

Male Pre-School Principals' Experiences on Glass Escalator

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Research Article

Received: 15.7.2021

Revised: 22.1.2022

Accepted: 1.2.2022

Abstract

The glass escalator is a metaphor used to describe how men in feminized workplaces move up career ladders, and this study aims to determine the experiences of male pre-school principals and the possible effects of cultural values on the results of the glass escalator through the ranks because of gender norms and job expectations. In this context, meetings are held with four school principals, working in Kocaeli and in pre-school education institutions. As an interpretive approach, phenomenology is used in the study. The criterion sampling method and the snowball sampling method, which are among the purposeful sampling methods, are used together in forming the working group. Research findings are discussed in terms of individual and cultural factors. The former is mainly related to the preferences of male principals, who tend to see working in pre-school institutions as an opportunity for promotion. This perspective is discussed from the standpoint of 'visibility', which emerges as an advantageous feature for men but not for women. Cultural factors, on the other hand, are related to culturally-influenced beliefs regarding male and female roles. Because management is seen as a male occupation, female teachers also prefer and support male principals.

Keywords: Glass escalator, pre-school educational institutions, male school principals

Erkek Okul Öncesi Müdürlerinin Cam Asansör Deneyimleri Öz

Cam asansör, kadınlaştırılmış işyerlerinde erkeklerin kariyer basamaklarını nasıl çıktıklarını anlatmak için kullanılan bir metafordur ve bu çalışma, erkek okul öncesi müdürlerinin deneyimlerini ve toplumsal cinsiyet normları ve iş beklentileri nedeniyle kültürel değerlerin cam asansörün sonuçları üzerindeki olası etkilerini belirlemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu bağlamda Kocaeli'nde okul öncesi eğitim kurumlarında görev yapan dört okul müdürü ile görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Çalışmada yorumlayıcı bir yaklaşım olarak fenomenoloji kullanılmıştır. Çalışma grubunun oluşturulmasında amaçlı örnekleme yöntemlerinden ölçüt örnekleme yöntemi ve kartopu örnekleme yöntemi birlikte kullanılmıştır. Araştırma bulguları bireysel ve kültürel faktörler açısından tartışılmıştır. Bunlardan ilki, okul öncesi kurumlarda çalışmayı terfi için bir fırsat olarak görme eğiliminde olan erkek müdürlerin tercihleriyle ilgilidir. Bu bakış açısı, kadınlar için değil ama erkekler için avantajlı bir özellik olarak ortaya çıkan 'görünürlük' açısından tartışılmıştır. Kültürel faktörler ise kadın ve erkek rollerine ilişkin kültürel olarak etkilenen inançlarla ilgilidir. Yöneticilik bir erkek mesleği olarak görüldüğünden, kadın öğretmenler de erkek müdürleri tercih etmekte ve desteklemektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Cam asansör, okul öncesi eğitim kurumları, erkek okul öncesi müdürleri

To cite this article in APA Style:

Erkol, H. (2023). Male pre-school principals' experiences on glass escalator. *Bartın University Journal of Faculty of Education*, 12(2), 292-302. <https://doi.org/10.14686/buefad.971199>

INTRODUCTION

In organizations, gender-based dominant and minority groups are formed due to the development of gender roles and occupational stereotypes that are based on the social status of the male and female genders. These factors also have an impact on the organizational structure that is a component of the social system. For instance, the idea of "tokenism" is reflected in the organization's numerical minority of women. Kanter (1977, 2003), who advocates the view that individuals who are numerically a minority in the organization have a disadvantaged position, states that this situation has consequences such as the visibility of their actions within the organization, polarization, and assimilation for the individuals in the minority position. The visibility of their actions means that individuals are expected to work in roles deemed appropriate for them within the organization, and as a result, they experience high levels of stress. Polarization is the formal and informal exclusion of individuals from a group and their isolation. Assimilation, on the other hand, means that people in different professions are expected to behave according to professional stereotypes.

