant

difference in favor of the fourth grade students according to the grade level in all dimensions except for social category differences ($t_{(314)} = 3.50, p < .05$). This finding suggests that the grade level is an effective variable on prospective teachers' respect for differences levels. ANOVA results concerning whether prospective teachers' respect for differences levels varied significantly according to department were presented in Table 8:

Table 8: ANOVA Results of Prospective Teachers' Respect for Differences Levels According to Department

Descriptive Statistics					ANOVA Results						
Dimensions	Department	N	\bar{X}	Ss	Source of variation	Sum of squares	sd	Mean square	F	p	Significant difference
Respect for differences (total scale)	Primary education	90	3.89	.47	Between groups Within groups Total	3.619 66.907 70.526	6 309 315	.603 .217	2.785	.012	6>1
	Sc. edu. social st.	36	4.08	.50							6>3
	Sc. edu. sci & mth	39	3.89	.53							6>5
	Fine arts	53	3.99	.43							7>1
	CEIT	32	3.86	.45							7>3
	Turkish education	33	4.16	.46							7>5
	Foreign languages	33	4.13	.40							
Knowledge-based differences	Primary education	90	3.92	.56	Between groups Within groups Total	4.360 98.853 103.214	6 309 315	.727 .320	2.272	.037	6>1
	Sc. edu. social st.	36	4.18	.59							6>3
	Sc. edu. sci & mth	39	3.93	.66							6>5
	Fine arts	53	4.08	.51							7>1
	CEIT	32	3.96	.68							7>3
	Turkish education	33	4.21	.51							7>5
	Foreign languages	33	4.19	.42							
Social category differences	Primary education	90	4.03	.67	Between groups Within groups Total	5.933 117.480 123.413	6 309 315	.989 .380	2.601	.018	6>1
	Sc. edu. social st.	36	4.09	.54							6>3
	Sc. edu. sci & mth	39	3.89	.62							6>5
	Fine arts	53	4.10	.67							7>1
	CEIT	32	3.87	.50							7>3
	Turkish education	33	4.25	.54							7>5
	Foreign languages	33	4.32	.58							
Value differences	Primary education	90	3.37	.85	Between groups Within groups Total	7.422 173.436 180.858	6 309 315	1.237 .561	2.204	.043	6>1
	Sc. edu. social st.	36	3.73	.73							6>4
	Sc. edu. sci & mth	39	3.68	.74							6>5
	Fine arts	53	3.52	.66							
	CEIT	32	3.55	.66							
	Turkish education	33	3.84	.78							
	Foreign languages	33	3.60	.64							

p<. 05, Note: 1-Primary education, 2-Secondary education social studies department 3-Secondary education science and mathematics department, 4-Fine arts department, 5-CEIT department, 6-Turkish education department, 7-Foreign languages department

As seen in Table 8, prospective teachers' respect for differences levels show a significant difference according to department ($F_{(6, 309)} = 2.785, p < .05$). In other words, prospective teachers' respect for differences levels change significantly according to department. Similarly, the scale's sub-dimensions of knowledge-based differences, social category differences and value differences show a significant difference according to department. As a result of the Bonferroni test to determine from which groups the significant difference originated, it was found that there is a significant difference between students of Turkish education department and students of primary education department, secondary education science and mathematics department, CEIT department in favor of the students in Turkish education department; between students of foreign languages department and students of primary education, secondary education social studies, CEIT departments in favor of the students in foreign languages department.

