Perception of Peace in Gifted Students (Case of Kırıkkale)*

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to determine the perception of peace in gifted students. In order to determine the study group, purposive sampling method was used. In this context, 12 gifted students who attend to a training center for gifted children in Kırıkkale and providing various criteria were included in the study.The study has been prepared in a phenomenological pattern with a qualitative approach. In data collection, drawing-writing and interviewing techniques were employed. The data acquired were content-analyzed. It has been seen that the students emphasized values such as unity and solidarity, pacifism and reconciliation along with the concept of peace. It has been observed that the students also emphasized the concept of violence. In the drawings of the students, the various elements of nature as well as the predominantly child and cloud drawings were mentioned as the symbol of peace.

Keywords: Gifted students, peace, perception of peace, phenomenology

Üstün Yetenekli Öğrencilerin Barış Algıları (Kırıkkale Örneği)

Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı üstün yetenekli öğrencilerin barış kavramına yönelik algılarını ortaya çıkarmaktır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunun seçiminde amaçlı örnekleme yönteminden yararlanılmıştır. Bu kapsamda, Kırıkkale İl Özel İdaresi Bilim ve Sanat Merkezi'ne devam eden ve çeşitli kriterleri sağlayan üstün yetenekli 12 öğrenci araştırmaya dahil edilmiştir. Araştırma nitel yaklaşıma uygun olarak tasarlanmış, fenomenoloji deseninden yararlanılmıştır. Araştırma verilerinin toplanmasında, çizme- yazma ve görüşme teknikleri kullanılmıştır**.** Elde edilen veriler içerik analizi ile çözümlenmiştir. Araştırma sonucunda, öğrencilerin barış kavramına ilişkin olarak birlik ve beraberlik, savaş karşıtlığı ve uzlaşı gibi değerleri sıklıkla yineledikleri görülmüştür. Ayrıca öğrencilerin şiddet kavramını da sıklıkla vurguladıkları dikkati çekmektedir. Öğrencilerin çizimlerinde baskın olarak çocuk ve bulut çizimlerinin yanı sıra çeşitli doğa unsurları da barışın simgesi olarak belirtilmektedir**.**

Anahtar Kelimeler: Barış, barış algısı, fenomenoloji, üstün yetenekli öğrenciler

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Introduction

The history of world has witnessed countless wars and destruction. Countries and civilizations have been damaged due to people's failure to manage their differences and to their ambition. The most important indicators of this situation are World War I and II. For example, more than 40 million people lost their lives because of the World War II (Erhan, 1996). Legal order was attempted to be taken under control with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the European Convention on Human Rights (1950), and the Convention on the Rights of the Children (1989). Unfortunately, the precautions taken have failed to prevent cases of war and conflict in the world. Conflicts, which happened in Rwanda and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and which damaged human dignity beyond repair, and the hot conflict, which still continues in Iraq and Syria, demonstrate the existence of this situation (Abdi and Schultz, 2008).

Globalization has changed the fundamental dynamics of countries, and has resolved all the barriers that stood in front of the spread of different values, belief systems, and cultures (Marquardt, 2005). Ravier (2009) stated that global impacts play a significant role in the relationships of countries with each other. With the escalation of the level of wellbeing of countries, and with the increase of transition between countries, comes the possibility of conflict in a globalized world (Tidwell and Lerche, 2004). The increase in conflict cases has caused people to be more aware of the importance of peace. In this process, one of the most important duties of the societies is to make differences coexist in peace.

Although the root of the concept of peace is unknown, it is seen that a tradition of peace is mentioned often in ancient Greek culture (Aktaş and Safran, 2013), and that this concept rose to prominence after the humanism and cosmopolitan rationalism of enlightenment in 1750's (Young, 2013). The wars and losses that occurred after the 18th century caused the 20th century to be an era dominated by violence. The nuclear massacres, genocides, and damages to the environment in this century have forced scientists towards a search for teaching peace and conveying it to the posterity (Harris, 2004). The concept of peace means the absence of cases of violence and war. Groff (2008) put forward that peace is a process of creating reconciliatory society, and also a feeling. In addition to this, Johnson and Johnson (2006) stated that peace consists of a dual structure that is comprised of war and violence at one side, and reconciliation and mutual understanding at the other.