Ongoing studies on the subject brought up the question of whether being a minority in the organization has the same results for men, as well as the experience of men who prefer to work in professions called "women's professions", bringing a strong criticism to the theory of "tokenism." It has led to the emergence of the concept of the glass escalator, meaning the status of being a token turns into an advantage for men. The idea that being a minority (tokenism) has different effects for men and women (Stroshine and Brandl, 2011; Williams, 1992; Yoder and Sinnett, 1985) was first used by Christine Williams (1992). Since it is called a glass escalator in his work titled "The Glass Escalator: Hidden Advantages for Men in the "Female" Profession" it is often attributed to Williams (1992) in the literature.

To illustrate how gender as a status characteristic interacts with the consequences of tokenism in two occupations, sociologists Floge and Merrill (1986) first employed the idea in relation to the token status of male nurses in the workplace. The results of a study done with 44 hospital employees—including male nurses and female doctors in two distinct hospitals—show that men gain substantially from this circumstance. Also, the results of the studies conducted with men working in occupations defined as female occupations to understand the outcomes of being a minority for men show that men and women working in non-traditional occupations do not experience the consequences of being a minority in the same way (Sargent, 2000; Shen-Miller, Olson, and Boling, 2011; Williams, 1992). While being a minority creates a negative situation within the organization for women, it creates a positive situation for men (Gustafson, 2008; Williams, 1992). In addition, the visibility of female minorities prevents them from working efficiently, while the visibility of male minorities gives them the chance to choose leadership and duties (Floge and Merrill, 1986; Williams, 1995a). Acker (1990) states that studies in this field are important in that they emphasize sexist institutions and professions that produce different experiences for men and women. The results of the study conducted by Wingfield (2009) show that the roles, skills, and abilities of men provide them with privileges and facilitate their progress. Williams (1995b) explains this situation by stating that masculinity is commonly associated with competence and mastery, and this perception persists even men work in a traditionally female occupation. For this reason, part of the perception that men do not belong to these jobs is always the idea that men are more talented and successful than women and that they should belong to jobs that reflect this.

As Williams (1995b) states, the main idea is that men are suitable for more masculine professions, meaning that men are more talented and have more leadership characteristics than their female colleagues. This is the result of power relations between men and women, largely due to the patriarchal social structure. The power and status brought by the patriarchal social structure provide men with situational dominance, and men effectively utilize their traditional advantages even in professions called women's professions (Cross and Bagilhole, 2002; Cognard-Black, 2004; Floge and Merrill, 1986), and they have the chance to succeed thanks to their favored minority status (Evans, 1997; Hultin, 2003). This situation causes men to think that they are more advantageous in terms of wages if they work in women's jobs (Hultin, 2003; Karlsen, 2012; Price-Glynn and Rakocski, 2012). In addition, the fact that women continue their careers at lower ranks or take a break due to family responsibilities divided according to gender roles also supports the concept of glass escalators in favor of men (Evers and Severdiy, 2014).

That men are supported by their female supervisors and colleagues is another issue that supports the formation of the glass escalator concept in the career development process (Budig, 2002; Evans, 1997; Fairhust and Snavely, 1983; Hultin, 2003; Maume, 1999; Morris, 2010; Simpson, 2004; Williams, 1992; Wingfield, 2009; Zimmer, 1998). This situation arises from the belief that men will be more talented and better leaders (Crocker and McGraw, 1984; Floge and Merrill, 1986). Ritter and Yoder (2004) reveal in their study that even when women

are more numerous in the group, the leadership task is given to men in large proportions. In many organizations, the fact that management levels are dominated by men (Budig, 2002) seems to be acceptable as an indicator of this.

