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Critical Thinking Dispositions as Predictors of Teachers' Curriculum Awareness[1]

Öğretmenlerin Öğretim Programı Farkındalıklarını Yordayan Bir Etmen Olarak Eleştirel Düşünme Eğilimleri

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Abstract

This research aims to determine the level of teachers' curriculum awareness and critical thinking dispositions and to examine the relationships between these two variables. The study group consists of 400 teachers working in public schools in the central districts of Bursa province during the 2023-2024 academic year. The research was conducted using the correlational research design. The Curriculum Awareness Scale (CAS) and the Turkish version of the California Critical Thinking Dispositions Inventory (CCTDI-T) were used as data collection tools. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation analysis, and multiple linear regression analysis. The results showed that the teachers' overall levels of curriculum awareness and critical thinking dispositions were generally high. Furthermore, there were positive and statistically significant relationships between teachers' curriculum awareness and critical thinking dispositions. It was also found that teachers' critical thinking dispositions significantly predicted their level of curriculum awareness. These findings suggest that developing teachers' critical thinking dispositions and skills may be a key factor in enhancing curriculum awareness.

Keywords: Awareness, Curriculum Awareness, Critical Thinking, Critical Thinking Dispositions

Özet

Bu çalışma, öğretmenlerin öğretim programı farkındalıkları ile eleştirel düşünme eğilimlerinin ne düzeyde olduğunu belirlemeyi ve öğretmenlerin öğretim programı farkındalıkları ile eleştirel düşünme eğilimleri arasındaki ilişkileri ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma grubunu 2023-2024 eğitim öğretim yılında, Bursa ilinin merkez ilçelerindeki devlet okullarında görev yapan toplam 400 öğretmen oluşturmaktadır. Çalışma, ilişkisel araştırma modeli kullanılarak yürütülmüştür. Veri toplama aracı olarak Öğretim Programı Farkındalık Ölçeği (ÖPFÖ) ve Kaliforniya Eleştirel Düşünme Eğilimleri Ölçeği'nin Türkçe versiyonu (CCTDI-T) kullanılmıştır. Araştırma kapsamında toplanan veriler, betimsel analizler, Pearson korelasyon analizi ve çoklu doğrusal regresyon analizi uygulanarak analiz edilmiştir. Elde edilen sonuçlar, öğretmenlerin öğretim programı farkındalıklarının ve eleştirel düşünme eğilimlerinin genel ortalamalarının yüksek olduğunu göstermiştir. Araştırma sonuçlarına göre öğretmenlerin öğretim programı farkındalıkları ile eleştirel düşünme eğilimleri arasında pozitif yönlü ve anlamlı ilişkilerin olduğu anlaşılmıştır. Öğretmenlerin eleştirel düşünme eğilimlerinin öğretim programı farkındalıklarını etkilediği de belirlenmiştir. Bu araştırmada elde edilen sonuçlar, öğretmenlerin öğretim programı farkındalığını desteklemek için eleştirel düşünme eğilim ve becerilerinin öncelikle geliştirilmesi gerektiğini göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Farkındalık, Öğretim Programı Farkındalığı, Eleştirel Düşünme, Eleştirel Düşünme Eğilimleri

[1] This study was derived from the first author's master's thesis titled "Investigation of Teachers' Curriculum Awareness and Critical Thinking Dispositions".

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1. Introduction

Curricula, as cornerstone elements of educational systems, play a critical role in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of teaching and learning processes. The effective execution of these programs largely depends on teachers' awareness of the curriculum and their ability to reflect this awareness in classroom practices. However, rapidly changing global conditions and evolving educational paradigms require teachers to follow the curriculum, evaluate it from a critical perspective, and make necessary adaptations when needed. In this context, examining the relationship between teachers' curriculum awareness and their critical thinking dispositions is of great importance for improving the quality of education and enhancing teacher competencies.

1.1. Curriculum Awareness

To thoroughly understand the concept of curriculum awareness, it is essential to first address the notion of awareness itself. Awareness is a state of heightened consciousness and learning that evolves with the complexity of an individual's learning experiences across cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains and involves the mutual and multifaceted interactions of these three areas (Pektaş, 2021). According to Dökmen (2002), awareness comprises associating a new stimulus with existing mental schemas, defining it, feeling excitement about it, and experiencing a desire to engage with it. In education, awareness is closely linked to Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, developed by Bloom and his colleagues (1956). This taxonomy encompasses three key domains—cognitive, affective, and psychomotor—and classifies objectives within each domain hierarchically, from simple to complex. Bloom and his colleagues (1956) refer to this hierarchical structure as a scale of consciousness or awareness. It is suggested that, particularly in the cognitive domain, an individual's awareness of these behaviors increases as behaviors become more complex. Within this theoretical framework, curriculum awareness emerges as a multidimensional concept, reflecting a teacher's understanding and application of curriculum objectives, content, teaching and learning processes, and assessment methods (Pektaş, 2021). Teachers with high curriculum awareness exhibit cognitive, affective, and psychomotor engagement in comprehending, applying, and evaluating curriculum components. This awareness enables teachers to manage educational processes and enhance student achievement more effectively.

1.2. Critical Thinking Disposition

Critical thinking has become one of the primary goals of contemporary education systems. According to Facione (1990), critical thinking entails multifaceted processes, procedures, or activities that involve learning and developing cognitive skills and internalizing affective dispositions and attitudes. This definition underscores that critical thinking is not merely a cognitive process but includes certain affective dispositions and mental habits. Critical thinking disposition can be defined as an individual's willingness and inclination to use critical thinking skills. Facione (1990) identified seven core characteristics of individuals with high critical thinking: analytical thinking, open-mindedness, inquisitiveness, truth-seeking, confidence in reasoning, maturity, and systematic thinking.

