DOI: 10.2478/jtes-2022-0007

sciendo

Journal of Teacher Education for Sustainability,
vol. 24, no. 1, pp. 87–104, 2022

Role of Social Justice in the Relationship Between Cultural Intelligence and Attitude Toward Teaching Profession

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Abstract

The research investigated the role of social justice in the relationship between cultural intelligence and attitude toward teaching profession. For a sustainable education, social justice and cultural intelligence are seen crucial in teaching profession. The data of the study were collected from 404 prospective teachers studying at a state university in Turkey by using a paper-based survey. For collecting the data, "Cultural Intelligence Scale (CIS)" developed by Ang et al. (2007) and adapted into Turkish by Ilhan and Cetin (2014); "Social Justice Scale (SJS)" developed by Torres-Harding et al. (2012) and adapted into Turkish by Cirik (2015); and "Attitude Scale of Teaching Profession" developed by Üstüner (2006) were used. A structural model was established and conducted to hypothesize the research questions. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to validate the measurement and structural model. The SEM-based mediating analysis using SPSS AMOS was employed to test the hypothesized relationships. According to the results, cultural intelligence predicted the attitude towards the teaching profession and also social justice. Moreover, social justice was found to be in the full mediating role in the relationship between cultural intelligence and attitude towards the teaching profession. The research concluded that social justice was an important factor in increasing cultural intelligence competencies of teacher candidates to enhance their positive attitude towards teaching profession.

Keywords: attitude toward teaching profession, cultural intelligence, social justice, sustainable education

Introduction

Education is treated as one of the important indicators showing the level of development of a country. There is a widespread and justified understanding that the success of an education system is generally the result of the work of successful and dedicated teachers. The success of the educational process in a country mostly depends on the

effectiveness of teachers (Saylık & Han, 2021). Teachers are seen as the main actors of change and transition towards sustainability in society (Pegalajar-Palomino et al., 2021). According to Kontaş (2016), the quality and characteristics of education are directly related to teachers' professional and personal characteristics. Therefore, teachers' attitudes towards their professions are also very important, as well as their qualifications (Şahin, 2010). Similarly, Trivedi (2012) states that teachers' beliefs, views and attitudes affect their teaching and behavior with the students. Thus, teacher attitude towards the profession affects a teacher's success and efficiency (Güneyli & Aslan, 2009). The establishment of good relationship between teacher and students determines success of the education process (Barwal, 2011). In that context, teacher training is accepted as the critical element in the education system (Üstüner, 2017). Sustainable development of teachers' professional identities plays a significant role in raising talented young scientists in higher education institutions (Kovalcikiene & Buksnyte-Marmiene, 2021). Alkhateeb (2013) emphasizes the training of professional teachers for providing proper education. In the teacher training process, pre-service teachers acquire attitude towards teaching profession (Akbulut & Karakuş, 2011; Karataş, 2020a). Pancholi and Bharwad (2015) state that a favorable and positive attitude makes the job more satisfying and professionally rewarding, but an unfavorable and negative attitude makes the teaching task more difficult, boring and unpleasant. Therefore, it can be stated that for a sustainable education process, teachers should have positive feelings towards their profession.