The glass escalator can't only be explained by the majority status of men in managerial positions. Because this situation is a result and reflection of social culture, it is possible that the causes and consequences of the glass escalator may differ between countries. It is possible to say that this situation arises from the social and cultural structure, which also affects the organizational culture significantly. The cultural characteristics of a society determine the institutional and administrative processes and practices in those societies as well as providing clues about the cultural characteristics of the institutions (Eğinli & Çakır, 2011). This situation also manifests itself in educational organizations that reflect the social structure. It is important to work in pre-school institutions, which is a profession attributed to women within the framework of professional stereotypes of management (Adler, 1999) and also one of the professions to which power is attributed. So this study aims to investigate the experiences of male pre-school administrators in Turkey regarding the concept of the glass escalator and the possible effects of cultural values on the causes and consequences of the concept of glass escalators.

METHOD

A qualitative research design was used in this study, which deals with the experiences of male pre-school administrators in Kocaeli, Turkey, regarding the concept of the glass escalator and the possible effects on cultural values as a result of the concept of the glass escalator. Since the subject of the research consists of the experiences of male pre-school administrators regarding the management process and their views on the impact of cultural values on their management experience, a qualitative research method is used in the research to define the common meaning of the lived experiences of a few people about a phenomenon or concept (Creswell, 2013).

The study group of the research consists of male school principals working in pre-school education institutions. Although the small number of male pre-school administrators constitutes a limitation for the study, the fact that the interviewed administrators know each other provided an advantage in informing the study group and conducting in-depth interviews in accordance with the nature of phenomenology. In the formation of the study group, the criterion sampling method and the snowball sampling method, which are purposeful sampling methods, were used together. In determining the criteria, it was determined that the school administrators should be experienced and oriented to the school's culture. So, the criteria used in the formation of the study group are that school administrators have at least two years of management experience, have worked in the institution where they are currently working for at least one year, and are willing to participate in the research. Within the scope of research ethics, participants included in the study group were called by phone and informed about the researcher and the research topic to be discussed. The information about the institutions and persons mentioned during the interviews is kept confidential by the researcher, and the participants are coded as "P1, P2,..."

The semi-structured interview technique, which is the main data collection technique in phenomenology research, is used to collect the data of the research. In the process of preparing the interview form, first of all, a question pool was created based on the literature. Afterward, the form was finalized by referring to the expert opinion and named as "Experiences of Male Pre-School Administrators and the Culture-Related Factors Affecting Their Experiences Interview Form." A voice recorder was used during the interviews if the participant gave permission. If the participant did not give permission, notes were taken, and what was said was recorded.

To ensure the external validity of the research, the findings were defined with direct quotations, and the raw data and analysis were matched to ensure internal validity. To ensure external reliability in the research, the judgments and comments obtained were audited by an expert. Content analysis, a research method used to identify patterns in recorded communication, was used in the analysis of the data. In this context, the interviews were transcribed, and themes were created by examining the transcribed interviews. Themes are combined into two dimensions.

RESULTS

The findings related to the concept of glass escalator in pre-school education institutions are discussed in two dimensions: (1) individual factors and (2) culture-related factors. The preference of male teachers in pre-school education institutions to be principals is discussed under the dimension of individual factors. The stereotype that management is a male job, cultural structure, gender perception and the "queen bee syndrome" are discussed under the dimension of culture-related factors.

Individual Factors

The results of the research reveal that pre-school institutions with female-dominated working environments are preferred by male administrator candidates for promotion. Another remarkable point that emerged as a result of the research is that school counselors who want to be administrators also prefer pre-school institutions. Some of the participants' views on this situation are as follows:

There is no need to give any other reason. I wanted to be a manager, and because of my low point, there is no alternative for me. There isn't any competition in pre-school institutions. Only school counselors and pre-school teachers can prefer pre-schools in management. I prefer it, so I came. (P 1)

I think being a principal as a school counselor is an advantage, because we received an interdisciplinary education at the school. Education is more important for me than teaching, and pre-schools are places where the development of positive behaviors in children is at the forefront. That is why I prefer pre-school institutions as a principal. (P 2)

