

How Can Gendered Reflexivity Be Used to Deconstruct Teacher Educators' Intellectual Configurations?*

Öğretmen Eğitimcilerinin Düşünsel Kurulumlarının Yapıbozumu İçin Cinsiyet Yüklü Düşünümsellik Nasıl Kullanılabilir?

Asuman Fulya SOĞUKSU** 
Ayşe Gülsüm AKÇATEPE*** 
Mustafa SEVER**** 

Abstract

This research investigates how gendered reflexivity functions as a conceptual tool for teacher educators to deconstruct their intellectual configurations regarding gender. We draw on the phenomenological approach, and Bourdieu's reflexive sociology, and field theory to analyse teacher educators' gendered experiences in the field. To conduct this analysis, we had focus group discussions with teacher educators inviting them to engage in a self-reflexive process on their practices and experiences within the context of dominant gender relations in the field. Through focus group discussions, we tried to understand how teacher educators make sense of their experiences of gender issues and how the practices that constitute these experiences are sustained by the relations in the field. The moments when differentiated understandings of practices and experiences emerged in these discussions let us see a potential that could lead the agents to rethink their practices. Gendered reflexivity, which can be regarded as agents' awareness of their practices and discourses concerning gender and as a continuous and conscious questioning of what mediates these practices and discourses, can serve as a conceptual tool to deconstruct and transform teacher educators' existing gendered intellectual configurations.

Keywords: Field theory, gendered reflexivity, phenomenology, teacher education, teacher educators.

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** Assist. Prof. Dr., Ankara University, Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, E-posta: fsahin@ankara.edu.tr, Orcid ID: 0000-0003-4528-533X.

*** Corresponding Author, Res. Assist. Dr., Ankara University, Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, E-posta: a.g.akcatepe@gmail.com, Orcid ID: 0000-0003-3433-2217

**** Prof. Dr., Ankara University, Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Philosophical, Social and Historical Foundations of Education, E-posta: severmustafa@gmail.com, Orcid ID: 0000-0003-3777-0124

Öz

Bu araştırma, cinsiyet yüklü düşünürselliğin, öğretmen eğitimcilerinin toplumsal cinsiyete ilişkin düşünsel kurulumlarını yapışöküme uğratmaları için kavramsal bir araç olarak nasıl işlev gördüğünü araştırmaktadır. Öğretmen eğitimcilerinin alandaki toplumsal cinsiyete ilişkin deneyimlerini analiz etmek için fenomenolojik yaklaşımdan, Bourdieu'nün düşünsel sosyolojisinden ve alan kuramından yararlandık. Bunun için öğretmen eğitimcileriyle, onları alandaki egemen toplumsal cinsiyet ilişkileri bağlamında pratikleri ve deneyimleri üzerine özdüşünsel bir sürece katılmaya davet eden odak grup görüşmeleri gerçekleştirdik. Odak grup görüşmeleri aracılığıyla, öğretmen eğitimcilerinin toplumsal cinsiyete ilişkin deneyimlerini tartışmaya açarak bu deneyimleri nasıl anlamlandırdıklarını ve bu deneyimleri oluşturan pratiklerin alandaki ilişkiler tarafından nasıl sürdürüldüğünü anlamaya çalıştık. Bu görüşmelerde, pratiklere ve deneyimlere ilişkin farklılaşan anlayışların ortaya çıktığı anlar, failleri kendi pratikleri üzerine tekrar düşünmeye yönlendirecek bir potansiyeli görmemizi sağladı. Faillerin toplumsal cinsiyete ilişkin kendi pratik ve söylemlerinin farkında olmaları ve bu pratik ve söylemlere neyin aracılık ettiğine dair sürekli ve bilinçli bir sorgulama olarak görülebilecek cinsiyet yüklü düşünürsellik, öğretmen eğitimcilerinin düşünsel kurulumlarını yapışöküme uğratmak ve dönüştürmek için kavramsal bir araç olarak hizmet edebilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Alan kuramı, cinsiyet yüklü düşünürsellik, fenomenoloji, öğretmen eğitimi, öğretmen eğitimcileri.

