

Examining School Principals' Social Justice Leadership Behaviors Towards Gifted Students*

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to determine the social justice leadership behaviors of school principals towards gifted high school students. The sample of the research consists of 253 gifted students studying at different high schools in Adana in the spring term of the 2022-2023 academic year. The Social Justice Leadership Scale was used as a data collection tool in the research. As a result of the research, it was determined that school principals demonstrated social justice leadership at a moderate level for gifted students. School principals demonstrate social justice leadership behaviors the lowest in the participation sub-dimension, and the highest in the critical consciousness and support sub-dimensions. There is no significant difference according to the variables of gender, family income and parental education status of the students. Some suggestions were made in accordance with the research results.

Key words: School principals, social justice, leadership, gifted students

Okul Yöneticilerinin Özel Yetenekli Öğrencilere Yönelik Sosyal Adalet Liderliği Davranışlarının İncelenmesi*

Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı, okul yöneticilerinin özel yetenekli lise öğrencilerine yönelik sosyal adalet liderliği davranışlarının tespit edilmesidir. Araştırmanın örneklemi, 2022-2023 eğitim öğretim yılı Bahar döneminde Adana ilindeki farklı liselerde öğrenim gören toplam 253 özel yetenekli öğrenciden oluşmaktadır. Araştırmada veri toplama aracı olarak Sosyal Adalet Liderliği Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda, okul yöneticileri özel yetenekli öğrencilere yönelik olarak sosyal adalet liderliğini orta düzeyde sergilemekte oldukları tespit edilmiştir. Okul yöneticileri sosyal adalet liderliğini en düşük katılım alt boyutunda, en yüksek ise eleştirel bilinç ve destek alt boyutlarında sergilemektedir. Öğrencilerin cinsiyet, aile geliri ve ebeveyn eğitim durumu değişkenlerine göre anlamlı bir farklılık tespit edilmemiştir. Araştırma sonuçları doğrultusunda bazı önerilerde bulunulmuştur.

Anahtar kelimeler: Okul yöneticileri, sosyal adalet, liderlik, özel yetenekliler

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Introduction

In recent years, considering the socio-economic and cultural diversity in the society, it is considered as a necessity to build social justice in education. Justice is defined as giving the right to the one who deserves it (Bozkurt, 2018). Social justice is not a term that can be defined, observed, reproduced and embodied, but is a process of ethical living in various societies (Furman & Shields, 2005). Basically, social justice leadership with the ideal of developing an inclusive perspective for all stakeholders of education; points to a process in which principals, teachers and students take an active role. Inclusiveness for all stakeholders, considering the diversity of individuals; means the recognition and inclusion of all differences such as language, religion, race, culture, gender, disability, class and social status (Theoharis, 2007). Social justice emerged from the effort to equalize and improve the opportunities and hopes of disadvantaged groups in society (Chiu & Walker, 2007). According to Tomul (2010), social justice in the educational environment aims to eliminate or minimize the problems arising from the reflection of differences in education. Social justice leadership is that school leaders must provide equal opportunity to achieve their primary educational goals (Arar, Beycioglu & Oplatka, 2017). Education studies place important responsibilities to educational leaders in both adapting to the globalizing world and in meeting the educational needs and solving problems arising from the social, political and economic processes that have emerged with globalization (Örücü & Şimşek, 2011). In this context, school leaders should have the ability to develop a school culture that promotes the values of equality, respect for diversity and enables students to realize their own potential (Wang, 2018). School principals working with such an understanding increase teachers' belief in what students can learn and increase students' self-confidence (Feng & Chen, 2019) and demonstrate skills in communication, emotional awareness, and building meaningful and long-lasting relationships (DeMatthews & Mawhinney, 2013). There have been recent efforts to eliminate the barriers for disadvantaged groups face in accessing education (Santrock, 2011). The socio-economic and cultural status index calculation in the PISA 2015 report is important. This index is calculated by taking into account the variables such as the profession and education level of the parents, the educational resources that the student has at home (Ministry of National Education [MoNE], 2016). According to this index, students -1 and below are defined as social and economical disadvantaged.

Many multinational organizations are developing policies to eliminate barriers to access to education. One of the school-centered efforts to guarantee that students in the disadvantaged group benefit from quality education services at a high level is the school principals' social justice leadership behaviors (Marshall & Oliva, 2006). It is stated that the social justice leadership behaviors demonstrated by the school principals contribute to the students' development of positive thoughts towards

educational environments, and are a factor that increases their school engagement relatively (Özdemir, 2017). Murray (2009), who conducted a similar study, observed that supporting disadvantaged students increased their school engagement. A key orientation of the school principal as a social justice leader is to increase academic achievement, especially by supporting disadvantaged students. For this purpose, the school principal investigates the ways in which students can benefit from enriched education programs at the highest level (Oakes et al., 2000). In the related literature reviews, it is found out that the academic development of disadvantaged students who have difficulty in accessing rich programs is relatively low (Brown, 2006). So that, school principals who demonstrate social justice leadership behaviors support all students in the school, especially those from the disadvantaged group (Özdemir & Pektaş, 2017). According to Özdemir and Pektaş (2017), school principals also display inclusive/participant-oriented behaviors at a higher rate for including disadvantaged students in school. A possible reason for school principals to create critical awareness and adopt an inclusive attitude towards students in the study may be their strong belief in their students' academic development. In this context, it is stated that the leadership behaviors of the principal in schools where low-income students study are significant for academic success (Riehl, 2000).

