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Revista de Cercetare si Interventie Sociala

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Published by:
Expert Projects Publishing House

expert projects
publishing

On behalf of:
„Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University,
Department of Sociology and Social Work
and
HoltIS Association

REVISTA DE CERCETARE SI INTERVENTIE SOCIALA
is indexed by Clarivate Analytics (Social Sciences Citation Index),
SCOPUS and CROSSREF

A Review of Multicultural Education in Northern Cyprus and Turkish Learning Levels of Students from Different Cultural Backgrounds

Mehmet OZBILGEHAN[1], Suleyman CELENK[2]

Abstract

The purpose of this research is -within the frame of opinions by form teachers working in primary schools in Northern Cyprus- reviewing problems faced by the students coming from different cultural backgrounds and reviewing proposals to solve such problems, in addition to considering Turkish grades on foreign students' report cards to determine Turkish learning levels of them. This study was carried out using a mix of qualitative and quantitative research methods as a base to understand the present situation. Within the scope of the purposeful sampling in the research, 40 classroom teachers from 5 primary schools from the Nicosia area were reached by using criterion sampling and maximum diversity techniques. A total of 120 foreign students were also reached. Open-ended questions were asked to teachers through semi-structured interview forms. The answers were interpreted by thematicizing. As a result of the study, problems faced by students from different cultures according to the opinions of teachers were grouped as; educational problems, communication problems, curriculum problems, problems related to family, and general problems. It is suggested to have special language programs for students from different cultural backgrounds.

Keywords: multiculturalism, multicultural education, students from different cultural backgrounds, form teachers.

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Introduction

Globalization is a process that connects the world more with the displacement of existing political, cultural and economic boundaries (Smith, 2005). According to Bozkurt (2000) globalization is expressed as the integration of the world in cultural, social, economic and political fields. On the other hand, it is defined as the concept of time and place losing its importance as the interdependence of the countries increases. Larsson (2001) suggests that people can easily communicate with people at the other end of the world, and thus making life easier. The migration wave that comes with globalization leads to international interaction. With the help of new possibilities created by globalization, transportation and trade between countries have become quite easier. To summarize, the basic dimensions of globalization are regarded as education, economy, culture, and politics (Waters, 2001). Education systems are greatly affected by the transformation and change provided by globalization (Çağlar & Reis, 2007).