Geniş Özet

Giriş

Eğitim süreçlerinin cinsiyetlendirilmiş doğası; pratikleri, söylemleri, beklentileri, tutumları ve inançları yoluyla öğrencilerin toplumsal cinsiyeti nasıl anladıkları ve yorumladıkları (Younger ve Warrington, 2008) ve okullardaki hakim toplumsal cinsiyet rejimlerine nasıl karşılık verildiği (Cushman, 2012) üzerinde etkisi olan önemli aktörler olarak öğretmenleri işaret etmektedir. Bu durum, toplumsal cinsiyet çalışmalarının öğretmen eğitimi politika ve programlarının temel bir bileşeni olarak kabul edilmesinin önemini vurgulamaktadır. Bununla birlikte, öğretmen eğitimi bağlamındaki toplumsal cinsiyete ilişkin konular okul bağlamdakilerden daha az ilgi görmektedir. Yaklaşık 30 yıl önce Coffey ve Acker (1991), Birleşik Krallık'ta öğretmen eğitiminde toplumsal cinsiyetin marjinal bir konumda olduğunu belirtmiştir. Takip eden yirmi yıl içinde araştırmacılar, toplumsal cinsiyetin Birleşik Krallık'ta öğretmen eğitiminde arka planda kalmaya devam ettiğine dikkat çekmiştir (Coffey ve Delamont, 2000; Younger ve Warrington, 2008; Skelton, 2009; Cushman, 2012). Benzer biçimde Menzies ve Santoro (2018), İskoçya'da toplumsal cinsiyetin öğretmen eğitimi üzerindeki etkisinin hem politika hem de uygulama düzeyinde çok az olduğunu belirtmiştir. Lahelma'nın (2011) çalışması, Finlandiya öğretmen eğitimindeki duruma odaklanmakta ve eğitimde toplumsal cinsiyet araştırmalarının sonuçlarının öğretmen eğitimine yansıtılmadığını savunmaktadır. İsveç'te de toplumsal cinsiyet, ülkedeki diğer yaşam alanlarında öncelikli bir konu olmasına karşın öğretmen eğitimi alanında ön planda görünmemektedir (Weiner, 2000; Malmgren ve Weiner, 2001).

Türkiye’de de öğretmen eğitiminde toplumsal cinsiyet benzer biçimde konumlanmıştır. 2017-2023 Öğretmen Strateji Belgesi, toplumsal cinsiyeti bir eylem maddesi olarak ele almamıştır (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı [MEB], 2017a). Öğretmenlik Mesleği Genel Yeterlikleri, öğretim süreçlerini çocukların bireysel farklılıkları ve sosyokültürel özellikleriyle ilişkilendirmeyi bir yeterlik olarak içerirken toplumsal cinsiyete doğrudan atıfta bulunmamaktadır (MEB, 2017b). 2019-2023 MEB Stratejik Planı, kız çocuklarının ortaöğretime katılımlarının artırılmasını ve devamsızlık ile sınıf tekrarlarının azaltılmasını hedeflemekte, ancak öğretmen eğitiminde toplumsal cinsiyet konularına yer vermemektedir (MEB, 2019). Dolayısıyla, öğretmen eğitiminde toplumsal cinsiyet konularının ilgili politika ve stratejilerde ya hiç yer almadığını ya da sosyokültürel arka plan gibi genel kavramlar kapsamında ele alındığını görüyoruz.