Social justice leadership needs to be organized with a set of rules backed by knowledge, skills and experience. Some of these rules include:

- understanding social justice and adapting it to the schools of one's own community,
- fighting with discrimination and prejudice,
- enabling the developing a multicultural and inclusive curriculum,
- continuing the fight against the factor that hinders the development of social justice as much as possible (Furman, 2012).

In the light of aforementioned studies related to the social justice, theoretical framework on gifted and talented education needs to be presented. This aims to rationalize the importance of the current study by mirroring the issues of the special population: gifted students.

Gifted and Talented Students in Education

Clark (2015) defines a gifted individual as a person who demonstrates advanced, highly integrated and accelerated development of functions in the brain. The gifted individuals attend Science and Art Centers (SACs), which are project-oriented centers aiming to develop talent and potential, established in addition to the schools. SACs were founded by the MoNE in Türkiye. Gifted individuals often access intellectual peers through practices such as advanced placement programs, acceleration practices, summer schools, and additional education classes (Kanlı, 2021).

The asynchronous development of gifted individuals, their “gifted” label, the expectations of their families and their environment, their dissatisfaction with the educational environment put them at a disadvantage and constitute a risk factor for

them (Pfeiffer & Stocking, 2000). Benefiting the qualified education opportunities may affect disadvantaged students' development positively. So, it is significant to provide support the students in these groups at schools. One of the important actors for this support is the school principals. School principal's support of disadvantaged students can increase their school engagement (Özdemir, 2017).

There are references for why gifted individuals are defined as disadvantaged. The difficulties they face, the educational approaches towards them, the qualifications of educators, and school principals cause them to be disadvantaged. These are some of them: They are identified, and start special education late (Altıntaş & İlgün, 2016); teachers and school principals experience problems in the education process (Levent, 2011; Özkan, 2009; Summak & Çelik Şahin, 2013), transportation problems, inadequacies of physical equipment and instructional materials (Atlı & Balay, 2016), inadequacy of school management and buildings (Güneş, 2018), lack of education policies (Cevher Kılıç, 2015; Çelik Şahin, 2021). In addition, Çelik Şahin (2021) found out that the sense of injustice outweighs in the SACs. Teachers expect the school principals to be impartial and fair. It has been explored SACs have insufficient positive working environment and lack of merit in the school principals' selection process. Teachers and school principals need guidance and process-oriented supervision. There are no objective criteria, transparency, feedback and standard measurement tools in the supervision process, and this hinders the effectiveness of the supervision.

When the national literature is examined, it is possible to find official documents examining the issues of talented individuals and social justice. During the First Five-Year Development Plan (1963-1967), it was emphasized that facilitating the access of talented individuals to all levels of education and organizing the education system in a way that would ensure the distribution of various tasks in society among citizens according to their abilities would realize the principles of both social justice and equal opportunity in society. Similarly, in the Third Five-Year Development Plan (1973-1977), the balanced distribution of educational institutions throughout the country and the provision of social justice and equal opportunities for talented and low-income individuals to benefit from education were listed among the general principles of education (Turkish Grand National Assembly Parliamentary Research Commission Report, 2012).

According to Bell (1997), the primary goals of social justice are to satisfy the demands of society's members and guarantee that every group engages in society equally. Equitable resource distribution, psychological and physical safety for all members in the community are characteristics of social justice. The Basic Law of National Education (1973) draws attention to equality of opportunity in education. Considering these resources, it is thought that building social justice for disadvantaged groups in education will contribute to equal participation in society, equal distribution of resources and environment of trust. Gifted education is strongly linked to the needs

for individual's development (Schulz, 2005). Current practices of gifted teaching require more supportive research-based information that can lead to find out the most appropriate pathways where individual's requirements, cognitive, social, and other contextual factors are taken into consideration. In recent years, scholars and educators showed attention to address these issues of inequality and social justice in gifted education (Chowdhury, 2017). The research points to the importance of providing equal opportunities, meeting educational needs, and ensuring social justice for gifted students.