Critical thinking dispositions empower individuals to solve problems effectively, make sound decisions, and form accurate judgments (Kozikoglu, 2019; Thompson, 2011). When individuals encounter complex situations, those who apply critical thinking skills in alignment with these dispositions are more likely to demonstrate sound judgment (Bailin et al., 1999). In education, teachers must embody these dispositions, as they enable continuous reflection and improvement in classroom

practices, teaching methods, and student assessments (Yurt, 2024). Teachers with strong critical thinking dispositions consistently question their practices, explore innovative teaching approaches (Lithoxoidou & Georgiadou, 2023), and develop strategies tailored to better meet their students' diverse needs (Jahn, 2012). This connection between critical thinking dispositions and practical application becomes even more evident when considering the definition provided in the Delphi Report. According to this framework, critical thinking involves "purposeful, self-regulatory judgment which results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference, as well as an explanation of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, soteriological, or contextual considerations upon which that judgment is based" (Facione, 1990). Accordingly, a disposition toward critical thinking enables teachers to assess educational policies, curricula, and school practices objectively. It also equips them to provide constructive feedback and advocate for meaningful improvements when necessary.

1.3. Curriculum Awareness and Critical Thinking Disposition

Teachers' critical thinking dispositions can influence their curriculum awareness in various ways, and it is thought that a reciprocal relationship exists between the two. Teachers with high critical thinking dispositions approach the curriculum as implementers and professionals who analyze, question, and adapt it when necessary (Yurt, 2024). This analytical approach enhances teachers' curriculum awareness, enabling them to implement it more consciously and effectively. Furthermore, critical thinking disposition allows teachers to perceive the curriculum not as a static document but as a dynamic and adaptable framework. This perspective enables teachers to modify and improve the curriculum according to the classroom environment, student needs, and evolving educational trends.

Critical thinking skills and dispositions, characterized by several key dimensions, are crucial in enhancing teachers' understanding and application of the curriculum (Kettler, 2016a). Facione (1990) defines analyticity as the ability to systematically analyze complex problems, identify underlying issues, and seek reasoned solutions. Teachers who exhibit a high degree of analyticity are more adept at critically examining the relationships among various curriculum components, such as objectives, content, teaching methods, and assessments (Metsäpelto et al., 2022). This analytical approach could be a key component for them to assess the coherence between curriculum objectives and assessment strategies, allowing for more informed suggestions for improvement (Maiorana, 1992). Consequently, their curriculum awareness may likely improve, enabling them to develop a more comprehensive and practical grasp of the curriculum.

Another critical dimension is self-confidence, which refers to individuals' belief in their reasoning and problem-solving capabilities (Facione, 1990; Halpern, 1998). Teachers with strong self-confidence in their critical thinking abilities are more likely to question the curriculum's effectiveness, identify potential areas of improvement, and challenge inconsistencies when necessary (Brookfield, 2011). This confidence fosters a deeper engagement with the curriculum, enabling teachers to offer well-founded critiques and propose innovative solutions, ultimately contributing to a more reflective and adaptive teaching practice (Paul & Elder, 2006). Furthermore, truth-seeking reflects a disposition toward valuing accuracy and actively searching for the most reliable information (Facione, 1990; Ennis, 1996). Teachers who embody truth-seeking are inclined to scrutinize the curriculum critically, evaluating its relevance and alignment with educational goals and societal needs (Halx & Reybold, 2005). This pursuit of truth deepens their understanding of the curriculum and enhances its applicability in changing educational contexts (Brookfield, 2012). Consequently, these critical thinking dimensions collectively foster a more nuanced curriculum awareness and enable teachers to

implement it more effectively in the classroom. Therefore, teachers' critical thinking dispositions positively influence their curriculum awareness (Paul & Elder, 2006; Kettler, 2016b).

Several recent studies in the literature examine teachers' curriculum awareness. In a study by Pektaş and Pesen (2021), the curriculum awareness levels of teachers were investigated. The results revealed that as teachers' length of service increased, their cognitive and affective awareness levels also rose. Additionally, it was found that teachers who graduated from faculties of education and those working in private schools had higher curriculum awareness. These findings suggest that teachers' professional experience and educational background significantly impact curriculum awareness. In another study by Kuloğlu (2022), it was determined that graduate education in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction enhanced teachers' awareness of the curriculum. This study showed that graduate education helps teachers gain curriculum literacy and improve teaching skills. These results highlight the importance of graduate education in teachers' professional development and suggest that it can effectively increase curriculum awareness. In a study by Karakaya and colleagues (2024), science teachers' awareness of the curriculum was examined. The results indicated that the length of professional experience impacted cognitive awareness. This finding supports the positive effect of professional experience on curriculum awareness. A study by Kavan and Yıldırım Suna (2023) revealed that Turkish language teachers had high curriculum awareness and that graduate education further increased this awareness. This research is fundamental in examining curriculum awareness in specific subject areas and again emphasizes the positive impact of graduate education on curriculum awareness.

The results of studies in the literature demonstrate that various factors influence teachers' curriculum awareness and can be developed. However, although teachers' curriculum awareness has been studied, more research is needed to examine the relationship between this awareness and critical thinking disposition. This study aims to fill this gap in the literature by investigating the relationship between teachers' curriculum awareness and their critical thinking dispositions. The study findings could provide valuable insights for education policymakers, teacher education programs, and in-service training planners. Understanding how teachers' critical thinking dispositions affect their curriculum awareness could contribute to improving the content and structure of teacher training and development programs. Furthermore, understanding this relationship could help develop strategies for more effective implementation and development of curricula. In conclusion, this study has the potential to contribute to efforts aimed at improving the quality of the education system and enhancing student achievement. In line with the purpose of the research, the following questions will be addressed:

1. What is the level of teachers' curriculum awareness?
2. What is the level of teachers' critical thinking dispositions?
3. Is there a significant relationship between teachers' curriculum awareness and their critical thinking dispositions?
4. Do teachers' critical thinking dispositions significantly predict their curriculum awareness?

2. Method

2.1. Research Design

In this study, the correlational research design, one of the quantitative research methods, was used. The correlational research design aims to determine the presence and degree of co-variation between two or more variables (Karasar, 2020). In this study, the relationship between teachers'

curriculum awareness and their critical thinking skills was examined. Additionally, the relationships between the sub-dimensions of the Curriculum Awareness Scale (CAS)—cognitive awareness, psychomotor awareness, and affective awareness—and the sub-dimensions of the Critical Thinking Disposition Scale (CCTDI-T)—analytical thinking, open-mindedness, inquisitiveness, self-confidence, truth-seeking, and systematicity—were analyzed to provide a more detailed understanding of these constructs.

