Investigating Pre-service Social Studies Teachers' Global Social Responsibility Level

Enis Harun Baser and Emin Kilinc

Enis Harun Baser, Dumlupinar University, Turkey. (e-mail: enisharun.baser@dpu.edu.tr)

Emin Kilinc, Dumlupinar University, Turkey. (e-mail: emin.kilinc@dpu.edu.tr)
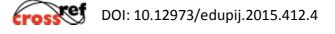
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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to investigate pre-service social studies teachers' global social responsibility levels from national, action-oriented, altruistic, and ecological aspects by considering gender, course year, academic success level, membership of a non-governmental organization, and where they lived before attending university. The author applied the descriptive survey model for this study in order to investigate pre-service social studies teachers' global social responsibility level. Participants of the study were selected through cluster random sampling from public universities in the Marmara, Aegean, and Central Anatolia regions of Turkey. The sample of the study consisted of 463 pre-service social studies teachers enrolled at either Afyon Kocatepe University, Usak University, Anadolu University, or Istanbul University. In order to analyze the data, one-way variance analysis (ANOVA), multiple comparison test (Post-Hoc) and independent samples t-test were used. The results indicated that there was no significant difference on participants' global social responsibility level by considering gender and course year. However, the results showed that pre-service social studies teachers who are members of any non-profit organization have higher levels of action-oriented responsibility, ecologic responsibility, and altruistic responsibility, than those who are not. Moreover, pre-service social studies teachers who lived in middle-sized city prior to attending university have more global social responsibility than those who lived in a village.

Keywords: global social responsibility, pre-service teacher, responsibility.

Introduction

One of the typical characteristics of post-industrial society is to act by considering a very large mass rather than personal interests and desire to feel responsibility in this way (Adizes & Weston, 1973). Problems such as the increase of new technologies, environmental problems, ignoring of the poor and the old elderly, and an increase of violence and aggression among young people brings the concept of responsibility into question and remarks that this concept is a critical characteristic for the survival of contemporary democratic structures (Bierhoff & Auhagen, 2003). At this point it is important to note the significance of the responsibility phenomenon. Responsibility is a social phenomenon from many standpoints (Bierhoff & Auhagen, 2003). Responsibility is defined as the active side of morality, an individual's care about both himself and others, fulfillment of his tasks and obligations, his attendance to social process and his efforts towards a better world (Kaya & Dogan, 2014).

Nowadays, it is seen that behaviors of the individual influences not only the small group with whom he interacts, but also influences the masses. Moreover, when considering modern methods of communication, individuals can now also reach people in faraway countries and have an influence upon them. In this context, the consensus about responsibility is that the scope of responsibility is enlarging (Ashford, 2003). Since responsibility moved beyond a narrow scope and is now considered a social context in a wider circle; in addition to its respective meaning, some changes have occurred in the morale of the concept of responsibility. This leads us to the concept of social responsibility.

According to Berman (1990), social responsibility is personal investment in the welfare of other people and for the benefit of the planet. Harris, Lang, Yates, & Kruck (2011) stated that a field related to social responsibility deals mainly with a sense of passive responsibility. Passive responsibility is based on an ideology that individuals and institutions generally have moral obligations to behave in a manner that does not harm society. They also stated that this responsibility towards society is not only passive, but also active, with individuals and institutions engaged in socially beneficial activities.

As a behavior model and social attitude, social responsibility refers to the perception of good citizen within the society that they live (Kilinc, 2014; Starret, 1996); that is, an individual who obeys the rules, lives respectful to the environment of his country, and acts in this way with the same level of sensitivity (Kilinc & Dere, 2013; Sarikaya & Kara, 2007). As soon as the influence of globalization increased, social responsibility which is mostly considered in its national context, started also to be considered in a global context (Starret, 1996). Global social responsibility is a concept which links individuals' social responsibilities in a global context (Nakamura & Watanabe-Muraoka, 2006). In this age, in which terrorism, racism, poverty, environmental corruption, and unprecedented other events are regularly seen, students need to learn how to be a global citizen (Bliss, 2005, Kilinc & Korkmaz, 2015).

Education has a crucial role on canalizing globalization for the benefit of society and humanity, preventing negative effects and popularizing positive effects (Balay, 2004). Personal and social responsibility education includes encouraging students' cognitive development in the context of moral cognition (Swaner, 2005). According to Oberst (2009), social responsibility can be learned and taught through experiencing it. To raise individuals to act for the benefit of society, social responsibility should be practically taught according to

learning concepts. It is a phenomenon including not only a cognitive process, but is mostly an emotional process. The people who go through both cognitive and emotional processes and are educated about social responsibility, learn to be more susceptive to the world around them (Merrigan, 2014). From Mitton and Harris' (1954) study, it is understood that responsibility education is an important part of a child's education, with tasks arranged according to the child's abilities. In observing responsibility education, the sense of social responsibility in adulthood is simply a continuation of the sense of responsibility which has been learned in childhood.

