Problems Related to Equality and Social Justice in Schools and the Ways towards Solution: Reflections from Middle School Teachers in Türkiye [*]

Okullarda Eşitliğe ve Sosyal Adalete Yönelik Yaşanan Sorunlar ve Bu Sorunlara Yönelik Çözüm Önerileri: Ortaokul Öğretmenlerinden Yansımalar

Buket TURHAN TÜRKKAN [**] ID
Ece YOLCU [***] ID

Abstract

Through educational experience, the problems within equality and social justice could emerge in many schools. It is crucial to see the teachers' perspective to define what types of problems are dominant and what their suggestions are for a better solution. The aim of study was to identify the problems related to equality and social justice in schools and bring about some solution suggestions. The participants included nine teachers (seven women and two men) working in middle schools across varying socioeconomic statuses (high, middle, and low) in Adana city. The study was a descriptive study based on the qualitative method. The data was collected by semi-structured interviews. Content analysis was utilized to analyze the data collected. The results show that teachers came up with some problems regarding equality primarily focusing on gender and in terms of social justice the dominant problems were about socioeconomic class disparities. They also put forward suggestions including education

and cooperation for parents, organizing education for teachers, teachers' arranging the seating plan, providing assistance with school needs.

Öz

Eğitim deneyimlerinde, eşitlik ve sosyal adalete ilişkin sorunlar birçok okulda ortaya çıkabilir. Hangi tür sorunların baskın olduğunu ve daha iyi bir çözüm için önerilerinin ne olduğunu tanımlamak için öğretmenlerin bakış açısını görmek çok önemlidir. Çalışmanın amacı, okullardaki eşitlik ve sosyal adaletle ilgili sorunları belirlemek ve bazı çözüm önerileri getirmektir. Katılımcılar, Adana ilinde farklı sosyoekonomik düzeye (yüksek, orta ve düşük) sahip ortaokullarda çalışan dokuz öğretmenden (yedi kadın ve iki erkek) oluşmaktadır. Çalışma, nitel yönteme dayalı betimsel bir çalışmadır. Veriler yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerle toplanmıştır. Toplanan verileri analiz etmek için içerik analizi gerçekleştirilmiştir. Sonuçlar, öğretmenlerin eşitlikle ilgili olarak öncelikle cinsiyete odaklanan bazı sorunlar ortaya koyduklarını ve sosyal adalet açısından baskın sorunların sosyoekonomik sınıf farklılıklarıyla ilgili olduğunu göstermektedir. Ayrıca, veliler için eğitim ve işbirliği, öğretmenler için eğitim organizasyonu, öğretmenlerin oturma planını düzenlemesi, okul ihtiyaçları konusunda yardım sağlama gibi önerilerde bulunmuşlardır.

Geniş Özet

Giriş

Okullar ve öğretmenler toplumsallaşmanın aracısı olarak görülmektedirler (Tolentino, 2009) ve öğretmenlerin ve okulların topluma yönelik yükümlükleri bulunmaktadır (Au, Bigelow & Karp, 2007). Bu bağlamda, öğretmenlerin toplumda değişimin aracısı görevine sahip oldukları ve okullara yansıyan toplumsal sorunları fark edebilecekleri düşünülmektedir.

Dünyada yaşanan küreselleşme olgusunun olumsuz etkileri bağlamında eşitsizlik ve sosyal adaletsizlik sorunlarının yoğun olarak yer aldığı düşüncesiyle bu sorunların eğitime yansımalarının ortaya çıkarılması önemli görülmektedir. Eğitime yansıyan toplumsal sorunların çözülmesi için öncelikle bu sorunların belirlenmesi gerekmektedir. Eşitlik ve sosyal adaletin boyutlarına yönelik sorunların okul ve öğrenciler üzerindeki etkilerini belirlemenin bu sorunların çözümünde katkı sağlayacağı düşünülmektedir. Bu bağlamda, toplumsal bağlamda yaşanan eşitsizlik ve sosyal adaletsizlikle ilgili sorunları birincil olarak hisseden eğitim paydaşlarından biri olan öğretmenlerin görüşlerinin belirlenmesi mevcut durumu ortaya çıkarmak için önemli bir durumdur. Bu doğrultuda araştırmanın genel amacı, "okullarda eşitliğe ve sosyal adalete yönelik sorunları belirlemek ve çözüm önerileri üretmek" olarak belirlenmiştir.

Yöntem

Araştırma, nitel bir anlayışla gerçekleştirilmiş, betimsel bir araştırma olarak desenlenmiştir. Burada da farklı sosyoekonomik düzeye sahip okullardaki sosyal adalet ve eşitliğe yönelik sorunlar ve çözüm önerileri saptanmaya çalışılmıştır. Araştırmada maksimum çeşitlilik örneklemesinden yararlanılarak, farklı sosyoekonomik düzeye sahip okullardan farklı branşlardaki öğretmenler katılımcı olarak yer

almıştır. Bu bağlamda, 2016-2017 eğitim öğretim yılında Adana ili merkez ilçelerinde yer alan alt, orta ve üst sosyoekonomik düzeye sahip okullarda çalışan 9 ortaokul öğretmeni araştırmanın örneklemini oluşturmuştur. Araştırmanın verilerinin toplanmasında, araştırmacılar tarafından hazırlanan ve eğitim programları ve öğretim anabilim dalında görev yapan iki uzmanın incelemesinden sonra son hali verilen yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşme formu kullanılmıştır. Görüşmeler yaklaşık 25-30 dk. sürmüştür. Yazılı metin haline getirilen kayıtlardan elde edilen verilerin analizinde içerik analizi yönteminden yararlanılmıştır. Geçerlik ve güvenirlik açısından, öğretmenlerle yapılan görüşmelerde kullanılan form için uzman görüşünden yararlanılmıştır. Ayrıca, birinci araştırmacı tarafından içerik analizinde elde edilen kod ve temalar için diğer iki araştırmacı tarafından uzman incelemesi yapılmıştır.

Bulgular

Araştırmanın bulguları farklı temalar altında toplanmıştır. Bu temalar, eşitliğe yönelik ve sosyal adalete yönelik sorunlar ve bunlara yönelik çözüm önerileri şeklinde sıralanmıştır. İlk tema bağlamında, eşitliğe yönelik öğretmenler tarafından gözlenen sorunlar kapsamında, en çok cinsiyet açısından eşitsizlikler yaşandığı belirtilmiştir. Eşitliğe yönelik gözlenen sorunlar kapsamında öğretmenler engelliler açısından, etnik köken açısından ve mezhep açısından da sorunların yaşandığını belirtmişlerdir. Etnik köken açısından sorunlar kapsamında, etnik kökeni farklı olan öğrencilerin farklı olduğunu hissettirme ve alay etme davranışlarının gözlendiği belirtilmiştir. Mezhep açısından sorunlar kapsamında ise bir öğretmen farklı mezhebe sahip öğrencilere, diğer öğrenciler tarafından bazen farklı davranıldığını dile getirmiştir.