Possible or continuing cases of conflict at an international or a national level force upon the necessity of education of peace. Education of peace is defined as a process in which individuals of a society are imposed with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values necessary for creating a change of behaviors in order to use peaceful methods in preventing and solving conflict and violence (Fountain, 1999). At this point, Harris (2004, p.6) stated that the modern education of peace consists of a fivefold structure. These folds can be summarized as *(it explains the roots of*

violence, it teaches alternatives to violence, it adjusts to cover different forms of violence, peace itself is a process that varies according to context, conflict is omnipresent). From this aspect, it can be seen that education of peace does not aim only to prevent conflicts. Conflict exists in every region of the modern world. The main goal of education of peace is to make the individual adopt to use non-violent ways in a case of conflict, ensuring that human beings reconcile without being psychologically or physically harmed. In other words, it can be defined as choosing the path of Mahatma Gandhi in the face of violence, employing a non-violent attitude, and being open to reconciliation (Allen, 2007).

Even though modern education of peace provides one with an important point of view, it is seen beneficial to carry out meticulously conducted studies in order to gain the related behaviors, and convey the values. In this regard, Johnson & Johnson (2006) stated that peace can be adopted by individuals by imposing or reconciliation. They predict that education through imposing would not be effective to preserve peace in long term, whereas reconciliation would be more efficient in generating mutual goals, interests, identities, and compatible relationship, thus ensuring that peace settles in the society permanently.

The concept of peace is related to each and every individual in every segment of all society. However, it is seen important to determine the opinions of gifted children on the concept of peace, for whom it is likely to be one of the individuals who would have a voice in matters of importance, and have an impact on significant decisions to be made in every country.

Gifted Children and Their Perception of Peace

Education systems are built upon general properties of individuals, and after the diagnosis periods in the process of education, individuals are directed towards an educational process which meets their special needs, depending on their having mental deficiencies or being gifted (Bilgili, 2000). In this respect, one of the most attractive and researched topics in the field of education is how individuals learn, think, remember, and organize information in their brains (Kurt, 2013). Individuals' perceptions may change, depending on several factors such as the society they live in, their family relations, age, sex, as well as their different personal properties. Herein, gifted children constitute a very special category.

Since gifted children have different developmental and learning properties from their peers, their educational processes, naturally, vary in accordance with their needs (Kontaş, 2010; Karakuş, 2010; Krijan, Jurcec, and Boric, 2015). A gifted child is defined as an individual who is identified by specialists to perform in a higher level than his/her peers in the areas of intelligence, creativity, arts, capacity of leadership, or special academic fields (URL 1; Bozgeyikli, Doğan, and Işıklar, 2010). These individuals are thought to look at and perceive the world and concepts from different points of view. Gifted individuals communicate with the world

differently compared with their peers. According to Dabrowski, gifted individuals are different from normal individuals in their communications with the outer world, owing to the richness of their thoughts and emotions, vividness of their imagination, and their property of moral and emotional sensitivity (cited in Saranlı and Metin, 2012).

In education systems, individuals who demonstrate abnormal progress are within the scope of special education. In Turkey, Centers of Science and Arts (BİLSEM) were founded for the first time in 2007, in order to serve the gifted children. It is seen that these centers follow their own unique educational and instructional processes, apart from the general education (Çelik-Şahin, 2014). According to the National Ministry of Education's (MEB) Instruction of Centers of Science and Arts (URL 1), the main goal of BİLSEM is to improve the capacities and differences of gifted individuals in Turkey.

It can be seen in the literature that there are various studies conducted in order to determine the perceptions of gifted students. These studies are generally related to class activities (Gentry, Rizza, and Gable, 2001), human figure (Dağlıoğlu et al, 2010), the world and technology of the future (Erişti, 2012), the center of science and arts (Kunt and Tortop, 2013), the course of social sciences (Mertol, Doğdu, and Yılar, 2013), the concept of mathematics (Öztürk, Akkan, and Kaplan, 2014), and the concept of democracy (Er and Ünal, 2015). There are also publications on the drawing-writing technique in the literature. It has been determined that these studies were done with students in an ordinary progress, and that they were done mostly in order to settle the cognitive structures of the students about war and peace (Doğan, Dikeç, and Sezer, 2010; Aktaş, 2015), enzymes (Kurt, 2013) and osmosis Kurt and Ekici, 2013), and their perceptions of a school principal (Yalçın and Erginer, 2014), science and nature (Yılmaz and Kahraman, 2015) and of phrase perceptions (Mertol, Özcan, Yurteri and Pamukçu, 2016). However, we have not encountered any studies for determining the gifted students' perceptions related to the concept of peace through the drawing-writing technique. This study is expected to contribute to the field as to this aspect.