I have studied at a high school for a long time. In this time, I realized that school principals aren't sufficient in many practices, so I decided to become a school principal. I saw this energy, desire, and power in myself because, as school counselors, we have to do some of the management work, whether voluntarily or not. The reason I chose pre-school was that I wanted to be a principal, and there was a need for school principals in pre-school institutions. There is a saying that "Nature does not accept a vacuum." In kindergartens, there were always school principals who acted as proxies, as pre-school teachers generally didn't prefer management. When we were given the right to be managers as school counselors, we preferred it. (P 3)

In 2004, after working at this center for 8 years, I wanted to choose different institutions. Actually, I applied for the position of school counselor. We also had the opportunity to become managers. Kindergartens were also among our choices, and then I became the principal of this kindergarten. (P 4)

As may be seen from the participant's opinions, men who work as administrators in pre-school facilities have the potential to be "visible" despite being a minority. This situation shows that being in the minority position of visibility creates negative situations for female principals (Crocker and McGraw, 1984; Kanter, 1977,1993; Sperandio, 2010), while it creates positive situations for male principals, such as the chance of choosing a principalship in pre-school institutions. This finding is also compatible with the studies on the subject in the literature (Evans, 1997; Hultin, 2003; Williams, 1993; Wingfield, 2009).

The results obtained from the participant opinions show that male teachers' desires for promotion play an active role in their preference for principalship in pre-school institutions. Moreover, research shows that men prefer to be managers in institutions that are defined as suitable for women (Karlsen, 2012; Montecinos & Nielsen, 2004; Simpson, 2004; Taylor, 2010). It is possible to say that defining managerial roles together with men plays an important role in the formation of this situation (Abreu-Hornboster, 2012; İnandı, Özkan, Peker and Atik, 2009).

Culture-Related Factors

Another point that the participants emphasized in the interview process is that women do not prefer to be principals in pre-school institutions, and they support men to be principals in these institutions. The participants state that they think that the acceptance of the management area by society as a work area suitable for men is effective in creating this situation. The participant opinions on the subject are as follows:

Women do not prefer to be principals. They started very enthusiastically, but then they quit. We work from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Teachers work from morning to noon. They work hard during that time, but it is only 5 hours, and they have free time for the rest of the day. That's why they don't prefer being principals. (P 1)

Before we started to work, teachers definitely had prejudice. Working with male principals for years has been unusual for pre-school teachers, but we have never had a problem. Considering the concept of the manager, we did not have any problems being accepted, since it is a male role in the eyes of teachers, even if they work in pre-school. It was a new process for parents as well as teachers or other groups, but we had no problems with parents either. Even after we started as a manager, we observed that there were fewer complaints when a male manager became a manager. (P 2)

We were very well received because there was an administrative problem that had accumulated over the years. As you know, female teachers did not want to be principals. Many of them have done this

work by proxy. But when we became the principal, they saw an authority, and it was nice to accept it. They saw that we were getting things done. They even said that these things could be done like this; it was easy, and then they started to aspire to this field. (P 3)

I think that being a male administrator in pre-school has managerial contributions. I say this based on my previous experience. Both teachers and staff approach me more positively. I think female school principals have become more oppressive. (P 4)

The findings obtained are in line with the research results available in the literature. It is possible to interpret this situation as the view that the administration is male-dominated not only because of the patriarchal social structure of Turkish society, but also because it has a more global structure. The results of this dimension support the formation of the concept of glass escalator, with research results stating that men are supported by their female supervisors and colleagues in the career development process (Budig, 2002; Evans, 1997; Fairhurst & Snavely, 1983; Hultin, 2003; Maume, 1999; Morris, 2010; Simpson, 2004; Williams, 1992, 1995; Wingfield, 2009; Zimmer, 1998). It is possible to interpret the harmony between the findings and the research results as the view that management is a man's job not only because of the patriarchal social structure of Turkish society but also because it has a more global structure.