2.2. Study Group

The research was conducted during the 2023–2024 academic year with teachers working in public schools in Bursa's central districts. The study group comprised 400 teachers working at various levels and in different subject areas in these public schools who completed the scale and demographic information forms via Google Forms. Subject groups were classified as follows: Preschool, Special Education, and Guidance and Psychological Counseling (PDR) teachers were grouped as the Pedagogical Sensitivity Group; Science, Technology Design, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and Mathematics teachers were grouped as the Science/Mathematics Group; Social Studies, History, Geography, Philosophy, and Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge teachers were grouped as the Social/Cultural Knowledge Group; Electrical, Electronics, Vocational High School Child Development, Accounting, IT, Metal, Textile, Furniture, Motor Vehicles, Handicrafts, Health Services, Work Skills, Public Relations, Machinery, Food and Beverage Services, and Vocational Religious Course teachers were grouped as the Vocational Courses Group; Visual Arts, Music, and Physical Education teachers were grouped as the Arts/Sports Group; Arabic and English teachers were classified as the Foreign Language Group; Turkish Language and Literature and Turkish teachers were classified as the Turkish Language Group. The elementary school teacher group was evaluated separately. Teachers participating in the study were selected using a convenience sampling method, ensuring easy access to the sample. Convenience sampling is a type of sampling in which individuals from whom data can be most efficiently and economically obtained are selected (Büyüköztürk et al., 2020).

Data collection tools included the Turkish-adapted version of the California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory (CCTDI-T) and the Curriculum Awareness Scale (CAS). These tools were transferred to Google Forms, and the link was shared with teachers who expressed interest in participating in the study. With the necessary permissions obtained, the researcher personally shared the survey link to volunteer participants via WhatsApp. Additionally, with the knowledge of school administrators, the link was shared in various schools' WhatsApp groups. The demographic characteristics of the participating teachers are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *Demographic Characteristics of Participating Teachers*

Characteristics	*n*	*%*
Gender		
Female	242	60.5
Male	158	39.5
Educational Level		
Undergraduate	330	82.5
Graduate	70	17.5
Professional Experience		
1-5 years	36	9
6-10 years	78	19.5
11-15 years	87	21.8
16-20 years	77	19.3
21 years and above	122	30.5
Educational Institution Level		
Preschool	32	8
Primary School	100	25
Middle School	98	24.5
High School	170	42.5
Subject Area		
Pedagogical Sensitivity Group	50	12.5
Elementary school teacher	85	21.3
Science/Mathematics Group	65	16.3
Social/Cultural Knowledge	45	11.3
Vocational Courses Group	45	11.3
Arts/Sports	40	10
Foreign Language Group	33	8.3
Turkish Language Group	37	9.3

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that most of the participating teachers were female (60.5%) and held undergraduate degrees (82.5%). Regarding professional experience, 30.5% had 21 years or more, and 21.8% had 11–15 years. Regarding institution levels, 42.5% worked in high schools, followed by primary schools (25%). Subject areas were diverse, with 21.3% being elementary school teachers, 16.3% in Science/Mathematics, and 12.5% in the Pedagogical Sensitivity Group.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

This research used a demographic information form, the Curriculum Awareness Scale (ÖPFÖ), and the Turkish adaptation of the California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory (CCTDI-T) as data collection tools. Detailed descriptions of these tools are provided below.

2.3.1. Demographic Information Form

The demographic information form, prepared by the researcher, contains participants' gender, educational status, teaching level, professional seniority, and subject area. While questions regarding gender, educational level, teaching stage, and professional seniority were multiple-choice, subject area information was collected using an open-ended question. Participants were required to answer all questions in the demographic information form before proceeding to the next section.

2.3.2. Curriculum Awareness Scale (CAS)

The Curriculum Awareness Scale (CAS), developed by Pektaş (2021), is a 5-point Likert-type scale. The response options range from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The scale consists of

25 items and is divided into three sub-dimensions: cognitive awareness (items 13-19), psychomotor awareness (items 1-12), and affective awareness (items 20-25). Higher scores indicate higher levels of curriculum awareness among teachers. The number of items in each sub-dimension is 7 in cognitive awareness, 6 in affective awareness, and 12 in psychomotor awareness. There are no reverse items in the scale. In this study, the calculated Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients were 0.95 for the overall CAS, 0.92 for psychomotor awareness, 0.93 for cognitive awareness, and 0.93 for affective awareness. According to Özdamar (2004), Cronbach's alpha values between 0.81 and 1.00 indicate a high level of reliability. The total variance explained by the three factors of the scale was found to be 59.52%.

2.3.3. Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory (CCTDI-T)

The California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory (CCTDI), developed based on the consensus of experts in a Delphi panel organized by the American Psychological Association (APA) in 1990, is a tool that measures critical thinking dispositions (Facione et al., 1994). The scale comprises seven theoretically and psychometrically tested subscales; however, the overall score from all subscales assesses critical thinking disposition (Facione et al., 1998; as cited in Kökdemir, 2003). The Turkish adaptation of the CCTDI, conducted by Kökdemir (2003), demonstrated high internal consistency and theoretical compatibility with the original scale, making it a reliable tool for research. The adapted scale consists of 51 items across six subscales. The overall internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) for the new scale was found to be .88, and the total variance explained by the scale was 36.13%. For this study, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated as 0.85 for the overall scale, 0.76 for analyticity, 0.82 for open-mindedness, 0.83 for inquisitiveness, 0.82 for self-confidence, 0.68 for truth-seeking, and 0.61 for systematicity. Özdamar (2004) suggests that values between 0.81 and 1.00 indicate high reliability, while values between 0.60 and 0.80 suggest moderate reliability.