İkinci tema bağlamında, sosyal adalete yönelik öğretmenler tarafından gözlenen sorunlar kapsamında en çok sosyoekonomik sınıf farklılıkları açısından yaşanılan sorunlardan söz edilmiştir. Sosyal adalete yönelik gözlenen sorunlar kapsamındaki diğer bir tema ise çocuk işçiliği açısından yaşanan sorunlardır. Bu kapsamda en çok bir işte çalışan öğrencilerin yorgunluktan dolayı etkili katılamamalarına yönelik sorundan söz edilmiştir.

Eşitliğe yönelik yaşanan sorunlara öğretmenler tarafından sunulan çözüm önerileri kapsamında öğretmenler en çok, cinsiyet eşitliği açısından yaşanan sorunlara yönelik çözüm önerileri sunmuşlardır. Engelliler açısından yaşanan sorunlara yönelik çözüm önerileri kapsamında en çok özel eğitim sınıflarında/kurumlarında eğitim almaya yönelik öneri sunulmuştur. Etnik köken açısından yaşanan sorunlara yönelik çözüm önerileri kapsamında öğrencilere, insanların eşit olduğunu anlatmaya yönelik bir öneri sunulmuştur. Mezhep açısından yaşanan sorunlara yönelik çözüm önerileri kapsamında ise, öğrencileri, farklı mezheplere yönelik bilgilendirme yapılabileceğinden söz edilmiştir.

Sosyal adalete yönelik yaşanan sorunlara öğretmenler tarafından sunulan çözüm önerileri kapsamında öğretmenler daha çok, sosyoekonomik sınıf farklılıklarıyla ilgili sorunlara yönelik çözüm önerileri sunmuşlardır. Bu bağlamda en çok okul ihtiyaçlarına yönelik yardım sağlamayla ilgili öneri sunulmuştur. Çocuk işçiliğiyle ilgili sorunlara yönelik çözüm önerileri kapsamında ise, aileleri bilinçlendirme, burs verme, çalışan çocukların ailelerine iş sahası açma ve süreklilik arz eden devlet desteği sağlanmasından söz edilmiştir.

Tartışma

Eşitliğe yönelik sorunlar açısından okullarda eşitliğe yönelik cinsiyet açısından, engelliler açısından, etnik köken açısından ve mezhep açısından sorunlar yaşandığı dile getirilmiştir. Alanyazında da okullarda cinsiyet eşitsizliği, engellilik ya da diğer açılardan zorbalık ve ayrımcılık sorunları göze çarpmaktadır. Okullarda öğrencilerin etnik köken, ırk ve mezhep gibi özellikleri de kimi zaman öğrencilerin zorbalığa ya da ayrımcılığa uğraması gibi sorunların kaynağı haline gelmektedir. Pepler, Connolly ve Craig (1999) yaptıkları bir araştırmada Kanada'da ilk ve orta öğretim düzeyindeki öğrencilerin yaklaşık %10' unun etnik zorbalık uyguladığını ortaya koymuştur. Göçmen çocukların ayrımcılık ya da zorbalığın genellikle mağduru olduğu görülse de etnik ve göç zorbalığının mağduru oldukları kadar başkalarını da kurban ettikleri görülebilmektedir (Scherr & Larson, 2009). Bu açıdan okullarda eşitlikle ilgili yaşanan toplumsal sorunların çözümüne yönelik önlemler alınması gerektiği düşünülmektedir.

Araştırmanın ikinci boyutunda, okullarda sosyal adalete yönelik sosyoekonomik sınıf farklılıkları açısından ve çocuk işçiliği açısından sorunlar yaşandığı dile getirilmiştir. Sosyoekonomik sınıf farklılıkları açısından, okul ihtiyaçlarını karşılayamama, gruplaşma, dışlanma, alay etme, davranış bozukluğu sergileme gibi sorunlar ön plana çıkmaktadır. Çocuk işçiliği açısında ise bir işte çalışan öğrencilerin başarısızlık yaşamaları, eğitime devam etmemeleri ve derse etkin katılamamaları gibi sorunlardan söz edilmiştir. Çeşitli araştırmalarda sosyoekonomik düzey ile akademik başarı arasında bir ilişki olduğu belirlenmiştir (Aslanargun, Bozkurt & Sarıoğlu, 2016; Suna & Özer, 2021; Suna, Tanberkan, Gür, Perc & Özer, 2020). Türkiye'de eğitimde fırsat eşitliğine yönelik gerçekleştirilen bir araştırmada, ailelerin sosyoekonomik durumundan kaynaklanan fırsat ve imkân eşitsizliğine yönelik sorunlar yaşandığı belirlenmiştir (Polat & Boydak Özdan, 2020). Buradan yola çıkılarak sosyoekonomik sınıf farklılıklarının ve çocuk işgücü sorunun daha ayrıntılı incelenmesinin ve söz konusu bu sorunlara çözüm üretilmesinin yararlı olacağı düşünülmektedir.

Araştırmanın üçüncü boyutunda, öğretmenler eşitliğe yönelik çeşitli bağlamlarda çözüm önerileri sunmuşlardır. Bu çözüm önerilerinin cinsiyet eşitliğine yönelik, engelliler açısından eşitliğe yönelik, etnik köken açısından eşitliğe yönelik ve mezhep açısından eşitliğe yönelik olduğu belirlenmiştir. Bu kapsamda dikkat çeken ve uygulanabilir olan çözüm önerileri, velilere yönelik eğitim ve işbirliği, öğretmenlere yönelik mesleki gelişim eğitimleri, öğrencilere yönelik bilinçlendirme eğitimleri, eğitimde kapsayıcılığın sağlanması, öğretmenler arası işbirliği ve okul şartlarının iyileştirilmesine yöneliktir. Araştırmanın dördüncü ve son boyutunda öğretmenler, sosyal adalete yönelik sosyoekonomik sınıf farklılıklarına yönelik ve çocuk işçiliğine yönelik çözüm önerileri sunmuşlardır. Bu bağlamda, okul ihtiyaçlarını karşılama, öğrenciyi yakından tanıma, eğitimde fırsat eşitliğini sağlama, olanakların iyileştirilmesi, çocuk işçiliğine yönelik ailelerin bilinçlendirilmesi ve burs sağlama gibi önerilerin uygulanabilir öneriler olduğu düşünülmektedir.