Within this dimension, it is possible to claim that time restrictions and, hence, family responsibilities, particularly in the light of first participant's opinion, play a significant influence in career development of women. This viewpoint is supported by various research findings in the literature (Elliot & Smith, 2004; Erkol, 2015; Güldal, 2006; Kirchmeyer, 2002; Mathe, 1989; Mayatürk, 2006; Neale and Özkanlı, 2010; Negiz and Yemen, 2011; Sağlam & Bostancı, 2012, Weber, 1998).

These factors, which are effective in the career development of women, are the result of cultural structure. It is possible to say that cultural structure is effective in educational institutions, which are a part of the social system. Masculine cultures such as Turkish society give importance to features such as independence, competition, power, and self-confidence (being assertive) (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 1991). Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (1991) state that education and professional life are powerful sources of cultural learning and that more formal communication takes place in organizations with a high power distance (Hofstede, 1984). The participant view that high power distance is effective on organizational communication is as follows:

As an administrator, I always try to keep my relationships with teachers at a certain level. Although I do not set very hard boundaries, I have a relationship that continues within reasonable limits. For example, I never address my teachers or employees by their first names, and I call them Mrs. (P 4)

Another remarkable point that emerged as a result of the research findings is the positive opinion of male school principals working in pre-school regarding the "Queen Bee Syndrome" (Örücü, Kılıç & Kılıç, 2007), which is considered an important organizational obstacle for women to rise to senior managerial positions. The opinions of the participants on the subject are as follows:

I prefer open and transparent communication. Of course, there are still differences between the man-woman agreement and the woman-woman agreement. We see this in schools. Female teachers get along better with male principals. (P 2)

It is more difficult for female teachers to work with female administrators. They conflict with each other. We don't have such a problem with male principals. (P 3)

Finally, the findings of the study show that gender stereotypes, which are a part of the cultural structure, can sometimes lead to the development of negative perceptions among parents about the male principals working in pre-school institutions. The participant opinions on the subject are as follows:

I believe that a female school principal should be appointed here. In pre-school education, mothers are mostly concerned with the school process of the child. Male parents are rarely concerned with school unless it is absolutely necessary. The ladies seek out the assistant principal because they need someone with whom they can better express themselves. They are averse to approaching male principals. They express themselves more easily to me because of my field, but they prefer female assistant managers. In Turkey, only 5% of pre-school principals are male. Even if the parent intends to file a complaint, the assistant principal is the first person he contacts. I believe that female parents communicate more easily with female assistant principals. When children graduate from here and enter primary school, there is no such thing. I don't know whether they want to see us as mothers or what kind of perception there is that they don't prefer us. (P 1)

Some of the parents' concerns and apprehensions cause issues. We hired a gardener at the start of the year, and he was the only male employee aside from myself. Later, our male teacher came. "Sir, how many male staff members are there in this school?" a parent inquired at a parent-teacher conference. Now it's difficult for me to send my child to school. My anxiety level rose. "What if it's harassment?" you might wonder. I assured the parents that everything was done following the rules, that there would be no harassment, and that the children would never be alone. I attempted to console him. I told him he shouldn't be concerned in that way. (P 3).

Considering the above-mentioned findings, it is possible to say that women employees are preferred by parents in pre-school education institutions as a result of the stereotypes shaped by the social structure, which is a summary of the information we have about certain groups (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2010).

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Research findings reveal that the concept of tokenism, which was put forward by Kanter (1977, 1993), and which reveals a disadvantageous situation for female managers, turns into an advantageous situation when considered in terms of male principals. This situation, named "Glass Ceiling Syndrome" by Williams (1992), can be seen in pre-school educational institutions. One of the reasons why managers prefer to work in these institutions is the possibility of promotion. As a result, visibility, which is defined as a negative feature for female managers, gives male principals a chance to lead as leaders.

It is possible to say that culture plays an important role in defining male principals as leaders. The paternalist leadership tendency, which emphasizes the concept of family and has significant differences in tendency between genders, is known to increase in societies with high power distance and collectivist values, such as Turkish culture (Cesur, Erkilet & Taylan, 2019; Çalışkan & Özkoç, 2016). This situation makes it easier for men who are more suitable for the father role to prefer management with a leadership position and to be supported.