In teacher training, with the increase of globalization, teacher qualifications changed to include the intercultural elements. Therefore, cultural awareness of teacher candidates became one of the main focuses in teacher training programs. Ang and Inkpen (2008) stated that rapid advances in transportation and information technologies had created more intercultural contact than ever before. Cultural intelligence (CQ) is defined as a multidimensional construct that targets intercultural interactions arising from racial, ethnic and national differences (Ang et al., 2007). Because of the racial, ethnic, cultural, and language differences throughout the world (Banks, 2004), CQ has gained increasing attention from researchers and practitioners (Van Dyne et al., 2012; Earley & Mosakowski, 2004; Karataş & Arpaci, 2021; Rockstuhl et al., 2011). Since cultural intelligence is seen as a tool increasing an individual's ability to interact with people outside their culture (Jyoti & Kour, 2015), it has become the focus of multidisciplinary research (Ott & Michailova, 2018) and empirical research in education and development (MacNab & Worthley, 2012). In this sense, it is stated that revealing the nature, content and effect of CQ will have important applications for individuals, groups and organizations working in a multicultural environment in today's conditions (Lee & Sukoco, 2010). Therefore, teacher education programs have an important role to play. Accordingly, they should employ students from different backgrounds and thus prepare teachers who are aware of the cultural pluralism of their classes (Lewis, 2001). As cultural diversity becomes more pronounced in schools and communities (Ryan, 2006), the expression of social justice is used in school mission statements and educational reform proposals to establish the vision of culturally sensitive schools to leave no children behind (Hytten & Bettez, 2011). Tyler (2000) states that justice allows people and groups to interact without contact and societal breakdown; therefore, teacher training programs try to prepare teachers from a social justice perspective (McDonald & Zeichner, 2009). Ratts et al. (2016) consider having multicultural and social justice competence as a lifelong process. In order for the education process to have a life-long sustainable feature, teachers are

expected to have developed social justice skills. In that sense there was an increased focus on social justice at the beginning of the 21st century (Jean-Marie et al., 2009; Gewirtz, 1998; Karataş, 2020b). Similarly, Brodie (2007) puts forward the necessity of establishing justice and fair distribution ethics in all management practices at local, national and global scales. Therefore, the question arises of how to effectively teach an open perspective of social justice that develops students' critical thinking skills and targets social change (Hackman, 2005). In this context, the teacher training process which enables teacher candidates to gain a positive attitude towards the profession has become more important in enabling cultural intelligence for teacher candidates in the perspective of social justice. In this study, the relationship between cultural intelligence and attitude towards the teaching profession is examined. It is also tested whether social justice has a mediating role in this relationship. The theoretical basis of the research is the previously conducted research findings. It is emphasized in the literature that a teacher should have cultural intelligence competence and an understanding of social justice. In this context, it is a matter of curiosity what role cultural intelligence and social justice play in shaping the attitudes of teacher candidates towards the teaching profession. The original aspect of this study is that there has been no previous study examining the relationship among these three variables and that this relationship will be tested by establishing a model. At this point, the research findings will also contribute to the literature on teacher training. The following hypotheses will be tested within the scope of the research:

H1: Cultural intelligence *will have a positive impact on* attitude towards teaching profession.

H2: Cultural intelligence *will have a positive impact on* social justice.

H3: Social justice *will have a positive impact on* attitude towards teaching profession.

H4: Social justice will have a mediating role in the relationship between cultural intelligence and attitude towards teaching profession.

Literature Review

Cultural Intelligence (CQ)

Many countries of the world have cultural, ethnic, racial, linguistic and religious diversity (Banks, 2004). Since the assumptions, values and traditions regarding the upbringing of the individual differ in societies (Van Dyne et al., 2010), it can be stated that the ability to interact effectively in multiple cultural environments has become more important recently (Crowne, 2008). Earley (2002) is emphasizing the intercultural misunderstandings and their significant impacts on multicultural organizations. Someone who interacts effectively with people in social situations within their own culture may not be able to interact effectively with other cultures where new and different cultural knowledge is needed (Crowne, 2009). For that reason, Kim and Dyne (2012) focus on education and experience to enhance the capability of CQ. According to Ott and Michailova (2018), for living comfortable in multicultural environments cultural intelligence appeals more importance than cognitive intelligence. Therefore, CQ has caught the attention of business leaders and researchers (Crowne, 2008), as well as cross-cultural training and international human resources management (MacNab et al., 2012).