Importance of the Research

A review of studies conducted until 2024 revealed that literature on social justice practices for gifted students is highly limited (Chowdhury, 2017; Dai, 2013; First Five-Year Development Plan 1963-1967; Preliminary Situation Assessment Report, 2004; Prime Ministry State Planning Organization, 1973; Schulz, 2005), and no academic research found in the national literature on social justice leadership for gifted and talented students. The fact that no study aiming to determine the social justice practices and leadership behaviors of school principals towards gifted students was found in the literature has also been the driving force of this study. As a principle of equality in education, it is significant to clarify the level of social justice leadership practices for meeting the needs of gifted students. Equal education means that a gifted student can have the learning opportunity he or she needs. Gifted students can have the learning opportunities they require when they receive equal education. Equal education also means that each child can maximize his or her own intelligence and talent and find suitable environments to use that intelligence and talent. This opportunity should be offered to all on equal terms (Hotaman, 2010). It is predicted that the creation of these environments will positively affect the success, sense of belonging and development of gifted students. This research is expected to serve as a resource for both policymakers and practitioners in addressing social justice concerns and the needs of gifted students in school environments.

Equality in education is the provision of education in line with the interests and abilities of the ones who have different abilities from their peers, taking into account their differences. From this perspective, special education for gifted children does not violate the principle of equality in education. Because both the skills acquired later and the cognitive and physical differences that individuals have innately show that there is no absolute equality in real life (Levent, 2011). The failure to provide the necessary education for children with special educational needs is considered as inequality of opportunity in education (Celkan, 1991), and supporting and maximizing talents is accepted as the essence of equality of opportunity in education (Ergün, 1992). Dai (2013) focuses on making gifted education socially defensible. Key principles and values that direct policy and practice, including efficiency or educational productivity, diversity, equity and social equality, excellence, and selectivity, must be supported in order to achieve this goal.

Curriculum and accountability standards are two examples of how the dominant culture has influenced education. Students from different cultures or classes are treated unfairly when their eligibility for gifted services is based on their performance in these areas. When services for identified students are of a higher quality than what unidentified students receive, identified students have been given an unfair advantage. When participation is open exclusively to those who have had experiences that only those in the dominant culture or social class have had, an injustice has been done to those with similar potential who lack appropriate experiences because of their language or economic or cultural differences. All these conditions presently exist in gifted education to varying degrees (Cross, 2013).

As social justice leaders, school principals are the architects and founders of a new social order in which social opportunities are expanded for disadvantaged individuals (Jean-Marie, Normore & Brooks, 2009). In this context, school principals who exhibit social justice leadership behaviors support all students in the school, especially those from the disadvantaged group (Özdemir & Pektaş, 2017). The most important feature of social justice leadership is to offer disadvantaged groups a leadership that is positive and free from problems arising from injustice (Blackmore, 2006).

Özdemir (2017) found out that if the school principals demonstrate social justice leadership, it will contribute to development of positive attitudes towards schools. Additionally, it will increase the students' school engagement. Murray (2009), who conducted a similar study, observed that supporting disadvantaged students increased their school engagement. According to Goren (2019), social justice leadership is a significant predictor of students' sense of belonging to school and also of the quality of school life. As a conclusion, it can be inferred that exploring the social justice leadership behaviors and practices towards gifted students will provide sufficient background to develop educational policies to set and promote social justice at schools. The school principals are undoubtedly implementer of the regulations and policies. So that, exploring the social justice practices towards a special and minority group such as the gifted ones will enable to review the gaps, and settle equity.

In the light of the literature background related to the social justice and gifted education context, difficulties faced by the gifted students, it is thought to examine school principals' social justice leadership behaviours towards gifted students with different variables. These two concepts, social justice and gifted students, are the original aspects of the present study, and it aims to find out the social justice leadership behaviours of school principals towards gifted students. As a consequence, the current study is expected to contribute to the national and international literature focusing on social justice leadership and gifted students.

Method

Research Design

A survey model, which aims to measure the social justice leadership practices of school principals for gifted high school students, was used in the study. It is a quantitative research and describes a past or present situation (Karasar, 2015). The present study which focuses on the social justice leadership skills of the school principals in the scope of meeting the needs of gifted high school students is a correlational survey.

The research question is as follows;

What is the level of school principals' social justice leadership behaviors towards gifted students?

This question guided the research. To provide a sharper focus, the study concentrated on further information, and therefore created three sub questions:

- a) Do the school principals' social justice leadership behaviors differentiate according to gender of the gifted high school students?
- b) Do the school principals' social justice leadership behaviors differentiate according to parents' education level of the gifted high school students?
- c) Do the school principals' social justice leadership behaviors differentiate according to family income of the gifted high school students?

Population and Sample

The homogeneous sampling technique which was one of the purposive sampling methods was used in the research. In quantitative research, purposive sampling can improve precision and validity (Bougie & Sekaran, 2020). Purposive sampling enables researchers to collect data that aligns closely with specific parameters, contexts and research objectives (Saunders et al., 2023). The research sample consists of 253 gifted students studying at different high schools in Adana in 2022-2023 academic year.