2.4. Data Analysis

In research, statistical analyses require the collected data to show normal or near-normal distributions. Before the analyses, reverse items in the critical thinking scale were corrected. Assumptions were tested prior to the analyses. First, the normal distribution of the data was examined, and 17 outlier values were removed from the data set. Next, skewness and kurtosis values of the data from both the critical thinking disposition and curriculum awareness scales were examined. After averaging the sub-dimensions of the scales, the skewness and kurtosis values of the sub-dimensions were checked. The normality assumption was met since the values were within the ±2 range for both scales and all sub-dimensions (George & Mallery, 2010). Skewness and kurtosis values within the ±2 range are sufficient for normal distribution.

Descriptive statistics such as arithmetic mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the data collected from teachers working in public schools. In addition, simple linear correlation and multiple linear regression analyses were employed to examine the relationships between the scales. Correlation measures the strength and direction of the relationship between two data sets, ranging from ±1, with values closer to 1 indicating stronger relationships (Can, 2022). Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were calculated to check for multicollinearity, and all values were found to be below 3, indicating the absence of multicollinearity (Yurt, 2023). Additionally, the Durbin-Watson coefficient was calculated to assess the independence of residuals. This test examines whether the residuals are autocorrelated, with a critical value between 1.5 and 2.5 considered acceptable (Field, 2013). A result within this range indicates no significant autocorrelation among the residuals. The distribution of residuals was also analyzed to ensure that they met the assumptions of normality, homoscedasticity,

and linearity. These checks are crucial for confirming the validity of the regression analysis results and ensuring the robustness of the model. The SPSS 23.0 statistical program was used for data analysis, and a significance level of (p = .05) was considered for statistical evaluations.

2.5. Ethics Committee Approval

Before data collection, the Ethics Committee of Bursa Uludağ University was informed through a form and petition, and approval was obtained on 11.12.2023 with the decision number E-92662996-044-139945.

3. Results

In this section, the findings related to the testing of the sub-problems addressed in the research are presented, and comments are made based on these findings. The findings and related comments are given in the order of the arrangement of the research sub-problems.

Table 2. *Descriptive Statistics for Teachers' Curriculum Awareness*

Variables	M*	SD	Range
Curriculum Awareness Total	4.04	.54	2.00-5.00
Psychomotor Awareness	4.07	.59	1.58-5.00
Cognitive Awareness	4.01	.66	1.29-5.00
Affective Awareness	4.03	.75	1.00-5.00

Note. *Rating Scale: 1.00-1.80 very low, 1.81-2.60 low, 2.61-3.40 moderate, 3.41-4.20 high, 4.21-5.00 very high

Table 2 shows that teachers' overall curriculum awareness (M = 4.04) is at a high level. In terms of the sub-dimensions of curriculum awareness, psychomotor awareness (M = 4.07), cognitive awareness (M = 4.01), and affective awareness (M = 4.03) are all reported at high levels. The averages of all sub-dimensions are quite close, indicating that teachers exhibit similar levels of awareness across cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.

Table 3. *Descriptive Statistics for Teachers' Critical Thinking Dispositions*

Variables	M*	SD	Range
Critical Thinking Dispositions Total	4.47	.45	2.63-5.63
Analyticity	4.85	.61	2.00-6.00
Open-mindedness	4.44	.86	1.42-6.00
Inquisitiveness	4.73	.74	1.67-6.00
Confidence	4.36	.79	1.00-6.00
Truth-seeking	3.76	.88	1.14-6.00
Systematicity	4.44	.79	1.17-6.00

Note. *Rating Scale: 1.00-1.82 very low, 1.83-2.65 low, 2.66-3.48 moderately low, 3.50-4.31 moderately high, 4.32-5.14 high, 5.15-6.00 very high

Table 3 shows that the overall average level of teachers' critical thinking dispositions is high (M = 4.47). When analyzing the sub-dimensions of teachers' critical thinking dispositions, the levels are as follows: analytic thinking (M = 4.85), open-mindedness (M = 4.44), inquisitiveness (M = 4.73), self-confidence (M = 4.36), truth-seeking (M = 3.76), and systematicity (M = 4.44). Among all sub-dimensions of the scale, analytic thinking (M = 4.85) and inquisitiveness (M = 4.73) have the highest means. Conversely, the truth-seeking factor, which is one of the characteristics determining teachers' critical thinking dispositions, has the lowest average score (M = 3.76), indicating that it is slightly above

the midpoint and is comparatively lower than the other sub-dimensions of the critical thinking disposition scale.

***Table 4**. Pearson Correlation Analysis Results for the Relationship Between Teachers' Curriculum Awareness and Critical Thinking Dispositions*

Variables	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*
1. CA Total	-										
2. Cognitive Awareness	.80**	-									
3. Affective Awareness	.79**	.53**	-								
4. Psychomotor Awareness	.89**	.56**	.54**	-							
5. CCTDI Total	.38**	.39**	.25**	.31**	-						
6. Analyticity	.34**	.32**	.22**	.30**	.58**	-					
7. Open-mindedness	.06	.13**	.02	.02	.64**	-.03	-				
8. Inquisitiveness	.35**	.32**	.24**	.32**	.58**	.69**	-.06	-			
9. Confidence	.40**	.32**	.29**	.37**	.51**	.61**	-.14**	.68**	-		
10. Truth-seeking	.07	.09	.04	.05	.47**	-.19**	.62**	-.18**	-.22**	-	
11. Systematicity	.21**	.25**	.14**	.15**	.67**	.17**	.47**	.14**	.19**	.46**	-

Note. **p < .01, *p < .05, N=400, CA= Curriculum Awareness, CCTDI= Critical Thinking Disposition

Correlation coefficients between .20 and .39 indicate a weak relationship, while coefficients between .40 and .69 indicate a moderate relationship (Alpar, 2011). In this context, the results of Table 4 indicate a positive but low-level significant relationship between participants' curriculum awareness and their critical thinking dispositions ($r = .38$, $p < .01$). Specifically, there are low-level positive correlations between curriculum awareness and the sub-dimensions of analyticity ($r = .34$, $p < .01$), inquisitiveness ($r = .35$, $p < .01$), and systematicity ($r = .21$, $p < .01$). Additionally, there is a moderate positive correlation between curriculum awareness and confidence ($r = .40$, $p < .01$). There are also significant positive correlations between the sub-dimensions of curriculum awareness—psychomotor ($r = .31$, $p < .01$), affective ($r = .25$, $p < .01$), and cognitive awareness ($r = .39$, $p < .01$)—and critical thinking dispositions.