Introduction

Globalization and rapid change in the world affect social life both positively and negatively, not only in economic matters, but also in political, social and cultural issues (Jusuf, 2005). There

are problems with social exclusion in the world caused by discriminatory attitudes towards race, social class, ethnicity, religion, gender and qualifications (Ainscow, 2020). According to the World Economic Forum, the ten most important problems in the world are hunger, unemployment, limited natural resources, gender inequality and economic problems (World Economic Forum, 2016). These problems affect many social areas, and one of these areas is education. In this context, it is stated that the priority problems of education are related to peace, environment, human rights, democracy, justice and equality (Engin Demir & Paykoç, 2006). Inequality and injustice in education are considered to be a fundamental problem facing today's educators (Dover, 2009).

There have been many studies on social problems in the field of education in the world and in Türkiye. When these studies were examined, it was seen that the following problems occurred: Problems regarding financial resources, school climate (attendance and discipline) and socioeconomic status among students in schools (Trinidad, 2020), low schooling rates in certain regions in Türkiye (Oyvat & Tekgüç, 2019), problems regarding gender equality in education (Brown, 2004; Cin & Walker, 2016; Klasen & Lamanna, 2009; Trinidad, 2020), child labor and disruption of the education of child workers in the world and in Türkiye (Yüksel, Adıgüzel & Yüksel, 2015), various problems experienced by refugee students in education in Türkiye (Karaağaç & Güvenç, 2019), various problems experienced by disabled students during their education process (Felder, 2021; Tekin, 2019). It is stated that in schools in regions where immigrant communities live in Türkiye, there are low academic success, intercultural problems, inadequate school quality, lack of parental participation, malnutrition, poverty, and lack of emotional support (Akar, 2010). It is stated that disadvantaged students experience various problems in the classroom and at school, such as low success and motivation, class divisions among students, peer bullying, exclusion, low resistance, low self-confidence and introversion (Koçak & Bozkurt Bostancı, 2019). In addition to the problems faced by students, a research conducted with teachers indicates that some teachers have a perception of sexism and that teachers and teacher candidates should be informed about gender equality (Tezer Asan, 2010). Besides, it has been observed that teachers experience communication problems in regions where migration occurs or whose native language is different (Özdemir & Civelek, 2015; Sözer & Işıker, 2021), and teachers working with immigrant students observe problems such as adaptation, violence and prejudice (Ergen & Şahin, 2019; Sözer & Işıker, 2019). Based on this, it can be said that both students and teachers experience problems in various social contexts in the education system.

Education is seen as a way to avoid poverty, and it is also accepted that poverty and low success in school are closely related (Steinberg & Krumer-Nevo, 2020). A study conducted in this context found that variables such as student characteristics such as well-being, scholastic activities and support at school explained the greatest variance in academic achievement among the urban poor, and that family background characteristics and school quality indicators were also significantly associated with academic achievement (Engin Demir, 2009). It has been determined that some immigrant children experience various traumatic problems and these traumas are reflected in the educational environment (Karaman & Bulut, 2018). In addition, it is stated that students with disabilities experience problems in terms of academic success (Caemmerer, Cawthon, & Bond,

2016). Additionally, it is stated that girls are more disadvantaged than boys in education (Özaydınlık, 2014). Based on this, it can be said that social problems such as poverty, migration, disability and gender inequality negatively affect education. It points out that various changes need to be made in the education system in order to prevent the negative reflection of social problems on education.

Education policies are central to efforts to make societies more equitable, and unlike other areas of social policy, education has paradoxically been positioned not only as one of the main causes of inequality, but also as a solution to those inequalities (Power, 2012). Addressing educational inequality requires taking a comprehensive and systematic approach to education reform, a practice that is now referred to as "social justice (in) education." (Dover, 2009). Social justice in education emerges as a way of preventing social problems from being reflected in education and providing solutions to social problems through education. In this context, it is important to identify differences in resources and learning opportunities provided to some students but not to others, as we establish social justice in the context of civic participation and democracy (Greene, 2008). The concept of social justice is central to theorizing about education and schooling because it is an important consideration that policy makers and practitioners in society must take into account when thinking about the nature of education and what schools are for; in this direction, the social inequalities that give rise to demands for social justice are firmly embedded in the structure of our socio-economic arrangements and are sustained and reinforced by our social practices and ideological beliefs about the natural order (Clark, 2006). Promoting equality and justice in education requires taking into account both distributive and non-distributive issues, and in this context there are two things to be done: First, the need to eliminate the serious economic inequalities that exist in our society, and second, the need to look inside the processes of equality in education and examine ways of managing and educating about differences, including those arising from gender, disability, ethnicity, beliefs, abilities and social class (Lynch, 2001). A methodology that helps assess justice in education should include: a) looking at the multidimensional nature of justice; b) looking at the tensions between different dimensions of justice; c) being sensitive to the mediated nature of fair practices; and d) being sensitive to differences in the contexts and levels at which justice is applied (Gewirtz, 2006).

It is stated that a sufficient level of social justice and equality has not been reached and that there are deficiencies in Turkish education policies and practices (Çam Tosun, 2021). In this context, strategies for the participation and success of all students should be planned and all teachers should adopt equality and inclusion as principles (Ainscow, 2020). In addition, it is thought that a rich feminist framework is needed to examine and design girls' education in Türkiye in the context of gender (Cin & Walker, 2016). Understanding the structural factors that cause poverty in society and their effects on learning requires reshaping teacher education programs, and in this context, it is stated that there is a need for programs that adopt a social justice perspective and challenge widespread perceptions of deficiency towards people in poverty through critical thinking (Steinberg & Krumer-Nevo, 2020). In this context, developing knowledge about current social events and the ability to solve these problems is considered important in teacher education (Yolcu, Karataş & Turhan Türkkan, 2017). Moreover, it is stated that teachers should have an understanding of intercultural

education and building a democratic society (Tutkun & Aksoyalp, 2010). Based on this, it can be said that teachers who are aware of social problems are needed.