Northern Cyprus has been influenced by the international process resulting from the intercultural interaction and migration wave in the globalization movements that started to accelerate in the second half of the 20th century and as of the 21st century we are in. Northern Cyprus has been harbouring more differences and more diversification in culture than ever before in history. A rapid change and transformation is observed in many areas in Northern Cyprus. The education system was also affected by the rapid transformation and change brought about by the rapidly spreading globalization movement. By courtesy of globalization, transportation between the countries is now easier and the opportunity to meet other cultures has started to be found with lower costs. This, in turn, gave the individual the opportunity to get to know and learn about the characteristics of other cultures as well as their own culture and to draw common points from their differences. This situation appears especially in the economy and business world. Education is of great importance in intercultural communication in acquiring these characteristics, which we can also express as intercultural communication competence (Zorel, 2014). In the field of tourism by Turkish Cypriots, the number of major hotels -which was "one" before 1974- has increased to 153 facilities and a capacity of 25,570 beds today (Kuzey Kibris Turizm Planlama Dairesi, 2020). In the field of education, the number of universities serving has increased to 22 as of 2020, and a total of 104,658 students have been reached, with the number of international students from other countries has reached 92,438. Northern Cyprus has become a country that hosts approximately one third of the population as foreign students. A total of 53,191 students receive education in preschool, primary, secondary and high schools. Approximately 6% of this number is foreign students, the number of foreign students at these levels in Northern Cyprus is 3459 (Kuzey Kibris Eğitim Ortak Hizmetler Dairesi, 2020).
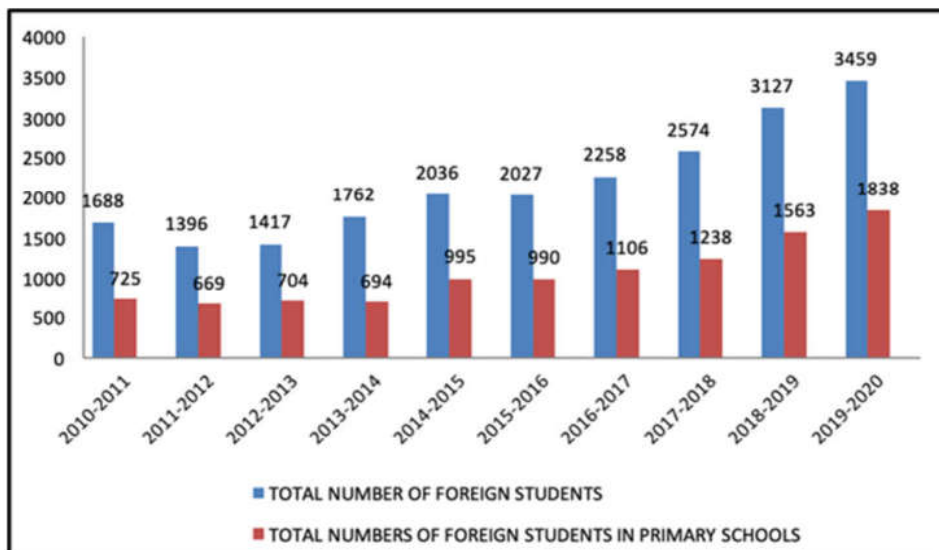
Figure 1. Numbers of foreign students studying in Northern Cyprus between 2010 and 2020

When *Figure 1* is analyzed, it is seen that the number of students coming from different cultures to Northern Cyprus has increased by years. This increase in the overall number of students reveals data showing precautions to be taken. Edited by Psaltis *et al.* (2017), the most up-to-date and comprehensive book on multiculturalism "Education in Multicultural Cyprus" addresses the situation in both north and south parts of Cyprus. According to the different academics in the book, problems are observed in history education, religious education, education of immigrant children living in Cyprus, and in the education of groups who are also Cypriot and considered to be disadvantaged (students with disabilities, etc.). It is observed that serious problems are arising such as alienation, inequality of opportunity, having an education in Turkish even if the mother tongue of the student is not Turkish; and by that being detached from education and face mental health issues. Based on the findings of the different articles in this book, it reveals that multicultural education is not implemented in Cyprus and should be applied urgently. The starting point of this research is to shed light on multiculturalism in Cyprus, to shed light on similar countries such as Cyprus which are receiving immigration, and to describe the problems and to propose solutions.

The multiculturalism brought by the globalization process has gained momentum in 2003 by opening the checkpoints between north and south parts of Cyprus. With the globalization in Northern Cyprus, the education process has started to be considered with more dimensions. Within this dynamism, we can easily state that a setting of multicultural enivroment was entered. "Multiculturalism", which is seen as one of the important theories of the 21st century; advocates for the

preservation of different cultures and common values for individuals to live in peace and harmony in society (Parekh, 2005). Again multiculturalism is stated as a versatile concept that includes other cultural dimensions such as ethnicity, race, language, social class, religious orientation (Tiedt & Tiedt, 2005). At this point, the evaluation of multiculturalism as an achievement in education coincides with the universal values of the century we live in.

It is seen that stakeholders of education such as familes, teachers, administrators, and students are at the center of the problems that multiculturalism brings to education. Students will be able to realize themselves in a multicultural education environment, to ensure social peace and to enable their students to live in a peaceful and happy way in a country. On the other hand, there are some competencies that teachers have in a multicultural education setting. Research in the literature has shown that teachers with competencies required by multicultural education support intercultural perspective and therefore face fewer problems and even increase students' academic success in the desired direction (Kitsantas, 2012). Therefore, based on the literature, in this research, it was preferred to work with education stakeholders, teachers and students, who are most affected by the multicultural education process.