Yılmaz and Güven (2015) stated that the perceptions of an individual can be revealed with speaking, writing, singing, drawing, or effective actions. The drawing technique, which has the attention of educators, art historians, and artists, provides information as to children's perceptions on the world and their cognitive lives. In addition, these drawings are also important because they the mind maps that reflect the children's emotional worlds (Yalçın and Enginer, 2014; Golomb, 2004). In this respect, the drawing-writing technique is one of the most important measuring devices that reflects the intellectual worlds of students (Nyachwayaa et al., 2011; Kurt andEkici, 2013; Kurtet al. 2013; Kurt, et al. 2013; Borthwick, 2011; Backett-Milburn and Mackie, 1999). This technique is recommended also because of it

requires instruments easy to access, such as a blank white sheet of paper, a pencil, or a colored paper (Matsumori, 2005).

In this study, it is aimed to reveal the perception of peace of children in the age bracket of 9-11, who study at the Center of Science and Arts in the Special Provincial Administration of Kırıkkale.

Methodology

The study was conducted with a qualitative approach to research. Qualitative research is a type of approach, which generally uses verbal data instead of numerical, and which is often used in social sciences (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Qualitative research focuses on texts and imaginative data, providing a deep insight into a case, a phenomenon, a subject, or an incident with an original analysis (Creswell, 2013). In qualitative approach, the researcher aims to see a subject, a process, or a case from the perspective of the participant, attempting to reveal the disguised meanings inside the data (Merriam, 2013). In this research, a pattern of qualitative approach to research, phenomenology, was used. The basis of phenomenology is comprised of personal experiences. In this pattern, researcher is interested in the subjective experiences of the participant, examining the participant's perceptions and the meanings given by the participant to incidents. Phenomenology is a descriptive means of research. In this respect, it is important to describe the phenomena, not to make generalizations (Akturan and Esen, 2008). This research focuses on the phenomenon of peace.

Participants

The participants of this study are 12 students who study at Kırıkkale Center of Science and Arts in the fall term of 2015-2016 school year, and who, at the time of the study, were in the age bracket of 9-11. The reason why the research was carried out with gifted students was that these individuals have a different perception of the world than their peers. In this context, purposeful sampling was used in the selection of study group, and several criteria were determined in order to minimize the problems in participant selection (Given, 2008; Knight, et al. 2013). The required criteria were passing the exam applied by the Center of Science and Arts, having a 130 or higher score from the Wisc-R intelligence test, and having no discontinuance to the school. 7 female and 5 male students who met the criteria were included in the study. The students were coded as S1, S2, S3, etc. in the study, thus, their real names were not used.

Data Collection

Methods of drawing-writing and interviewing were used in this study. The first phase of data collection was the drawing-writing technique. The students were instructed to "draw and write what peace means to you", and were provided with the required time and space to complete the task. The technique of drawing has been

used in revealing children's emotional and social problems in recent years (Dağlıoğlu et al. 2010), and it is seen that this technique is efficient in uncovering cognitive structures related to several concepts in the field of education. Drawing is an effective technique, which fathoms the students' thoughts, and reveals their frame of mind (Ehrlen, 2009). The main goal of the use of the drawing technique is to anatomize hidden attitudes, thoughts, and perceptions of students (Backett-Milburn and Mckie, 1999; Borthwick, 2011; Nyachwayaa et al., 2011; Kurt, 2013; Kurt et al. 2013). Figure 1 shows an example of a drawing by S6.

*Figure 1.*An example of a drawing by s6.

(The words in the drawing: "stop war!")

In the second phase of the data collection process, the participants were given a semi-structured interview form. This data collection technique, also described by Patton (2014) as the interview-guide approach, means the direction of the interview process with predetermined sub-headings in order to keep the interview in track with the points related to the research. Another advantage of a semi-structured interview is its flexibility. The researcher can manipulate the order and structure of the questions during the interview, and can deepen them when necessary (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013). This study aims to examine deeply the perceptions of participants on peace with use of the technique of interview. In this respect, the questions asked were as follows:

- What does peace mean to you?

- What do you think are the factors that damage peace?

- What do you think should be done in order to preserve peace?

The application of the study lasted for approximately 90 minutes for each activity.

