



INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT-1

COUNTRY SPECIFIC TEXT: TURKIYE

INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY LITERACY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

IN TURKIYE

This chapter first outlines the current situation in Turkiye regarding inclusion and diversity with respect to cultural awareness, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation and disability. It then discusses the results of a survey study that aims at identifying higher education instructors' and students' views and beliefs about diversity in their own education settings. The survey, which consists of 36 items for instructors and 35 for students, was distributed online and received responses from a total of 78 instructors and 175 students from different universities in Turkiye. The results suggest that, in general, students and instructors are aware of the impact of diversity on education, yet there are discrepancies between how instructors rate themselves and how their students view their instructors with respect to diversity and education.

Key words: *diversity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, inclusion*

1. Introduction

Inclusive education, even though frequently referring to the education of disabled individuals, is a broader term that should be redefined to embrace all groups that experience inequity. Therefore, in this paper, inclusive education will be used to refer to all diverse or disadvantaged groups that make up the society. It will be used with reference to gender differences, ethnic origin, cultural difference, sexual orientation and physical/mental disability, and individuals who suffer from these in their educational setting.

As the world gets more global and easy to reach, the demographics of countries rapidly change. Turkiye is one of the countries that undergoes such changes. In addition to its inherent disabled citizens, the country also needs to account for the needs of all the other groups to be able to become a whole. Within this scope, multicultural education, pluralism and education inequities will be frequently mentioned.

Further studies are needed to analyze the current situation in Turkiye, yet a comprehensive research conducted by World Values Survey in 2018 showed that 44% of Turkish people do not trust foreigners, and 74% are quite satisfied with being a Turk. Furthermore, 88% do not want to

be neighbors with gay citizens, followed by 63% of those against atheist neighbors, 30% against neighbors who do not fast, and 25% against neighbors with a different mother tongue.

The multicultural nature of Türkiye has undergone many changes since then, which is assumed to have impacted the country's educational structure as well. Bearing in mind that education plays a leading role in such big changes, the current study focuses on the university setting of different universities around Türkiye.

This chapter will first outline the current situation in Türkiye regarding the diversity groups, outline major studies related to education in Türkiye with respect to the concept of equity, and finally it will summarize the findings of a comprehensive study conducted with university instructors and students eliciting their attitudes regarding diversity in their educational setting.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Ethnic/racial Diversity in Türkiye

One of the most outstanding aspects of multiculturalism results from the difference of the ethnic origins of individuals sharing the same community. Especially during the past decade, Türkiye has experienced great changes in terms of hosting individuals from different ethnic backgrounds. This is also reflected in the increase of studies conducted in this area. According to Demirdağ and Ünlü-Kaynakçı (2019), the number has increased from 4.2% between 2000-2002 to 36.5% between 2015-2018. This also corresponds with the statistics of TÜİK (Turkish Statistics Organization), which indicated that in year 2017, the number of immigrants has increased by 22.4% when compared to the previous year, with a total of 466.333 individuals. As such, the impact that it has on education is undeniable.

One of the fundamentals of ethnic diversity can be seen in the language used in education, i.e. whether it is monolingual or bilingual. Aydın and Özfidan (2014) aimed at identifying teachers', students', and academicians' perceptions on multicultural and bilingual education based on mother tongue education, Kurdish, in Türkiye. The findings suggest that the government needs to develop sensitivity towards students' mother tongue and develop curricula in accordance with the needs of this ethnic group.

Çayır (2016) analyzed the content of the books used in national education in Türkiye and reached the conclusion that most are biased in terms of the national representation, assuming a mono-ethnic structure. His study is meaningful in the sense that minority groups are not represented in the content of the books, which also denies students the right of learning and familiarizing themselves with other cultures.

Tüzün (2017) reported on the current situation of Syrian immigrants, especially children at school age, and made suggestions on improvements. In her report, it is stated there are a total of 1.552.645 Syrian children, yet the schooling of these children is only 63%. She indicated one of the main reasons for low schooling as the lack of multicultural education needed for this specific group of immigrants.