Table 1.
Participant profile

Participants	N	%
Gender		
Male	120	47.4
Female	133	52.6
Grade		
9	105	41.5
10	56	22.1
11	52	20.5
12	40	15.8
Mother graduation		
Primary school	14	5.5
Secondary school	16	6.3
High school	49	19.4
University	139	54.9
Masters/Doctoral degree	35	13.8
Father graduation		

Primary school	7	2.8
Secondary school	7	2.8
High school	46	18.2
University	140	55.3
Masters/Doctoral degree	53	20.9
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Family monthly income (TRY)		
1000-5000	16	6.3
5100-10000	50	19.8
10100-15000	54	21.3
15100-20000	49	19.4
20100-25000	39	15.4
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Total	253	100

Table 1 demonstrates the participant profile. 133 (52.6%) were female and 120 (47.4%) were male. 105 of the participants are in 9th grade (41.5%), 56 in 10th grade (22.1%), 52 in 11th grade (20.5%) and 40 in 12th grade (15.8%). The participants' age range is from 14 to 18. Considering the maternal education status of the participants, 14 (5.5%) were primary school graduates, 16 were secondary school (6.3%), 49 were high school (19.4%), 139 (54.9%) were university graduates, and 35 have masters/doctoral degree (13.8%). When the father's education status of the participants is examined, 7 of them are primary school (2.8%), 7 of them are secondary school (2.8%), 46 of them are high school (18.2%), 140 of them are university (55.3%) and 53 of them have masters/doctoral degree (20.9%). When the family income is examined, the number of participants with monthly income between 1000-5000TRY is 16 (6.3%), 45 (17.8%) between 5100-10000TRY, 50 (19.8%) with 10100-15000TRY, 54 (21.3%) between 15100-20000TRY, 49 (19.4) with 20100-25000TRY and 39 (15.4%) with 25100 and above.

Data Collection

"Scale for Social Justice Leadership-SSJL" (Özdemir & Kütüküt, 2015) was used as a data collection tool. This scale is a Likert-type scale with response options such as "Strongly Disagree", "Slightly Agree" "Moderately Agree", "Occasionally Agree", "Strongly Agree". The scale's sub-dimensions are critical consciousness (9 items), support (12 items), participation (3 items). Cronbach Alpha for scale in total is .94, for support sub-dimension .91, for critical consciousness sub-dimension .92, for participation sub-dimension.72.

Data Collection Process

Quantitative studies define validity and reliability standards as following: providing a detailed account of the research process from beginning to end; providing an objective, adaptable, and transparent report of the findings (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008). The research data were collected through the form prepared in the electronic environment. Instructions and explanation was given by the researcher on the google form. It takes an average of five minutes to complete the scale.

Data Analysis

Quantitative techniques were used for the data analysis. In order to identify the suitability of the data set for analysis, missing data and extreme value analyzes were performed. In this context, incomplete or incorrect data entries are excluded from the assesment. When evaluating the data, the arithmetic mean was evaluated as “Very Low” in 1.00-1.80 range, “Low” in 1.81-2.60 range, “Medium Level” in 2.61-3.40 range, “High” 3.41-4.20 range, and “Very High” in 4.21-5.00 range.

Findings

SPSS program was used for the analysis. Kolmogorov Smirnov test is one of the most common hypothesis tests that test the assumption of normality, if the significance value above 0.05 then the data is considered normal (Collier & Bienstock, 2006). The Kolmogorov Smirnov normality test was performed for the research data, and it was identified that the data were not normally distributed since the values were less than 0.05. Descriptive statistical analyzes were conducted to find out the social justice leadership practices towards gifted students. Kruskal Wallis H. and Man Whitney U. analyzes were conducted for demographic variables.

Table 2.

Descriptive statistics of sub-dimensions of SSJL

SSJL	Mean	SD	Cronbach alpha
Scale	3.37	.92	.95
Support	3.41	.96	.93
Critical consciousness	3.66	1.03	.94
Participation	2.35	1.25	.82

Table 2 demonstrates that the general average of SSJL was 3.37 and it was determined that the social justice leadership behaviors of school principals were at a moderate level. It was found that the critical consciousness sub-dimension was high with an average of 3.66, the support sub-dimension was high with an average of 3.41, and the participation sub-dimension was low with an average of 2.35. Cronbach's alpha values are .95 for the whole scale, .93 for the support sub-dimension, .94 for the critical consciousness sub-dimension, and .82 for the participation sub-dimension.

Table 3.

Man whitney u test results for gender variable

SSJL	Group	N	Average rank	Rank total	U	p
Support	Female	133	139.70	18579.50	6291.50	.004
	Male	120	112.93	13551.50		
Critical consciousness	Female	133	136.61	18169.50	6701.50	.02
	Male	120	116.35	13961.50		
Participation	Female	133	134.48	17885.50	6985.50	.08
	Male	120	118.71	14245.50		
Total	Female	133	139.43	18544.50	6326.50	.004

Male	120	113.22	13586.50
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In Table 3, the social justice leadership participation perceptions of students were insignificant according to the gender variable ($p>.05$). However, social justice leadership total scores, critical consciousness and support sub-dimension perceptions differentiated significantly according to the gender variable. Male students evaluate school principals' social justice leadership practices lower than female students.