In Northern Cyprus, both the protection of the social structure and the creation of a sustainable education system have gained vital importance. For this, the change and transformation caused by globalization should be taken into consideration. Smaller societies like in Cyprus can be more susceptible to be affected by such change and transformation compared to other countries with larger population. Aydin (2013) drew attention to this issue and the integration of attitudes, norms and values required by multiculturalism, and stated that it was getting more attention on a small geography such as Northern Cyprus.

It is thought that in this research, it will be important to reveal the problems experienced by students in Northern Cyprus from different cultures in the adaptation to the education system and how these problems should be solved. Furthermore, it can be said that it will be important in terms of shedding light on language success in multicultural education in order to reveal students' success in Turkish, which is their mother tongue in the north of Cyprus. In conclusion, this study may be important in terms of guiding students from different cultures in order to be successful in the education process.

In the research, data was collected and evaluated in two dimensions. In the first dimension, the problems experienced by teachers working in primary schools in the multicultural education system in Northern Cyprus and their own suggestions for solving these problems are discussed. In the other dimension, students' Turkish report scores were evaluated and language success levels were analyzed. Whether students' language achievement levels differ has been examined and it is aimed to evaluate their levels in the current education system.

Methodology

Model of the Research

This study is based on a mixed method in which qualitative and quantitative research methods are used together. Studies involving mixed methods are defined as the combined use of qualitative and quantitative methods for similar basic phenomena (Creswell, 2009). In the qualitative dimension of the research, the description of the problems of students from different cultures educated in Cyprus in the framework of teacher opinions was revealed by making use of the case study and phenomenology model. Surveyal model in the quantitative dimension of the research was the Turkish language report scores for students', as language success levels were discussed, described and interpreted. In addition, the language achievement levels of students from different countries and different cultures studying in Northern Cyprus were analyzed to see if they differed significantly in Turkish grade scores at the end of Semester 1 and Semester 2.

Research Questions on the Qualitative Dimension of the Study

1) What are the opinions of the teachers who participated in the research about the educational problems of children from different cultures in a multicultural education environment?
2) What are the suggestions of the teachers participating in the research regarding the solution of the educational problems experienced by children from different cultures in the multicultural education environment?

Research Questions on the Quantitative Dimension of the Study

3) Is there a significant difference between students from different cultures and native speakers considering first, second and third grade students' success in reading, understanding, speaking and writing in Turkish lessons?
4) Is there a significant difference between the scores of fourth and fifth grade students from different cultures and the students whose native language is Turkish?

Study Group

Cyprus is an island in Mediterranean sea. There were 19,988 students studying in primary schools in 2019, when the research was carried out throughout Northern Cyprus. There are 3459 students from foreign countries (countries who do not have Turkish as the first language) across North Cyprus and the number of foreign students studying in primary schools is 1838. 440 of these students study in 10 primary schools in Nicosia. Within the scope of the purposeful sampling in the research, criterion sampling and maximum diversity techniques were used and 5

of the 10 primary schools in Nicosia were included in the research. The reason for choosing the 5 specified schools is related to the multicultural structure of the school in accordance with the criterion sample and the number of students from different cultures to be at least 10 students.

As a result, the study group of this research, were determined from 5 primary schools in the center of Nicosia in Northern Cyprus as a total of 120 foreign students from 16 different countries. All 120 students mentioned in the study were reached and report cards were received. In addition, a total of 824 students whose mother tongue is Turkish are included in the study to compare the level of Turkish language success of foreign students. Since the grades in the first, second and third years are given in the letter system and in the fourth and fifth years the grades were given in the numeric system, the success levels are evaluated separately in two groups.

In the research, the other working group is teachers. Teachers working in five major primary schools in Nicosia in the 2019-2020 academic years were included in this study, considering their teaching to foreign students on the basis of the criterion sample. In accordance with the maximum diversity sampling, attention was paid to the variety of variables such as gender, class, age and seniority, and 40 teachers were included in the study. 18 of these teachers are men and 22 are women. 7 of the teachers are first grade, 6 are second grade, 7 are third grade, 9 are fourth grade, and 11 are fifth grade.