It can be clearly stated that ethnic diversity is one of the main issues Türkiye is facing in this new era. Its impact on education needs to be carefully investigated to account for higher schooling

and academic success. One of the fundamental components is the training of the educators, who are directly exposed to these disadvantaged group of students, and who can make a difference in their lives.

2.2. Gender in Türkiye

Generally limited to the recognition and promotion of women's rights, gender equality is a concept which should have multiple interpretations. Basically, it should include the government's commitment in prohibiting and contrasting every form of discrimination based on sex and gender orientation. Even though the recognition of gender equality is based on both cultural and legal systems, the recurring events of discrimination testify the opposition to the recognition of the concept in Türkiye (Scotti and Roma 2021).

The development of gender studies in Türkiye, as an interdisciplinary field of academic study traces back to the initial launch of the Women's Research Centers at universities in 1989 (Yelsalı Parmaksız, 2019). The development of international agenda led especially by the United Nations (UN) for gender equality and later reinforced by the EU influenced the feminist movement and caused the scientific and academic institutions to study the movement epistemologically (Kandiyoti, 2010). Like most of the examples in the United States or in Europe, the process here in Türkiye was also connected with the emerging feminist activism in the 1970s. The shift from activism to academy has marked the institutionalization of the feminist critique of the conventional, male-oriented social and political structures in society as well as in university (Yelsalı Parmaksız, 2019).

Since the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923, the role of Turkish women in society has undergone a dramatic change as well as the Turkish legal system. For example, women's participation in the general economy of the state has steadily increased, their roles within the family have become more complex and diversified, and their social roles took on a new meaning. Also, according to the Turkish Civil Code of 1926, now the Turkish women were placed on the same footing as men. All these transitions continued with women given the right to vote and to be elected to the national assembly for the first time in 1934. Despite these progressive changes, the legal development of women's rights in Türkiye does not seem to have kept pace with other states in the Council of Europe where women play a more prominent role (Zand and Apaydın; 2016).

These progressive changes, unfortunately, could not show itself in education since women's representation in education is an important part of broader gender equity discussions. The gender imbalance in education is not a new issue; and Türkiye is no exception. According to statistics and related estimates of UNESCO's report, youth literacy rates for the population aged 15 to 24 years were higher than adult literacy rates for all the years covered, reflecting an increased access to primary, secondary, and higher education among younger generations (UNESCO, 2013). Despite the fact that there has been a clear progress in women literacy rates from 1985 through 2015, the percentage of illiterate individuals is still higher for females than males. For instance,

roughly 84% of the illiterate adult population in 2015 consists of women; therefore, illiterate female population is almost five times more than illiterate male population (Cin et. al. 2020).

Even though the recent projections indicate a drop in adult female illiteracy; in most of the occupations gender inequalities can still be observed. For example, based on a recent survey, nearly 50% of the medical students in Türkiye are female, which is similar to the ratio in the US. However, this balanced distribution in male-to-female ratio dramatically diverts in certain specializations. Female medical doctors usually prefer less demanding, and at the same time relatively low pay specialties such as family practice, preclinical sciences and pediatrics. Although, the number of females in surgical specializations started increasing in recent years, male surgeons are still preferential in comparison to their female counterparts (Eyigör, et. al., 2020).

2.3. Sexual Orientation in Türkiye

According to Ellis and Mitchell (2000, p.197) sexual orientation is defined by a “person’s relatively consistent and persistent directness toward some thing or activity for sexual gratification.” The literature usually defines sexual orientation by the sex of the sexual partner (Cardoso, 2013). Sexual orientation is usually discussed in terms of three categories: heterosexual (having emotional, romantic, or sexual attractions to members of the other sex), homosexual (having emotional, romantic, or sexual attractions to members of one’s own sex) and bisexual (having emotional, romantic, or sexual attractions to both men and women). There is no agreement among scientists on why people develop a specific sexual orientation. Moreover, sexual orientation is not a conscious “choice” or “preference” of a person. Several theories suggest that the differences in sexual orientation are effectively caused by one or several of hormonal, biological, genetic, neurological, familial, and environmental factors (Evcili, 2019).