Cultural intelligence is the ability to interpret the unfamiliar and ambiguous actions of a stranger who is not from one's own culture, like people from that person's own

culture (Earley & Mosakowski, 2004). CQ refers to an individual capacity, allowing one to more effectively interact (MacNab & Worthley, 2012) and manage in culturally diverse settings (Ang et al., 2007). This type of intelligence includes cognitive, motivational and behavioral characteristics (Earley, 2002) and expresses the ability of the individual to adapt effectively to new multidimensional cultural environments (Lin et al., 2012). With the CQ ability, people become willing to learn to understand culturally diverse situations (Rockstuhl et al., 2011), and respond flexibly to new or complex situations (Schaik & Burkart, 2011). Therefore, it can be claimed that for foreigners to adapt in a culturally diverse situations and settings CQ ability plays a vital role (Ang et al., 2015; Lee & Sukoco, 2010; Ott & Michailova, 2018). According to Ott and Michailova (2018), individuals with high CQ are culturally competent, have cognitive, behavioral and motivational abilities to work effectively with members of different cultures and adapt to foreign environments. People with this skill show empathy towards others and use their social skills to communicate with other people (Tuleja, 2014).

CQ is a multidimensional concept which has four main capabilities as motivational, cognitive, metacognitive and behavioral dimensions (Ang & Inkpen, 2008; Van Dyne et al., 2010; Rockstuhl, et al., 2011). These sets of capabilities are different, yet interrelated (Van Dyne et al., 2010). CQ provides a comprehensive framework that defines the intercultural competence field with its four factors (Earley & Ang, 2003). According to the conceptualization of the related research, *Motivational CQ* refers to the ability of an individual to understand the functioning of intercultural environments and to keep things going, and shows interest, trust and adaptation between cultures. *Cognitive CQ* expresses an individual's knowledge of cultures and cultural differences and provides people with an understanding of cross-cultural issues and differences. *Metacognitive CQ* refers to an individual's mental ability to acquire cultural knowledge and understand differences, and provides the ability to strategize and interpret culturally diverse experiences. *Behavioral CQ* refers to an individual's behavioral flexibility ability in cross-cultural interactions and provides the ability to properly perform verbal and non-verbal actions in cross-cultural interaction (Ang et al., 2015).

Social Justice

In a multicultural world, all communities are seeking ways of giving their people equal opportunities and a fair distribution of resources. In this context, the term of social justice becomes clearer in explaining these kinds of abilities. Most commentators state that social justice is about legitimacy, fairness, and welfare (Ryan, 2006). According to Sen (2000), the concepts of social justice can be central to ethical norms for assessing the optimality or acceptability of distributions of income. In this meaning, the idea of social justice implies that certain goods, for example, education and health care should be distributed fairly (Brodie, 2007). According to Gewirtz (1998), both material and non-material resources of a society should be distributed fairly. At this point, the importance of the concept of social justice emerges. Social justice involves exploring the social construction of unequal hierarchies that result in a social group access to power and privilege (Lewis, 2001). Rawls (1972) also emphasizes the idea that social justice requires fair distribution of goods. Social justice can be obtained when goods, rights and responsibilities are distributed equally among individuals (as cited in Ryan, 2006). Larson and Murtadha (2002) emphasize the role of social justice in organizing multicultural commu-

nities. Similarly, Banks (2004) draws attention to the importance of people gaining the knowledge, attitude and skills required to make their nation and the world more democratic and just. According to Nussbaum (2003), achieving the capabilities effectively in social justice is important because without it the society is not accepted as just.

On the other hand, Spalding et al. (2010) use social justice as an umbrella term to encompass projects aimed at preparing teachers to recognize, name and combat inequality in schools and society. According to Larson and Murtadha (2002), concern about inequity in education has triggered greater research on social justice in education. In this sense, Hackman (2005) also emphasizes the importance of social justice in education, and states that equity and social justice need to become part of the daily practices in the classroom. Similarly, McDonald and Zeichner (2009) state that teachers should become aware of the hierarchies based on race, class, gender, and sexuality. They also underline that a teacher training program should aim to educate and train teachers from a social justice perspective. Banks (2004) also states that teachers should be aware of and be sensitive to the cultural development of all students in their classrooms. According to the scholar, teachers should facilitate all their students' identity development, including mainstream students, students of color, and other marginalized groups of students. At this point, the importance of social justice education is emphasized. This type of education encourages students to take an active role in their own education and supports teachers in creating democratic and critical educational environments (Hackman, 2005). McDonald and Zeichner (2009) highlight the need of social justice with providing the teacher candidates a course on multicultural education. The importance of schools in teaching social justice is emphasized. In this regard, Hytten and Bettez (2011) state that schools are important in developing justice-oriented citizens who systematically evaluate social, political and economic problems and implement collective strategies for change.