4. Discussion, Conclusion and Suggestions

As a result of the research, it was concluded that the democratic tendencies of prospective teachers are at a high level. As in the scale used in this study, democratic tendencies cover the sub-dimensions of teacher democracy, student democracy, classroom management and freedom of expression, it can be said that prospective teachers support democratic education and democratic learning environment. Similarly, in the study conducted by Bayındır, İnan and Demir (2010) [12] in which they aimed to determine prospective teachers' foresights concerning development of democracy in classrooms, it was found that prospective teachers have quite positive opinions for the establishment of democracy in their class in the future, they mostly emphasized the need for teachers to listen their students and let them express themselves freely. In the study conducted by Kayabaşı (2011) [14] that analyzed to what extent prospective teachers participate in democratic principles, it was found that prospective teachers participate in democratic principles at high rates. It is seen that prospective teachers' level democratic values and democratic attitudes are examined in the literature rather than their opinions towards democratic education and democratic tendencies. In many of these studies (Saracaloğlu, Evin, & Varol, 2004; Akın & Özdemir, 2009; Yazıcı, 2011; Yılmaz, 2011; Çermik, 2013) [26-30], it was found that prospective teachers have democratic values at high levels or they have high level of democratic attitudes; on the other hand, in the study conducted by Karatekin, Meray and Kuş (2012) [31], it was found that prospective teachers have moderate level of democratic attitudes. In this study, it can be said that prospective teachers' growth in the culture of democracy may be effective on their having high level of democratic tendencies. Moreover, this result is promising in terms of development of democratic consciousness in prospective teachers and the formation of a democratic society.

It was concluded that prospective teachers respect for differences at high level. Similarly, in the study conducted by Cavkaytar (2013) [32], it was determined that prospective teachers mostly emphasized the importance of respecting the rights and freedoms of others, their thoughts among the basic

characteristics of democratic individuals. Thus, in this study, prospective teachers' having high levels of both respect for differences and democratic tendencies can be evaluated as a positive result in terms of their being democratic individuals. Memduhoğlu and Ayyürek (2014) [33] found that the differences in the kindergarten personnel were regarded as a wealth and the differences were respected in their study determining perceptions of school administrators and teachers towards the differences among the personnel in the kindergarten. Memduhoğlu (2011) [21] determined that teachers had a positive attitude towards differences and respect for differences in his study conducted in high schools. In this study, prospective teachers' being respectful for differences can be regarded as an important and positive result in terms of contributing to the formation of a democratic society in which everybody can live comfortably with their differences, they can feel comfortable, there is respect for differences without prejudices. Furthermore, it was concluded that prospective teachers mostly respect for social category differences. It can be said that it may be because of the fact that the participants live in an environment with ethnic and socio-cultural diversity.

In this study, a positive, low level and significant relationship was found between democratic tendencies of prospective teachers and their respect for differences level. Unlike the results of this study, Öksüz and Güven (2012) [25] found that there was a positive, high level and significant relationship between democratic tendencies of prospective teachers and their respect for differences level. In this research, it is a striking result that although prospective teachers' democratic tendencies and respect for differences are at high level, the relationship between two is at low level. So, it can be said that there is a low and significant relationship between prospective teachers' democratic tendencies and respect for differences.

In this study, it was concluded that the prospective teachers' democratic tendencies do not change according to gender. In terms of gender, there are different research results in the literature. In many studies (Büyükkaragöz, 1995; Sağlam, 2000; Yanardağ, 2000; Demoulin & Kolstad, 2000; Aycan & Çalık, 2003; Saracaloğlu *et al.*, 2004; Ulusoy, 2007; Genç & Kalafat, 2008; Gömleksiz & Kan, 2008; Tekin *et al.*, 2009; Bayındır, İnan, & Demir, 2010; Gömleksiz & Çetintaş, 2011) [34-38, 26, 39, 40, 41, 42, 11, 12], it was found that the democratic attitudes of female students were higher than male students. In one study (Çermik, 2013) [30], the democratic values of male prospective teachers were found to be higher than female ones. In parallel with the results of this research, in many researches (Dilekmen, 2000; Ada *et al.*, 2000; Karahan *et al.*, 2004; Kılıç, Erçoşkun, & Nalçacı, 2004; Genç, 2006; Erçoşkun & Nalçacı, 2008; Ektem & Sünbül, 2011; Yazıcı, 2011; Karatekin *et al.*, 2012; Güven, Kaya, & Aslan, 2014) [43-48, 28, 10, 31], it was determined that the democratic attitudes/values of the students do not differ according to gender. Therefore, it can be said that democratic attitudes, values and tendencies of male and female prospective teachers vary in different research results. However, in this study, it was concluded that male students showed more democratic tendency than female students in terms of freedom of expression. This can be resulted from patriarchal social order and thus inequality caused by gender mainstreaming in

Turkey. This situation can be interpreted as the fact that male prospective teachers are more free at the point of expressing themselves and women are more conservative.