Prejudgments against people with different sexual orientation as homosexuality is seen in Türkiye as seen in the world. Due to these prejudgments, individuals with different orientations except heterosexuality are discriminated against and may face aggressive attitudes. These negative behaviors and thoughts exhibited against different sexual orientation-gay and lesbian-people are expressed by the term homophobia.

Social prejudices and homophobic approaches toward people having different sexual orientation are common in societies in which heterosexuality is regarded as the normal and sole sexual orientation. Türkiye, being one of these countries experience homophobic behaviors. Even though the Turkish Constitution acknowledges human rights, and the values of a democratic state, numerous articles enunciate that these rights can be restricted in order to protect national security, public order, public morality, and general health. Due to the subjective nature of these terms, basic human rights are susceptible to arbitrary restrictions. The human rights of LGBT individuals have been especially violated under the banner of “safeguarding public morality”. These human rights violations consist of many aspects ranging from right to live, right to education, right to housing, right to work, and to right to form an association, as well as practices such as arbitrary detentions, arbitrary fines, and police brutality (Çakmak, 2012).

Göçmen and Yılmaz (2017) explore the discrimination practices encountered by lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals in education, income, employment, and health care in Türkiye. According to the results they received from their participants, in terms of education, the majority of respondents did not come out during their schooling. Of the respondents who were enrolled in a high school or university in the last 12 months, 11.1% (n = 320) stated that they felt that they were discriminated on the basis of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, whereas 88.1% (n = 2,533) stated that they did not face discrimination. The percentage of respondents who stated that they had never or rarely experienced negative comments or conduct at school due to their sexual orientation and/or gender identity was 32.6% (n = 636). The number of respondents who stated that they had very often or always experienced negative comments or conduct at school because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity was 21.8% (n = 425) and 12.9% (n = 251), respectively. Respondents were also asked if they had to drop out of school due to discrimination on the basis of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Almost 5% of the respondents (n = 89) reported that they dropped out of school due to discrimination. The percentage of students who had to change their schools (before a university degree) due to discrimination on the basis of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity was 4.2% (n = 76).

Finally, Gökçe (2013) explores discrimination on campus in Türkiye. University students were discriminated against because of their clothing style; their religious attitudes; their political leanings; their gender; their ethnicity; their hometown or nationality; their age; and their IQ levels on campus. Besides, it appears they were discriminated against by both lecturers and peers. This study contributes to the literature demonstrating types of discrimination, and exclusive behaviours resulting from discrimination in higher education in Türkiye. The findings of this study highlight the importance of attracting the attention of lecturers to be aware of discrimination and biases in their classes, and policy makers to support non-discrimination by establishing diversity courses in higher education curriculum.

2.4. Cultural Diversity in Türkiye

Multicultural education is clearly a change and reform in the educational system that aims at bringing together individuals from various cultural background by offering them equal rights in education (Alanay and Aydın, 2016). Accounting for this equality is difficult, especially in countries where cultural diversity is dominant and increasing day by day. Türkiye is a sample for these nations. Aydın (2013) points out that there around 15 different languages actively being spoken in Türkiye resulting from different religions or geographical origins. In addition to the already existing diversity, the number of refugees and asylum seekers from countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria has contributed to the need of addressing cultural diversity in the country (Kotluk and Kocakaya, 2019). A lot of these individuals, especially students, need to undergo Transition Training Centres and Public Schools in, as highlighted in the Education Reform Initiative (2017).

This situation puts responsibilities on the shoulders of educators which they may not be ready for. Specifically with refugee students, additional considerations need to be made regarding the entire teaching learning process, including content, material, teaching techniques and assessment procedures (Aydın and Kaya, 2019; Aydın, Gündoğdu and Akgül, 2019). Otherwise, it is almost

impossible to keep these students in the educational system. In order to have a clearer idea about the challenges cultural diversity poses on Türkiye, the studies on this subject need to be thoroughly examined.