Data Analysis

Before data analysis, the answer sheets collected from the gifted students were numbered between 1 and 12. In the analysis of the data, content analysis was employed as a qualitative analysis technique. Content analysis is a means of qualitative analysis, which reveals the hidden facts within the data (Lichtman, 2010; Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013). Content analysis is an attempt to uncover the consistencies and meanings by basing upon qualitative data (Patton, 2014). Robson (2015) stated that content analysis has 5 stages: introducing the data, generating the first codes, determining the themes, generating thematic grits, and integration and interpretation.

After the stages mentioned above were applied, categories related to the data from drawing-writing and interviewswere formed. In order to ensure the reliability of the study, the data was encoded by two independent researchers, and the subjects of consensus and dissidence were reviewed. Afterwards, the encoding reliance formula developed by Miles and Huberman (1994) was used (Reliability = Consensus / (Consensus + Dissidence) X 100), and reliability of the study was found to be 88%. The data was finalized, and the findings were supported with direct quotations. At the end of the study, Nvivo 9.3 was used to generate the chart that demonstrates the perceptions of the students on the concept of peace.

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Findings

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The data analyzed in the study is presented under two sub-headings such as "peace in the drawing-writing activities" and "views on peace".

Peace in the Drawing-Writing Activities

This section includes the findings acquired from the analysis of the drawings and writings of the gifted children. Drawings or writings of the children on peace were settled by several concepts, and the frequencies and percentages related to the number of these concepts' being mentioned are presented on Table 1.

Table 1.

Items Related to the Concept of Peace in the Children's Drawings

Concept	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	S11	S12	f
Child		x				x	x	x	x	x	x		7
Cloud			x	X			x	x	x	x		x	7
Grass			x	X					x	x		x	5
Sea	x	x	x			x							4

Item											Total
Heart		x	x				x			x	4
World	x	x				x					3
Tree			x	X						x	3
Sun								x	x	x	3
Flower				X						x	2
Hand	x										1
Mountain			x								1
Bird				X							1
Contract					x						1
Ship						x					1
Butterfly										x	1
Home										x	1

It is possible to see various items in the gifted students' drawings on peace (Table 1). The items encountered most were "child" (7) and "cloud" (7). These items were followed respectively by "grass" (5), "sea" (4), "heart" (4), "world" (3), "tree" (3), "sun" (3), "flower" (2).

When the data acquired with the technique of drawing-writing was gathered under the suitable categories, the concepts mentioned by the students were grouped under 3 categories. When these categories that express the cognitive structures of the students were examined, interpreting the drawing and writing techniques altogether, the frequency of the concepts under the "values" category was higher (25), which was followed by the categories "objects" (24) and "reflection of peace" (24). The category "reflection of peace" consists mostly of the codes that belong to the writings of the students, while the categories "objects" and "values" consist mostly of the codes that belong to the drawings of the students (Table 2).

Table 2.

Concepts and Categories Related to Peace, Acquired by the Technique of Drawing-Writing

Category	Concept	Drawing (f)	Writing (f)
Values	Unity and solidarity	6	9
	Reconciliation	4	-

	Pacifism	2	2
	Freedom	1	1
	Total	13	12
Objects	World	3	-
	Nature	10	1
	Child	7	1
	Sanctuary	2	-
	Total	22	2
Reflection of peace	Unites people	8	9
	Frees children	-	1
	Prevents war	2	2
	Makes happy	-	1
	Gives love and comfort	-	1
	Total	10	14

It was observed that the gifted students, when practicing the drawing-writing technique, often expressed themselves with the concepts under the category "objects". It is understood that the students describe peace with the concepts "world" (3), "nature" (10), "child" (7), and "sanctuary" (2). It is seen that they drew images related mostly to unity and solidarity in the category "values". It is especially notable that they drew people hand in hand. In the category "reflections of peace", it is observed that the students often emphasized the unifying aspect of peace. Images 2, 3, 4, and 5 demonstrate the drawings of the students on what sorts of changes would occur if there were peace in the world.
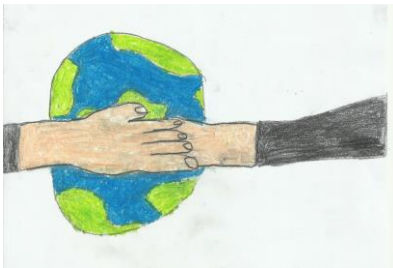

Figure 2. Peace as a value (S1)**Figure 3.**Peace as a value (S7)

Figure 4. Peace as an object (S2)**Figure 5.**Reflections of peace (S4)

The samples in the category "values" in the words in the drawings of the students were as such:

"Stop war" (S6).