Globalization also changes the content, manner of treatment and structure of education. These days, students encounter global issues more often. This makes the teachers, who generally have high levels of awareness and information about global issues, important for the education of 21st century students. The teaching paradigm needs to change in order to meet the changing global conditions and the demands and needs arising from that. Teachers who adopt globalization should provide students with the necessary ability, skills and information (Richardson, 2012). Within the scope of social benefit, the struggle against wrongful behaviors by children is a complex task which requires support during a child's social responsibility education (Oberst, 2009). This task is more related to parents and teachers in fact. This undertaking is carried out in a systematic, planned and controlled way by teachers in schools. To improve individuals during childhood in the field of social responsibility, teachers first need to be at a certain level themselves. Thus, the purpose of this study is to discuss responsibility in a global context and examine pre-service social studies teachers' global social responsibility level by considering several variables.

Methodology

The authors applied the descriptive survey model for this study in order to investigate pre-service social studies teachers' global social responsibility level. Survey model is an efficient method for systematically collecting data from a broad spectrum of individuals and educational settings (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003). It is also concerned with assessing attitudes, opinions, references, demographics, practices, and procedures (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2006).

The target population for this study is pre-service social studies teachers enrolled at colleges of education at public universities in Turkey. There are 75 of these colleges of education spread across Turkey. Because the target population of the study is very large and spread over a wide geographical area, the authors decided to use sampling for their research. Cluster random sampling was applied in order to select participants, which is convenient when the population is very large or spread out geographically (Gay et al., 2006). The participants of the study were selected through cluster random sampling from public universities in the Turkish regions of Marmara, Aegean, and Anatolia. The sample of the study consisted of 463 pre-service social studies teachers enrolled at Afyon Kocatepe University, Usak University, Anadolu University, or Istanbul University. Table 1 shows demographic information about participants.

Table 1. Profile of the participants

Demographic Information		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	259	55.9
	Male	204	44.1
	Total	463	100.0
Course Year	1st year	79	17.1
	2nd year	158	34.1
	3rd year	118	25.5
	4th year	108	23.3
	Total	463	100.0

The 'Global Social Responsibility Scale', which was developed by the authors, was used to collect data. The scale has four dimensions: Action Oriented Responsibility, Ecologic Responsibility, Altruistic Responsibility, and National Responsibility. A five point Likert-type scale (1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neither Agree Nor Disagree, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree) was used to identify the level of participation for each item. Reliability coefficients of the scale are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Global Social Responsibility Scale reliability indices by dimension

Dimensions	Cronbach Alpha (α)
Action Oriented Responsibility	.88
Ecologic Responsibility	.74
Altruistic Responsibility	.77
National Responsibility	.73
Total	.89

The data was analyzed through descriptive analysis, independent sample, and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) using the SPSS v.20 statistical software program. α= 0.05 significance level was taken as the basis for significance test between groups.

Findings

The following findings emerged from this study on pre-service social studies teachers' global social responsibility level.

An independent sample t-test was conducted in order to evaluate whether or not there was a difference between male and female pre-service social studies teachers' global social responsibility level (Action Oriented Responsibility, Ecologic Responsibility, Altruistic Responsibility, National Responsibility). The test was not significant and there were no differences found between gender on Action Oriented Responsibility ($t_{(461)}$=.345, p>0.05), Ecologic Responsibility ($t_{(461)}$=1.342, p>0.05), Altruistic Responsibility ($t_{(461)}$=1.773, p>0.05), or National Responsibility level ($t_{(461)}$=.357, p>0.05).

Table 3. Results of t-test on Participants' Global Social Responsibility Level Based on Gender

Dimensions	Gender	N	X̄	SD	Df	T	p
Action Oriented Responsibility	Female	259	44.2124	7.10097	461	.345	.731
	Male	204	43.9804	7.30204			
Ecologic Responsibility	Female	259	21.5792	2.93015	461	1.342	.180
	Male	204	21.1912	3.27669			
Altruistic Responsibility	Female	259	29.5174	4.09039	461	1.773	.077
	Male	204	28.8088	4.48838			
National Responsibility	Female	259	19.8069	4.60803	461	.357	.721
	Male	204	19.6471	5.00472			

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate the relationship between course year and global social responsibility level. The independent variable, Course Year included four levels: 1st year, 2nd year, 3rd year, and 4th year, which reflects the 4-year course length of most bachelor degrees in Turkey. The ANOVAs were not significant (Table 4). There were no significant differences found between course years on action oriented responsibility ($F_{(3-459)}$ =1.190, p>0.05), ecologic responsibility ($F_{(3-459)}$=1.380, p>0.05), altruistic responsibility ($F_{(3-459)}$=.558, p>0.05), or national responsibility ($F_{(3-459)}$=2.278, p>0.05).