Koltuk and Kocakaya (2019) examined public school teachers' views on culturally relevant education (CRE) in Türkiye. They involved 1302 teachers from seven cities in the seven different geographical regions in Türkiye. The findings suggest that most teachers are sensitive towards cultural differences but when it comes to adopting teaching to students' cultural needs, the majority are reluctant, suggesting that there is no need or it may damage social integrity.

Karataş and Oral (2015) conducted a study with post-graduate students working at a university in Türkiye to elicit their views about culturally sensitive teaching and learning environments. Their findings highlight the importance of culturally responsive education and the participants' belief that will promote students' academic success. Yet, it is worth highlighting that the post-graduate students also emphasized the fact that they are not fully equipped with the skills and knowledge to realize culturally responsive education in their own classes.

Polat (2011) took the issue of cultural diversity in education from the administrators' point of view. He conducted his study with 147 public school directors and elicited their attitudes using the multicultural education attitude scale. His findings suggest that, overall, directors have a positive attitude towards multicultural education, yet they are more hesitant when it comes to the responsibilities of teachers to encourage students to be proud of their identity or including cultural diversity while teaching subject matter.

Aydin (2013) looked at how the Turkish teacher training programs differed from European ones with respect to multicultural education and found that, more or less, it is left to individual teachers' skills and knowledge to deal with diversity of culture in their classrooms.

Finally, Erbaş (2019) examined the effect of training in multicultural understanding and sensitivity with 9 teachers and teacher candidates. He looked at how participants changed their definition of multiculturalism and multicultural education in the course of time as they received the training. He concluded that there is room for education and training of teachers in terms of accounting for cultural differences in their classrooms.

2.5. Disability in Türkiye

According to the International Classification of Functioning, disability and health definitions implies that participation and disability can be related to either body functions, contextual factors, personal factors or related to combination of these factors (WHO, 2001). The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that people with disabilities comprise 15.6% of the population of the world and that the rates of poorer health outcomes, lower education, less economic participation and higher poverty are higher in individuals with disabilities than are those in individuals without disabilities due to barriers to access healthcare, education, employment, transportation services, etc. Within the total population of 8.5 million, approximately 1.8 million (21.2%) persons are reported to have orthopedic, visual, hearing, speech, and language impairments in Türkiye (Meral and Turnball, 2014).

There is a strong need to develop conditions in all aspects of life for people with disabilities, especially employment and educational settings (Akyürek, et. al. 2020). Taken together, despite the legal and scientific developments in Türkiye, we still have limited knowledge on what is really going on in Turkish public schools regarding the specific experiences of students with special needs, their families and their teachers. Apart from that, Türkiye does not seem to spend much for special education when compared to other countries. In a study where China, Kuwait, South Korea, Türkiye, and the United States were compared it was found that Türkiye spent \$250 million for Special Education of its 150 billion Annual Expenditures which is only 00.15% of Total Annual Budget (Ochoa, et. al. 2017).

When it comes to the number of the disabled students in higher education, according to the Higher Education Council there are 7.791.532 students enrolled in state and foundation universities and only 49.840 of this number is students with disabilities. The number of the male students is 32.080, and females is 15.760 (<https://istatistik.yok.gov.tr/>).

Tekin (2019) states that in order to solve the problems faced by students with disabilities in our country, it has become mandatory to establish Disabled Student Units in universities in accordance with the “Higher Education Institutions’ Regulation on Consultation and Coordination of Disabled Persons,” dated 14/08/2010 and numbered 27672. The academic and psycho-social problems experienced by disabled students who were educated in universities were effective in the emergence of this directive. For this reason, it is important to identify the problems of the students with disabilities in the universities and to produce suggestions for the solution.

To sum up, even though identifying the problems of the disabled students in Higher Education is vital, there is also the need for the academic staff to be equipped with necessary skills and knowledge in order to be more helpful for their students when they have students with special needs in their classrooms.

3. Methodology

The study aimed at determining university students’ and instructors’ attitudes and beliefs regarding the diversity areas under study. The data was collected using two scales (details outlined in Chapter 1); one for instructors and one for students.

3.1. Participants

3.1.1 Instructors

A total of 78 university instructors participated in the study, and the majority were women (74.4%). Table 1 demonstrates the demographic information of instructor participants.