"Peace is the value that unifies people" (S1).

The samples in the category "objects" in the words in the drawings of the students were as such:

"Peace is free as a bird. It frees children, too" (S4).

"Peace is like a scrub" (S3).

The samples in the category "reflections of peace" in the words in the drawings of the students were as such:

"If we are together, there is the happy peace" (S3).

"Peace is a contract signed among humans" (S5).

Views on Peace

The data acquired from the interviews with the students has been divided into three categories as "definition of peace", "factors that harm peace", and "maintaining peace".

Table 3.

Categories and Codes that Emerge as a Result of the Interviews

Category	Concept	Frequency (f)
Definition of Peace	Showing love and respect	5
	Unity and solidarity	4
	Absence of violence	4
	Living in peace	4

	Making friendships	3
	Being in solidarity and sharing	3
	Being tolerant	3
	Behaving freely	1
	Total	*27*
Factors That Harm Peace	Violence and Conflict	7
	Conflict of Interests	4
	Being Disrespectful	3
	Discrimination	3
	Lack of Cooperation	1
	Dissent	1
	Lack of Empathy	1
	Total	*20*
Maintaining Peace	Avoiding violence	5
	Empathizing	3
	Showing love and respect to each other	3
	Cooperating and sharing	3
	Being fair and equal	3
	Making friendships	2
	Preventing discrimination	2
	Signing contracts	2
	Being united	2
	Communicating	1
	Being tolerant	1
	Total	*27*

Considering the views of the students on the concept of peace, it is seen that the concept they emphasize most is "showing love and respect" (5). This category is

followed by "unity and solidarity" (4), "absence of violence" (4), and "living in peace" (4). The students' views on the definition of peace are as follows:

"It is that all the people in the world live in solidarity with a feeling of brotherhood and affinity, and it is the absence of wars" (S1).

"Freedom comes to my mind when I say peace" (S6).

"It means being respectful, not waging wars, having friendships, and countries being friends, because nobody wants war" (S7).

Considering the views of the students on the factors that harm peace, it is seen that the concept with the highest frequency is "violence and conflict" (7). It is followed respectively by "conflict of interests" (4), "being disrespectful" (3), and "discrimination" (3). Some of the students' views on the factors that harm peace are as follows:

"Between individuals, let's say, one group wants something and another group want something else, there may be some arguments between these groups. Just like with the governments, this will disturb the peace in the world. Wars begin again" (S1).

"People, societies never treat each other well. Today, even a neighbor does not look after his neighbor" (S7).

"It is affected by violence's and shootings" (S8).

Considering the views of the students on maintaining peace, it is seen that the concept with the highest frequency is "avoiding violence". It is respectively followed by empathizing (3), "showing love and respect to each other" (3), "cooperating and sharing" (3), and "being fair and equal" (3). The students' views on maintaining peace are as follows:

"Nobody should quarrel with each other, everyone should cooperate and share" (S4).

"...we mustn't battle, we mustn't fight" (S6).

"I think countries must come together in a country, and sign a contract, and stop waging war" (S7).

"We must show respect and love, we must be tolerant, we must be charitable" (S9).
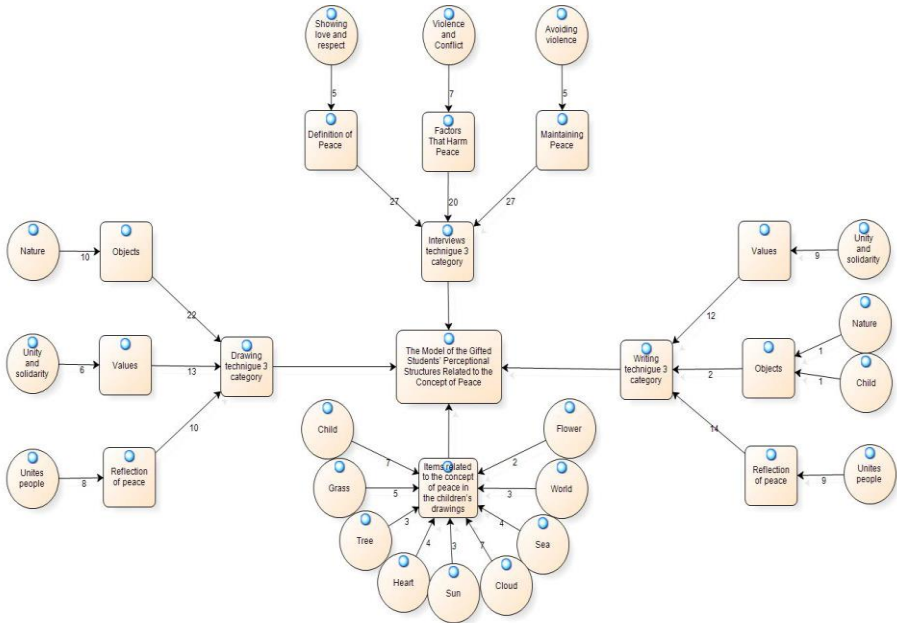
Figure 6. The model of the gifted students' perceptional structures related to the concept of peace

