TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF GENDER: A METAPHORICAL ANALYSIS OF MALE AND FEMALE STUDENTS

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to reveal teachers' perceptions of gender through the metaphors produced for male and female students. Content analysis was conducted in this qualitative study. The data were collected from 263 teachers working at primary and secondary schools in Tokat using semi-structured survey form. The results revealed that teachers had stereotypes and prejudices which supported patriarchal structure. More than half of the teachers described female students using metaphors such as "sensitive, touchy, and emotional". The most frequently used metaphors in this category were the flower, glass vase, and butterfly. Teachers described male students mostly by using the metaphors that emphasized the "protective" aspect of men. The most frequent metaphor in this category was the tree. Education in Turkey is far from the potential to ensure the gender equality. Gender equality awareness should be established in all segments of society including teachers, and policies towards ensuring gender equality should be put into effect urgently.

Keywords: gender, education, teachers' perceptions, metaphor, Turkey

1. Introduction

Education is among the fundamental human rights. It is the state's basic obligations to provide this right for men and women equally. According to article 10 of Turkish Constitution, *'Men and women have equal rights. The State has the obligation to ensure that this equality exists in practice.'* Ensuring equality is only possible by ensuring gender equality. Gender is about how a society defines men and women as a social being. The culture in which men and women live is the determiner of definition. This culture involves men and women's roles created by social life rather than their inborn physiological, biological, and genetic differences. Therefore, gender roles are learned.

The concept of sex defines the biological aspect of being a man or woman while gender refers to social aspects. Within this context, sex is a demographic characteristic defining individuals biologically (Dökmen, 2017, p. 20) while gender is a sociological

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characteristic. However, it can be argued that cultural structures of gender involve biological sexes in a sense. Generally, it is not possible to know exactly whether the difference between men and women is biological or cultural. In fact, many of the differences are the results of their joint effect (Dökmen, 2014, p. 20). Thus, gender isn't completely disconnected from biological sex. Although gender is shaped in accordance with culture, the subordination of women, for instance, is a common problem that can be seen in many cultures. That can be interpreted as the effect of biological sex in addition to cultural forms in determining the gender concept. According to Connell (1998, p. 190), this concept involves the thought that gender has a subjective dimension that is connected with social structures and relations in addition to individual differences. Therefore, gender is also a feature of collectivities, institutions, and historical processes.

The following parts of the study involved the theoretical background of gender concept, the method, and data collection procedure. Then, the findings and results obtained from data were presented making use of the literature. Finally, some recommendations were presented.

2. Theoretical overview

A variety of theories attempted to explain the development of gender roles of individuals. These theories can be classified into three categories. These are theories based on biological explanations (Psychoanalytic Theory, Biological Theory, Sociobiological Theory), cognitive theories (Cognitive-Developmental Theory, Gender Schema Theory, Information Processing Theory, Social Cognitive Theory), and theories emphasizing social effects and interaction (Social Role Theory, Self-Presentation Theory) (Dökmen, 2017, p. 92). For example, Sociobiological Theory, one of the theories based on biological explanations, associates the gender differences with the programming of continuation of lineage. According to this theory, mate selection, production strategies, and parenthood investments on the continuity of lineage lie in the roots of differences. This theory argues that today's gender differences are associated with an adaptation process regarding the continuity of lineage with the reproduction demands that men and women face (Bussey and Bandura, 1999; Dökmen, 2017, 53-54). One of the cognitive theories, Cognitive—Developmental Theory argues that children develop their stereotyped viewpoints on gender thanks to what they see and hear around them. After they develop their own knowledge about gender, this knowledge turns into gender identity or gender stability in their behaviors and thoughts (Kohlberg, 1966 as cited in Bussey and Bandura 1999). On the other hand, emphasizing social effects and interaction, Social Role Theory associates gender with the process of social structuring rather than those possessed biologically. According to this theory, gender differences are mainly based on social and institutional practices. It argues that men and women are given different roles in society, and men have higher status roles in the hierarchical structure. This difference has an effect on men and women stereotypes, and behaviors and characteristics expected of themselves and the other gender by men and women. If the roles of men and women change, the gender difference will change as well. As the women have higher status roles,

the gender differences will decrease (Eagly and Steffen, 1984 as cited in Dökmen, 2017, 82). Both definitions of gender and theories explaining how the gender roles are developed in individuals indicate that this concept is multidirectional. No matter which theory is used to explain the development of gender roles, it is impossible to explain it without referring to family, school, and society. These three constructs are deterministic in children's learning gender roles. Family, school, and society teach children their gender identity and roles through their own ways of functions whether purposefully or not. The key concept is learning.