Table 1 Demographics of instructor participants

Gender	f	%
Woman	58	74.4
Men	18	23.1

I don't want to specify	2	2.6
Age		
26-35	14	17.9
36-45	31	39.7
46-55	21	26.9
56-66	12	15.4
Academic Degree		
BA	12	15.4
MA	19	24.4
PhD	34	43.6
Professor	13	16.7
Experience		
0-5	13	16.7
6-10	14	17.9
11-15	8	10.3
16-25	29	37.2
26+	14	17.9

The instructor group represents a heterogeneous sample of university instructors in terms age, experience, and academic degree. Yet, a larger number of participants are aged between 36-45, hold a PhD, and have an experience between 16-25 years.

3.1.2 Students

A total of 175 university students responded to the survey, which was conducted online. Table 2 shows the details of the student participants.

Table 2 Demographics of student participants

Gender	f	%
Woman	95	54.3
Men	78	44.6
I don't want to specify	2	1.1
Age		
18-25	157	89.7
26-35	14	8.0
36-45	2	1.1
46+	2	1.1

Level of class		
First year	59	33.7
Second year	12	6.9
Third year	39	22.3
Fourth year	38	21.7
English Preparation class	21	12.0
MA/MS	2	1.1
PhD	4	2.3

Out of 175 university students, 95 were female, 78 male and 2, did not want to reveal their gender. The majority of students (89,7%) were at the age range of 18-25. In terms of their seniority at the university, most were undergraduate students, with only 6 graduate students.

3.2. Data Collection Instrument

The data was collected using two versions of the same survey, which aimed at eliciting instructor and student attitudes and beliefs regarding inclusion and diversity at university setting. The survey made up of three main parts. The first part is the demographic information section. The second part is the 5-point Likert-type scale consisting of 36 items, and 5 diversity aspects, i.e., a) cultural awareness, b. ethnic background, c. sexual orientation, d. gender, e. disability. And finally part 3, with five questions about institutional procedures regarding diversity issues. The initial scale was designed with the contributions of researchers from five different countries, namely, Belgium, Turkiye, Poland, Greece and UK. The detailed results and procedures related to design and piloting are outlined in Chapter 1 of this book.

3.2 Data Analysis

In this study, descriptive of the items were checked and the analysis of the variables were calculated using SPSS version 21. The standard deviations, the means of the items and the means of the categories were reported. In the instructor's part there were a total of 36 items: 6 in the cultural awareness category, 8 in the ethnic background category, 6 in sexual orientation, 8 in gender and 8 in the disability category. IN the student survey, there were 35 items: cultural awareness (6 items), ethnic background (8 items), sexual orientation (6 items), gender (male/female) (7 items), and disability (8 items).

4. Results

In this section, all five diversity aspects under study will be discussed with respect to instructor and student responses. Finally, a comparison will be made between the two.

4.1. Cultural Awareness

a) Instructors

Table 3 Cultural Awareness-Instructors

Cultural Awareness	M	SD
I adequately address multicultural issues in my classes.	4.04	.860
I try to provide opportunities for activities related to cultural awareness.	4.15	.722
I feel comfortable working/studying with colleagues/students of different cultural backgrounds.	4.64	.558
I feel uncomfortable when I am in the company of people from different cultural backgrounds.	1.94	1.399
During group discussions or exercises, I make efforts to ensure all students are included regardless of their cultural backgrounds.	4.60	.631
I feel comfortable discussing cultural issues in the classroom.	4.13	1.024
Cultural Awareness Category Average	3,92	.463

Based on the results, it can be said that instructors' self-reflections on how they deal with cultural diversity in their classrooms is quite high. They seem to be comfortable working with students and colleagues from different cultural backgrounds and also reflect this into their own teaching environment. The fact that they disagree with the statement *I feel uncomfortable when I am in the company of people from different cultural backgrounds* (1.94) supports this view.

b) Students

Table 4 shows the results of students for the cultural awareness aspect of the survey.