Conclusion and Discussion

This research was done so as to determine the perception of peace of 12 gifted students who study at the Center of Science and Arts in the Special Provincial Administration of Kırıkkale. It was observed that the students often repeat the values related to peace and concepts about the reflection of peace. The gifted students stated the basic values included by peace in their cognitive structures for peace. Although there were several data collection devices, the individuals often repeated the values of unity and solidarity, and reconciliation. The students stated that peace emerges from the culture of reconciliation, that destruction of reconciliation harms peace, and that reconciliation is a must in maintaining peace. They also expressed the necessity of the actions such as having an anti-war attitude, respecting, and empathizing, in support to their perceptions. In their research that studied the drawings of gifted students on democracy, Er and Ünal (2015) stated that the students emphasized many values directly related to democracy, and that the students had awareness in a desired level.

It is interesting that one of the basic concepts the gifted students emphasize related to peace is "violence". The reason for this negative emphasis may be today's extensity of violent behaviors, and the students' belief that violence must be eliminated in order to maintain peace. Erişti (2012) argued in his study that students

had negative judgments as to the world and technology of the future. On the other hand, gifted students often highlighted that the skill of empathy is crucial in order to maintain peace. This case promotes the conclusions of the study by Shechtman and Silektor (2012). The researchers emphasized that the gifted students manifest a higher level of empathy skills compared to the individuals with a regular growing. This finding may not be considered a surprise, as gifted individuals have a more advanced level of the skill of thinking sophisticatedly.

In the drawings of the students, there are images of the sky, butterflies, and birds. Similar results were also reached in the study of Aktaş (2015). In his study with teacher candidates training in pre-school teaching and pediatric development, it was emphasized that teacher candidates often used doves, butterflies, and plants in portraying peace. This result supports the perspective that, even though the students are of an older age, the similarities between the figures in the drawings continue to exist. Another important result of this study is that these figures were drawn by gifted students at an earlier age. In the study, students expressed various views on peace. This indicates that gifted students are skilled in creativity and thinking out of the box. Another research that supports this view was conducted by Dağlıoğlu et al. (2010). The researchers emphasized that gifted students are superior to their ordinarily-growing peers in skills and creativity.

One of the values required for being a good person and having a world with an understanding of reconciliation is peace. Terry (2008) asserts that, as gifted individuals have a larger social, moral, and ethical capacity, we must support them in their educational lives, so that these individuals may contribute significantly to the solutions to social problems. In addition, Çetinkaya&Kıncal (2015) state that, owing to their mental capacities, their skill of thinking thoroughly, and their respect to the concepts of equality and justice, gifted individuals may develop a more qualified approach to problems. This brings forward the process of character education of gifted individuals. Forging of the values such as peace, democracy, fairness, equality, freedom, etc. into the personalities of gifted individuals shall influence their future behaviors. In this respect, the quality of character education is related to the education of gifted individuals (Berkowitz and Hoppe, 2009).

In this context, educators have an important role. Teachers of gifted individuals must consider highly the special conditions of these individuals, deliberately organizing the educational settings, and supporting them in increasing their capacity of creativity (Panov, 2002). On the other hand, conditions of the training process of the teachers of gifted individuals must not be determined only by policy-makers, but should also include the views of students (Şahin, 2013).