The family is the primary construct that teaches the gender roles. Deliberately or not, the family transmits the gender roles to the child ever since he/she was born. The child learns the roles mostly through observations, imitations, and modeling. Some studies revealed the families' positive and negative effects on the transmission of egalitarian roles during the formation of children's perceptions of gender (Aydilek Çiftçi and Özgün, 2011; Epstein and Ward, 2011; Fulcher et al. 2007; Güder and Yıldız, 2016; Tenenbaum and Leaper, 2002). Therefore, the family is the first place where the non-egalitarian gender roles are taught.

This process starting with the family continues with the school. Unlike family, schools teach gender roles in a planned and systematic manner. Thus, it legitimizes the socially adopted roles. This is the socialization function of education. Socialization means making the child a part of the society in which he/she was born and grew up; thus, it is an enculturation process. However, this enculturation process isn't dependent from power and government relations. Therefore, it is not only a definition of an identity or gender role for men and women; it is the indicator of reproduction of unequal power relations between these two genders (Aslan, 2015). As these unequal power relations turn into a gender identity during the socialization process, it moves towards the working life and other parts of social life.

The education system has a determining role in ensuring gender equality because it has a potential to create non-egalitarian or egalitarian gender roles during the socialization of individuals. The access to education for male and female students should be ensured so that education can use its transforming potential. It is the simplest indicator of the effort to ensure gender equality. However, access to education system doesn't guarantee the equality. Doubtlessly, girls experience problems in access to education in many parts of the world (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] 2007). In Turkey, it is observed that there isn't a significant difference between male and female students in terms of access to primary and secondary education during 2016-2017 academic year and schooling rate of female students at higher education (42,6%) is slightly higher than male students (39,2%) (Ministry of National Education [MONE] 2017). Although the access to higher education is similar for male and female students, it is observed that gender difference is seen in field/profession selection. For example, when the undergraduate programs are examined, it can be seen that 71,9% are male students while 29,1% are female students at engineering, 77,3% are male while 22,7% are female at information and communication technologies, 37,4% are male while 62,6% are female at education, and 36% are male while 64% are female at

medicine (Higher Education Council [HEC], 2017). The data show that where the male or female students densify are the fields that support the traditional gender roles. Doubtlessly, the teachers play an important role in these choices.

Although the access to education and field/profession choice are important indicators of gender equality, education system itself is determining the learning of gender perceptions. Therefore, answering the question whether the education system supports the gender equality through the values it transmits or not requires focusing on process indicators. Curricula, textbooks, educational materials, and teacher attitudes are the fundamental indicators of the process. Certainly, all of these indicators have an effect on children's learning gender roles and whether they adopt egalitarian roles or not.

Textbooks and workbooks, in which the gender perceptions are visible, are among the most frequently researched topics in Turkey. An important part of these studies revealed that gender inequality was reproduced through textbooks (Arslan, 2000; Asan, 2010; Esen, 2007; Gümüşoğlu, 2008; Helvacıoğlu, 1996; İnal, 1996; Sayılan, 2012). It is observed that male-dominant viewpoint supporting especially the patriarchal structure, masculine discourse, and understanding that describes women in traditional profession or roles are dominant in these textbooks.

When the stereotypes or biases that are historically used to define women and men are used by teachers to describe male and female students, it might mean that education system is reproducing the gender inequality. As a matter of fact, there are studies evidencing that teachers' attitudes towards an issue have an effect on students' attitudes. For example, Barker and Aspray (2006) revealed a consistency between teachers' attitudes and beliefs of technology with students' beliefs and attitudes. Moreover, some studies found that teachers' behaviors towards male and female students were different (Caldarella, Shatzer, Richardson, Shen, Zhang, and Zhang, 2009; Chronaki, 2012; Culley, 1988; Duffy, Warren and Walsh, 2001; Kokkinos, Panayiotou, and Davazoglou, 2004; Sayılan, 2012; Tan, Ecevit, and Üşür, 2000).

Education is one of the most effective intervention areas so that social values and dynamics turn in a way that they ensure gender equality. The learning and teaching process at schools has the potential to transform values, and attitudes in a way to ensure gender equality. However, the data show that this transformative potential of education in Turkey is used at a limited level. According to Gender Inequality Index, which aims at monitoring the gender inequality and developments of countries about it, and has been estimated since 2006 by World Economic Forum (WEF), Turkey was ranked at 130th place among the 145 countries in 2015 (WEF, 2015, 9). On the other hand, when the family violence, which is among the fundamental indicators of gender, is examined, it can be seen that one out of three high school male graduates committed physical violence to his spouse at least once. Within this context, there is not much difference between primary school graduate males and high school graduate males in terms of this issue (Altınay and Arat, 2007). Another indicator is labor force participation rate. Women's participation rate to the labor force is considerably lower than men. The labor force participation rate was 72,1% for men and 33,8% for women in November 2017 (Turkish Statistical Institute [TSI] 2018). Although the schooling rate of male and female in Turkey was similar,

indicators regarding the working and social life show that education system isn't adequate in ensuring the gender equality in individuals' values, attitudes, and behaviors. The social role of women continues to be defined through their traditional roles in the family, and education is seen as a tool to help women better play their motherhood role and it maintains the traditional structure (Aslan, 1997).