Table 4 Cultural Awareness-Students

Cultural Awareness	M	SD
The instructors at my university adequately address multicultural issues in their classes.	3.39	.081
My instructors try to provide opportunities for activities related to cultural awareness.	3.50	.079
My instructors are comfortable working/studying with colleagues/students of different cultural backgrounds.	4.18	.073
My instructors help me to increase my understanding of multicultural issues.	3.66	.078
During group discussions or exercises, the instructors make efforts to ensure all students are included regardless of their cultural backgrounds.	4.10	.073
My instructors seem comfortable discussing cultural issues in the classroom.	3.78	.076
Cultural Awareness Category Average	3,77	,743

As it can be seen from Table 4, the highest rating was given to item 3, which shows that instructors reflect an embracing behaviour towards students from different cultural backgrounds.

However, it seems that multicultural issues are not overtly addressed in class (3.50), nor awareness raising activities are being frequently integrated into the curriculum (3.50). Yet, it is worth noting that instructors rated themselves high on integrating exercises with an effort to include all students, but students rated their instructors lower on this item.

4.2. Ethnic Background

a) Instructors

Table 5 Ethnic Background-Instructors

Ethnic Background	M	SD
I accept different behavioral/verbal expressions of ethnicity in my classes.	4.22	.816
I am concerned about racial inequality in education.	3.90	1.001
A student's ethnic background does not affect how I behave in the classroom.	4.42	.933
I feel comfortable when I am in the company of people from different ethnic backgrounds.	4.55	.732
I understand why students of other ethnic backgrounds act differently.	4.05	.992
I try to stop racist behaviors in my classroom.	4.31	1.514
I think students should avoid telling jokes about other ethnicities and racial groups.	4.23	1.172
I think prejudice about different ethnic or racial groups are wrong.	4.64	.821
Ethnic Background Category Average	4,29	.553

Instructors' ratings about their own behaviours and beliefs in terms of ethnic background is rather high. They disagree with the idea of prejudice (4.64), and also claim to be comfortable when with people from different ethnic backgrounds (4.55). The lowest rating is in item 2, which is about their concern of inequality in education, suggesting either that there is no inequality or they are not specifically concerned about it.

b) Students

Table 6 Ethnic Background-Students

Ethnic Background	M	SD
My instructors accept different behavioral/verbal expressions of ethnicity.	3.69	1.236
My instructors are concerned about racial inequality in education.	3.22	1.360
Students' ethnic background does not affect my instructors' behavior in the classroom.	4.12	.996

My instructors help me develop my awareness of different ethnic backgrounds.	3.38	1.307
My instructors understand why students of other ethnic backgrounds act differently.	3.43	1.191
My instructors try to stop racist behaviors in my classroom.	3.56	1.578
My instructors avoid telling jokes about other ethnicities and racial groups.	3.79	1.392
My instructors react to ethnically biased behavior in the classroom.	3.27	1.558
Ethnic Background Category Average	3,56	,952

Students ratings of the ethnic background items show that are at a quite moderate level, neither too high nor too low. Number 2 is the lowest item, which shows that students do not think that their instructors are quite concerned about inequalities in education resulting from ethnic discrimination. Even though they think their instructors behaviour in class is not affected by students' ethnic background (4.12), they question instructors' concern about inequality.

4.3. Gender

a) Instructors

Under this diversity topic there were 8 questions asked to the instructors. The aim was to understand how university lecturers perceive gender. Looking at the mean score and the standard deviations it is possible to say that the instructors have agreed the most on the first item. Almost all participants who took the survey stated their belief about treating students the same regardless of their gender. Besides, the mean score of the instructors who seem to believe that females are better students when compared to the males is 3.58, which is not low. The lowest item in terms of mean score on this topic was given to the item "I consider specific interests and needs of males and females." which was 3.31.