Multiple regression analysis is a technique used to predict the dependent variable based on two or more independent variables (predictors) (Büyüköztürk, 2021). In this study, multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine whether teachers' critical thinking dispositions influence their curriculum awareness and the sub-dimensions of curriculum awareness (cognitive, affective, and psychomotor awareness). The results are presented in Tables 5, 6, 7, and 8.

Table 5. *Multiple Linear Regression Analysis of the Effect of Critical Thinking Dispositions on Curriculum Awareness*

Variables	*B*	*Std. Error*	β	*t*	*p*
Constant	1.820	.253		7.190	.000*
Analyticity	.111	.058	.125	1.910	.057
Open-mindedness	-.012	.038	-.018	-.309	.758
Inquisitiveness	.071	.051	.096	1.375	.170
Confidence	.197	.046	.285	4.309	.000*
Truth-seeking	.101	.038	.165	2.648	.008*
Systematicity	.038	.039	.055	.977	.329
$R=0.463$, $R^2=0.203$, $F(4,283)= 17.901$, $p < 0.01$					

Note. Dependent variable: Curriculum Awareness, *$p < .05$

When examining Table 5, it can be seen that critical thinking dispositions predict curriculum awareness ($R = .463$, $R^2 = .203$, $F(4,283) = 17.901$, $p < .01$). The change in curriculum awareness is explained by 20% of the independent variables. When examining the significance values of the standardized beta coefficients, it is observed that self-confidence ($\beta = .285$, $p < .01$) and search for truth ($\beta=.165$, $p<.05$) are significant predictors of curriculum awareness. The variables of self-confidence and search for truth positively affect curriculum awareness. These two sub-dimensions of critical thinking account for 17.9% of the change in curriculum awareness. However, it was found that the sub-dimensions of analyticity, open-mindedness, curiosity, and systematicity do not have a significant effect on curriculum awareness ($p> .05$).

Table 6. *Multiple Linear Regression Analysis of the Effect of Critical Thinking Dispositions on Cognitive Awareness*

Variables	*B*	*Std. Error*	β	*t*	*p*
Constant	1.276	.314		4.065	.000*
Analyticity	.161	.072	.150	2.248	.025*
Open-mindedness	.043	.047	.056	.912	.362
Inquisitiveness	.103	.064	.115	1.617	.107
Confidence	.136	.057	.162	2.408	.016*
Truth-seeking	.075	.047	.100	1.578	.115
Systematicity	.090	.048	.107	1.863	.063
$R=.428$, $R^2=.171$, $F(5,402)= 14.678$, $p < .01$					

Note. Dependent variable: Cognitive Awareness, *$p < .05$

Upon examining Table 6, it is evident that critical thinking dispositions predict cognitive awareness ($R = .428$, $R^2 = .171$, $F(5, 402) = 14.678$, $p < .01$). The change in cognitive awareness is explained by 17% of the independent variables. When analyzing the significance values of the standardized beta coefficients, it is observed that analytic thinking ($\beta = .150$, $p < .05$) and self-confidence ($\beta = .162$, $p < .05$) are significant predictors of cognitive awareness. Both analytic thinking and self-confidence positively influence cognitive awareness. However, it was found that the sub-dimensions of open-mindedness, inquisitiveness, truth-seeking, and systematicity do not have a significant effect on cognitive awareness ($p > .05$).

Table 7. *Multiple Linear Regression Analysis of the Effect of Critical Thinking Dispositions on Affective Awareness*

Variables	*B*	*Std. Error*	β	*t*	*p*
Constant	2.049	.371		5.516	.000*
Analyticity	.064	.085	.052	.748	.455
Open-mindedness	-.022	.056	-.026	-.402	.688
Inquisitiveness	.053	.075	.052	.702	.483
Confidence	.231	.067	.243	3.447	.001*
Truth-seeking	.092	.056	.109	1.638	.102
Systematicity	.039	.057	.041	.685	.494
R=.0326, R^2=.093, F(4,101)= 7.784, p < .01					

Note. Dependent variable: Affective Awareness, *p < .05

Upon examining Table 7, it is evident that critical thinking dispositions predict affective awareness (R = .326, R^2 = .093, F(4,011) = 7.784, p < .01). The change in affective awareness is explained by 9% of the independent variables. Analyzing the significance values of the standardized beta coefficients reveals that self-confidence (β = .243, p < .05) is a significant predictor of affective awareness. The self-confidence variable positively influences affective awareness. However, it was found that the sub-dimensions of analytic thinking, open-mindedness, inquisitiveness, truth-seeking, and systematicity do not have a significant effect on affective awareness (p > .05).

Table 8. *Multiple Linear Regression Analysis of the Effect of Critical Thinking Dispositions on Psychomotor Awareness*

Variables	*B*	*Std. Error*	β	*t*	*p*
Constant	2.023	.280		7.215	.000*
Analyticity	.104	.064	.109	1.628	.104
Open-mindedness	-.038	.042	-.056	-.910	.363
Inquisitiveness	.061	.057	.076	1.065	.288
Confidence	.215	.051	.288	4.247	.000*
Truth-seeking	.122	.042	.182	2.864	.004*
Systematicity	.007	.043	.010	.168	.867
R=.419, R^2=.163, F(4,105)= 13.981, p < 001					

Note. Dependent variable: Psychomotor Awareness, *p <. 05

Upon examining Table 8, it is clear that critical thinking predicts psychomotor awareness at a low level (R = .419, R^2 = .163, F(4,105) = 13.981, p < .01). The change in psychomotor awareness is explained by 16% of the independent variables. Analyzing the significance values of the standardized beta coefficients indicates that both self-confidence (β = .288, p < .01) and truth-seeking (β = .182, p < .05) are significant predictors of psychomotor awareness. The variables of self-confidence and truth-seeking positively influence psychomotor awareness. However, it was observed that the sub-dimensions of analytic thinking, open-mindedness, inquisitiveness, and systematicity do not have a significant effect on psychomotor awareness (p > .05).

4. Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

This study examined the relationship between teachers' curriculum awareness and their critical thinking dispositions. The research, conducted using a survey design, involved 400 teachers. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression techniques. The findings reveal that both teachers' curriculum awareness and critical thinking dispositions were at high levels, and that these two variables demonstrated a positive and statistically significant relationship. These findings offer significant insights for educational theory and practice, highlighting the potential impact of fostering critical thinking dispositions on enhancing teachers' curriculum awareness.

According to the results, teachers' curriculum awareness was found to be high. The high levels observed across the sub-dimensions of curriculum awareness—cognitive, affective, and psychomotor—indicate that teachers possess a comprehensive understanding of the curriculum and are able to reflect this awareness in their classroom practices effectively. The results of this study align with the research results previously made, according to a study by Pektaş and Pesen (2021), which shows that groups of teachers of eight different teaching subject areas listed as preschool teachers, elementary school teachers, Science teachers, Religion and Moral Issues teachers, Mathematics teachers, English teachers, Social Studies teachers and Turkish teachers have high levels of cognitive, affective and psychomotor awareness regarding the curriculum. Similarly, Kavan and Yıldırım Suna (2023) found that Turkish language teachers' curriculum awareness is high, and postgraduate education enhances this awareness. These findings suggest that teachers with high curriculum awareness are more likely to design and implement instruction aligned with educational goals, cater to diverse student needs, and promote holistic development. High curriculum awareness can also foster students' critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills, as teachers are better equipped to integrate curriculum objectives with innovative teaching strategies. However, while these results are promising, it is essential to approach them with cautious optimism, as high levels of curriculum awareness may not necessarily translate into effective classroom practices. This transformation is more likely to occur when supported by continuous professional development, adequate resources, and a supportive school environment than when such support is lacking. However, such conditions are not guaranteed in all educational contexts.

Another finding of the study is that teachers' critical thinking dispositions are high. This high level of critical thinking suggests that teachers embrace key components of critical thinking as defined by Facione (1990), including analyticity, open-mindedness, inquisitiveness, self-confidence, truth-seeking, and systematicity. The findings align with the results of other studies in the literature (Barut & Gündoğdu, 2023; Çelebi et al., 2024; Ekinci & Ekinci, 2017; Yıldırım et al., 2024; Yurt, 2024). For instance, Yurt (2024) found that teachers' critical thinking dispositions are high and influence their commitment to the curriculum. This result suggests that teachers adopt a critical approach in their professional development and classroom practices. In Barut and Gündoğdu's (2023) study, it was reported that primary school, secondary school, and high school teachers have high critical thinking dispositions, the sub-dimensions of which are open-mindedness, systematicity, flexibility, perseverance, patience, and metacognition. Ekinci and Ekinci (2017) also found that the teachers' critical thinking dispositions are considerably high regarding the general score and scores taken from the sub-dimensions. These findings indicate that teachers' high critical thinking dispositions reflect their adoption of a critical approach in professional development and classroom practices. Moreover, it is suggested that critical thinking dispositions positively contribute to teachers' professional commitment and approach to curriculum implementation. In this context, designing and implementing

training programs that enhance teachers' critical thinking components are expected to improve the overall quality of education.

One of the most significant findings of the study is the positive and statistically significant relationship between curriculum awareness and critical thinking disposition. This result suggests that these two constructs mutually support and reinforce one another, indicating that as one increases, so does the other. The strong relationship between critical thinking components, such as analyticity, inquisitiveness, self-confidence, and systematicity, and curriculum awareness indicates that these skills play an essential role in curriculum implementation. A study by Keçeli (2024) also demonstrated that teachers have positive attitudes toward the curriculum and high levels of curriculum awareness. These results support the idea that critical thinking skills contribute to better understanding and implementing the curriculum. In another study by Coşgun Demirdağ and Taşgın (2024), it was found that preschool teachers have a high level of cognitive, emotional, and psychomotor awareness, which are the sub-dimensions of curricular awareness. The study's findings revealed that curriculum awareness and curriculum literacy are interconnected. This result implies that having a sufficient understanding of curricular content and the ability to design appropriate instructional materials are closely linked to professional teaching skills. These skills include effectively employing suitable teaching methods and developing positive attitudes toward the curriculum. Such competencies enable teachers to better interpret and adapt to new teaching approaches, ultimately enhancing the overall quality of instruction.

Another key finding is that the components of critical thinking disposition significantly influence curriculum awareness. This finding underscores the potential of improving teachers' critical thinking skills to enhance their curriculum awareness. Among these components, self-confidence, truth-seeking, and analyticity stand out as particularly impactful, emphasizing the importance of prioritizing these skills in teacher training and professional development programs. This finding aligns with Kuloğlu's (2022) study, which highlighted that critical thinking skills developed during postgraduate education effectively enhance curriculum awareness. In this context, the positive impact of critical thinking disposition components, particularly self-confidence, truth-seeking, and analyticity, on curriculum awareness highlights the importance of designing teacher education programs that support the development of these skills.

Self-confidence, defined as an individual's belief in their ability to think critically and make sound decisions, enables teachers to assess curricula with greater depth and clarity (Facione, 1990; Facione et al., 1994; Facione et al., 1995). Teachers with high self-confidence are better equipped to critically evaluate curriculum objectives, content, and instructional methods. This trait also may empower them to question, interpret, and adapt curricular components to align with the needs of their students and teaching contexts. Truth-seeking, characterized as the persistent desire to seek accurate information and remain vigilant against biases or misinformation, drives teachers to assess the reliability, validity, and effectiveness of curricular materials (Brookfield, 2012; Facione, 1990; Halx & Reybold, 2005). By engaging in truth-seeking behaviors, teachers can identify best practices and ensure that their instructional approaches are grounded in evidence-based strategies. Analyticity, another vital critical thinking component, involves the ability to systematically identify and solve problems, evaluate arguments, and make reasoned judgments (Kökdemir, 2003; Paul & Elder, 2006). Teachers with high levels of analyticity are adept at breaking down complex curricular content into manageable components, facilitating better understanding and implementation. Furthermore, they are more likely to recognize the interconnections within the curriculum and adapt instructional strategies to address the diverse learning needs of students (Yurt, 2024). These critical thinking

components contribute to a comprehensive understanding of curriculum goals, structure, and pedagogical strategies. Incorporating targeted interventions in teacher education programs to develop these skills can significantly enhance curriculum awareness, ultimately fostering more effective teaching practices.