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Data Collection Tools

In this research, 3 data collection tools were used.
1) Personal Information Form for Teachers: The "Personal Information Form" used in the research was prepared to reveal the information of the teachers in the study group.
2) Semi-Structured Interview Form for Teachers Regarding Education Problems of Foreign Students: In the study, a semi-structured interview form consisting of written open-ended questions was prepared to reveal the administrative and instructional problems experienced by teachers in a multicultural education environment. The written opinion form used in this study was created on two main axes. These axes have been identified as problems and solutions.

3) Student Turkish Grades in Report Cards: In the study, Turkish report scores were taken to evaluate the Turkish language success levels of the students.

Analysis of Data

Statistical Package for Social Sciences 25.0 software was used to analyze the data collected from primary school students in the quantitative part of the study. The "chi-square test" was used to compare the reading, comprehension, speaking and writing grades of the students whose mother tongue is Turkish and whose mother tongue is not Turkish, who study in the first, second and third grades. The compliance of the data used in the comparison of the Turkish course grades of the fourth and fifth grade students whose mother tongue is Turkish and whose native language is not Turkish was examined with the "Kolmogorov–Smirnov test" and it was found that it did not fit the normal distribution. For this reason, a non-parametric test "Mann–Whitney U test", which can be used to compare the two groups, has been applied. First term and second term grades of students whose mother tongue is not Turkish were compared with the "Wilcoxon test".

In the qualitative part of the research, the factors related to the problem were investigated with a holistic approach, and how the factors affected the situation in question and how they were affected by the related situation were studied. For this purpose, "content analysis" technique was used in analyzing the data. Content analysis is explained in the form of reaching the themes and categories by summarizing and combining the codes extracted from the data text examined (Büyüköztürk *et al.*, 2010). The ratio was reflected to the tables prepared for qualitative findings according to how the answers, given by a total of 40 teachers, are relating to the theme. For example, if 5 teachers were mentioned, it was stated in the table that the theme found was 12.5%.

Results

The research findings are presented below in separate titles in accordance with the qualitative and quantitative dimensions.

Qualitative Findings

Opinions of primary school teachers were asked related to "Managerial and Instructional Problems Experienced in Multicultural Education Environment". The students whose mother tongue is not Turkish have been dealt with in the study together with the reasons of management and teaching problems they encounter in Northern Cyprus.

Table 1. Teachers' views on educational problems experienced by students from different cultures

Main Theme	Theme
The Student Has No Problem During the Education Process	Student is smart and successful in lessons
	Student is successful in using Turkish
	Family interest of the student is sufficient
	Student started Turkish education from kindergarten
The Student Has Problems During the Education Process	Not being able to benefit from education due to language problem
	Academic failure
	Problem in reading and writing
	Problems in verbal lessons
	Grammar problem
	Creating problems in classroom management
	Not doing homework
Student Having Communication Problem	Having communication problems with the teacher
	Having communication problems with friends
Curriculum Related Issues	Issues are difficult and above the level of the foreign student
	Curriculum difference, difficulty and implementation problem
Students' Problems Arising from Family	Parents' failure to support classes
	Lack of attention from parents
	Parent's understanding with educators
	The adaptation problem of the family
	Parents not coming to school
General Problems Affecting Student Education	Irregular attendance to school
	Having psychological problems (escaping from school, being ridiculed, unhappiness etc.)
	Directing students to religious education outside of school
	The education system is different from what they are used to
	The teacher does not speak a foreign language
	New students are constantly coming and untimely enrollment

When teachers' opinions about the education problems experienced by students from different cultures are examined, it is seen that teachers use the problem of "using Turkish and language problem". Another important point is the views stating that there is a problem about the content and implementation of the curriculum. It is stated that the applied curriculum is not suitable for foreign students, does not include multiculturalism and is difficult. Based on the opinions of the teachers, we can say that the problems of students not understanding and reinforcing the issues are disrupting the education in the classroom. They also stated that the students had problems communicating with their friends because of the language. In addition, it was revealed that some families could not show sufficient interest in their children's education for various reasons. Apart from these, various problems such as psychological problems affecting students' education, they came to school irregularly and teachers working in primary schools do not speak a language. The personal solutions of the participanting teachers regarding the second research question of the qualitative research are presented in *Table 2* below.