Table 4.

Kruskal wallis h test analysis results regarding the parent education variable

Mother Graduation Level	N	Average rank	sd	X ²	p
Primary school	14	146.75	4	1.419	.84
Secondary school	16	133.50			
High school	49	125.94			
University	139	124.05			
Postgraduate	35	129.34			
Father graduation level	N	Average rank	sd	X ²	p
Primary school	7	105.93	4	5.721	.22
Secondary school	7	188.21			
High school	46	121.77			
University	140	126.99			
Postgraduate	53	126.26			

Table 4 demonstrates that the social justice leadership practices were insignificant according to the parents' education level.

Table 5.

Kruskal wallis h test analysis results regarding family income variable

Total income (TRY)	N	Average rank	sd	X ²	p
1000-5000	16	104.78	5	9.31	.09
5100-10000	45	155.11			
10100-15000	50	126.64			
15100-20000	54	123.23			
20100-25000	49	120.74			
25000and above	39	117.22			

According to the analysis results, the students' perceptions of the social justice leadership behaviors demonstrated by the school principals were insignificant according to the families' monthly income.

Discussion and Conclusion

The research results indicated that school principals demonstrate social justice leadership behaviors towards gifted students at a moderate level. Among the social justice leadership scale subdimensions, the "support" and "critical consciousness" sub-dimensions were at the highest level, while the "participation" sub-dimension was the lowest. In the literature, the components that should be considered to guarantee social justice in education have been discussed. Furman and Shields (2005) explained the necessary components to build up social justice in education as respect for the cultural values and differences of individuals, freedom of expression, supported participation, and a culture of common choice and interdependence on the basis of mutual benefit. It is marked that by reflecting of social justice behaviors in the classroom, students' courage, risk taking, open-mindedness, and willingness to look at events from multiple perspectives develop positively (Koçak & Bostancı, 2019). Özdemir et al., (2021) found out that school administrators should demonstrate a leadership approach that promotes the academic growth of every student, particularly the disadvantaged ones. School principals should give all students equal access to high-quality and enriched educational materials in order to achieve this goal. Additionally, they should design instructional strategies to support disadvantaged students and involve all students. Boyles, Carusi, and Attick (2009) argued that social development will be achieved through the actions of teachers and leaders to address inequalities in schools. In this context, strengthening and raising the three dimensions of social justice leadership, which are support, critical consciousness and participation, to high levels will be an important step in eliminating the obstacles and limitations faced by disadvantaged gifted students.

The relationship of total and sub-dimensions of SSSL and the participants' genders was insignificant. Compared to male students, female students perceive social justice leadership practices at a higher level. This result demonstrates similarity with some references in the literature. Local socio-cultural and socio-economic inequalities, disability, racial, ethnic, religious, gender, etc. Discriminatory and marginalizing practices are seen as the biggest obstacles to social justice in education (Polat, 2007; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2021). This study proved that social justice practices provided for female are more than male. Attempts to ensure social justice in education will also manifest itself in social life, and improvements and developments in this regard will accelerate. Changes in the development that can be achieved in social life with education also provide positive contributions to education. Thus, on the basis of equality in education, rights and freedoms will be wider and more acceptable with educational activities where everyone's free preferences and wishes are taken into account (Bozkurt, 2018; Özdemir & Pektaş, 2017). In İmamoğlu Akman's (2023) study, when the perceptions of school principals on social justice leadership behaviors and all its dimensions were examined, it was explored that female students have higher perceptions than male

students. In the study of Gürgen (2017), it was emphasized that school principals should be more supportive for girls to ensure social justice at school and social justice should be strengthened so that they can express themselves.

The difference between the total and sub-dimensions of SSJL and the education levels of the parents was insignificant in this research. The research results demonstrated more than half of parents of the gifted students graduated from university. Similarly, Köksal and Boran (2016) found out that 68% of fathers of gifted students graduated from university, or graduate education level, and 47.8% of mothers graduated from university. Likewise the related literature (Erdem, 2015; Keleş & Doğan, 2020; Köksal, 2021), most of the gifted students' parents graduated from university/colleges. It can be interfered that more educated parents provide more enriched livings, sophisticated lifestyle for their children. According to Çam-Tosun and Tan, the parents of gifted and non-identified children differ in their expenditures for their children. When it came to out-of-school expenses, parents spent money the most for books, movies, and intelligence games for their gifted children, but they spent for field trips and movies for their non-identified children (Çam-Tosun & Tan, 2021).

Turhan (2010) mentions the importance of the leadership roles of principals in eliminating social injustices in terms of both students and teachers in schools that provide education to students from different socio-economic and socio-cultural environments. There are studies on the school principals' social justice leadership that no significant difference was seen in the mean scale points according to education level of participants (Kilim et al., 2023). In another study (Akyürek, 2021), which differs from the current research findings, teachers' perceptions of school principals' level of social justice leadership demonstrates a significant difference according to the educational status variable.