Table 4. ANOVA Table about Participants' Global Social Responsibility Level Based On Course Year

Dimensions	Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Action Oriented Responsibility	Between Groups	184.037	3	61.346	1.190	.313
	Within Groups	23655.345	459	51.537		
	Total	23839.382	462			
Ecologic Responsibility	Between Groups	39.435	3	13.145	1.380	.248
	Within Groups	4372.414	459	9.526		
	Total	4411.849	462			
Altruistic Responsibility	Between Groups	32.409	3	10.803	.558	.623
	Within Groups	8431.098	459	18.368		
	Total	8463.508	462			
National Responsibility	Between Groups	154.999	3	51.666	2.278	.079
	Within Groups	10410.854	459	22.682		
	Total	10565.853	462			

An independent samples t-test was conducted in order to evaluate the hypothesis that participants' global social responsibility levels are high if they are members of a non-profit organization. The tests were found to be significant for action oriented responsibility ($t_{(461)}$=6.143; p<.05), ecologic responsibility ($t_{(461)}$=3.775; p<.05), and altruistic responsibility ($t_{(461)}$=2.909; p<.05). Pre-service social studies teachers who are members of a non-profit organization have higher levels of action oriented responsibility (M=47.71, SD=6.12) than those who are not members (M=43.02, SD=7.13). Also, pre-service social studies teachers who are members of a non-profit organization have higher levels of ecologic responsibility (M=22.38, SD=2.69) than those who are not members (M=21.11, SD=3.14). Moreover, pre-service social studies teachers who are members of a non-profit organization have higher levels of altruistic responsibility (M=30.25, SD=3.97) than those who are not members (M=28.89, SD=4.32). The effect size calculated for action oriented responsibility (d=.70) was

high, ecologic responsibility (d=.43) was moderate, and altruistic responsibility (d=.32) was low (Cohen, 1992).

Table 5. Results of t-test on Participants' Global Social Responsibility Level Based on Non-profit Organization (NPO) Membership

Dimensions	NPO	N	X̄	SD	df	t	p	d
Action Oriented Responsibility	Yes	107	47.7103	6.12605	461	6.143	.000	.70
	No	356	43.0281	7.13210				
Ecologic Responsibility	Yes	107	22.3832	2.69747	461	3.775	.000	.43
	No	356	21.1152	3.14364				
Altruistic Responsibility	Yes	107	30.2523	3.97419	461	2.909	.004	.32
	No	356	28.8904	4.32377				
National Responsibility	Yes	107	20.4393	4.98522	461	1.737	.263	
	No	356	19.5253	4.70624				

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate the relationship between students' location (where they mostly lived before attending university) and their global social responsibility level. The independent variable included six levels: village, town, small city (population 10,000-100,000), middle size city (population 100,000-500,000), big city (population 500,000-1,000,000), and metropolis (population above 1,000,000). The dependent variable is the level of global social responsibility. The ANOVA was significant for action oriented responsibility ($F_{(5-455)}$=2.906, p<.05). The strength of relationship between the location where students mostly lived and action oriented responsibility, as assessed by $\eta2$, was moderate.

Follow up tests were conducted to evaluate pairwise differences among the mean values. According to Sidak test, pre-service social studies teachers who lived in middle size cities have more global social responsibility than those who lived in villages. There are no other significant differences.

Table 6. ANOVA Table about Participants' Global Social Responsibility Level Based On Course Year and Students Location Where They Mostly Lived

Dimensions (responsibility)	Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	Diff.	η^2
Action Oriented	Between Groups	730.861	5	146.172	2.91	.014	Village-Middle Size Town	.030
	Within Groups	22884.14	455	50.295				
	Total	23615.00	460					
Ecologic	Between Groups	56.936	5	11.387	1.22	.300		
	Within Groups	4259.581	455	9.362				
	Total	4316.516	460					

Dimensions (responsibility)	Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	Diff.	η^2
Altruistic	Between Groups	173.561	5	34.712	1.92	.090		
	Within Groups	8230.178	455	18.088				
	Total	8403.740	460					
National	Between Groups	242.187	5	48.437	2.14	.060		
	Within Groups	10320.09	455	22.682				
	Total	10562.28	460					

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate the relationship between participants' grade point average and global social responsibility level. The ANOVAs were not significant (Table 7). There were no significant differences between GPA on action oriented responsibility ($F_{(3-340)}$=2.090, p>0.05), ecologic responsibility ($F_{(3-340)}$=.534, p>0.05), altruistic responsibility ($F_{(3-340)}$=1.314, p>0.05) or national responsibility ($F_{(3-340)}$=.490, p>0.05).