Metaphors are frequently used to reveal individuals' beliefs, attitudes, expectations, and perceptions. Beyond being a rhetoric, metaphors are a way of seeing and understanding the world (Morgan, 1980). Metaphors present a comprehensive perspective regarding the participants' mental images and they reveal a much bigger, more comprehensive, and broader meaning than the participant intended to. They may reveal a viewpoint that even the participant isn't aware of (Nikitina and Furuoka, 2008). When the international literature is reviewed, it can be seen that metaphors are frequently used in educational studies (Berliner 1990; Dikmeyer 1989; Hoyle and Wallace 2007; Nikitina and Furuoka, 2008; Perry and Cooper, 2001; Tobin, 1990). The number of studies using metaphors about school and teacher perceptions in Turkey has increased since the 2000s (Balcı, 2011; Saban, 2008; Özdemir and Akkaya, 2013; Koç, 2014). However, there is scarcely any gender-related studies using metaphors (Aslan, 2015; Başarır and Sarı, 2015; Topuz and Erkanlı, 2016). It is clear that there are a number of factors that have an effect on students' development of gender identity. However, teachers have a vital role in this process. According to MacNaugthon (2006), teachers that model the stereotyped gender roles in the classroom not only restrict the students' experiences but deepen the gender inequality in education as well. It is aimed to contribute to the limited literature in Turkey, and to share the current situation of this concept in Turkey with international readers. Turkey's subjective case and the relevant problems are also new for international literature. The current research presents not only the findings regarding the teachers' perceptions of gender but clues about the cultural aspect of these perceptions as well. Cultural dimension constitutes the foundation of gender concept. Therefore, this research is remarkable for international literature since it presents data from Turkey. Moreover, it is the first study in Turkey that reveals teachers' perceptions through male and female student concepts.

The purpose of this study was to reveal teachers' perceptions of gender through metaphors regarding male and female students and discuss teachers' roles in ensuring gender equality. Within this scope, the following questions were addressed: what were the metaphors that were used by teachers to describe male and female student concepts and what conceptual categories emerged as a result?

3. Method

This section involves research model, participants, data collection tool, data analysis, and interpretation.

3.1. Research model

Aiming at revealing teachers' perceptions of male and female students through metaphors, this study was designed as a qualitative research. It is possible to mention a variety of reasons to use metaphors in this study. According to Collins and Green (1990), metaphors can be used to understand individuals' feelings, comprehension, understandings, and thoughts. These are extremely important since they affect individuals' behaviors in real life. Adler (2008) states that metaphors are influenced by the culture. Therefore, metaphors can be useful in both revealing the aspects that even the participants themselves aren't aware of and interpret the gender concept which is shaped by the culture to a large extent.

3.2. Participants

The participants of this study involved 263 teachers working at different education levels in Tokat (Turkey) during the 2016-2017 academic year. Some variables such as gender, marital status, age, experience, education level, and branch were taken into consideration while selecting participants. It was tried to diversify the participants, and the volunteers took part in. The questionnaire was administered by the author between 3 and 14 April 2017.

3.3. Data collection

The data of the study was collected using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was composed of two parts. The first part involved items regarding the participants' demographic information. The second part involved two open-ended items. The teachers were asked produce two metaphors both for male and female students and explain their rationale (Female students are like …………. because ………… Male students are like ……….. because ………….). According to Şimşek and Yıldırım (2008), the metaphor isn't able to reveal the descriptive or visual power sufficiently on its own. It should be followed by the question of "why". The real power of metaphors is hidden in this question. Individuals can attach different meanings to the same metaphors. In this study, the metaphors are categorized based on the teachers' responses to the question of why.

3.4. Data analysis

The data was analyzed using content analysis technique. The main goal of the content analysis is to reach concepts and relations that can explain the collected data. The similar data are drawn together around concepts and themes in content analysis and they are interpreted (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008, p. 162).

During the analysis and interpretation process of the metaphors, the followings steps were taken. (i) Each questionnaire was given a unique number. (ii) The questionnaires that included unanswered items for either male or female students or both of them were excluded (15 for female students, 33 for male students). Moreover, the questionnaires including a metaphor without an explanation or including the explanation without a metaphor (6 for female students, 5 for male students) were also excluded from the dataset. (iv) The metaphors produced by participants and their

intended uses were examined. The metaphors without an association with the explanation were excluded (9 for female students, 16 for male students). Additionally, ten expressions that weren't metaphors were excluded. This exclusion process was carried out by consulting the experts' opinions. (v) In the next step, the metaphors produced by teachers for male and female students were grouped under conceptual categories based on their intended uses. From time to time, the same metaphors with different meaning attachments were grouped under different categories because the categories were created depending on the meaning rather than the metaphors themselves. While the teachers' metaphors were presented under categories, they were supported by direct quotations from teachers. (vi) In the final step, frequencies of metaphors in each category were estimated, and percentages for some tables were calculated and interpreted.