The research results showed that the difference between the total and sub-dimensions of SSJL and the total monthly income of the participants' families was insignificant. This finding provides a different approach from some research. There is a study which reveals that students with a low family income have a more positive perception about social justice leadership (Gören Gören, 2019 as cited in Özdemir et al., 2021). The fact remains that some children have exceptional abilities regardless of the income bracket into which they were born, despite the fact that children of socially privileged parents enjoy many benefits, such as greater access to gifted education programs, and private schools (Merry, 2008). The perception of social justice leadership of the gifted high school students who have high or low family income was insignificant. Students with different amount of family income evaluate school principals' social justice leadership approaches in a similar way. According to Akkuş (2019), the family's expenditure on education is important. In this context, the quality of education that individuals can receive is parallel to family income. Since families with low income do not prefer/cannot invest in education, their children are disadvantaged. As reported by the Social Justice Index Report (2019), Türkiye is

ranked the second lowest of the 41 countries in the EU and OECD countries' social justice index. According to the same report, Türkiye is ranked second from the bottom in the income equality ranking and last in the education equality ranking (Hellman et al., 2019). This result indicates that the phenomenon of social justice should be considered important from a social perspective and some precautions should be taken regarding the concept (Kasapoğlu Tankutay, 2024). Similarly, in another study, the low ratio of low-income families to total education expenditures is considered as an indicator of how poor families' children benefit from educational services to less extent than children in the upper-income group (Özdemir & Pektaş, 2017).

Demir (2023) stated that the school principals and teachers make an individual effort for students with low income levels, and school principals explained that it is important to establish the student profile of the school and to identify the students in the disadvantaged category with the studies carried out by the guidance service for the students with low income, while implementing social justice in schools. MoNE, like many other developing countries, works to increase educational opportunities for low-income children in Türkiye (Özdemir et al., 2021). In another study, students' perceptions of social justice leadership did not differentiate significantly according to the monthly family income variable (Imamoğlu Akman, 2023). In the study of Uğurlu and Kumru (2019), it was concluded that when school principals practice social justice leadership, students' sense of belonging to school increases, and a positive school climate is created. Societal values, beliefs, expectations, societal misconceptions and misunderstandings greatly influence the development of gifted education. The issues around social difference, social equality and social justice require more emphasis to improve gifted education. More research are required to address all societal issues pertinent to gifted education. Equal opportunity in education requires an assurance that all students regardless of their identity and their level of ability will be facilitated to develop the full potential of each individual. All children have a right to develop maximally and, this should not be confused with the right to an equal development. Equity should demand the attainment of an individual excellence (Gross, 1999), and excellence should be within the context of equity (Sapon Shevin, 2000).

The results of the present research indicated that school principals demonstrate social justice leadership behaviors towards gifted high school students at a moderate level. The difference between the total and sub-dimensions of SSJL and the education levels of the parents was insignificant. The third result showed no significant difference was identified between the total and sub-dimensions of SSJL and the participants' genders. Another result demonstrated the difference between the total and sub-dimensions of SSJL and the education levels of the parents was not significant. And lastly, the difference between the total and sub-dimensions of SSJL and the total income of the participants' families was not significant. Thus, the conclusions reveals the importance of social justice leadership behaviours towards gifted high school students, and this research is expected to present original and new contributions to the gifted education and social justice leadership literature.

Suggestions

- In order to strengthen the participation dimension of the social justice leadership behaviors of school principals towards gifted students, these students should be included in the decision-making processes regarding the situations that concern them, and a culture of democracy should be developed in schools.
- Research can be conducted in which the method is different (qualitative, longitudinal, mixed, etc.) regarding social justice leadership approaches for gifted students.
- Social justice leadership behaviors of teachers of gifted students can be examined, action researches and in-service trainings can be planned to develop these behaviors.