Table 7 Gender-Instructors

Gender	M	SD
Students should be treated equally, regardless of their gender.	4.90	.305
Females are better students than males.	3.58	1.446
Some jobs/departments are not appropriate for females to study.	4.18	1.137
For females, marriage is more important than education.	4.64	.897
During my lessons, my attitude is different with males and females.	4.62	.743
I prefer to teach only male or female classes.	4.86	.448
I expect females to obey school rules more than males.	4.54	.893
I consider specific interests and needs of males and females.	3.31	1.302
Gender Category Average	4.33	.492

b) Students

Under this diversity topic university students were asked about their perception of their lecturers' attitudes towards gender in the classroom. There were 7 statements given to the students. Looking at the mean score and the standard deviations it is possible to say that the students verify their instructors' results with slight differences in the mean scores and standard deviation. Almost all participants who took the survey stated their belief about their instructors treating

students the same regardless of their gender with a mean score of 4.07. However, it should be mentioned here that the mean for each item is lower than the instructors which mean that even though the students believe their instructors react the same to both genders, the degree is not as high as the way instructors stated about themselves.

Table 8 Gender-Students

Gender	M	SD
My instructors treat students equally, regardless of their gender.	4.07	1.184
According to my instructors females are better students than males.	3.59	1.427
According to my instructors some jobs/departments are not appropriate for females to study.	3.79	1.532
According to my instructors marriage is more important than education for females.	4.06	1.488
During lessons, my instructors' attitude is different with males and females.	3.93	1.377
My instructors would prefer teaching only male or only female classes.	4.07	1.434
My instructors expect females to obey school rules more than males.	4.01	1.480
Category Average	3.08	1.087

4.4. Sexual Orientation

a) Instructors

Instructors, when asked about their opinions on sexual orientation they represent positive attitudes towards their students' sexual orientation. Results reveal that instructors do not differentiate between gay and heterosexual students since most of the mean scores are above 4. The lowest mean score under this item was given to the statement "Homo and heterosexuals have the same learning-working habits." with a mean score of 4.05, which is still positive but not as high as the mean of all other items.

Table 9 Sexual Orientation-Instructors

Sexual Orientation	M	SD
I think that students who are gay should be able to receive equal education as heterosexual.	4.65	.991
I would feel comfortable teaching a gay student.	4.63	.884
My sexual orientation doesn't influence my academic life.	4.62	.649
Homosexuals affect the University's reputation negatively.	4.46	1.065
Homo and heterosexuals have the same learning-working habits.	4.05	1.194
I would feel comfortable having a homosexual officemate.	4.23	1.080
Sexual Orientation Category Average	4.44	.719

b) Students

Under the diversity topic sexual orientation, the students were asked about how they perceive their instructors' attitudes and behaviors towards students with different sexual orientations. The idea was to crosscheck instructors' statements with students' perceptions. Results show that students verify that their instructors have positive attitudes to different sexual orientations with mean scores around 3.50. However, it should be mentioned here as well that students mean scores are not as high as their instructors.

Table 10 Sexual Orientation-Students

Sexual Orientation	M	SD
My instructors offer equal learning opportunities to gay and heterosexual students.	3.54	1.629
Any mentions of the word "homosexuality" makes my instructors feel uncomfortable.	3.41	1.655
According to my instructors homosexuals affect the University's reputation negatively.	3.61	1.622
According to my instructors homo and heterosexuals have the same learning-working habits.	3.34	1.632
I think my instructors would feel comfortable having a homosexual student.	3.49	1.497
According to my instructors homosexuality is a psychological disorder and requires therapy.	3.44	.128
Sexual Orientation Category Average	3.47	1.204

4.5. Disability

a) Instructors

When instructors have students with special needs in the classroom, being able to fulfill the expectations of these students is an important qualification in order to include these students into teaching and learning processes. The idea here was to understand how instructors rate themselves for their existing knowledge and skills about teaching to students with special needs. It is very possible to see that instructors rated their knowledge as low because the mean score for the item "I have knowledge and skills to educate students with disabilities" is 2.90 which is one of the lowest.