Table 7. ANOVA Table about Participants' Global Social Responsibility Level Based On GPA

Dimensions	Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Action Oriented Responsibility	Between Groups	334.278	3	111.426	2.090	.101
	Within Groups	18125.882	340	53.311		
	Total	18460.160	343			
Ecologic Responsibility	Between Groups	14.896	3	4.965	.534	.659
	Within Groups	3160.869	340	9.297		
	Total	3175.765	343			
Altruistic Responsibility	Between Groups	70.464	3	23.488	1.314	.270
	Within Groups	6078.533	340	17.878		
	Total	6148.997	343			
National Responsibility	Between Groups	34.347	3	11.449	.490	.690
	Within Groups	7946.673	340	23.373		
	Total	7981.020	343			

Conclusion and Discussion

When considering the findings of this research, it is seen that although there is a difference on behalf of female pre-service social studies teachers' social responsibility levels (action-directed responsibility, ecological responsibility, altruist responsibility and national responsibility), no significant statistical difference was found. According to this result, it can be said that pre-service social studies teachers' adopt responsibility phenomenon at the same level according to the variable of gender. In Ozen's (2009) research with 8th grade students, there were no significant differences and it supports this information reached as a

result of the research. However, in another research, Berkowitz and Lutterman (1968) found significant differences on behalf of females on social responsibility levels by gender variable. In his research, Akbas (2004) found that the factor of gender affects students' responsibility behaviors and concluded that female students who are subjected to research are more aware of their responsibilities than male students. A similar result was also found in Abdi Golzar's research (2006); a significant difference was seen on 5th grade students' point averages of responsibility level on behalf of females. In his research with secondary education teachers, Ercan (2009) also demonstrated that the opinions about how social responsibility is important are different on behalf of females according to gender. In Tayli's (2013) research, it is asserted that gender is a determinant on responsibility. Altunay and Yalcinkaya (2011) found significant differences on behalf of females in the context of pre-service teachers' opinions about universal values. When considering the research results found in the literature, the factor of gender (on behalf of females) affects individuals' social responsibility levels.

Another result of the research shows that there is no significant difference between pre-service social studies teachers' global social responsibility levels in all points according to the variable of class level. Class variety makes no difference, which may indicate that the classes taken have no effect on global social responsibility. No significant difference could be found on attendance to the class of community service practices or academic success levels to support this finding. In their essay, however, Reason, Ryder, & Kee (2013) found that continuing education through to university has a positive effect on the development of responsibility.

As a consequence of this research, no significant difference could be found for pre-service social studies teachers' global social responsibility levels for national responsibility according to membership of a non-governmental organization, but a significant difference was found for those with membership of a non-governmental organization in terms of action-directed responsibility, ecological responsibility and altruist responsibility. Ercan (2009) also reached a similar result and found that secondary education teachers' opinions about the level of importance and practice of social responsibility based on non-governmental organization membership statistically differs for those who are members. In this context, it can be said that being a member of non-governmental organizations has a positive effect on pre-service social studies teachers' global social responsibility levels.

In the literature, Altunay and Yalcinkaya (2011) studied pre-service teachers' opinions about universal and hedonistic values according to the location where they most lived, but found no significant difference. Contrary to their findings, in this research, a significant difference was found on pre-service social studies teachers' global social responsibility levels in terms of action-directed responsibility based on the population size of the location where they lived before attending university. Accordingly, the higher the population, the higher the pre-service social studies teachers' global social responsibility levels were found to be.

According to academic success level, which was another variable in the research, it was determined that for pre-service social studies teachers, there was no difference for any of the global social responsibility levels. In his research with 5th grade students, Abdi Golzar (2006) reached a result that is the total opposite to the result of this current study, with differences between responsibility levels found according to academic success. Accordingly, he found that the point averages of those students having high academic success are higher

than the point averages of students with low academic success. It can be interpreted that academic success affects responsibility at an early age, but the higher the education level, the more the effect of academic success decreases. In Sezer's study, it was found that most teachers he researched consider textbooks as insufficient to teach responsibility values. Thinking of the insufficiency of textbooks on teaching the values of responsibility as a factor that may affect success, this also seems supportive of the result reached in this current study. In his research, Celik (2010) determined that the most important factor is family for 5th grade student's value of responsibility acquisition, followed by teachers and social studies courses. Yontar (2007) found that students think that the methods used by teachers to teach the values of responsibility are effective, but that their effect lasts only a short time. In a much earlier study, Mitton and Harris (1954) asserted that responsibility is a part of personality and that it is positively related to positive organization of the family relationship and academic success. From these results, it can be understood that academic success affects individuals' social responsibilities, but it does not have a long-lasting or permanent effect.

Notes

Corresponding author: ENIS HARUN BASER

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