

The Role of University Education in Changing the Gender Role Perceptions of Turkish ELT Student Teachers

The Role of University Education in Changing the Gender Role Perceptions of Turkish ELT Student Teachers

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Özet

Despite recent improvements in demographics and educational outcomes, it is still the case that traditional expectations and attitudes toward gender roles in the Turkish society have been preserved to a great extent. Given this current position of Turkey in terms of gender issues, the transformative power of education, especially of teachers, could be emphasized more strongly at all levels of education. Therefore, it is important that teachers are trained to identify and counter gender bias to help fight the problem of sexism prevalent in the country. The purpose of this study was to compare the gender role perceptions and gender role classifications of first-year and fourth year English language teaching student teachers and to identify any difference between the two groups. The sample (N=204) for the present study was obtained from a large state university in western Turkey. Gender role orientation was assessed with the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI, Bem 1974). Findings have indicated that male student teachers still have a traditional perspective on gender roles and that university education does not seem to have a role in changing their existing value judgments in relation to gender. On the other hand, Turkish female students have adopted a more masculine gender role within the four years of their university education. Implications are included for teacher education institutions in Turkey.

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Abstract

Despite recent improvements in demographics and educational outcomes, it is still the case that traditional expectations and attitudes toward gender roles in the Turkish society have been preserved to a great extent. Given this current position of Turkey in terms of gender issues, the transformative power of education, especially of teachers, could be emphasized more strongly at all levels of education. Therefore, it is important that teachers are trained to identify and counter gender bias to help fight the problem of sexism prevalent in the country. The purpose of this study was to compare the gender role perceptions and gender role classifications of first-year and fourth year English language teaching student teachers and to identify any difference between the two groups. The sample (N=204) for the present study was obtained from a large state university in western Turkey. Gender role orientation was assessed with the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI, Bem 1974). Findings have indicated that male student teachers still have a traditional perspective on gender roles and that university education does not seem to have a role in changing their existing value judgments in relation to gender. On the other hand, Turkish female students have adopted a more masculine gender role within the four years of their university education. Implications are included for teacher education institutions in Turkey.

Keywords

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