Attitude Towards Teaching Profession

Teaching is a profession which requires sacrifice, sincerity and extra effort, so teachers' attitude towards the profession is seen as a vital prerequisite for an effective performance. Barwal (2011) states that teaching profession is a part of teachers' affective or emotional reaction to their experience in an educational setting. Therefore, attitude of teachers towards their profession can be seen as an important issue of research. Attitudes are defined as positive or negative evaluation statements about objects, individuals or events (Robbins & Judge, 2012). The term *attitude* can be defined as beliefs, habits and motives associated with a particular object (Barwal, 2011). According to Babu and Raju (2016), an attitude is a mental set, mental process, internal disposition, or an arrangement of certain mental processes organized in a person to make them ready to be adjusted in a certain way. Similarly, attitude is defined as positive or negative response to any situation, event or object (Akbulut & Karakuş, 2011), considering it favorable or unfavorable (Andronache et al., 2014). On the other hand, professional attitude is the feelings of an individual, behaviors and commitment to the profession (Chakraborty & Mondal, 2014). Attitudes towards the profession generally include full commitment to the profession, enjoying the profession, being aware of the social benefits of the profession, and believing in the necessity of developing the profession (Parvez & Shakir, 2013). In addition, professional development of teachers has critical importance for the advancement of education and sustainable development (Meesuk et al., 2021).

Teaching requires versatile skills. Among these skills, cognitive competencies such as knowledge and skills and affective competences such as attitudes and behaviors can be mentioned (Bektaş & Nalçacı, 2012). Therefore, the teacher can motivate learners to learn in the desired direction by using attitudes (Karataş & Oral, 2019; Sarkar & Behera, 2016). According to Üstüner (2017), the quality of a teacher's attitude towards the profession can be considered as one of the main factors determining teacher behavior in the classroom environment. Accordingly, the attitude towards the profession reflects the professional perception of the teachers and can also be considered as an indicator of the quality of the teacher's professional behavior (Kontaş, 2016). To achieve an effective sustainable education, teachers must have appropriate attitudes to pass on these values to their future students (Echegoyen-Sanz & Martín-Ezpeleta, 2021). Thus, it can be concluded that effective teaching is related to the development of the total attitude towards the teaching profession (Banerjee & Behera, 2014). Güneyli and Aslan (2009) state that a teacher who has a positive attitude towards their profession enjoys the profession, is devoted to the profession, and is aware that the profession is socially necessary and important.

Positive attitude towards the profession helps the teacher to develop a conducting student-friendly environment in the classroom (Bhargava & Pathy, 2014). Yaakub (1990) also hypothesizes that teachers with a good disposition towards their students reflect positive attitude, while those teachers with a poor disposition possess negative attitude. In this context, positive attitudes towards the profession are reflected in the teacher's behavior in the classroom and enable the teacher to fulfill the teaching role better (Karataş, 2020c; Şahin, 2010). According to Chakraborty and Mondal (2014), the teacher with positive attitude show better performance and effort. Similarly, Egwu (2015) also emphasizes that positive attitude enables teachers to go through the training properly and come out well equipped for the responsibility ahead. Moreover, Bilgin and Aykaç (2016) state that pre-service teachers having positive attitudes towards teaching profession are assumed to be successful teachers. Therefore, positive attitudes towards teaching profession can be seen as an important element of effective teaching in today's multicultural teaching environment.