Some precautions were taken to ensure the validity and reliability of the study. The detailed report of data and explanation of how the researcher ended up with the findings are important criteria for validity (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008). In this study, the analysis of metaphors was described in detail, and the findings were supported by direct quotations. During quoting, teachers' gender, educational level, and branch were coded (WSB1, MPB1; W: Woman, M: Man, P: Primary School, S: Secondary School, B: Branch[ii], the number refers to each unique participant). Thus, the path followed in this study became clear, and it enabled other researchers to follow a similar path. Two experts were included in the analysis to determine whether the metaphors really represented their categories in order to ensure reliability. The number of agreement and disagreement among experts and author was determined. Agreement percent (Reliability= Agreement / Agreement + Disagreement) recommended by Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 64) was used to estimate reliability. Out of 56 metaphors produced by teachers for female students, 3 weren't able to be associated with the attached meaning, and a disagreement between experts and the author emerged. Accordingly, the reliability of the results belonging to "female students" concept was found as .95 using the aforementioned formula. Out of 90 metaphors produced by teachers for male students, 4 metaphors involved disagreement. Accordingly, the reliability regarding the results belonging to "male students" concept was found as .96. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), an agreement close to or over 90% indicates a reliability at a desired level. Moreover, some qualitative data were digitized by using frequency and percentage. Digitization of qualitative data serves a few purposes; increasing reliability, minimizing the bias, and making it possible to make comparisons between themes and categories emerged as a result of analysis (Yıldırım and Şimşek, p. 2008).

[ii] T: Turkish Language and Literature/Turkish Language, M: Mathematic, Tex: Textile, R: Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge, I: Information Technologies, E: English Language, S: Social Studies, C: Classroom Teacher, V: Visual Arts, Bio: Biology, SC: School Counselor, G: Geography, P: Preschool

4. Findings

4.1. Findings regarding demographics

Of all the participants, 39,5% were female while 60,5% were male. 52,9% worked at primary schools and 47% at secondary schools. The majority of participants were married (87,8%), 10,7% were single, and 1,5% were widowed. The majority of participants (83,9%) had six years or more teaching experience.

4.2. Findings regarding the metaphors

In this part of the study, the findings obtained from the analysis of the data collected from teachers were presented.

4.2.1. Findings regarding the metaphors produced for female students

A total of 255 teachers produced 56 metaphors for female students. These metaphors were presented in 6 conceptual categories (Table 1).

Table 1: Conceptual Categories Involving the Metaphors Produced for Female Students

Categories	The Number of Metaphors	Female		Male		Total	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
(1) Metaphors emphasizing that female students are *sensitive, fragile, and emotional*	15	68	66,7	96	62,7	164	64,3
(2) Metaphors emphasizing that female students are *submissive, passive, and dependent*	14	13	12,7	16	10,5	29	11,4
(3) Metaphors emphasizing that female students are *hardworking and responsible*	9	10	9,8	15	9,8	25	9,8
(4) Metaphors emphasizing the *motherhood, fertility, and femininity* roles of female students	6	3	2,9	12	7,8	15	5,9
(5) Metaphors emphasizing that female students are *complicated and hard-to-understand* beings	7	3	2,9	9	5,9	12	4,7
(6) Metaphors emphasizing that female students are *talkative and cunning*	5	5	4,9	5	3,3	10	3,9
Total	56	102	100,0	153	100,0	255	100,0

4.2.1.1. Metaphors used by teachers to describe female students

It was found that 66,7% of female teachers and 62,7% of male teachers described female students as "sensitive, fragile, and emotional" beings/individuals (Table 1). The metaphors used by teachers to describe female students were presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Metaphors used by Teachers for Female Students

Categories[iii]	Female	Male
1	Flower/ rose/ snowdrop/ daisy (52), Glass/ glass vase (4), Butterfly (6), Seedling (1) Cat (1), Gazelle (1), Decoration plant (2) Silk worm (1)	Flower/ rose/ snowdrop/ daisy (63), Glass/ glass vase (10), Butterfly (6), Seedling / Sapling (8), Cat (4), Gazelle (2), Decoration plant (1), Silk fabric (1), Bibelot (1)
2	Water (1), Dough / play dough (4), Bird (1), Empty box (2), Lamb (1), Angel (2), Flowerpot (1), Bucket (1)	Water (4), Bird (2), Empty box (1), Chicken (2), Sheep / Lamb (2), Food processor (2), Car (2), Painting (1)
3	Bee (3), Ant (4), Watch (3)	Bee (6), Ant (2), Watch (1), Gold (1), Fire (1), Precious stone (1), Diamond (1), Sugar (1), Race car (1)
4	Air (1), Tree (2)	Air (3), Soil (4), Tree (1), Sun (2), Mother (1), Spring (1)
5	Smartboard (1), Puzzle (1), Smartphone (1)	Book (4), Puzzle (1) Machine (1), Chameleon (1), Smartphone (1), Computer(1)
6	Parrot (3), Fox (1), Witch (1)	Mirror (3), Fox (1), Intelligence officer (1)