Table 2. Teachers' suggestions for solutions to problems experienced by students from different cultures in the school environment

Main Theme	Theme
Recommendations for Government Policy in Education	Foreign students should be distributed equally to schools
	Psychological Counseling and Guidance service should be active
	Multicultural education should be supported
	Economic support should be provided to families
	Education policies should be created for immigrants in the country
	Immigrants who cannot adapt to Cyprus should be sent back
	Foreign students should be given importance and support should be provided
	The duration of the education should be increased
	Working hours and conditions of the families should be arranged in accordance with the education process

Recommendations for Education Ministry Practices	In-service training course should be given to teachers
	Level determination exams should be given to students and level groups should be formed, individual education should be provided
	Night schools should be opened and education should be provided for foreign families
	Compliance and support classes should be created
	An office should be established for foreign students
	A system should be established to ensure communication with families and children
	A multicultural day should be organized
	Students who are successful in the integration program should be sent to schools
	Different course opportunities should be provided to students
	A solution should be found for teachers' burnout
	A program should be put on prospective teachers at universities about multicultural education and Turkish education for foreign students
	Projects for foreign students should be prepared
	Class numbers in schools should be reduced and assistant teachers should be given
	Children should be taught games, computer-aided education should be given
	Inspection of teachers, administrators and families
Recommendations for the curriculum	Curriculum should be reorganized within the scope of multiculturalism
	Expert educators knowing the multicultural curriculum should be used
	Turkish Cypriot culture and values should be included in the curriculum
	Special programs should be prepared for students whose native language is not Turkish
	Support programs should be prepared for teachers

Suggestions for language education	Language training program must be compulsory
	Orientation and language training should be provided to families
	Language programs and honor system should be adopted for parents and children
	Support should be obtained from educators who know the languages of students
	Students should be given the opportunity to study in their mother tongue
Suggestions for cultural harmony	Social and cultural events should be organized
	Turkish Cypriot culture should be preserved and taught
	Students should be given the opportunity to present their own culture
	Cultural differences and common points should be identified
General recommendations	Parent meetings and home visits should be done
	Civil society organizations should be used
	Social Services Department should supervise and help homes
	All stakeholders of education should be made conscious

The teachers emphasized the creation of a state policy for the educational problems experienced by students from different cultures in the multicultural education environment. To this end, they emphasized the necessity of a strong political will and a strong economic structure in multiculturalism and multicultural education. They demanded that students from different cultures be distributed equally to schools, and that the Psychological Counseling and Guidance Service should be available in schools. The teachers stated that they need in-service training and that they consider themselves insufficient in terms of multicultural education. The fact that the teachers want the groups to be formed and individual training with the placement exams before the students are distributed to the classes clearly reveals the problems in the applications. In addition, suggestions such as opening night schools, creating resource classes and establishing an office for the foreign students within the education ministry were presented. In this framework, reorganization of the curriculum is seen as an imperative in the globalizing world. The majority of teachers focus on the preparation and implementation of compulsory language education programs. The teachers who stated that they could not establish a healthy communication with the students stated that social and cultural activities are important in this regard. It is stated that this will contribute to the harmony among students, to teach and protect the Turkish Cypriot culture. However, it was also said that it would be beneficial for foreign students to present their own culture and to learn differences and similarities. It is

believed that the participation of state institutions and organizations and non-governmental organizations in all these processes will contribute to the joint resolution of problems in education. There are teachers suggesting that training in multiculturalism, multicultural education and Turkish language education for foreign students at the institutions who are predominantly engaging in teacher training should be given to the teachers in order to contribute more to the contemporary education life.