In this research, it was concluded that prospective teachers' democratic tendencies do not change significantly according to grade level. Some research results (Tekin *et al.*, 2009; Kılıç, 2010; Yazıcı, 2011) ^[45, 49, 28] correspond to the results of this study. Unlike the results of this study, Demoulin & Kolstad (2000) ^[37] found that the higher the class level, the higher the democratic attitude scores of prospective teachers; Karahan *et al.* (2004) found that fourth grade students had higher democratic attitudes than 1st grade students; Güven, Kaya and Aslan (2014) found that the students in the fifth grade had higher democratic attitudes than the students in the first, second and fourth grades. In this research, it is seen that the university education does not have a meaningful effect on the democratic tendencies of prospective teachers. It is worrisome that university education does not have a meaningful effect, especially when it is thought about the role that education should play in shaping democratic consciousness in students, and in general, the role of democracy in society. Thus, it can be said that education in higher education should be made in accordance with the understanding of democratic education.

In this research, it turned out that the democratic tendencies of prospective teachers do not differ according to department. Some research results (Saracaloglu *et al.*, 2004; Ektem & Sünbül, 2011; İnan & Dervent, 2013) ^[10, 50] support the results of this study. However, it was concluded that democratic tendencies of Turkish education department students are higher than those of primary education department in terms of freedom of expression. In parallel with the results of this research, Gömleksiz and Çetintaş (2011) ^[11] found that prospective teachers in Turkish education department have the highest democratic attitude scores; Çermik (2013) ^[30] concluded that the democratic values of prospective teachers in music and Turkish education department are the highest, respectively. Turkish education department students' showing more democratic tendencies in terms of freedom of expression can be resulted from the fact that the students of this department can be more competent in expressing themselves when their verbal skills are considered.

In this study, it was determined that female prospective teachers are more respectful to differences than males. Unlike the results of this study, Memduhoğlu and Ayyürek (2014) ^[33] found that males reported a more positive view of differences than females; on the other hand, Çermik (2013) ^[30] investigated the democratic values of prospective teachers and found that they had similar democratic values about respect for differences and justice. In this study, it can be said that the social structure in Turkey is influential on the fact that females are more respectful for differences than males. It is seen that women are unequally alienated because of the inequality created by gender mainstreaming in patriarchal societies like Turkish society. Therefore, it can be interpreted that women do not see the respect they expect and so they are more respectful to the differences of others because of their sensitivity. This shows that females are more sensitive to differences than males. In addition, it was concluded that fourth grade prospective teachers are more respectful for differences than first grade students. In higher education,

students share the same environment with the individuals from different religious, gender, culture, ethnicity, etc. and they see different perspectives. It can be said that this is influential on prospective teachers' accepting and respecting differences over time. It is hopeful that higher education has a positive impact on students' respect for differences.

As a result of the research, it was concluded that the students of Turkish and foreign language departments are more respectful to the differences than the students of primary education, secondary education science and mathematics students and the students of CEIT department. Therefore, it can be said that language students show more respect for differences than the students of the numerically weighted departments. It is known that language departments have more social courses in their curricula and in these courses the students are able to reflect different views through the discussion environments. This can be influential on the fact that language students are more sensitive to differences.

Based on the results of the research, it may be suggested to add courses such as democracy education and democratic education to teacher education programs in higher education. It is also advisable for the teachers/instructors to behave democratically and establish democratic learning environments in order to give the students opportunity for the formation of democracy consciousness. Teachers/instructors need to be model for the learners by being more sensitive to differences and respecting different ideas in the classroom environment. Teaching-learning environments in which students can express their opinions freely should be prepared by creating discussion environments. Only quantitative data tools were used in this research, and in further studies interviews may be conducted with prospective teachers to gather more in-depth data, so that they can express their opinions about democratic education and respecting for differences.

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