The metaphors in the first category emphasized the female students' sensitivity, fragility, and emotionality. When Table 2 is examined, it can be seen that the metaphors such as flower, rose, snowdrop, daisy, glass, and butterfly were used frequently.

> *"Female students are like flowers. They are petite, fragile, and filled with nice emotions."* (MST75).

> *"Female students are like glass. They are fragile and sensitive. Their feelings can be hurt easily. It is necessary to be delicate in relations with them, like a glassware."* (MSM248)

> *"Female students are like butterflies because they are sensitive and delicate, and they aren't strong against difficulties like butterflies."* (WSTex122)

In the second category, metaphors emphasizing that the female students were "submissive, passive, and dependent" took place. A total of 14 metaphors were produced in this category. Of the teachers who produced metaphors in this category, 12,7% were female and 10,5% were male. The teachers in this category mostly described female students using characteristics such as "submissive, passive, and dependent", which are the characteristics that are expected from women in a patriarchal structure. Female teachers characterized female students as passive and dependent individuals more compared with male teachers.

> *"Female students are like water. They take the shape of the container they enter."* (MSI124)

> *"They are like sheep. They are influenced by each other."* (WST225)

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iii See Table 1 for corresponding categories.

"They are like an empty box. You fill it and they take the shape of how you fill it." (WPE221)

Emphasizing that the female students were hardworking and responsible, the third category involved 9 metaphors. Approximately 10% of teachers described female students using the metaphors in this category. Bee, ant, and watch were the most used metaphors in this group (Table 2).

"They are like bees because they are hardworking, tidy, and neat." (MPT287)

"They are like ants. They are tidy, hardworking, and disciplined individuals like ants. (WPS286)

"They are like watches. They work in an order and are aware of their responsibilities." (WPE265)

Six metaphors emphasizing the female students' "motherhood, fertility, and femininity" roles were produced. Of these metaphors, 2,9% were produced by female teachers, and 7,8% were produced by male teachers (Table 1). These metaphors included air, soil, tree, and sun.

"They are like air because there is no life, no humanity without them. We owe them the continuation of generations." (MPC271)

"They are like soil. They produce and breed." (MST126)

"They are like the sun. They give life and light." (MSV198)

Seven metaphors which emphasized that female students were "complicated and hard-to-understand" were produced. Of these metaphors, 2,9% were produced by female teachers and 5,9% were produced by male teachers (Table 1). These metaphors involved book, smartboard, and puzzle (Table 3).

"Female students are like books. They are complicated and contain information and everything. It requires time and suitable conditions for them to manifest themselves." (MSBio153)

"They are like puzzles. They are complicated and hard-to-understand. But, every attitude has a meaning." (WPC293)

Five metaphors emphasizing that female students were "talkative and cunning" were produced, which can be regarded as some sort of social prejudice. Of these

metaphors, 4,9% were produced by female teachers, and 3,3% were produced by male teachers.

> *"Female students are like parrots. When they see an event at school or around them, they tell it everyone. Just like a parrot, they always talk and never keep quiet."* (WPSC267)

> *"Female students are like intelligence officers. They learn about everything somehow and disseminate it to the whole class. Even I learn something about the school from them.* (MPT260)

4.2.2. Findings regarding the metaphors produced for male students

A total of 230 teachers produced 89 metaphors for male students. These metaphors were classified under 9 conceptual categories (Table 3).

Table 3: Conceptual Categories Involving the Metaphors Produced for Male Students

Categories	The Number of Metaphors	Female		Male		Total	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
(1) Metaphors emphasizing the *protective* aspect of male students.	8	11	12,1	31	22,3	42	18,3
(2) Metaphors emphasizing that male students are *open to manipulation*	16	12	13,2	27	19,4	39	17,0
(3) Metaphors emphasizing that male students are *strong, challenging, and enduring*	17	13	14,3	24	17,3	37	16,1
(4) Metaphors emphasizing that male students are *autonomous*	16	17	18,7	17	12,2	34	14,8
(5) Metaphors emphasizing that male students are *lazy and irresponsible*	9	14	15,4	9	6,5	23	10,0
(6) Metaphors emphasizing that male students are individuals who are *smart*, can think *analytically*, and act *rationally*	10	3	3,3	14	10,1	17	7,4
(7) Metaphors emphasizing that male students are *rude* and *hard-headed*	6	11	12,1	6	4,3	17	7,4
(8) Metaphors emphasizing that male students are *sensitive, fragile*, and *emotional*	5	8	8,8	7	5	15	6,5
(9) Metaphors emphasizing that male students are *hardworking*	2	2	2,2	4	2,9	6	2,6
Total	**89**	**91**	**100**	**139**	**100**	**230**	**100**