Öğretmen eğitimi politikalarında toplumsal cinsiyetin görünmezliği, hizmet öncesi öğretmen eğitimi programlarında bütünlük bir toplumsal cinsiyet boyutunun eksikliğine yol açmaktadır. Esen (2013) öğretmen eğitimi programlarında başlı başına toplumsal cinsiyet konusunu ele alan herhangi bir ders bulunmadığını, toplumsal cinsiyet konularının diğer derslerin kapsamına dahil edildiğini ya da genellikle konuya ilgi duyan öğrencilerin katıldığı seçmeli dersler kapsamında ele alındığını belirtmektedir. Öğretmen eğitimi programları, öğretmenlerin toplumsal cinsiyete ilişkin gerekli anlayış ve bilgiye sahip olmasını sağlamak açısından önemlidir. Böylece öğretmenler okullardaki toplumsal cinsiyet kalıp yargılarını ve eşitsizlikleri onaylamak ve sürdürmek yerine bunlara karşı koymaya hazırlanabilir (Skelton, 2007; Younger, 2007; Skelton, 2009).

Öğretmen eğitiminde toplumsal cinsiyetin dikkat çekmeyen görünümü, öğretmen eğitimcileri ve öğretmen eğitimi alanı için ne anlama gelmektedir? Weiner (2000), öğretmen eğitiminde feminist söylemin eksikliğinin, öğretmen eğitimcilerini alandaki toplumsal cinsiyet rejimlerine karşı koymak için kullanabilecekleri feminizme ilişkin kuramsal ya da pratik kavrayışlardan mahrum bıraktığını ileri sürmektedir. Bunun yanında, Povey’in de savunduğu gibi, “hizmet öncesi öğretmen eğitimi, toplumsal cinsiyete ilişkin baskın söylemlere direnmek, harekete geçme kapasitesini korumak ve kendimizi değişimin araçları olarak görmeyi sürdürmek amacıyla mesleğe yeni başlayan öğretmenlerle birlikte çalışmanın olanaklı olduğu bir alan olmaya devam etmektedir” (2000, s. 229). Dolayısıyla bu araştırma, cinsiyet yüklü düşünümelliğin, öğretmen eğitimcilerinin toplumsal cinsiyete ilişkin düşünsel kurulumlarını yapışöküme uğratmak için entelektüel bir araç olarak hizmet edip edemeyeceğini görmeye yönelik bir çabadır.

Araştırmamızı Bourdieu’nün düşünümssel sosyolojisi ile alan ve habitus kavramlarına dayandırarak, öğretmen eğitiminde toplumsal cinsiyete ilişkin yerleşik yapıların ve kalıp yargıların derinlemesine bir analizini gerçekleştiriyoruz. Bu analizin Türkiye bağlamında egemen toplumsal cinsiyet tartışmalarını genişletme potansiyeline sahip sosyolojik bir mercek sağlayabileceğine inanıyoruz.

Konumlar arasındaki nesnel ilişkiler ağı olarak tanımlanabilecek alanı, farklı bileşenlerden ya da parçalardan oluşan bir yapıdan çok mantığı, kuralları, normları ve düzenlemeleri olan güçler alanı olarak ele almak esastır. Alan üzerinden düşünmek, ilişkiler hakkında düşünmeyi gerektirir (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Bireyler sosyal dünyada çeşitli sosyal alanlara girerler ve ortak çıkarlar

ile hedefler temelinde hareket eden bir grup birey kendilerini ortak bir sosyal alanda konumlandırır. Bourdieu bunu çeşitli sosyal alanlardan oluşan bir iktidar alanı olarak tanımlar (Thomson, 2008). Dolayısıyla, akademiye de iktidar alanının yapısını yansıtan bir alan olarak görmek kaçınılmazdır. Toplumsal ve kültürel hiyerarşilerin karşıt ilkeleri bu alanın örgütlenmesinde etkilidir (Bourdieu, 1988). Sosyal alanlar ve iktidar alanı arasındaki karşılıklı etkileşimin bir sonucu olarak, iktidar alanında yaşananlar bir sosyal alanı etkilerken bunun tersi de mümkündür (Thomson, 2008).