The fact that male administrators are more likely to be viewed as leaders and that the management positions are consequently seen as more suitable for men is a result of the patriarchal structure of society. Patriarchy, which is defined as the domination or use of power by men over other people (Hearn, 1992), plays an important role in determining the nature of gender ideology in different contexts (Kandiyoti, 1988). However, the fact that the patriarchal structure's ability to maintain its existence so effectively in all areas of life means that this structure is internalized by women can't be denied (Köstek, 2007).

It is also a result of culture-related factors that male school principals have a positive perception of the Queen Bee Syndrome (Zel, 2002), which is defined as the use of women against women by adopting male attitudes and trying to eliminate the competition of other women. As a result of these culture-related factors, it can be said that men consider themselves suitable for the managerial role, and they find female managers less successful in this regard. The managers participating in the research state that male managers are more successful than female managers in terms of establishing authority, solving problems, and communicating with female employees. According to Kanter (1993), this situation is caused by gender stereotypes accepted by both men and women in society, as well as the roles attributed to women and the masculine organizational structure formed. Stereotypes are beliefs about the characteristics shared by people in a particular group or social category (Taylor, Peplau, and Sears, 2008) or the behaviours that society expects from women and men concerning their gender (Çelik, 2008). In many countries in the world, management is defined by men and is defined by practices consisting of male lives and values. The fact that the masculine structure that dominates the business world forces women to practice these stereotypes also causes women to adopt stereotypes about themselves and to believe that they cannot carry out their managerial duties (Limbach, 1994; Groot, 2010), so it can be thought that male managers are preferred.

Another important reason why women do not prefer to take place on management positions is the time pressure created by their social roles. Negiz and Yemen (2011) found that the responsibilities of "family, children, and the role of women as "wives" have a decisive role in the career development of women managers and that the reflections of traditional social understanding in family and business life sometimes affect women's career goals in their decisions. It has a compelling and sometimes internalizing effect; women have to make time and career plans while determining their priorities in working life, and therefore they lag behind men in the promotion to the top.

Adler (1999) emphasizes that the roles defined for the individual must be compatible with the division of labor, which is an absolute condition for the preservation and continuation of human society. In this context, it can be said that the expectations regarding women's work and family roles (Weber, 1998) play an active role in women's not choosing the managerial position due to their social roles. Indeed, Mathe (1989) states that women prefer professions with more flexible working hours to be able to fulfill their motherhood and housewife duties,

which are the roles that social life imposes on them, without interruption. Furthermore, it can be asserted that the fact that teaching is defined by society as a profession requiring love for students and that this definition is also effective in women's choice of teaching as a profession, The metaphors developed by the students about the teacher often have characteristics that are devoted to mothers, such as "informative, nurturing, loving, protecting, pure, sensitive, valuable, and guiding" (Tulunay-Ateş, 2016).

It can be said that the fact that women constitute the dominant group in pre-school education institutions plays a part in shaping the perception of teachers in pre-school educational institutions. This situation also shows itself in the metaphors developed for pre-school teachers. The results of the metaphor research conducted for pre-schoolers and their teachers indicate that the metaphors of "house, tree, flower, sapling, the beginning of life, the first step, the first step of the ladder, water, and seed" (Ertürk-Kara, 2014) are frequently used for pre-school education; it also shows that the metaphors of "information source, shaper, character developer, guide" (Soydemir, 2011) are frequently used for pre-school teachers.

When the metaphors produced regarding the perceptions of teachers in pre-school education institutions are examined, it is understood that pre-school institutions are seen as the beginning of educational life, and pre-school teachers are seen as individuals who are protective and shape students with love and compassion. Based on this situation, it is possible to say that pre-school teaching characteristics are closely related to stereotypes attributed to women, and this situation causes a slow change in the number of male pre-school teachers. The fact that women prefer pre-school teaching field also supports this perception. It is seen that 94.3% of the teachers in pre-school education institutions are women and 5.6% are men (MEB, 2019).