Method

Research Group

The data were collected from prospective teachers studying at a state university in Turkey by using a paper based anonymous survey. A total of 404 students voluntarily filled out the survey. 73.8 % of the participants were women, while 26.2 % were men. Their ages ranged between 19 and 48 years, whereas majority of them (68.2 %) were aged between the age of 21 and 23 years.

Instruments

Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS): CQS was developed by Ang et al. (2007) and adapted into Turkish language by Ilhan and Cetin (2014). This scale has 20 items and four subdimensions, including "metacognition" (4 items), "cognition" (6 items), "motivation" (5 items), "behavior" (5 items). The measurement items were based on a seven-

point Likert-type scale with values ranging from "1 = Strongly disagree" to "7 = Strongly agree".

Social Justice Scale (SJS): SJS was developed by Torres-Harding et al. (2012) and adapted into Turkish by Cirik (2015). The scale has 24 items and four subdimensions, including "attitude" (11 items), "perceived behavioral control" (5 items), "subjective norms" (4 items), and "behavioral intention" (4 items). The measurement items were based on a seven-point Likert-type scale with values ranging from "1 = Strongly disagree" to "7 = Strongly agree".

Attitude Scale of Teaching Profession: The scale was developed by Üstüner (2006) to determine the attitudes towards teaching profession. The scale has 34 items and one dimension. The measurement items were based on a five-point Likert-type scale with values ranging from "1 = Strongly disagree" to "5 = Strongly agree". When the total score of the test and item-test correlations for each item were examined, it was seen that the item-test correlation varied between .42 and .74. The internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach Alpha) of the scale was calculated as .93.

Results

Measurement Model Assessment

Composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha were used to test construct reliability. As suggested in Table 1, the Cronbach's alpha values ranged between .894 and .945, which exceeded the suggested value of .70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Moreover, the CR values fell between .82 and .97, which exceeded the threshold value of .70 (Kline, 2015). These results suggested the reliability of constructs was ascertained. For establishing the convergent validity, average variance extracted (AVE) values should exceed the threshold value of .40 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Results suggested that the AVE values ranged between .41 and .67; the AVE values of the scales were lower than CR values; thereby, the convergent validity was deemed satisfactory. On the other hand, the fact that AVE values are higher than MSV and ASV values and that "AVE scores are higher than inter-factor correlations show that it has discriminant validity. Table 1 demonstrates that all constructs were significantly correlated with each other at $p<.01$ level.

Table 1

Correlations, Reliability, Convergent and Discriminant Validity

	Alpha	CR	AVE	√AVE	MSV	ASV	TPA	CI	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
ATTP	.930	.82	.41	.64	.19	.12			153.74	14.27	-1.274	1.321
CI	.945	.97	.67	.81	.19	.17	.22**		93.72	22.21	.-140	.-572
SJ	.894	.91	.42	.64	.16	.10	.40**	.44**	139.55	15.77	.-656	.744

*$p<.01$

A confirmatory-factor-analysis (CFA) was used to validate the measurement and structural model. According to the threshold values for the acceptable model fit by Hair et al. (2017), the results presented in Table 2 indicated an acceptable model fit. These findings suggested an adequate support for the construct validity of both models.

Table 2

The CFA Results

Fit Indices	Measurement Models			Structural Model	Reference Value(s)
	ATTP	CI	SJ		
χ^2	173.91	341.60	543.72	136.81	
p value	< .01	< .01	< .01	< .01	
χ^2/df	3.48	2.19	2.25	3.33	< 5
GFI	.93	.92	.90	.94	≥ .85
AGFI	.89	.90	.88	.91	≥ .80
CFI	.88	.97	.94	.95	≥ .90
IFI	.88	.97	.94	.95	≥ .90
RMSEA	.07	.05	.05	.07	≥ .08
SRMR	.07	.04	.04	.06	

Testing of the Hypotheses

A SEM-based mediation analysis using SPSS AMOS was employed to test the hypothesized relationships. A bootstrapping technique with 5000 bootstrap samples and 95 % confidence interval (Hayes, 2017) was employed to test direct, indirect, and total effects. Analysis results regarding testing the hypotheses at the first stage are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Results of Testing the Hypotheses