Düşünümsellik, konumlar ve eğilimler ile habitus ve alan arasındaki döngüsel nedenselliğin sürekli ve bilinçli bir şekilde sorgulanması (Bourdieu, 1988) ve dolayısıyla ortaya çıkan pratiklerin sorgulanması olarak görülebilir. Bunu yapabilmek için ‘...düşünülebilir olanı sınırlayan ve düşünceyi önceden belirleyen düşünülmemiş düşünce kategorilerinin sistematik olarak keşfedilmesini’ gerekir (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, s. 40). Bourdieu’ye göre, ‘düşünümselliği geliştirerek, [sosyolojinin sosyolojisi] insanlara bir şey söylediklerinde ya da düşündüklerinde, nedenlerin yanı sıra gerekçeler tarafından da hareket ettirilebileceklerinin her zaman farkında olmayı öğretebilir’ (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, s. 181-82). Böyle bir farkındalığın, alandaki tüm aktörler tarafından gerçekleştirilmesi koşuluyla etki yaratması beklenebilir (Bourdieu, 2004). Kolektif bir uygulama olarak düşünümsellik bu açıdan daha anlamlı görülmektedir (Schirato & Webb, 2003). Bireysel anlamda özdüşünümsel bir pratik geliştirmek yeterli değildir, zira tüm failer ortak bir kolektif bilinçle donatıldığı sürece alana gömülü olanların dönüştürülmesi yoluyla belirli yapı ve eğilimlerin yeniden üretilmesi engellenebilir.

Araştırmada düşünümselliği kullanma nedenimiz, öğretmen eğitimi alanında toplumsal cinsiyete ilişkin yerleşik yapı ve eğilimlerin yapısökümüne ilişkin değerli içgörüler sağlayabilecek bir bakış açısı sağlama potansiyelidir. Bourdieu’nün sosyal dünyayı anlamaya yönelik ilişkisel yaklaşımı, olay ve olgulara ilişkin belirlemci bakış açısını kırmamızı sağlar ve kendimizi bu olay ve olgulara ilişkin yanılmalardan kurtarmamıza yardımcı olur. Aktörlerin toplumsal cinsiyete ilişkin kendi pratik ve söylemlerinin farkında olmaları ve bunlara aracılık eden şeyi sürekli ve bilinçli bir biçimde sorgulamaları olarak görülebilecek olan toplumsal cinsiyete dayalı düşünümsellik, öğretmen eğitimcilerinin var olan toplumsal cinsiyete dayalı entelektüel yapılandırmalarını yapısöküme uğratmak ve dönüştürmek için kavramsal bir araç olarak hizmet edebilir. ‘Bu nedenle ancak belirli alanlar içinde ve arasında faaliyet gösteren sosyal güçlerin çatışması ve geriliminin kıskırttığı mesafeden ortaya çıkabilen’ (McNay, 1999, s. 110) düşünümsellik, alandaki toplumsal cinsiyet meseleleriyle ilgili olarak aktörlerin kontrolü içinde ve dışında işleyen mekanizmaları görmek ve detaylandırmak için bir temel sunar. Toplumsal cinsiyete dayalı düşünümsellik, öğretmen eğitimcilerine, toplumsal cinsiyet hakkındaki epistemolojik varsayımlarını etkileyen bilinçdışı süreçleri incelemelerini ve sorgulamalarını sağlayan kavramsal bir araç olarak hizmet edebilir. Bunun yanında, öğretmen eğitimcilerinin öznel eğilimleri ile öğretmen eğitimi alanının nesnel yapıları arasındaki ilişkinin analizi, alandaki toplumsal cinsiyet rejimlerini yeniden üreten mekanizmalar ve bu mekanizmaların nasıl dönüştürülebileceği üzerine düşünmek için alternatif bir yol sağlayabilir.