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Genişletilmiş Özet

Toplumsal yaşamdaki kaynak ve fırsatlara erişimleri kontrol etme üzerine verilen alan mücadelesinin en yoğun geçtiği yerlerden birisi de eğitimidir (Aktay, 2016). Türkiye özel yetenekliler eğitimi alanında politikalar üretmektedir, ancak bu politikalar uzun süreli olmamaktadır (Altıntaş & İlğün, 2016; Sak vd., 2015). Bu sebeple ülkemizde özellikle ekonomik açıdan iyi durumda olan aileler, özel yeteneklerin geliştirilmesi konusunda daha avantajlı olup, maddi güçleri ile farklılaştırılmış ve zenginleştirilmiş eğitim olanaklarına ulaşabilmektedirler. Sosyo-ekonomik açıdan dezavantajlı olan aileler ve çocukları ise hem eğitim farkındalık açısından hem de eğitim olanaklarına ulaşma açısından iki kere dezavantajlıdır. Çelik Şahin (2021) tarafından yapılan araştırmada BİLSEM’lerde adaletsizlik duygusunun hâkim olduğu vurgulanmıştır. Öğretmenler, yöneticilerinin tarafsız ve adil olması beklentisindedir. Pozitif çalışma ortamının ve yönetici seçme sürecinde liyakat eksikliğinin mevcut olduğu tespit edilmiştir. BİLSEM’lerin fiziki durumlarının ve öğretimsel materyallerin yetersiz olduğu bulgular arasındadır. Öğretmen ve yöneticilerin rehberliğe, süreç odaklı bir denetime ihtiyaçları bulunmaktadır. Denetim sürecinde nesnel ölçütler, şeffaflık, geri bildirim ve standart ölçme araçları bulunmamaktadır ve bu durum denetimin etkililiğini engellemektedir. Okul müdürleri tarafından sergilenen sosyal adalet davranışlarının, öğrencilerin okula yönelik olumlu tutum geliştirmesine katkıda bulunarak okul bağlılığını artırdığı belirlenmiştir (Özdemir, 2017).

Bell’e göre (1997) sosyal adaletin amacı toplum üyelerinin ihtiyaçlarını karşılamak ve toplumdaki tüm grupların tam ve eşit katılımını gerçekleştirebilmektir. Sosyal adaleti sağlamış toplumlarda kaynakların dağılımı eşit ve tüm toplum üyeleri fiziksel ve psikolojik olarak güvencedir. Milli Eğitim Temel Kanunu (1973) eğitimde fırsat eşitliğine dikkat çekmektedir. Eğitimde eşitlik ilkesi kapsamında, sosyal adalet liderliği uygulamalarının hangi düzeyde olduğunun tespit edilmesi, bu öğrencilerin ihtiyaçlarının karşılanması için önem arz etmektedir. Eşit eğitimle kastedilen, özel yetenekli bir çocuğun ihtiyaç duyduğu öğrenme fırsatına sahip olabilmesidir. Eşit eğitim aynı zamanda; her çocuğun kendi zekâsını ve yeteneğini en üst düzeye çıkarabilmesi ve bunu kullanmak için uygun ortamlar bulabilmesidir. Bu fırsat herkese eşit koşullarda sunulmalıdır (Hotaman, 2010). Bu ortamların oluşturulması, özel yetenekli öğrencilerin başarısını, aidiyet duygusunu ve gelişimlerini olumlu etkileyeceği öngörülmektedir. 2023 yılına kadar yapılmış araştırmalar incelendiğinde, özel yetenekli öğrencilere yönelik sosyal adalet uygulamaları ile ilgili yapılan araştırmaların çok kısıtlı olduğu ulusal alan yazında ise hiç mevcut olmadığı tespit edilmiştir. Tespit edilen bu problem, araştırmanın çıkış noktasıdır.

Özel yetenekli lise öğrencilerine yönelik olarak okul müdürlerinin sosyal adalet liderliği becerilerini ölçmeyi hedefleyen bu araştırmada nicel araştırma yöntemlerinden tarama modeli kullanılmaktadır. Tarama modeli, geçmişte ya da hala var olan bir durumu olduğu şekliyle betimlemeyi amaçlar (Karasar, 2015). Araştırmanın çalışma grubu, 2022-2023 eğitim öğretim yılı Bahar döneminde Adana ilindeki Bilim ve Sanat Merkezleri’ne devam eden 253 lise öğrencisi oluşturmaktadır.

Katılımcı öğrencilerin 133'ü kadın (%52,6), 120'si erkektir (%47,4). Araştırmada veri toplama aracı olarak Özdemir ve Kütküt (2015) tarafından geliştirilen Sosyal Adalet Liderliği Ölçeği (SALÖ) kullanılmıştır. Araştırma verilerinin toplanması elektronik ortamda hazırlanan form ile gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Okul yöneticilerinin sosyal adalet liderliği davranışlarının orta düzeyde olduğu bulgulanmıştır. Eleştirel bilinç alt boyutunun 3.66 ortalama ile yüksek, destek alt boyutu 3.41 ortalama ile yüksek ve katılım alt boyutunun 2.35 ortalama ile düşük olduğu bulgulanmıştır. Cronbach alpha değerleri ise tüm ölçek .95, destek alt boyutu .93, eleştirel bilinç alt boyutu .94, katılım alt boyutu .82'dir. Cinsiyet değişkenine göre okul yöneticilerinin sosyal adalet liderliği davranışları anlamlı bir farklılık oluşturmamaktadır ($p>.05$). Erkek öğrenciler, kız öğrencilere göre, okul yöneticilerinin sosyal adalet liderliği davranışlarını daha düşük olarak değerlendirmelerine rağmen istatistiksel olarak anlamlı değildir. Aile geliri değişkeni ile okul yöneticilerinin sosyal adalet liderliği davranışları arasında anlamlı bir farklılık olmadığı bulgusu elde edilmiştir. Ayrıca, Annenin ve babanın eğitim düzeyi ile okul yöneticilerinin özel yetenekli öğrencilere yönelik sosyal adalet liderliği davranışları arasında anlamlı bir farklılık bulunmamaktadır.