Quantitative Findings

Under this heading, the Turkish language achievements of the foreign students in the years first, second and third were compared with the students whose native language is Turkish, and then the first and second semester grades are compared. Similarly, Turkish course grades of the 4th and 5th year students were compared.

Table 3. Comparison of reading, comprehension, speaking and writing grades of students whose mother tongue is Turkish and whose mother tongue is not Turkish

	Native Turkish speaker (n=478)		Non-native Turkish speaker (n=70)		Total (n=548)		χ^2	P
	n	%	n	%	N	%		
Reading								
A	362	75.73	45	64.29	407	74.27	4.416	0.110
B	69	14.44	16	22.86	85	15.51		
C+D	47	9.83	9	12.86	56	10.22		
Comprehension								
A	373	78.03	52	74.29	425	77.55	2.024	0.363
B	73	15.27	10	14.29	83	15.15		
C+D	32	6.69	8	11.43	40	7.30		
Speaking								
A	414	86.61	56	80.00	470	85.77	2.217	0.330
B	38	7.95	8	11.43	46	8.39		
C+D	26	5ç44	6	8.57	32	5.84		
Writing								
A	332	69.46	42	60.00	374	68.25	4.475	0.107
B	91	19.04	21	30.00	112	20.44		
C+D	54	11.30	7	10.00	61	11.13		

In *Table 3*, the results of chi-square test regarding the comparison of reading, comprehension, speaking and writing grades of students whose mother tongue is Turkish and whose mother tongue is not Turkish are included. When *Table 3* is analyzed, it is determined that there is no statistically significant difference between reading, comprehension, speaking and writing grades of students whose mother tongue is Turkish and whose mother tongue is not Turkish ($p>0.05$). Although the reading, comprehension, speaking and writing grades of students whose mother tongue is Turkish were found higher than those whose mother tongue is not Turkish, this difference was not statistically significant.

Table 4. Comparison of Turkish course notes of students whose native language is Turkish and whose mother tongue is not Turkish

Level of Turkish Knowledge	n	$\overline{x}$	s	M	Lower	Upper	SO	Z	p
Native Turkish Speaker	346	8.69	1.34	9	5	10	197.61	-0.423	0.672
Non-Native Turkish Speaker	50	8.82	1.16	9	6	10	204.64		

Table 4 shows the results of the Mann–Whitney U test conducted for comparing Turkish course grades of students whose mother tongue is Turkish and whose mother tongue is not Turkish. When Table 4 is analyzed, it is determined that the average grade of Turkish lessons of students whose mother tongue is Turkish is $\overline{x} = 8.69 \pm 1.34$, and the average of Turkish students whose mother tongue is not Turkish is $\overline{x} = 8.82 \pm 1.16$. It has been determined that there is no statistically significant difference between the Turkish course grades of the students whose native language is included in the study ($p>0.05$).

Table 5. Comparison of Semester I and Semester II Turkish course grades for students whose mother tongue is not Turkish

Semester II - Semester I	N	Rank Average	Rank Sum	Z	P
Negative ranks	0	0	0	-3.606	0.000*
Positive ranks	13	7	91		
Equal	37				

*p<0.05

Table 5 shows the results of the Wilcoxon test applied to compare Semester I and Semester II Turkish course grades of students whose mother tongue is not Turkish. When Table 5 is analyzed, it was observed that 13 of the students were

increased Turkish course grades and 37 were equal in the second semester. It was determined that there is a statistically significant difference between Semester I and Semester II Turkish course grades of the students whose mother tongue is not Turkish and the Turkish course grades increased in the second semester ($p<0.05$).