While teachers shape students, they also shape society and the world (Habacı, Karataş, Adıgüzelli, Ürker & Atıcı, 2013). One of the characteristics of teachers who make a difference from their colleagues is the ability to take responsibility in solving social problems (Çetin & Ünsal, 2020). It is stated that in order to successfully combat social problems, qualified human resources that can be produced with an original education program and qualified education process are needed and that qualified teachers will be able to face social problems (Jusuf, 2005). It is thought that teachers who are aware of poverty as a social problem have the potential to take action for equality and promote social justice inside and outside the school (Steinberg & Krumer-Nevo, 2020). Education is not simply the transfer of knowledge; education serves a variety of different purposes, from giving birth to new ideas and developments for society as a whole (Arora, 2018). Considering the facts that individuals' personal and social feelings are affected by the practices and interactions at school (Beane, 1990) and that schools can become tools that reproduce discrimination as in society (Karp, 2007), it is thought that schools should be shaped by democratic and social goals and values as well as academic purposes (Au, Bigelow & Karp, 2007). Schools and teachers are seen as agents of socialization (Tolentino, 2009), and teachers and schools have obligations towards society (Au, Bigelow & Karp, 2007). Within this, it is thought that teachers have the role of agents of change in society and can notice the social problems reflected in schools.

The problems experienced in society are also reflected in education. Education is both a tool and one of the negatively affected areas in overcoming social problems. Considering that the problems of inequality and social injustice are prevalent in the context of the negative effects of the globalization phenomenon in the world, it is considered important to reveal the reflections of these problems on education. In order to solve the social problems reflected in education, these problems must first be determined. It is thought that determining the effects of problems related to the dimensions of equality and social justice on schools and students will contribute to the solution of these problems. In this context, determining the opinions of teachers, who are one of the education stakeholders who primarily feel the problems related to inequality and social injustice in the social context, is important to reveal the current situation. Therefore, the primary aim of the research was set as 'identifying issues related to equality and social justice in schools and proposing solutions.' Reaching this aim through the study will lead a pathway to understand the problems and issues regarding social justice and equality, teachers' understanding and suggestions for these problems. This can help people responsible for planning education to find concrete ways to overcome these problems and also teach or train students and teachers to enhance social justice and equality through school communities. The research questions determined in this direction are as follows:

1. According to teachers, what problems are experienced in schools regarding equality?
2. What issues do teachers identify related to social justice in schools?
3. What solutions do teachers suggest for addressing problems related to equality in schools?
4. What solutions do teachers suggest for addressing problems regarding social justice in schools?

Method

The research was conducted with a qualitative approach and designed as a descriptive research. Descriptive research is research that aims to carefully describe a situation and determine a situation even if it does not establish a cause-effect relationship. Here, it was tried to identify the problems and solution suggestions regarding social justice and equality in schools with different socio-economic levels.

Since teachers as important stakeholders of education has a crucial place in observing the problems regarding social justice and equality in schools, their views were applied to through this study. Even though, it is recommended that education on social justice and equality should start from early ages, it is thought that students' developmental indicators of social justice and equality can be observed more clearly at the middle school level. Also, situations such as social exclusion and discrimination experienced by students (especially between the ages of 7-15) are one of the problems of today (Ļubkina & Patapova, 2010). As Kohlberg asserted, children starts to learn about social norms through early adolescence and later and before then their moral behaviors are fixed and absolute. It is found in some studies that children could behave more egalitarian at later ages than 8 (Fehr, Bernhard & Rockenbach, 2008) or teaching them social justice issues could be more profound thanks to transition to abstract learning stages (Kelly & Brooks, 2009). In this respect, middle school was determined as the level because it would be easier for middle school teachers to reveal the problems. By utilizing maximum diversity sampling in the research, teachers from different branches from schools with different socio-economic levels were included as participants. In this context, 9 middle school teachers working in schools with low, middle and high socio-economic levels in the central districts of Adana province in the 2016-2017 academic year formed the sample of the research. Personal information about the participants of the study is included in Table 1.

Table 1. Personal information for participants

Code	School Type	Branch	Years of seniority	Gender	Age
H1	High Socio-eco. Lev. (SEL)	Maths	35 years	Man	59
H2	High SEL	Phys. Education	15 years	Man	40
H3	High SEL	Turkish	31 years	Man	51
M1	Middle SEL	Maths	11 years	Woman	33
M2	Middle SEL	Science	6 years	Man	31
M3	Middle SEL	Visual Arts	17 years	Man	39
L1	Low SEL	Maths	2 years	Woman	23
L2	Low SEL	Phys. Education	6 years	Man	34
L3	Low SEL	Turkish	16 years	Man	37

In collecting the data of the study, a semi-structured interview form prepared by the researchers and finalized after the review of two experts, working in the department of curriculum and instruction, was used. The data were collected in the 2016-2017 academic year. The form included 9 open-ended questions regarding the purpose of the research. Voice recordings were made during the interviews with the consent of the participants. The interviews lasted approximately 25-30 minutes.

Content analysis method was used to analyze the data obtained from the records converted into written text. The themes and codes obtained were arranged in accordance with the questions and the purposes of the research.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the study, several precautions were taken. Following Creswell's (2013) validation strategies, peer reviews and expert opinions were utilized for the interview form used with teachers. Additionally, two other researchers conducted an expert review of the codes and themes derived from the content analysis carried out by the primary researcher. Expert review involves having another researcher examine whether the findings align consistently with the data (Merriam, 1995). To enhance reliability, inter-coder agreement was established to ensure consistency in the findings, and after a thorough discussion, the final version of the themes and codes was developed. Furthermore, purposeful sampling (maximum diversity) and thick descriptions were employed as additional measures to enhance transferability.