	SJ			ATTP		
	β	S.E.	C.R.	*β*	S.E.	C.R.
CQ → ATTP (H_1)	–	–	–	0.33***	0.045	5.90
R^2	–	–	–	0.11		
CQ → SJ (H_2)	0.57***	0.058	8.01	–	–	–
R^2	0.33			–	–	–
SJ → ATTP (H_3)	–	–	–	0.54***	0.069	7.94
R^2	–	–	–	0.30		
CQ → SJ → ATTP (H_4)						
CQ → ATTP	–	–	–	0.02	0.057	.331
SJ → ATTP	–	–	–	0.53***	0.085	6.44
R^2	–	–	–	0.30		

***p<.001

As seen in Table 1, first of all, H1 (CQ → ATTP) was tested and it was determined that cultural intelligence predicted the attitude towards the teaching profession (β = .33, p < .001). In this case, H1 was accepted. Then, H2 (CQ → SJ) was tested. Accordingly, it was seen that cultural intelligence predicted social justice (β = .57, p < .001). In this

case, H2 was accepted. In order to test other hypotheses of the research, a separate model was established in which social justice was the mediating variable. Accordingly, the effect of social justice, which was the mediating variable, on the attitude towards the teaching profession was found to be significant ($\beta = .54$ $p < .001$). In this case, H3 was accepted. However, it was observed that the path coefficient value ($\beta = .02$, $t = .33$) from the cultural intelligence variable to the attitude variable towards the teaching profession was not significant, although the mediating variable, social justice, was included in the model. In fact, according to Baron and Kenny (1986), in a model in which the mediating variable is tested this path coefficient value is expected to be insignificant for the full mediation role. In this respect, social justice is in the full mediating role and H4 is supported. However, cultural intelligence explains 30 % of the change (variance) in attitude towards the teaching profession together with social justice. In addition, the direct, indirect, and total effect coefficients related to the bootstrap confidence interval of the mediating role of social justice were examined. Table 4 shows the bootstrapping results.

Table 4

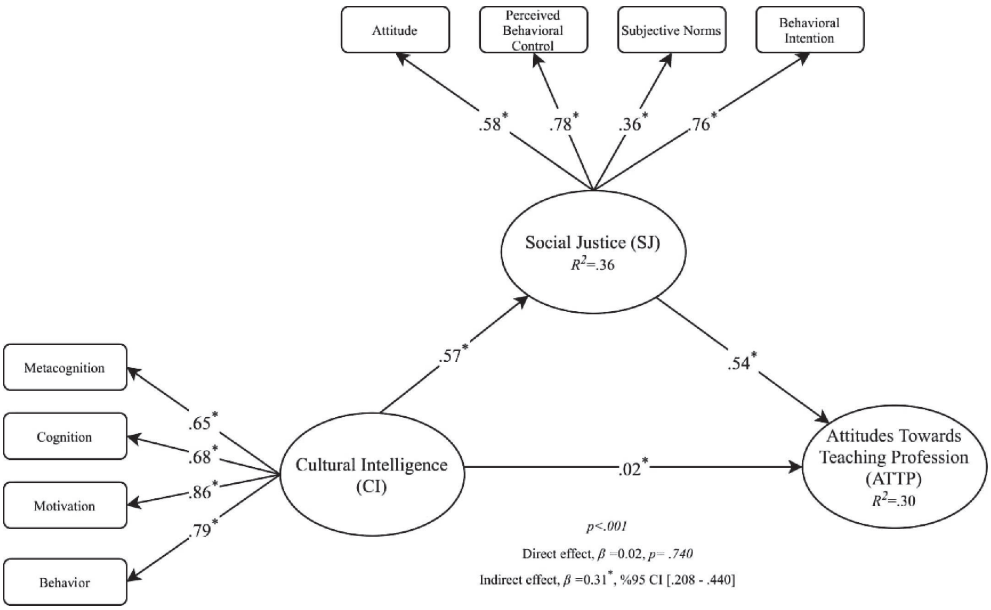
Path Analysis Findings: Direct, Indirect and Total Effects

Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects	LCL	UCL
Standardized Direct Effects		
CQ → SJ	.477	.674
CQ → PTA	.-137	.170
SJ → PTA	.377	.690
Standardized Indirect Effect		
CQ → SJ → PTA	.208	.440
Standardized Total Effects		
CQ → SJ	.343	.591
CQ → PTA	.180	.368
SJ → PTA	.331	.847

According to bootstrapping results, the indirect effect of cultural intelligence on attitude towards teaching profession through social justice was found to be significant ($\chi = .31$ %95 BCA CQ [0.208, 0.440]). For a variable to have a mediating effect, lower and upper limits of bootstrap are expected to be above zero (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). The lower limit and upper limit of the confidence interval did not include 0, thereby, H4 was also supported. These findings show that the social justice variable has a mediating effect on the relationship between cultural intelligence and attitude towards the teaching profession. The fit index values obtained as a result of the path analysis are as follows: ($\chi^2 = 136.81$ $\chi^2/df = 3.33$ GFI = .94, AGFI = .91, CFI = .95, NFI = .93, IFI = .95, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .06 (see Table 2). In this sense, the fit index values are above the reference values, which indicates that the model is compatible and acceptable with the data. The structural model is provided in Figure 1.

Figure 1

The Structural Model



Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, as the first hypothesis, the relationship between cultural intelligence and attitude towards the teaching profession was tested. According to the analysis, CQ predicted the attitude towards teaching profession. This result shows that cultural intelligence competences have significant impact on teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession. In the related literature, the attitude towards teaching profession is evaluated as an important factor in effective teaching (Banerjee & Behera, 2014; Kontaş, 2016; Üstüner, 2017). Bhargava and Pathy (2014) emphasized the importance of a positive attitude towards the profession and mentioned the necessity of a positive attitude for teachers to create a student-friendly environment in the classroom. Accordingly, Chakraborty and Mondal (2014) found that the teachers with positive attitude showed better performance and effort. Some other researchers (Şahin, 2010; Egwu, 2015; Chakraborty & Mondal, 2014; Bilgin & Aykaç, 2016) also concluded that positive attitude towards teaching profession enabled teacher candidates to teach effectively in different environments. Therefore, positive attitudes towards teaching profession can be seen as an important element of effective teaching in today's multicultural teaching environment. In this sense, our research has found out that cultural intelligence competences have significant impact on teacher candidates' attitude towards teaching profession.

According to the analysis of the research, cultural intelligence predicted social justice supporting the second hypothesis. That result shows that high level of cultural competencies of teacher candidates will enable them to perform more social justice behaviors. Cultural intelligence is treated as an important capability in multicultural world. In this sense, there are some experimental studies that show that CQ is an important predictor

of both performance-related outcomes and also emotional outcomes in culturally different situations (Imai & Gelfand, 2010). Ang et al. (2015) also revealed the findings that cultural intelligence was a distinct ability that explained the significant performance variance in intercultural settings. Accordingly, Rockstuhl et al. (2011) and Kim and Dyne (2012) emphasize the critical importance of CQ in multicultural contexts. Crowne (2008) states that exposures to other cultures and experiences increases cultural intelligence. Gaining cultural intelligence provides teacher candidates self-improvement in classroom activities. MacNab and Worthley (2012) emphasize that general self-efficacy predicts successful development of cultural intelligence capacities. In the results of their research Lin et al. (2012) found a positive effect of CQ on cross-cultural adjustment, and in intercultural contexts (Ang et al., 2015; Kim & Dyne, 2012; Rockstuhl et al., 2011). Therefore, it can be concluded that cultural intelligence competences of teacher candidates will provide them an opportunity to teach in a multicultural educational environment.