4.1. Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between teachers' curriculum awareness and critical thinking dispositions and found a positive and statistically significant correlation between the two variables. Teachers were found to have high levels of both curriculum awareness and critical thinking dispositions. Notably, specific components of critical thinking disposition—such as analyticity, inquisitiveness, self-confidence, and systematicity—were found to influence levels of curriculum awareness significantly.

These findings highlight the importance of critical thinking skills in teachers' professional development and suggest that improving these skills may be an effective strategy for enhancing curriculum awareness. Furthermore, teachers with a high level of curriculum awareness are more likely to design and implement instructional processes effectively, thereby positively contributing to student achievement.

4.2. Recommendations

Teacher training programs should include additional courses and practical activities aimed at developing critical thinking skills. In-service training programs should also be organized to further enhance teachers' critical thinking abilities and curriculum awareness. School administrators are encouraged to establish professional learning communities where teachers can apply critical thinking skills and deepen their understanding of the curriculum. Future research should examine the influence of critical thinking disposition and curriculum awareness on student achievement. Experimental studies are recommended to test the effectiveness of interventions aimed at improving teachers' critical thinking skills and curriculum awareness. Moreover, longitudinal studies are needed to explore the sustained, long-term impact of these variables on teaching practices and student outcomes.

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Geniş Özet

GİRİŞ

Öğretim programları, eğitim sisteminin temel yapı taşlarından biridir ve öğretim sürecinin planlanması, uygulanması ve değerlendirilmesinde merkezi rol oynar. Bu programların etkili bir şekilde uygulanması, büyük ölçüde öğretmenlerin öğretim programı farkındalıklarına bağlıdır. Günümüzün hızla değişen eğitim paradigması, öğretmenlerden yalnızca programın içeriğini takip etmelerini değil aynı zamanda eleştirel bir bakış açısıyla değerlendirmelerini ve gerektiğinde uyarlamalar yapmalarını da gerektirmektedir.

Öğretim programı farkındalığı; öğretmenlerin programın amaç, içerik, öğretim süreci ve değerlendirme gibi bileşenlerini bilişsel, duyuşsal ve devinimsel düzeyde algılayabilmeleri ve bu farkındalığı sınıf içi uygulamalara yansıtabilmeleri anlamına gelir. Bu farkındalık, öğretmenlerin öğretim süreçlerini etkili şekilde yönetmelerini ve öğrencilerin başarısını artırmalarını sağlar. Eleştirel düşünme ise bireyin düşünme sürecini sorgulayıcı, analitik ve sistematik bir şekilde yürütebilme becerisi ve eğilimidir. Facione'ye (1990) göre eleştirel düşünme, analitiklik, açık fikirlilik, meraklılık, kendine güven, gerçeği arama ve sistematiklik gibi eğilimleri içerir. Bu eğilimler, öğretmenlerin öğretim sürecini sürekli gözden geçirmeleri, yenilikçi yöntemler aramaları ve eğitim politikalarına daha bilinçli yaklaşmaları açısından önem taşır.

Bu araştırma, öğretmenlerin öğretim programı farkındalığı ile eleştirel düşünme eğilimleri arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Alandaki sınırlı sayıda çalışma göz önüne alındığında, bu çalışma öğretmen eğitimi politikalarının geliştirilmesine katkı sunabilecek önemli bilgiler sağlamaktadır.

Yöntem

Araştırma, nicel araştırma yöntemlerinden ilişkisel tarama modeli ile yürütülmüştür. Bu model, iki ya da daha fazla değişken arasındaki ilişkiyi belirlemeye yönelik bir yaklaşımdır. Çalışma grubunu, 2023-2024 eğitim-öğretim yılında Bursa il merkezindeki devlet okullarında görev yapan farklı branşlardan 400 öğretmen oluşturmuştur. Öğretmenler kolayda örnekleme yöntemiyle belirlenmiştir.

Veri toplama araçları olarak, Öğretim Programı Farkındalık Ölçeği (ÖPFÖ) ve Kaliforniya Eleştirel Düşünme Eğilimleri Ölçeği'nin Türkçe formu (CCTDI-T) kullanılmıştır. ÖPFÖ, bilişsel, duyuşsal ve devinimsel olmak üzere üç alt boyuttan oluşmaktadır (Pektaş, 2021). CCTDI-T ise analitiklik, açık fikirlilik, meraklılık, kendine güven, gerçeği arama ve sistematiklik olmak üzere altı boyut içermektedir (Kökdemir, 2003).

Verilerin analizinde betimsel istatistikler, Pearson korelasyon analizi ve çoklu doğrusal regresyon analizi kullanılmıştır. Veriler SPSS 23.0 programında analiz edilmiştir. Analizlerden önce normallik varsayımları test edilmiş, aykırı değerler çıkarılmış ve ölçeklerin alt boyutlarının çarpıklık-basıklık değerleri ±2 aralığında olduğu için normal dağılım varsayımı sağlanmıştır.

Bulgular

Araştırmanın ilk bulgularına göre, öğretmenlerin öğretim programı farkındalığı genel olarak yüksek düzeydedir (Ort. = 4.04). Alt boyutlar açısından da devinimsel (4.07), bilişsel (4.01) ve duyuşsal (4.03) farkındalık düzeyleri yüksektir. Bu bulgu, öğretmenlerin programın tüm boyutlarına duyarlı olduğunu göstermektedir.

Eleştirel düşünme eğilimleri de yüksek düzeyde bulunmuştur (Ort. = 4.47). En yüksek ortalamalar analitik düşünme (4.85) ve meraklılık (4.73) boyutlarında görülürken, en düşük ortalama gerçeği arama (3.76) boyutunda elde edilmiştir.