Findings

The findings of the research were discussed under four themes: problems observed by teachers regarding equality, problems observed by teachers regarding social justice, solution suggestions offered by teachers to problems related to equality, and solution suggestions offered by teachers to problems related to social justice.
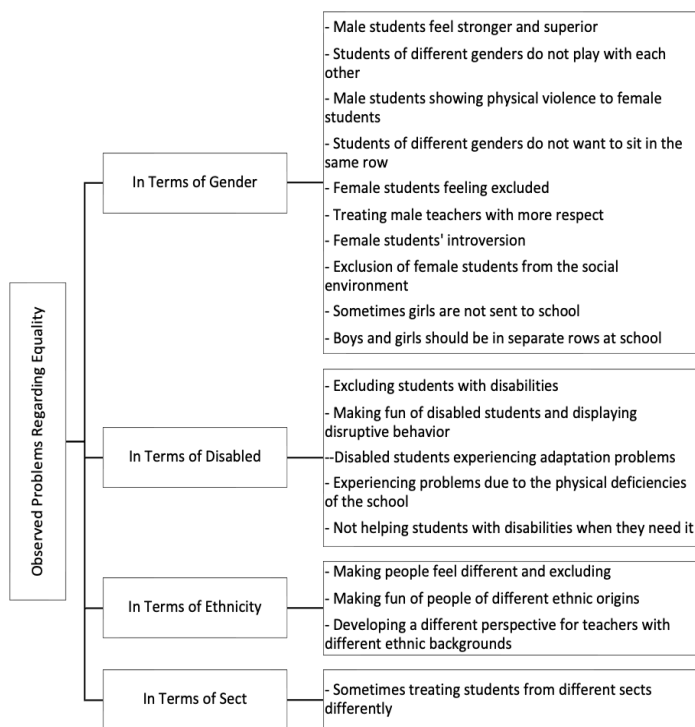

Figure 1. Problems observed by teachers regarding equality

Among the problems observed by teachers regarding equality, it was stated that inequalities were mostly experienced in terms of gender. Eleven different problems were mentioned within gender issues. In this context, teachers mostly talked about the problems of male students feeling stronger and superior and students of different genders not playing games with each other. In addition, problems such as male students' showing physical violence to female students, students of different genders not being willing to sit in the same row, male students' humiliating words to female students, female students feel excluded, male teachers are treated with more respect, female students' becoming introverted, female students' being excluded from the social environment, female students' not being sent to school at times and boys and girls being placed in separate desks were also mentioned. Regarding the observed problems regarding equality, teachers stated that there were also problems related to disabled people, ethnic origin and sect. Among the problems for disabled people, they mostly mentioned were exclusion of disabled students and mocking and disturbing students with disabilities. However, it was also stated that disabled students experience adaptation problems, problems arising from the physical deficiencies of the school, and other students not helping disabled students when they need it. Within the scope of problems in terms of ethnicity, it was put forward that students with different ethnic origins are made to feel different and mocked. However, the problem of developing different perspectives for teachers with different ethnic backgrounds was also indicated. Regarding the problems concerning sect, a teacher stated that other students sometimes treat students from different sects differently. One teacher (man, low Sel) touched upon the fact that students of different genders do not play with each other and another one (woman, middle sel) talked about the problems faced by disabled students.

> For example, during the physical education lesson, the children do this, teacher, let the girls play outside the field, let's play here, when asked why, the children directly show the inequality between boys and girls there. We are boys, let's play. They see it as if they have the power. L2

> I had another mainstream student in another class, a female student. She was not at a very good level in terms of development, nor was she physically well. All the time, let's say a friend of theirs behaved badly, they would say, 'I don't know about this, my teacher, just sit next to that one,' and they would ask me to sit next to that female student as punishment. You know, they consider sitting next to her as punishment. They always exclude. For example, did the pen drop or did the girl pull the desk to herself? Here's what you're doing, why you're doing it, you're doing it on purpose, that is, constantly excluding that female student, constantly pointing her behavior in the student's face, as if she were doing something bad. She was in such a situation. M1
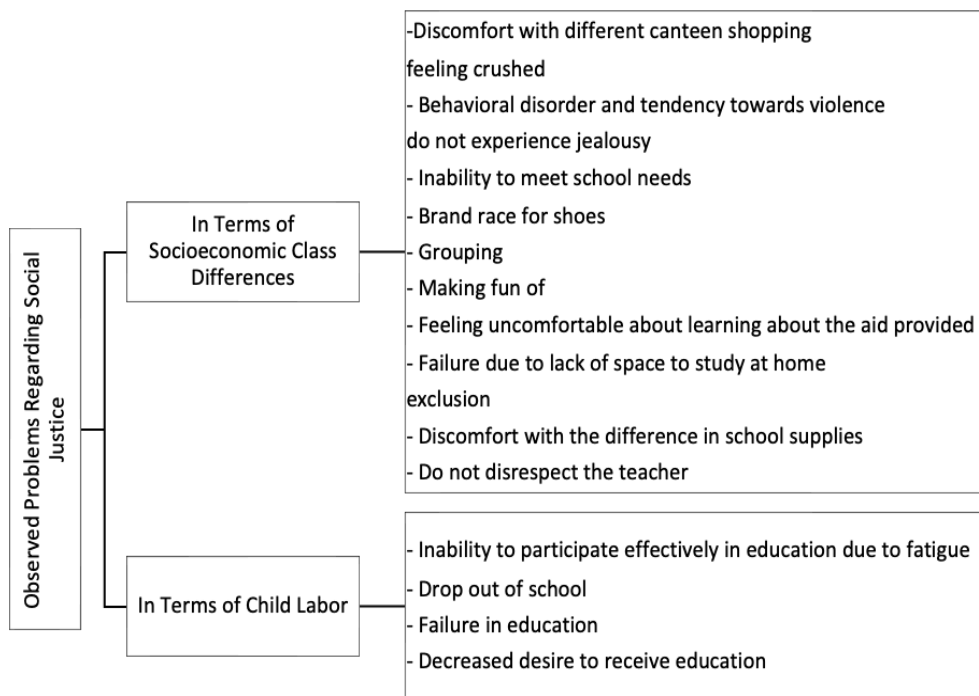
Figure 2. Problems observed by teachers regarding social justice

Within the problems observed by teachers regarding social justice, the problems experienced in terms of socioeconomic class differences were mostly mentioned. In this context, it was stated that the most common problems were the discomfort felt by the different shopping in the canteen and the students with low socioeconomic levels feeling oppressed. In addition to these problems, it has been stated that behavioral disorders and violent tendencies due to the difference in socioeconomic level, experiencing jealousy, not being able to meet school needs, brand competition for shoes, grouping, mocking, feeling uncomfortable about learning about the aid provided, failure and exclusion due to lack of space to study at home are experienced. Another theme about problems regarding social justice is the problems experienced related to child labor. Related to this, the problem of students working at a job not being able to participate effectively due to fatigue was mentioned. However, it has also been stated that there are problems such as dropping out of school, experiencing educational failure, and decreasing desire to receive education. H1 (man, high sel) talked about the problem experienced due to different shopping in the canteen. L2 (man) stated that almost all of the students in his school were working.