As this study employed the qualitative approach to research, it reflects the points of view of participants in a limited number. Other studies with quantitative or mixed methods may be conducted in order to settle the perceptions of peace of gifted students in larger numbers. Moreover, such studies on the perception of the concept

of peace may be done with children in the areas of hot conflict in several parts of the world. Gifted children and ordinarily-growing children may be compared in their perceptions of peace.

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Genişletilmiş Özet

Toplumdaki bireyler birbirinden oldukça farklı özellikler sergilemektedir. Bu farklılıklar da dünyayı algılama biçimlerini şekillendirmektedir. Bireylerin algıları, farklı kişisel özelliklerinin yanı sıra, içinde yaşanılan topluma, genetik özelliklerine, aile ilişkilerine, yaşa, cinsiyete vb. ölçütlere göre değişmektedir. Üstün yetenekli öğrenciler de bu kapsamda değerlendirilip, akranlarından farklı bir gelişim ve öğrenme çizgisi izlemektedirler. Bu öğrenciler, zeka, yaratıcılık, sanat, liderlik kapasitesi ve özel akademik alanlarda yaşıtlarından daha farklı performans sergilemektedirler. Üstün yetenekli bireyler, akranlarına göre dünyayla farklı bir iletişim kurmakta, dünyaya farklı açılardan bakmaktadırlar. Bu durum, bu bireylerin akranlarından farklı bir dünya algısına sahip olduklarını göstermektedir. Böylece özellikle eğitim alanındaki araştırmacılar için üstün yetenekli bireylerin dünyayı algılayış biçimlerini belirlemek merak uyandıran bir çalışma alanı olarak belirmektedir. Bu çalışmanın da çıkış noktasını bu varsayım oluşturmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın amacı üstün yetenekli öğrencilerin barış kavramına yönelik algılarını ortaya çıkarmaktır. Çünkü barış, tarihin en ihtiyaç duyulan kavramlarından biri olup, daha küçük yaşlarda bu kavramın öneminin ve özelliklerinin çocuklara kazandırılması gerekli görülmektedir. Bu sürecin başlangıç noktası ise var olan algılarının ölçülmesidir. Bu araştırma kapsamında da üstün yetenekli öğrencilerin barış kavramına yönelik algıları belirlenmek istenmiş, böylece daha sonra üstün yetenekli öğrencilerin barış kavramını anlamlandırmalarını geliştirmek amacıyla tasarlanacak çalışmalara yön gösterilmek istenmiştir.

Bu araştırmada da öğrenci algılarının derinlemesine incelenmesi amaçlandığı için nitel araştırma yaklaşımından yararlanılmıştır. Nitel araştırma yaklaşımı özünde esnek bir yapıda olmasından ve araştırılan durumun, olayın ve birey yaşantılarının içindeki gizli anlamların ortaya çıkarılmasına katkı sağladığı için sıklıkla kullanılmaktadır. Ayrıca özel bir grup olan üstün yetenekli öğrencilerin barış algısı incelendiği için fenomenoloji deseninden yararlanılmıştır. Fenomenoloji, alan yazına bakıldığında farklı deneyimlere sahip bireylerin dünyayı kavrayış şekillerinin incelenmesinde kullanılmaktadır. Bu araştırma kapsamında da akranlarından farklı özellikler sergileyen üstün yetenekli öğrencilerin barış kavramına yönelik algılarını ortaya çıkarmak için kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunun belirlenmesinde amaçlı örnekleme yönteminden yararlanılmıştır. Bu kapsamda, çalışma grubuna dâhil edilecek öğrencilerde bilim ve sanat merkezi sınavından başarılı olma, Wisc-R zekatestindenyeterlipuanıalmışolmaveçalışmayakatılmadagönüllüolmaölçütleriaran mıştır. Bu ölçütleri karşılayan ve Kırıkkale İl Özel İdaresi Bilim ve Sanat Merkezi'ne devam üstün yetenekli 12 öğrenci araştırmanın çalışma grubunu

oluşturmuştur. Araştırma verilerinin toplanmasında, çizme- yazma ve görüşme teknikleri kullanılmıştır. Bu teknikler, uygulamaya geçirilmeden önce pilot çalışma yapılmış, gerekli düzenlemelerin ardından veri toplama araçlarına son hali verilerek, uygulama safhasına geçilmiştir. Araştırma kapsamında öğrencilere "barış kavramının size ne ifade ettiğini çiziniz ve yazınız" yönergesi verilmiş ve müdahale edilmeksizin çizimlerini gerçekleştirmeleri sağlanmıştır. Ayrıca, öğrencilerin görüşlerini ifade edebilmeleri için açık uçlu sorular yöneltilmiştir. Elde edilen veriler içerik analizi ile çözümlenmiştir. Böylece çizme-yazma ve görüşme verilerinin içindeki gizli anlamlar ortaya çıkarılmıştır. Çözümlenen veriler, frekans değerleri ve doğrudan alıntılarla desteklenerek okuyucuların görüşlerine sunulmuştur. Böylece araştırmanın inandırıcılığı arttırılmaya çalışılmıştır.