4.2.2.1. Metaphors used by teachers to describe male students

The metaphors used by teachers to describe male students were presented in Table 4. Eight metaphors produced by 21,1% female teachers and 22,3% of male teachers emphasized the protective side of male students.

Table 4: Metaphors used by Teachers for Male Students

Categories[iv]	Female	Male
1	Tree (8), Father (1), Scarecrow (1), Coconut (1)	Tree (27), Bag (1), Detective (1), Eyeglasses (1), Dog (1)
2	Sapling (2), Dough/play dough (2), Water (1), Car/Bus (1), Soil (2) Leaf (1), Glass (1), Sponge (1), Puzzle (1)	Sapling (9),), Dough/play dough (3), Stream/water (4), Car/Bus (3), Soil (2), Seed (2), Leaf (1) Painting (1), Notebook (1), Paper (1)
3	Lion /Bull / Camel/ Tiger/Wolf (3), Steel / Iron / Mine (1), Bomb (2), King (1), Pen (1), Monster (1), Marble (1)	Lion /Bull / Camel/ Tiger/Wolf (14), Steel / Iron / Mine (3), Warrior / Fighter (2) King (1), Brave boy (2), Pen (1), Energy ball (1)
4	Sea (6), Flea / Squirrel (4), Insect (1), Wind / Air (2), Book (1), Horizon (1), Volcanic mountain (1), Summer rain (1)	Sea (1), Flea / Squirrel (2), Insect (4), Wind / Air (2), Book (1), World (1), Fireworks (1), Car without breaks (1), Autumn (1), Agent (1), Ball (1)
5	Cicada (6), Box/ Empty box/Cube (3), a Herd of Sheep (2), Broken record (1), Turtle (1), Seasonal worker (1), Pot	Cicada (4), Box/ Empty box/Cube (3), Turtle (1), Pot (1),
6	Mind (1), Cellphone (1), Sun (1) Programming language (1)	Computer (6), Mind (1), Wheel (1), Internet (2), Voice recorder (1), Fox (1), Star (1)
7	Wood/ Log (4), Stone (2), Machine (2), Cactus (3),	Wood/ Log (4), Stone (2), Machine (1), Rooster (1)
8	Flower /rose (6), Glass (1), Butterfly (1)	Flower /rose (5), Glass (1), Diamond (1)
9	Bee (2)	Bee (3), Ant (1)

The metaphor used by teachers to emphasize male students' protective side was the tree (Table 4).

> *"Male students are like trees. They can stand against the problems. They protect those who are weaker than them."* (MST245)

> *"Male students are like scarecrows. They seem present but in fact, they aren't most of the time. Still, they protect those around them with their existence."* (WST257)

The teachers produced 16 metaphors, which indicated that the male students were open to manipulation. Of these metaphors, 13,2% were produced by female teachers, and 19,4% were produced by male teachers. The most frequently used metaphors in this category were sapling, dough, and water.

> *"Male students are like the sapling. They need care and protection. They can be bent and twisted. They need good guidance to grow well. They play their future roles depending on how they are raised."* (MSBio15)

> *"Male students are like dough because they are available to be given shape."* (WPV201)

[iv] See Table 3 for corresponding categories.

"Male students are like water. They flow into wherever you turn them." (MSV198)

Metaphors emphasizing that male students were strong, challenging, and enduring were produced by 14,3% of female teachers and 17,3% of male teachers. A total of 17 metaphors were produced in this category. The most frequently used metaphors were animals such as lion, bull, camel, tiger, wolf, or mines such as steel and iron.

"Male students are like lions. They are strong and leaders. They are more enduring and stronger. They act rationally rather than emotionally." (WSR247)

"Male students are like steel. They are enduring." (WPC45)

The teachers produced 16 metaphors which emphasized that male students were autonomous/independent. Of these metaphors, 18,7% were produced by female teachers and 12,2% were produced by male teachers. These metaphors included sea, flea/squirrel, and wind.

"Male students are like the sea. Sometimes wavy, and sometimes calm. It is difficult to predict how they will be." (WST1)

"Male students are like fleas. They are lively and independent. It isn't possible to shush them." (WPC197)

"Male students are like the wind. You can't know when and which way they will blow." (WSG154)

Of all the metaphors, 10,1% were produced to emphasize that male students were lazy and irresponsible. There were 9 metaphors in this category. Of these metaphors, 15,4% were produced by female teachers and 6,5% were produced by male teachers. The most frequently used metaphor was cicada in this category.