Discussion

It is seen that foreign students coming from different countries and cultures in Northern Cyprus experience various problems within the educational environment prepared for Turkish speaking students. In the research, it is seen that among 120 students from twelve different countries' cultures, teachers face more problems with students from Middle East countries Syria, Egypt, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. If the student was born in Cyprus or came to the country at a young age and started kindergarten education, it is stated that educational problems are more easily overcome. In addition, if the students have just arrived and registered in Cyprus, it is seen that they face serious problems in adaptation. The biggest problem that teachers have with students from different cultures is seen as language and being unable to communicate properly due to language. Galloway and Jenkins (2005) stated in their study in America that the biggest problems of foreign students are language and adaptation problems. It was determined that students had difficulty in understanding the subjects and doing homework due to language and adaptation problems. It is also stated that students from different cultures who do not speak Turkish go to grouping among themselves (especially Pakistani students) because they have difficulty in communicating with their classmates. It is stated that this situation is improved by students learning Turkish in the process.

Tok (2010) stated that in the study of immigrant students examining learning difficulties, foreign students have verbal expression difficulties and cannot express themselves fully, and can not express and answer the texts they read. It was observed in the interviews that this situation directly affected classroom management. The fact that children from different cultures are successful in visual and numerical courses rather than verbal courses supports this situation. In their study, Ciğerci and Güngör (2016), stated that the teachers had language problems with newly arrived foreign students, they had disciplinary problems due to their inability to communicate with them, and that they had academic failure because they could not do homework. Children cannot be happy because they cannot communicate with their friends and they become self-isolated in the school environment. While the current educational problems of the teachers have persists, it has been observed that their burnout has been increasing after the problems they experienced due to the inadequacy of multicultural education and the lack of necessary professional support. In the studies of Bulut and Başbay (2015), the fact that senior teachers stated that they did not consider themselves sufficient in terms of competence and

awareness in knowledge and skill levels in multicultural education compared to junior teachers.

When the educational problems of the students are examined, it is seen that the family support is not at the desired level in education when the economic concerns of the parents are at the forefront, the children are not able to deal with their education after their long hours in the workplaces, they cannot leave the job when they call the teacher, and the lack of communication and indifference due to not knowing enough language. In the research of Güngör and Şenel (2018), it was revealed that due to the economic situation of the families, they could not show the necessary attention to their children and they had a communication problem with the teachers at school. In another study, Ramburuth and Härtel (2010) conducted a study to determine the needs of foreign students with low socioeconomic status, to understand and recognize their backgrounds. In this study, it was revealed that socioeconomic factors and familial factors affecting the learning of students with low socioeconomic levels are important.

The teachers, who remained in this study, emphasized that they had problems in discipline issues resulting from the lack of communication with Syrian and Egyptian students, that students were in tally and failed in their classes. In addition, the teachers stated that Syrian children had problems with their friends, that they constantly quarreled and swore, and that they did not see an improvement in their behavior despite the warnings. Turkmenistan families with a large population as a workforce have not been found to have much trouble (except for exceptions) in terms of language and communication due to their language being close to Turkish. In a similar study of Alyilmaz, Biçer and Çoban (2015) with Kyrgyz students, they do not experience much hardship due to Turkish being a similar language, they are happy with being in Turkey and they stated that they had difficulties in comprehension and explaining only because they were new to the country at first.

It can be said that teachers' suggestions for solutions to educational problems experienced by students from different cultures in the school environment are partly applicable in the short term, some of which can be implemented in the long term, and must be transformed into a form of state policy. The findings in the studies of Forrest, Lean and Dunn (2016) overlap in the context of the importance of establishing multicultural commissions within the education ministry and preparing and implementing multicultural education policies. In the study of Lijuan (2002), it is stated that orientation programs are important for foreign students to adapt. In another study, it was stated that orientation education is required for the academic success of students in the development of linguistic and cultural diversity in schools, and all these results are similar to the findings of this study (Cummins, 2015).

In the study, it was stated that guidance and psychological counseling services are not sufficient in primary schools in Northern Cyprus. In the one of the limited amount of studies, a study carried out by Takir and Özerem (2019) for secondary and

high school students in North Cyprus, it was stated that the guidance teachers did not implement an individual program for foreign students. It has been demonstrated that counselor teachers only communicate with families at the notification level.