Araştırma verilerinin analizi sonucunda, çizme–yazma ve görüşme tekniğine ilişkin üçer kategori ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu açıdan bakıldığında, çizme-yazma verilerinin analizinin ardından "değer", "nesne" ve "barışın yansımaları" isimli üç kategori ortaya çıkmıştır. Aynı şekilde görüşme verilerinin analizinin ardından da "barışın tanımı", barışı zedeleyen etmenler" ve "barışı sürdürmek" olarak belirlenen üç kategori ortaya çıkmıştır. Çizme-yazma tekniği kapsamında ulaşılan bulgular incelendiğinde öğrencilerin en sık olarak çocuk ve bulut çizimleri gerçekleştirdikleri görülmüştür. Değer kategorisine ilişkin olarak birlik ve beraberliğe, nesne kategorisinde doğaya, barışın yansımaları kategorisinde ise barışın insanları birleştirme özelliğine vurgu yaptıklarına ulaşılmıştır. Görüşme bulgularına bakıldığında en sık vurguların barışın tanımı kategorisinde sevgi ve saygı göstermeye, barışı zedeleyen etmenler kategorisinde şiddet ve çatışmaya, barışı sürdürmek kategorisinde ise şiddetten kaçınmaya yapıldığı görülmektedir.

Araştırma sonucunda, öğrencilerin barış kavramına ilişkin olarak birlik ve beraberlik, savaş karşıtlığı ve uzlaşı gibi değerleri sıklıkla yinelediklerine görülmüştür. Ayrıca öğrencilerin şiddet kavramını da sıklıkla vurguladıkları dikkati çekmektedir. Araştırmada üstün yetenekli öğrencilerin barışı sürdürmek için empati becerisini vurgulamaları da dikkati çekmektedir. Öğrencilerin çizimlerinde ise gökyüzü, kelebek ve kuş sembolleri barışın simgesi olarak belirtilmektedir. Araştırma sonucunda ulaşılan diğer dikkat çekici bir sonuç ise öğrencilerin birbirinden oldukça farklı görüşler öne sürmeleridir. Bu sonuç, üstün yetenekli öğrencilerin bir özelliği olan dünyayı farklı algılama durumunun bu araştırma kapsamında da kendini gösterdiğinin bir kanıtıdır.

Bu çalışma nitel araştırma yaklaşımına uygun olarak tasarlandığı için sınırlı sayıdaki katılımcı görüşünü yansıtmaktadır. Barış kavramına yönelik daha fazla sayıdaki üstün yetenekli öğrencilerin algılarını belirlemek için nicel bir yaklaşımla desenlenen farklı çalışmalar gerçekleştirilebilir. Bununla beraber, barış kavramına ilişkin bu tür çalışmalar dünyanın çeşitli yerlerinde bulunan sıcak çatışma alanlarındaki çocuklarla yapılabilir. Üstün yetenekli çocuklar ile normal gelişim gösteren çocuklar barış kavramını algılamaları bağlamında karşılaştırılabilir. Karma

araştırma yaklaşımı kapsamında, hem nicel araştırmanın hem de nitel araştırmanın güçlü yönlerinden yararlanılarak bütünsel çalışmalar tasarlanabilir. Türkiye'de üstün yetenekli öğrencilerin devam ettiği bilim ve sanat merkezlerindeki ders programlarına temel demokrasi ve insan hakları değerleri dâhil edilebilir. Böylece insan hakları ve demokrasiye yönelik duyarlılıkları daha da geliştirilebilir. Ayrıca barış kavramı dışında diğer insan hakları ve demokrasi kavramlarına yönelik algı belirleme çalışmaları gerçekleştirilebilir. Böylece öğrencilerin insan hakları ve demokrasiye yönelik algıları daha tutarlı bir şekilde ortaya çıkarılabilir.