> Now our school is in a rich district of Adana. There are students here, from contractors to doctors, from private schools, who come here because of lack of education. There are those who receive 20 lira or 30 lira pocket money a day, and there are also students without any pocket money whose families make toast with bread and squeeze fresh fruit juice. Do these make a difference? Sometimes there are people who say, 'Why don't you eat it?' They think it's strange

for us. They bring it from home. Yes. That child is also ashamed and starving because of his shame. H1

Too much. Almost all of them. Female students generally go to Karataş, Tuzla, the seaside districts of Adana or Mersin with their mothers and make jam, pastry, etc. Boys especially work in barbershops, hairdressers, car repair shops and car washes, there are a lot of them, they all work, but almost in the summer."I didn't see anyone saying they don't work at school. L2

Figure 3. Solution suggestions offered by teachers to problems related to equality

Teachers' Solution Suggestions for Equality

Towards Gender Equality
- Education and cooperation for parents
- Teacher's arrangement of seating plan-school desk plan
- Organizing training for teachers
- An education policy aimed at valuing people
- Organizing events to do together
- Ensuring school attendance by communicating with the family
- Improving the self-confidence of female students
- Organizing seminars for students

Towards Equality for Disabled People
- Receiving education in special education classes-institutions
- Improving the physical conditions of the school
- Organizing special events for disabled students
- Doing inclusive activities with students in the classroom
- Collaborating with psychological counselors and other teachers
- Enabling students to empathize with disabled people

Towards Equality in Terms of Ethnicity
- Explaining to students that people are equal

Towards Equality in Terms of Sects
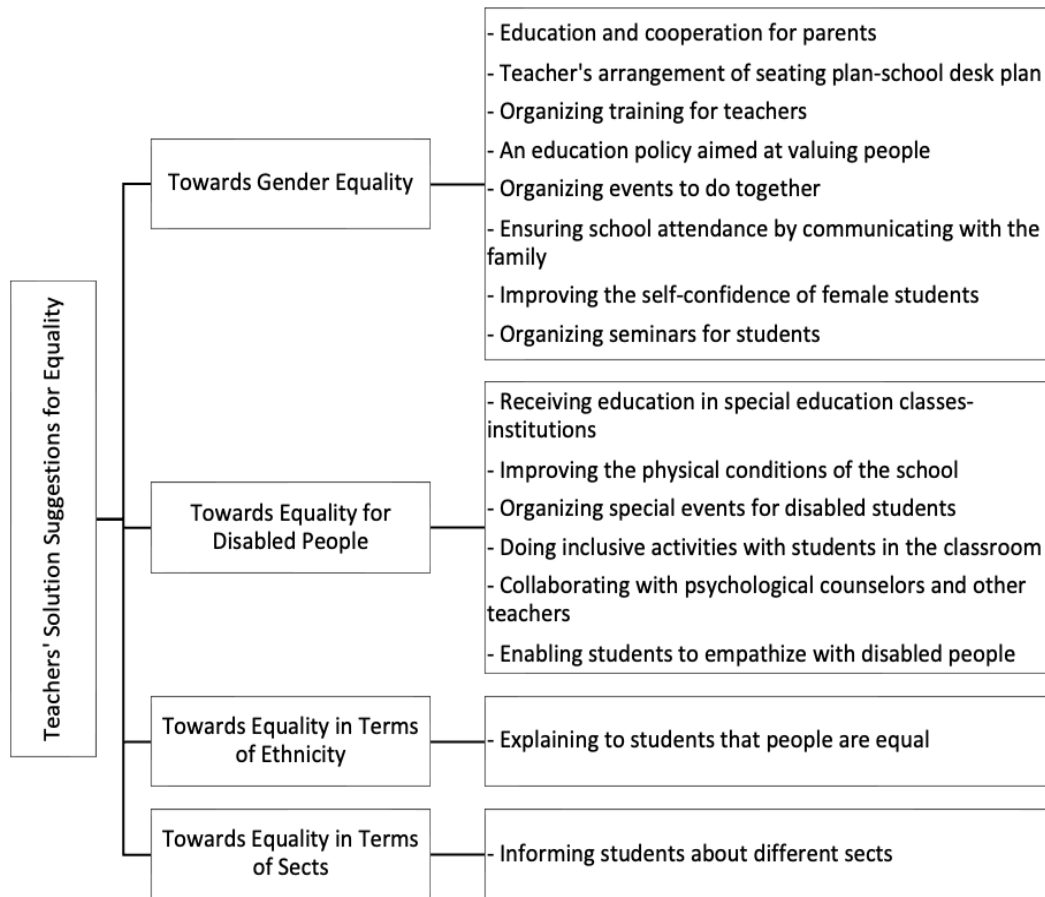- Informing students about different sects

Figure 3. Solution suggestions offered by teachers to problems related to equality

Related to the solution suggestions offered by teachers to the problems experienced regarding equality, teachers mostly offered solution suggestions for the problems regarding gender equality. In line with this, a solution suggestion regarding education and cooperation, mostly aimed at parents, was mentioned. In addition, suggestions were also presented for the teacher to organize the seating plan and school desk, organize training for teachers, create an education policy to value people, organize activities to be held together, ensure school attendance by communicating with the family,

and improve the self-confidence of female students. As for solution suggestions for the problems experienced by the disabled, the most common proposal was to receive education in special education classes/institutions. In addition, suggestions were also put forward to improve the physical conditions of the school, to organize special events for disabled students, to carry out inclusive activities with students in the classroom, to cooperate with psychological counselors and other teachers, and to ensure empathy towards disabled people. Within suggestions for the problems experienced in terms of ethnic origin, a suggestion was presented to the students to explain that people are equal. Related to solution suggestions for the problems experienced in terms of sect, it was mentioned that students could be informed about different sects. Concerning solution suggestions for gender equality and equality for the disabled M3 (man, middle sel) and H3 (man, high sel) expressed their views as follows.