Pearson korelasyon analizine göre, öğretim programı farkındalığı ile eleştirel düşünme eğilimleri arasında pozitif ve anlamlı ilişkiler tespit edilmiştir ($r = .38$, $p < .01$). Özellikle analitik düşünme, meraklılık, kendine güven ve sistematiklik alt boyutlarıyla olan ilişkiler anlamlıdır. Kendine güven ile olan ilişki orta düzeyde ($r = .40$) olup, diğerleri düşük düzeydedir.

Regresyon analizine göre, eleştirel düşünme eğilimleri, öğretim programı farkındalığının %20'sini açıklamaktadır. Özellikle kendine güven ($\beta = .285$, $p < .01$) ve gerçeği arama ($\beta = .165$, $p < .05$) öğretim programı farkındalığını anlamlı şekilde yordayan alt boyutlardır. Analitiklik, açık fikirlilik, meraklılık ve sistematiklik ise anlamlı yordayıcı değildir.

Bilişsel farkındalığın yordayıcıları arasında analitik düşünme ve kendine güven anlamlı bulunmuştur. Duyuşsal farkındalık yalnızca kendine güven ile anlamlı ilişki göstermektedir. Devinimsel farkındalığı ise hem kendine güven hem de gerçeği arama boyutları anlamlı şekilde yordamaktadır.

Tartışma ve Sonuç

Araştırma sonuçları, öğretmenlerin öğretim programı farkındalıklarının ve eleştirel düşünme eğilimlerinin yüksek düzeyde olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu bulgular, öğretmenlerin programı sadece uygulayan değil, aynı zamanda eleştirel bir bakış açısıyla değerlendiren bireyler olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu sonuç, daha önceki araştırmalarla da örtüşmektedir (Pektaş & Pesen, 2021; Yurt, 2024).

Özellikle öğretmenlerin kendine güven düzeylerinin öğretim programı farkındalığında belirleyici olması dikkat çekicidir. Eleştirel düşünmeye yönelik yüksek öz-yeterlik algısı, öğretmenlerin programı daha bilinçli şekilde analiz etmelerine ve uygulamalarında yaratıcı çözümler geliştirmelerine imkân tanımaktadır. Gerçeği arama eğilimi ise öğretmenlerin programı yüzeysel değil, daha derinlikli bir şekilde sorgulamalarını sağlamaktadır.

Araştırmanın dikkat çeken bir diğer bulgusu, açık fikirlilik ve meraklılık gibi alt boyutların öğretim programı farkındalığını anlamlı düzeyde yordamamasıdır. Bu durum, bu boyutların genel farkındalık yerine daha çok öğrenme sürecine yönelik kişisel tutumları temsil ettiğini gösterebilir.

Sonuç olarak, öğretmenlerin eleştirel düşünme eğilimlerinin özellikle kendine güven ve gerçeği arama boyutları, öğretim programı farkındalıklarının artmasına önemli katkılar sunmaktadır. Bu doğrultuda, öğretmen eğitim programlarında eleştirel düşünmenin geliştirilmesine özel vurgu yapılmalı ve öğretmenlerin karar verme, sorgulama ve değerlendirme yetkinlikleri güçlendirilmelidir.

Araştırma bulgularına dayanarak geliştirilen öneriler, öğretmen eğitiminin niteliğini artırmaya yönelik çeşitli açılımlar sunmaktadır. İlk olarak, öğretmen yetiştirme programlarında eleştirel düşünme eğilimlerinin gelişimini destekleyecek kuramsal ve uygulamalı içeriklere daha fazla yer verilmelidir. Bu bağlamda, öğretmen adaylarının eleştirel düşünme boyutlarında özellikle kendine güven, gerçeği arama ve analitiklik becerilerinin geliştirilmesi, öğretim programına yönelik daha bilinçli bir tutum geliştirmelerine katkı sağlayacaktır. Ayrıca, hizmette olan öğretmenler için düzenlenen hizmet içi eğitimlerde eleştirel düşünme temelli uygulamalı çalışmalar yapılmalı ve bu çalışmalar öğretim programı farkındalığını artıracak şekilde yapılandırılmalıdır. Okul yöneticileri ise öğretmenlerin eleştirel düşünme becerilerini aktif olarak kullanabilecekleri mesleki öğrenme toplulukları ve iş birliği ortamları oluşturarak bu süreci destekleyebilir. Son olarak, öğretmenlerin eleştirel düşünme eğilimleri ile öğretim programı farkındalıklarının öğrenci başarısı üzerindeki etkilerini inceleyen yeni araştırmalar yapılmalı; bu kapsamda deneysel ve uzunlamasına çalışmalarla öğretmenlerin bu yeterliklerinin

öğretimsel çıktılara olan katkısı daha derinlemesine analiz edilmelidir. Bu öneriler, hem öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimlerine katkı sunmakta hem de eğitim sisteminin niteliğini artıracak yapısal iyileştirmelere zemin oluşturmaktadır.

Yayın Etiği Beyanı

Bu araştırmanın, Bursa Uludağ Üniversitesi Etik Kurulu tarafından 11.12.2023 tarihinde E-92662996-044-139945 sayılı kararıyla verilen etik kurul izni bulunmaktadır. Bu araştırmanın planlanmasından, uygulanmasına, verilerin toplanmasından verilerin analizine kadar olan tüm süreçte "Yükseköğretim Kurumları Bilimsel Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği Yönergesi" kapsamında uyulması belirtilen tüm kurallara uyulmuştur. Yönergenin ikinci bölümü olan "Bilimsel Araştırma ve Yayın Etiğine Aykırı Eylemler" başlığı altında belirtilen eylemlerden hiçbiri gerçekleştirilmemiştir. Bu araştırmanın yazım sürecinde bilimsel, etik ve alıntı kurallarına uyulmuş; toplanan veriler üzerinde herhangi bir tahrifat yapılmamıştır. Bu çalışma herhangi başka bir akademik yayın ortamına değerlendirme için gönderilmemiştir.

Araştırmacıların Katkı Oranı Beyanı

Birinci Yazar %50, İkinci Yazar %50, oranında katkı sağlamıştır.

Çatışma Beyanı

Araştırmanın yazarları olarak herhangi bir çıkar/çatışma beyanımız olmadığını ifade ederiz.