In today's multicultural classrooms, it is emphasized that teachers should be aware of the cultural differences of their students such as race, gender, class, ableism and sexual orientation (Lewis, 2001). According to Pham (2021), teachers play a very important role by greatly influencing the quality of education. Teachers have the most critical role in maintaining the order of the society as they educate the future decision makers of the societies (Koskela & Karkkainen, 2021). Teachers should have cultural intelligence in order to manage the multicultural classrooms. Accordingly, it can be claimed that cultural intelligence significantly improves task performance and creates a culturally rich workforce (Jyoti & Kour, 2015; Ang et al., 2007). Therefore, increasing cultural intelligence of teacher candidates can also increase their social justice behaviors. Broido (2000) suggests including some courses related to social justice in teacher training programs. McDonald and Zeichner (2009) also demonstrated the importance of teacher training programs including social justice. Accordingly, social justice indicates that teacher candidates will have the opportunity to think about how social structures such as class and classism, race and racism shape students' experiences. Some researchers (Hytten & Bettez, 2011; Hackman, 2005; Lewis, 2001; Nagda et al., 2003) emphasize the importance of social justice in teacher education programs. According to Jean-Marie et al. (2009), social justice promotes a broader and deeper understanding of issues. Hackman (2005) states that teachers should adopt a social justice approach to create a dedicated classroom environment and a context that empowers social change. Lewis (2001) also suggests social justice in pre-service training to develop innovative teacher education programs.

In order to test the other hypotheses of the research, a model was established in which social justice was the mediating variable on the relationship between cultural intelligence and attitude towards the teaching profession. In this respect, social justice was found to be in the full mediating role on the relationship between cultural intelligence and attitude towards the teaching profession. This result shows that social justice is an important factor in increasing cultural intelligence competences of teacher candidates to enhance their positive attitude towards teaching profession. Teacher training programs should contain elements for teacher candidates to gain positive attitudes towards teaching profession, because it forms a base in effective teaching. In this context, Alkhateeb (2013) found that pre-service teachers' attitudes towards the teaching profession affect their academic achievement. Chakraborty and Mondal (2014) also found significant difference between prospective teachers' attitude towards teaching and their academic qualification.

Attitude towards teaching profession is also related to different variables. Accordingly, it was determined in the studies that individual values of teacher candidates predicted their attitudes towards the teaching profession (Bektaş & Nalçacı, 2012); attitudes towards the teaching profession have positive relation with the perception of self-sufficiency towards teaching (Akbaba, 2013); attitude towards teaching profession has a positive significant correlation with communication skills (Yeşil, 2010); attitude towards the teaching profession has a significant and positive relationship with the life satisfaction (Şahin, 2010); the self-efficacy beliefs on teaching improve the attitudes towards the profession positively (Üstüner, 2017). As seen in the related research results, positive attitude towards teaching profession is related to many variables, including self-sufficiency, communication skills, life satisfaction and self-efficacy. Moreover, this research also revealed that cultural intelligence had a significant effect on attitude towards teaching profession together with social justice.

To sum up, this research investigated the role of social justice in the relationship between cultural intelligence and attitude towards teaching profession. The research found that cultural intelligence predicted the attitude towards the teaching profession and also social justice. Moreover, social justice was found to be in the full mediating role in the relationship between cultural intelligence and attitude towards the teaching profession. The research concluded that social justice was an important factor in increasing cultural intelligence competences of teacher candidates to enhance their positive attitude towards teaching profession.

Limitations

Although this study is original in terms of showing that social justice has a full mediating role in the relationship between cultural intelligence and attitude towards the teaching profession, the research has some limitations. First, presenting the model by collecting data from teacher candidates studying at a university can be considered a limitation. In this respect, the model, which is put forward by collecting data from prospective teachers from different universities and even in different countries, can be tested in future studies. Likewise, the model can be enriched by using different variables that are shown to be related to the attitude towards the teaching profession in the literature. Another limitation of this study is that it is a cross-sectional study. Therefore, studies can be carried out by employing qualitative research techniques in order to examine in depth the effect of cultural intelligence and social justice on the attitude towards the teaching profession.

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