> To solve these problems, first of all, family education, we always say, it is like a trivet. When family, student and teacher cooperate, success in education and equality of opportunity are definitely achieved. We definitely need to focus on parent education. M3

> This is how it can be solved, that is, when those schools are built, it is not done only with a ramp for the disabled or by saying that they have built a WC for the disabled. I am a person who attaches great importance to this as a person, and I pioneered this in all the schools I attended. This problem can be solved in this way; if these children are brought here, they should not be imprisoned within those four walls for 30 hours. He needs to do painting, music and physical education with his normal peers. H3
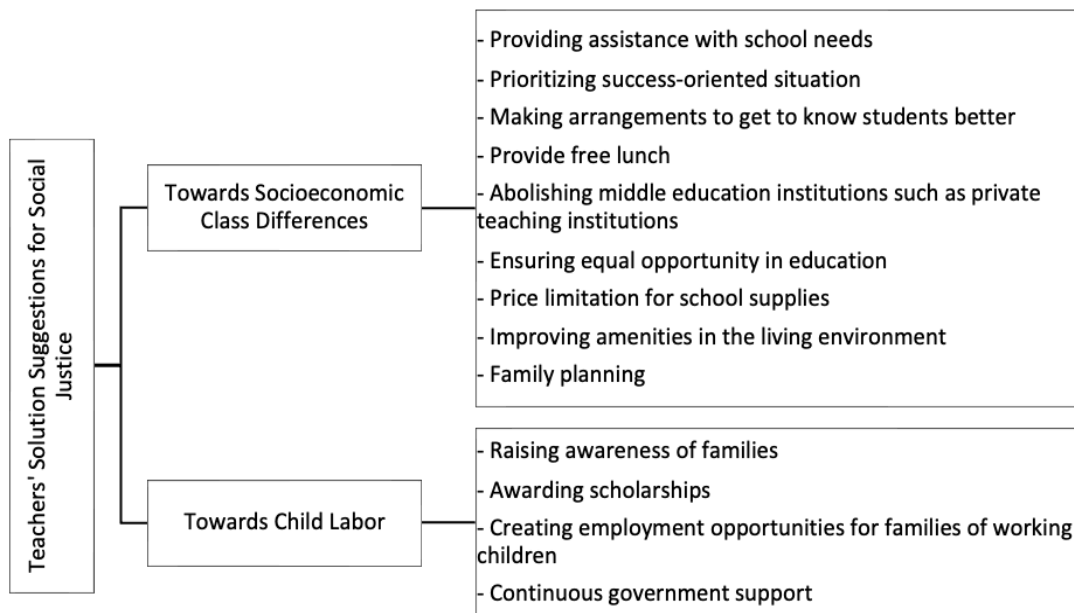

Figure 4. Solution suggestions offered by teachers to problems related to social justice

Regarding solution suggestions offered by teachers to the problems related to social justice, teachers mostly offered suggestions for the problems related to socioeconomic class differences. In this context, suggestions were made mostly about providing assistance for school needs. In addition, prioritizing the success-oriented situation, making arrangements to get to know the students better, providing free lunch services, abolishing middle education institutions such as private lessons / teaching institutions, ensuring equal opportunities in education, limiting the fee for school supplies, making family planning, making changes in the life experiences Suggestions to improve the facilities in the surrounding area are also presented. Within the scope of the solution suggestions for the problems related to child labor, raising awareness of families, providing scholarships, creating employment opportunities for the families of working children and providing continuous state support were mentioned. Regarding socioeconomic class differences H3 (man, high sel) suggested arranging to get to know the students better and L1 (woman, low sel) offered a suggestion to raise awareness among families.

> The thing is, you need to reduce the number of students in such schools, or rather in all schools, once. Both the school administration and the teacher need to have better control of the students. If school is viewed not only as instruction but also as education, if class sizes are reduced a little more, teachers will know their students better and know which child has what kind of problem. Then not everything will remain on paper. H3

> I think families should be made aware and they should be educated. It seems to me that they are literally using the child in this way. He/She does not think about whether the child has a personality or a wish. Families can be educated; children are already receiving education at school. L1

Result, Discussion and Suggestions

In line with the results of the research, firstly, the problems observed in schools regarding equality were discussed. In this sense, it has been stated that there are problems regarding equality in schools in terms of gender, disabled people, ethnicity and sect. Within these problems, the problems related to gender inequality and inequality with regard to disabled people were mostly mentioned. Among the problems related to equality, problems such as exclusion, discrimination, ridicule, lack of respect for differences and compliance problems attract attention. Schools can cause sexism to occur, and although some practices reduce gender differences, activities such as division of the curriculum, disciplinary systems and sports events can lead to sexist behaviors and attitudes (Connell, 1996). In a study, it was determined that students experienced psychological health problems such as emotional problems and behavioral problems, and that situations such as gender, deprivation, children in need, ethnicity and age were associated with an increase in psychological health problems (Deighton, Lereya, Casey, Patalay, Humphrey, & Wolpert, 2019). The issue of bullying frequently appears in research on gender-related problems in schools. In a study conducted in this context, it was determined that there was a significant difference in terms of gender regarding bullying and that boys were more likely to be bullies than girls (Li, 2006). In addition, it has been determined that masculine stereotypical characteristics are associated with bullying in both genders, while

feminine characteristics cause victimization for male students (Navarro, Larrañaga & Yubero, 2011). Additionally, it is stated that there are some concerns, especially about gender issues, such as boys not being adequately included in peer support and victims of bullying among male students not sharing the situation with anyone (Cowie, 2000). Considering that behaviors such as discrimination, exclusion, ridicule and humiliation are included in the scope of bullying, it can be said that the results of these studies are remarkable in terms of gender. When the studies conducted with students with disabilities are examined, it is seen that inclusive students experience problems with school administrators regarding discrimination, exclusion, and school enrollment, with teachers regarding discrimination, reluctance and negative behavior, and with students regarding violence and non-acceptance (Ereş & Canaslan, 2017). It has been determined that differentiation and adaptations are not adequately included, students are often not encouraged to participate in social activities, and the support of normally developing peers is not received in inclusion practices (Olçay Gül & Vuran, 2015). In research conducted on gender equality, it has been determined that students need education on gender equality (Acar Erdol & Gözütok, 2017; Bağçeli Kahraman & Başal, 2011; Kalaycı & Şanssever, 2014; Kılıç, Beyazova, Akbaş, Zara & Serhatlı, 2014; Turhan Türkkan, Karaduman, Arslan Namlı & Karakuş, 2018; Turhan Türkkan, Karakuş, Arslan Namlı & Karaduman, 2018; Yeşil & Balcı Karaboğa, 2021; Yolcu, 2021; Yolcu & Sarı, 2018). In schools, characteristics of students such as ethnicity, race and sect sometimes become the source of problems such as bullying or discrimination of students. In a study conducted by Pepler, Connolly and Craig (1999), it was revealed that approximately 10% of primary and secondary school students in Canada practiced ethnic bullying. Although immigrant children are often seen as victims of discrimination or bullying, they can also be seen to victimize others as much as they are victims of ethnic and immigration bullying (Scherr & Larson, 2009). Another study in California region revealed that students of Spanish, Asian, African origin or students with multi-ethnic identities were exposed to bullying due to reasons such as race and ethnicity (Lai & Tov, 2004). In Türkiye, especially in regions receiving immigration, it is seen that refugees experience some problems related to both ethnicity and religion. In their research, Tosun, Yorulmaz, Tekin and Yıldız (2018) concluded that refugee students experienced difficulties due to differences in religious issues, and students with different religious beliefs experienced problems such as not being able to obtain information about their own beliefs in the religious culture course. In a study conducted with primary school students, it was determined that students had limited experience with respect for differences in their environment, that students' perception of tolerance was not developed on the basis of respect for differences, and that they acquired incorrect information and understanding from their family, media, environment, teachers and textbooks (Ersoy, 2016). Prejudices that refer to factors such as gender, age, race, religion and physical appearance, which we may encounter at any time in our daily lives, in individual and social situations, can also threaten social harmony. Therefore, it is thought that the issue of prejudice is a current problem and may arise in the future (Erdoğan & Citizen, 2020). In this respect, it is thought that measures should be taken to solve social problems related to equality in schools.