Okul yöneticileri, özel yetenekli öğrencilere yönelik sosyal adalet liderliği davranışlarını orta düzeyde sergilemektedir. Sosyal adalet liderliği davranışlarından en yüksek düzeyde sergilediği «destek» ve «eleştirel bilinç» alt boyutları, en düşük ise «katılım» alt boyutudur. Boyles, Carusi ve Attick (2009) toplumsal gelişimin, öğretmenlerin ve liderlerin okullardaki eşitsizlikleri gidermeye yönelik eylemleri yoluyla sağlanacağını ileri sürmüşlerdir. Bu bağlamda sosyal adalet liderliğinin üç boyutu olan destek, eleştirel bilinç ve katılım boyutlarının güçlendirilmesi ve yüksek düzeylere çıkarılmasının, dezavantajlı özel yetenekli öğrencilerin karşılaştıkları engel ve sınırlılıkların giderilmesinde önemli bir adım olacaktır.

SALÖ toplam ve alt boyutları ile katılımcıların cinsiyeti arasında anlamlı bir fark bulunmamaktadır. Kız öğrenciler, erkek öğrencilere kıyasla okul yöneticilerinin sosyal adalet liderliği davranışlarını daha yüksek düzeyde olduğunu belirtmişlerdir. Bu sonuç, alan yazında yer alan bazı kaynaklara karşıt olarak nitelendirilebilir. Yerelde yaşanan sosyo kültürel ve sosyo ekonomik eşitsizlikler, engelli olma durumları, ırki, etnik, dini, cinsiyet vb. ayrımcı ve ötekileştirici uygulamalar eğitimde sosyal adaletin önündeki en büyük engeller olarak görülmektedir (Polat, 2007; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2021). Yapılan bu araştırmada, kadınlara yönelik sağlanan sosyal adalet uygulamalarının daha fazla olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Eğitimde sosyal adaleti sağlamaya yönelik girişimler sosyal yaşamda da kendini gösterecek ve bu konuda iyileştirme ve gelişmeler hızlanacaktır. Eğitimle toplumsal yaşamda başarılıabilen gelişme ve değişimler aynı zamanda eğitime de olumlu katkılar sağlamaktadır. Böylece eğitimde eşitlik temelinde herkesin özgürce tercih ve isteklerinin dikkate alındığı eğitim etkinlikleriyle hak ve özgürlükler daha geniş ve kabul edilebilir olabilecektir

(Bozkurt, 2018). SALÖ toplam ve alt boyutları ile katılımcıların ebeveynlerinin eğitim düzeyleri arasında anlamlı bir farklılık bulunmamaktadır.

Araştırmanın diğer sonucuna göre, SALÖ toplam ve alt boyutları ile katılımcıların ailesinin toplam geliri arasında anlamlı bir farklılık bulunmamaktadır. Demir (2023) araştırmasında gelir düzeyi düşük öğrenciler için okul yönetiminin ve öğretmenlerinin bireysel bir çaba içinde olduklarını, okul yöneticilerinin okullarda sosyal adaleti hayata geçirirken gelir düzeyi düşük öğrenciler için öncelikle rehberlik servisi tarafından yürütülen çalışmalarla okulun öğrenci profilinin oluşturulması ve dezavantajlı kategoride olan öğrencilerin tespit edilmesinin önemli olduğunu ifade ettiklerini belirtmiştir.

Okul yöneticilerinin, özel yetenekli lise öğrencilerine yönelik sosyal adalet liderliği davranışlarının incelendiği bu çalışmada önemli sonuçlara ulaşılmıştır. Okul yöneticileri, özel yetenekli öğrencilere yönelik sosyal adalet liderliği davranışlarını orta düzeyde sergilemektedir. Sosyal adalet liderliği davranışlarından en yüksek düzeyde sergilediği destek ve eleştirel bilinç alt boyutları, en düşük ise katılım alt boyutudur. Öğrencilerin cinsiyetleri, okul müdürlerinin sosyal adalet liderliği kapsayıcılık algıları ile anlamlı bir farklılık yaratmamaktadır. Bununla birlikte sosyal adalet liderliği toplam puanları, eleştirel farkındalık ve destek alt boyut algıları cinsiyet değişkenine göre anlamlı bir şekilde farklılaşmıştır. Erkek öğrenciler, okul müdürlerinin sosyal adalet liderliği davranışlarını, kız öğrencilere göre daha düşük değerlendirmektedir. Ebeveyn eğitim düzeyi ile aylık gelirlerinin, özel yetenekli lise öğrencilerinin okul yöneticilerinin sergilediği sosyal adalet liderliği davranışlarına yönelik algılarını etkileyen faktörler olmadığı sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.