The definition of pre-school teaching as a female profession not only causes a slow change in the number of male pre-school teachers, but also causes male pre-school teachers who choose this field to have problems in the learning process and working life. The results of the research conducted by Haskan-Avcı, Karababa & Zencir (2019) revealed that male pre-school teacher candidates have problems in personal relationships and communication, such as the reactions of the society and faculty members towards their gender, mostly due to the male minority, and the stereotypes of parents towards male pre-school teachers.

Another study conducted by Yağbasan and Aksoy (2016) shows that the main reason why male teachers aren't preferred in pre-school education institutions is that men are not trusted to show as much compassion and attention as women. Because of this stereotype, male students studying in the preschool teaching department have a more negative perspective towards the teaching profession than female students studying in the same department. (Kızıldaş, Halmatov and Sariçam, 2012; Manalova-Yalçın and Özgen, 2017). Also, parents' point of view is that women will be more successful because they have a sense of motherhood, are more tolerant and patient, can communicate better with children and are more interested in them, are more careful, and can better understand children's education (Koçak and Kaygusuz, 2019). This perspective can be said to be effective in the formation of this situation.

SUGGESTIONS

Professional stereotypes and situations that develop due to these stereotypes (such as "glass ceiling syndrome") are frequently mentioned in the literature. However, there are not enough studies in the literature on men working in fields such as pre-school teaching and nursing, which are widely accepted as women's professions. Although the majority of teachers working in pre-school education institutions are women, the number of male pre-school teachers is increasing from year to year. In this context, issues such as the individual characteristics of male pre-school teacher candidates who prefer to study in this field and the reasons for choosing the field are also open to research.

The problems that male pre-school teacher candidates experience during their university education are another issue that needs to be investigated. The impact of social stereotypes on these students and the perspectives of field teachers, classmates, and others on male pre-school teacher candidates are among the issues that need to be addressed. The opinions of male pre-school teacher candidates about professional self-perception and the factors affecting professional self-perception, field adequacy, and the factors that cause these opinions are also among the issues that need to be addressed.

In this study, the experiences of male pre-school principals with the concept of the glass escalator are discussed. It is important to study the concept of glass escalators in different professions in terms of their contribution to the literature. In addition, in this study, the concept of the glass escalator is included only through the experiences of male pre-school administrators. It is also important to investigate the culture-related factors that caused the formation of the glass escalator concept and even to conduct comparative research on this subject,

including in different countries. Finally, the concept of the glass escalator has a structural and social impact on individuals who experience it. Individual results are also among the issues that need to be investigated.

Educational levels are parts of a whole that complement each other. In pre-school education institutions, beside the psychomotor, physical, social, emotional, mental, and linguistic development of children, their socialization and preparation for the formal education process are also in question. As seen in the results of the study, parents prefer female pre-school teachers for different reasons. However, some of the parents who prefer female pre-school teachers prefer male primary school teachers, especially for boys in the primary education period. It is possible to interpret this situation as parents and even society accepting pre-school education institutions as a different field from formal education. In this context, it is important to investigate the gender preferences of the parents of male students in the pre-school and primary education periods and the reasons for these preferences.

Finally, pre-school education is critical for developing a child's self-concept and sexual identity, as well as an independent personality within the framework of cultural socialization norms. From this perspective, it is possible to conclude that male pre-school teachers will have a positive impact on the development of boys' personalities. In this context, it is thought that long-term qualitative studies and experimental studies, in which the effects of male pre-school teachers on the development of boys, can be observed, will contribute to the literature. And lastly, this study is limited to male school administrators working in pre-school education institutions in Kocaeli. Considering the perception that the cultural structure creates on male preschool teachers and principals, it is useful to consider the subject in a more comprehensive way with different aspects.

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