In the second dimension of the research, it was stated that there were problems in schools regarding social justice in terms of socioeconomic class differences and child labor. In this context,

the problems discussed in terms of socioeconomic class differences are remarkable in number. In terms of socioeconomic class differences, problems such as not being able to meet school needs, grouping, exclusion, ridicule, and displaying behavioral disorders come to the fore. In terms of child labour, problems such as failure of students working in a job, not continuing their education and not being able to participate effectively in the lesson were mentioned. Various studies have determined that there is a relationship between socioeconomic level and academic success (Aslanargun, Bozkurt & Sarıoğlu, 2016; Suna & Özer, 2021; Suna, Tanberkan, Gür, Perc & Özer, 2020). In a study conducted in this context, it is stated that the economic income of the family leads to consequences such as the student's attendance, failure to meet school needs, and the child's need for labor force (Aslanargun, Bozkurt & Sarıoğlu, 2016). The existence of the child labor problem in Türkiye and the reflections of this situation on education have been discussed in various studies (Gökalp, 2011; Gürdoğan Bayır, 2019; Şen & Kahraman, 2012; Tor, 2010; Yüksel, Adıgüzel & Yüksel, 2015). Based on this, it can be said that this problem continues today and this situation negatively affects the education of working children. In a study conducted on equality of opportunity in education in Türkiye, it was determined that there were problems regarding inequality of opportunities and opportunities arising from the socioeconomic status of families (Polat & Boydak Özdan, 2020). Based on this, it is thought that it would be useful to examine socioeconomic class differences and the child labor problem in more detail and to find solutions to these problems.

In the third dimension of the research, teachers offered solutions for equality in various contexts. It has been determined that these solution suggestions are aimed at gender equality, equality in terms of disabled people, equality in terms of ethnicity and equality in terms of sect. In this context, notable and applicable solution suggestions are aimed at training and cooperation for parents, professional development training for teachers, awareness training for students, ensuring inclusiveness in education, cooperation between teachers and improving school conditions. In the research conducted on gender equality, it has been suggested that teaching activities should be carried out for teachers and students that will increase awareness of gender equality (Acar Erdol, 2019; Akita & Mori, 2022; Aydemir, 2019; Brinkman, 2009; Esen, 2013; Kollmayer, Schultes, Lüftenegger, Finsterwald, Spiel & Schober, 2020; Seçgin & Kurnaz, 2015; Şener Özel, 2019; Turhan Türkkan, Karaduman, Arslan Namlı & Karakuş, 2018; Turhan Türkkan, Karakuş, Arslan Namlı & Karaduman, 2018; Yeşil & Balcı Karaboğa, 2021; Yolcu, 2021). In addition, research conducted in the context of equality for disabled people has stated that there is a need for educational activities that increase awareness and understanding of disabled people (Sezer, 2012; Tasa & Mamatoğlu, 2018). In schools containing different ethnic groups, in order to resolve conflicts and create positive relationships, all different student groups should be treated consistently and fairly and their behavior should be responded to in this way, the responsibility should be shared with the family for the appropriate behavior of the students, the curriculum should include relations between different ethnic groups, and it is recommended to take precautions such as organizing events, creating heterogeneous groups within the school to ensure the interaction of different ethnic groups, and ensuring that school personnel have similar diversity (Henze, Katz & Norte, 2000). Finally, in a more general sense, suggestions have been made for organizing educational activities for students to develop social justice and equality

values (Turhan Türkkan, 2017). Based on this, it has been seen that these suggestions offered by teachers are also included in the literature. In this respect, it is thought that these suggestions should be taken into consideration. However, within the scope of recommendations for disabled people, two teachers offered suggestions for receiving education in special education classes/institutions. In the inclusive education approach, it is stated that the inclusion of students with different educational needs in regular education schools is now at the center of education policy and planning all over the world (Savolainen, Engelbrecht, Nel, & Malinen, 2012). In this respect, it can be said that this suggestion of the teachers contradicts this approach, and in this context, teachers' perspectives also need to be improved.

In the fourth and last dimension of the research, teachers offered solutions for social justice, socioeconomic class differences and child labor. In this context, suggestions such as meeting school needs, getting to know the student closely, ensuring equal opportunities in education, improving opportunities, raising awareness of families about child labor and providing scholarships are thought to be feasible suggestions. Similar suggestions have been presented in studies on socioeconomic class differences and child labor. In this context, suggestions have been made to provide individuals with equal access to educational opportunities (Polat & Boydak Özdan, 2020). In addition, it has been stated that education plays an important role in improving the living conditions of working children and that teachers should make learning attractive for these children, deal with children's problems and provide information about child labor (Gürdoğan Bayır, 2019). It was also mentioned that families should be made aware of children's rights and the harms of child labor and should also be supported financially (Erbay, 2013). It has been stated that in addition to combating the concept of poverty, all legal regulations and measures should be inspected, families should be made aware of this issue, education should be given importance, as well as employers should be made aware, legal measures should be ensured regarding child labor and even punitive measures should be toughened (Somel, 2019). It is thought that the solution suggestions offered by the teachers in the research are also included in the studies in the literature and therefore these suggestions should be taken into consideration by the relevant institutions and organizations and taken into action.

In line with the results of the research, practical arrangements can be made, such as carrying out activities to raise awareness among students in the context of equality and social justice values, organizing professional development training for teachers on this subject, making arrangements to address problems arising from socioeconomic class differences in schools, and carrying out studies to prevent child labor. In addition, it is recommended to conduct more in-depth research on the identified problems and conduct action research to solve these problems.

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