Table 11 Disability-Instructors

Disability	M	SD
Students with disabilities can socially and emotionally develop when they study with students without disabilities.	4.21	.931
I have knowledge and skills to educate students with disabilities.	2.90	1.383
I am willing to adjust my teaching to support students with disabilities in my classes.	4.22	1.002
I feel comfortable working with students with disabilities.	3.99	1.099
I think students with disabilities should be educated in separate classes.	4.15	1.082
Students with disabilities are a burden on the educational system.	4.64	.882

I tend to become impatient with disabled students.	4.22	.992
I don't expect too much from disabled students.	3.99	.947
Disability Category Average	3.69	.563

b) Students

When students were asked to state their opinion of their instructors' attitudes towards students with disability they rated their instructors lowest to the item "According to my instructors, students with disabilities should be educated in separate classes." with a mean score of 2.80. The highest mean score is given to the item "Students with disabilities are a burden on the educational system." (m=3.83)

Table 12 Disability-Students

Disability	M	SD
My instructors treat students with a disability as if they have no feelings.	3.67	.135
My instructors have knowledge and skills to educate students with disabilities.	3.01	.130
My instructors are willing to adjust their teaching to support students with disabilities.	3.38	.117
My instructors are comfortable working with students with disabilities.	3.33	.122
According to my instructors, students with disabilities should be educated in separate classes.	2.80	.136
Students with disabilities are a burden on the educational system.	3.83	.128
My instructors become impatient with disabled students.	3.22	.138
My instructors don't expect too much from disabled students.	2.93	.138
Disability Category Average	3.08	1.087

5. Discussion

The findings of this research refer to some major differences between instructors' self ratings and the way students' perceive their instructors in terms of inclusion in their own educational settings. As for cultural awareness, the average ratings of students (3,77) and instructors (3,92) seems to be close to each other. Yet, students' results do not agree with some items, which are rated higher by instructor. Especially, in-class activities to raise awareness on cultural issues is one of these problematic areas. Additionally, the average scores, both of instructors and students, are below 4, which is an indication that cultural issues still play a role at higher education institutions, and need to be looked into.

In terms of ethnic background, the discrepancy between instructors and students is much more evident (students: 3,56, instructors: 4,29). The most striking finding is that students do not think that their instructors are sufficiently concerned about the ethnic background of their students and how it might impact their education.

Regarding gender, girls are viewed as being more serious about their school work and more compliant and having better work habits in the classroom—factors that may contribute to girls' greater success in the classroom in the early grades (Fabregat, Almacellas and Beltri, 1999;

Smith, 1998). Boys receive more direction and criticism from their teachers than girls do (Bennett, Guttman, Rock & Cerullo, 1993; DeVoe, 1991) and are expected to demonstrate more disruptive behaviors than girls. Even though our study was conducted in higher education seems our results support the findings in the field as well.

For sexual orientation, the findings were difficult to explain because the foundational research on the effects of these variables is limited in the literature, at least in Turkish context. Even though gender effects have been periodically researched over decades, less studies have been conducted on sexual preferences, and the attitudes of instructors and students were not compared.

The discrepancy between instructors' own perception and students' perception of their instructors was highest for some items under disability. When asked, instructors stated that they believe that students with special needs should be educated in different classes ($m=4.15$). They were generally positive about that item; however, students do not perceive their instructors' opinion as positive rating this item 2.80. This may be because of students' own perception since it is not very common in Türkiye in higher education to have students with special needs so students do not see disabled students frequently in their own classes and think that this is the preference of the instructor.

6. Conclusion

Recent events around the world have confronted many of us in the field of higher education to face realities in our classrooms. Even though the government initiatives to ensure the inclusion of students from different cultural/ethnic backgrounds into the public educational opportunities especially after the migration of Syrian refugees in Türkiye has increased, there are still a lot need to be done to include students with different gender, sexual orientation and disability to the Turkish Higher Education system. The study in hand, therefore was an attempt to outline the current situation of inclusion and diversity in Türkiye. Drawing on research from a survey study of a group of 253 participants of instructors and students in higher education, the results reveal that our participants were aware of the impact of diversity on education. The analysis focuses on the ways in which inclusion is conceptualized and practised in universities by instructors and how students perceive these behaviours in their instructors' daily classroom practices. The results show that the way instructors rate themselves are rather different than the way students see in practice

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