"Male students are like cicadas. They don't like working. Laziness is in their souls. Of course, I'm telling it about learning because they don't like learning; they have other interests." (WPS286)

"Male students are like turtles. They don't let them get tired. Their own pace isn't enough. They definitely need reinforcement." (WPC94)

Rationality and analytical thinking were expressed as the characteristics of males. In this category, 10 metaphors were produced. Of these metaphors, 3,3% were produced by female teachers and 10,1% were produced from male teachers. Among the most frequently produced metaphors in this group, there were computer, mind, and internet.

"Male students are like computers. They work fast. They are rationalist rather than emotionality. You get the results based on your commands like a computer. Other variables don't get involved like they did for girls." (MSBio153)

"Male students are like programming language because the level of analytical thinking is high." (WSE4)

Six metaphors emphasizing that male students were rude and hard-headed were produced by 12,1% of female teachers and 4,3% of male teachers. The metaphors in this category involved wood, stone, and machine.

"Male students are like wood. You need to carve them well." (WPP240)

"Male students are like stones. They carry their power and toughness with them and try to show them. Both they and their hearts are like stone. They don't listen to words, sometimes it becomes barefacedness." (WPT99)

The metaphors emphasizing that male students were sensitive, fragile, and emotional were produced by 8,8% of female teachers and 5,0% of male teachers. In this category, emotionality was expressed by using metaphors such as flowers, glass, and butterflies like it did for female students.

"Male students are like flowers. They are adorable, innocent, and need care and delicacy." (WPC274)

"Male students are like glass. They seem firm but they are fragile. Suddenly, they fall into pieces." (MSM248)

"Male students are like butterflies. They are free and hard to catch. They fly hopelessly somewhere. But, they have sensitive sides. You need to know how to hold and have a way with them. (WPS298)

Two metaphors emphasizing that male students were hardworking were produced by 2,2% of female teachers and 2,9% of male teachers.

"They are in fact hardworking like bees." (WPC178)

"Male students are like ants. They are entrepreneur and protective. (MPC137)

5. Discussion, conclusion, and recommendations

The current study revealed that teachers had traditional values and attitudes, which supported patriarchal structure. Some stereotypes and prejudices that are frequently

used to describe man and woman in society were also used to describe male and female students. It was determined that society's perception of man and woman was consistent with teachers' perceptions of male and female students. The characteristics that are defined as feminine and masculine were used to describe male and female students at schools. This might be indicating that education system reproduces the gender inequality. More than half of the teachers (64,3%) described female students as sensitive, fragile, and emotional. The use of these metaphors for male students was 6,6%. On the other hand, teachers defined male students by metaphors emphasizing strong, challenging, and protective aspects. Fragility, sensitivity, emotionality, and weakness were used as the characteristics of female students. These kinds of adjectives might be developed while raising male and female children. According to Navaro (2003), men and women have different socialization processes. Men ground their existence on competition and being strong while women on sensitivity, empathy, and closeness to the emotional world during socialization. Women get support when they demonstrate their weakness while they are isolated when they become competitive and strong. These characteristics weaken and trivialize women both in social and working life while they develop the perception that men are superior and valuable. This perception has led underrepresentation of women in management and leadership positions (Stufft and Coyne, 2009). In the background of differentiating professions for men and women in Turkey and many other countries and behind the violence against women lies the sexist stereotypes and prejudices that weaken, subordinate, and devalue women.

Male students were described as *protective* while female students were described as *submissive, passive, and dependent*. Turkey is a country where a traditional/patriarchal structure is dominant in man-woman relationships. The patriarchy and unequal relationships are reproduced at home, school, society, and working life through women's dependency on men. Ideology carries out that during the construction of gender. A remarkable finding of this study was that some metaphors involving sexism and inequality were used more by female teachers to describe female students. For example, 66,7% of female teachers and 62,5% of male teachers described female students as sensitive, fragile, and emotional; 12,7% of female teachers and 10,5% of male teachers described female students as submissive, passive, and dependent; and 4,9% of female teachers and 3,3% of male teachers described female students as talkative and cunning. This finding is important since it showed that women internalized the patriarchal structure at least as much as men. Their internalization of sexist codes feeding patriarch ideology might prevent children from developing egalitarian gender perceptions and roles.