Teachers drew attention to whether or not any in-service training programs have been prepared on Turkish education for students whose mother tongue is not Turkish with multicultural education. In this regard, the support of teachers in the education process, the problems they face should be closely related and should not be left alone. School administrations prefer to deal with teachers only when problems arise. In the study of Takir and Özerem (2019), they propose to provide in-service trainings to teachers because they do not know how to approach foreign students, what to pay attention to in the classroom environment, how to train foreign students and how to carry out multicultural education. In another study, Matziouri, Tsioumis and Kyridis (2014) investigated the educational leadership in a multicultural education environment in higher and lower profiles of teachers on duty in Northern Greece, and revealed that teachers should be trained on multiculturalism. This result also supports the findings of this research.

It was observed that the curriculum applied in primary schools in Northern Cyprus is not suitable for foreign students, does not include multiculturalism and is difficult and too intense for children. According to teachers, the curriculum should be reorganized to include multiculturalism, but attention should also be paid to the preservation, development and transfer of the Turkish Cypriot culture. Teachers can not sufficiently deal with the problems of their students from different cultures in order to keep up with the curriculum. The fact that Yavuz and Mizrak (2016) stated that it would be beneficial to make some arrangements in the curriculum to meet the needs of students from different cultures as one of the problems experienced by the teachers, which supports the findings in this research. It has also been observed that social and cultural activities that children can express themselves as well as lessons are not sufficient. In this regard, it was emphasized that it would be beneficial to plan and support the activities by expert staff of education ministry and to cooperate with non-governmental organizations in this regard.

Conclusion

When the quantitative results of the research are evaluated, the fact that the students whose native language is Turkish among the first, second and third year students included in the study were found to have higher grades in reading, comprehensing, speaking and writing than the students whose mother tongue is not Turkish was expected in the existing curriculum structure, although this difference is statistically insignificant this can be interpreted that teachers were grading students in a manner being not very distinctive. It can be interpreted that the students who come from different cultures have higher Turkish course grade

in the second term compared to the first term, and that they can increase their academic success by completing the adaptation process. The difference between the Turkish course grade average of the students in the fourth and fifth grades whose mother tongue is Turkish compared to the students whose mother tongue is not Turkish is noteworthy even there is no statistically significant results. This may be related to the desire of students from different cultures to prove themselves and succeed. Another reason can be explained as that teachers are not grade-oriented towards foreign students and that they are based on children's happiness and success in themselves and that they are more sensitive to them. It can also be said that teachers do not separate foreign students and do not discriminate while giving grades. In the research of Aktoprak, Yiğit and Güneyli (2018), it was revealed that primary school teachers in Northern Cyprus attach importance to the education of their foreign students and they care about their cultural characteristics while teaching. Therefore, it shows that foreign students are included in the Northern Cyprus education system and are not excluded by teachers.

Recommendations

In order to solve the language problems experienced by students from different cultures, special language education programs should be prepared for them and their achievements should be certified. However, language education and information should be provided to families by planning night schools. It will be useful to start orientation education in pre-school period and, if necessary, to be provided in certain centers during school.

It is thought that it would be beneficial to plan the activities where the foreign students can present their culture and values by the experts of the education ministry and these activities to take part in the annual work calendar. Providing individual programs in schools by providing guidance and psychological counseling services in our primary schools will be beneficial for education. Foreign students who have been disconnected from classroom instruction in schools can be excluded, which can bring various problems such as running away from school.

The language achievement levels of students from different cultures are higher in the second semester compared to the first semester grade report scores, which indicates that the students generally overcome the adaptation problems they experience in the first term. In this respect, it may be thought that it would be beneficial to continue the adaptation process with a more intense program outside of school hours.

Maintaining social peace and tranquillity in Cyprus is extremely important in terms of ensuring continuity in education. The multiculturalism should be handled in the society as a gain and harmony should be ensured rapidly without alienating the individuals from different cultures in Northern Cyprus.

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