Female students were also described by their motherhood, fertility, and womanhood characteristics. This finding shows that some teachers used biological reductionism approach while they defined female students. On the other hand, 7,5% of teachers described male students as smart, analytically thinking, and rationalist individuals. This viewpoint goes back to enlightened and early theorists. Both enlightened thinkers and early theorists such as Durkheim and Weber addressed fertility roles of women to explain men and women's social positions using biological

reductionism. For example, Rousseau viewed the distinction between men and women in public and private areas as a basic characteristic of social order. Associating men with rationale makes men suitable for public space while identifying women with their body and fertility role makes them suitable for private space and condemns them to their gender (Entwistle, 2012, p. 224 as cited in Ersöz, 2016, p. 13). This biological reductionist approach can cause women to be identified within home rather than working life, to be subordinated, and to be exposed to some kinds of discrimination in labor market even today. Even though women have the same level of education or qualifications with men, they earn less than men in many parts of the world (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] 2012, 195-200). For example, when the gender-based wage differences in terms of education level and profession in 2010 in Turkey were examined, a difference between men and women was determined at a rate of 16,7% at primary and lower secondary school, 10,1% at high school, 19,5% at vocational high school, and 16,1% at college or higher. A wage difference was determined at a rate of 7,4% at service and salesperson, 6,1% at office services, and 19,4% at professional jobs (TSI 2010, 71).

Sometimes, women have to work harder to gain a place for themselves in social and working life. Approximately 10% of teachers described female students as hardworking, which is 2,6% for male students. On the other hand, 10,1% of teachers described male students as lazy and irresponsible. There are some studies revealing that female students are academically more successful, which supported the metaphors regarding hardworking and laziness in this study (Bahar, 2006; Büyüköztürk and Denizkulu, 2002; Duckworth and Seligman, 2006; Koç, Avşaroğlu, and Sezer, 2004; Mau and Lynn, 2001; Pomerantz, Altermatt, and Saxon, 2002; Wilberg and Lynii, 1999). It is possible to associate higher achievement of female students with their families' perceptions of gender. Especially for traditionalist/conservative families in Turkey, the patriarchal structure is dominant. Girls raised in these families might be aware of the fact that they don't have a chance to continue their education once they fail. Moreover, the likelihood of getting married at earlier ages is high in such families, and a failure in education might mean marriage for girls. Although female students have high achievement, it is still possible to get married at earlier ages. The rate of child brides who married before 18 is 28% in Turkey. Nearly all of these children are from families with lower socioeconomic status or traditionalist/conservative families (Türkiye Aile Yapısı Araştırması [TAYA] 2011).

Metaphors emphasizing that female students were dependent by 11,4% of teachers and male students were autonomous/independent by 15,0% of teachers were produced. According to a study by European Commission (2009 as cited in Sayılan, 2012), schools strengthen the dominant masculine and feminine culture. Even though the curriculum is purified from sexism, hidden curriculum might manifest itself in traditionalist images such as "good, silent, and successful girl" and "tough, rebel boy", school discourse, attitudes of some teachers, and cultural context and activities of the school. On the other hand, 4,7% of teachers defined female students as complicated and hard-to-understand. Moreover, 3,9% of teachers used metaphors emphasizing that

female students were talkative and cunning beings, which could be identified as social stereotypes. According to a study cited by McLaren (2011) from Psychology Today, when the administrators and teachers watched a scene involving a class discussion and were asked who spoke most, the vast majority responded girls. However, boys spoke three times more than girls in reality. This research revealed the presence of teachers' gender prejudices against female students at school environment. As cited by Slater (2003), a research carried out by American Association of University Woman in 1991 showed that gender prejudices had a negative impact of girls' education, and this effect increased as the education level increased.

The adjectives used to describe male and female students in this study were mostly consistent with the findings of studies conducted by Williams and Best (1982, 1990 as cited in Dökmen, 2017, p. 108) in 25 countries in America, Europe, Asia, and Australia. In that study, it was found that men and women were attributed similar characteristics in 25 countries. It was determined that men were identified with strong, autonomous, and aggressive while women were identified with emotional, passive, weak, dependent, etc. according to Morgan (1998, pp. 216-217), there is a link between gender clichés and traditional organization principles. Organizations try to be rational, analytical, strategical, strong, and aggressive. In other words, organization principles support the clichés related to men.

Education is an important transformative power in ensuring gender equality. Creation of egalitarian values and attitudes and transformation of attitudes that prevent equality become possible through education. To achieve that, education itself shouldn't produce gender inequality. Ensuring equality and fulfilling potentials of students are possible by treating male and female students equally in the classroom. The education is expected to support and improve equality in order for gender not to limit students through stereotypes and prejudices and to have different experiences in the classroom. Doubtlessly, gender equality isn't something that could be achieved only by the education system. Some steps should be taken to involve women in education, social, and working life, and discriminative practices should be ended. Starting from the faculties raising teachers, gender awareness should be developed in all parts of the society, and policies towards equality should be implemented. Parents should be educated to create gender equality in families. The education system should be able to support gender equality and teach roles so that the society could give the same value to men and women's similarities and differences and their roles.

Conflict of Interest Statement
The authors declare no conflicts of interests.

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