Yöntem

Öğretmen eğitimcilerinin öğretmen eğitimi alanındaki cinsiyetlendirilmiş deneyimlerini araştırmak için fenomenolojik yaklaşımdan (Schutz, 1967; Husserl, 1983; Merleau-Ponty, 2012) yararlandık. Fenomenolojik mercekle aracılığıyla, öğretmen eğitimcilerinin öğretmen eğitiminin kendine özgü ortamlarındaki cinsiyetlendirilmiş deneyimlerinin özerine odaklanarak onların öğretim ya da araştırma yapma eylemlerini cinsiyetlendirilmiş pratikler olarak algılamalarını, alanda işleyen toplumsal cinsiyet kalıp yargılarının ve eşitsizliklerinin farkında olmalarını ve daha da önemlisi kendi toplumsal cinsiyet kalıp yargılarının farkında olmalarını ve öğretmen eğitiminde hakim olan toplumsal cinsiyet rejimlerine verdikleri tepkileri detaylandırmamıza yardımcı oldu.

Araştırmayı Türkiye’de bir devlet üniversitesinde 21 öğretmen eğitimcisi (10 kadın, 11 erkek) ile gerçekleştirdik. Tüm öğretmen eğitimcileri araştırmaya katılmaya gönüllü olmuştur. Katılımcılar, 11 araştırma görevlisi, altı yardımcı doçent ve dört doçentten oluşmaktadır. Araştırmayı yürüttüğümüz fakülte’deki yerleşik toplumsal cinsiyet kalıplarını daha iyi anlama isteğimizi yansıtabilecek biçimde, fakültede on yıl ya da daha uzun bir süre boyunca öğretim elemanı olan öğretmen eğitimcilerine ulaşmaya çalıştık. Bunun yanı sıra, bağlam anlayışımızı alandaki belirli araştırma alanlarıyla sınırlanmamak için farklı bölümlerden farklı araştırma alanlarına sahip öğretim elemanlarına ulaşmaya gayret ettik.

Verileri odak grup tartışmaları yoluyla oluşturduk. Alandaki ilişkilerin hiyerarşik yapısını göz önünde bulundurarak araştırma görevlileri ile ayrı, yardımcı doçent ve doçentlerle ayrı gruplar halinde odak grup görüşmeleri gerçekleştirdik. Diğer katılımcıların görüşme sürecinde rahat olabilmelerini engelleyeceğini düşündüğümüz için profesörleri araştırmaya dahil etmemeyi tercih ettik. Bu nedenle, önce araştırma görevlileriyle iki ayrı odak grup görüşmesi, ardından da yardımcı doçent ve doçentlerle iki ayrı odak grup görüşmesi gerçekleştirdik.

Bulgular

Araştırmamızın bulgularını, alan ve habitusun ilişkiselliğini yansıtabilecek biçimde dört başlık altında sunduk. Toplumsal cinsiyetin öğretmen eğitimi alanındaki konumu, söylem ve uygulama düzeyinde birbirleriyle çelişse de iki yönlüdür. Bunun nedeni, ‘toplumsal cinsiyet’i belirli bir kategori ya da incelenecek bir konu olarak kullanmak istemeyen ancak buna mecbur bırakılan bir grup akademisyen ile toplumsal cinsiyet çalışmak isteyen ancak güç ilişkileri nedeniyle tartışma alanına girmesine izin verilmeyen bir başka grup akademisyenin bulunmasıdır. Başka bir deyişle, öğretmen eğitimi alanında toplumsal cinsiyet üzerine araştırma yapmak ya da araştırma uygulamalarında toplumsal cinsiyet duyarlılığına sahip olmak, kategorik bir değişken olarak toplumsal cinsiyet alanında kalındığı sürece oldukça önemli görünmektedir. İlerlemek ve toplumsal cinsiyeti bir kategori olarak değil de başlı başına bir mesele olarak ele almak isteniyorsa, o zaman sistemin içine gömülü güç ilişkilerine uymak gerekir. Bu son argüman daha fazla araştırma gerektirmektedir çünkü diğer pek çok kavram ya da nosyon gibi toplumsal cinsiyet de artık akademide bir endüstri haline gelmiştir.

Öğretmen eğitiminde toplumsal cinsiyetin ötekileştirilmiş konumu, öğretmen eğitimcilerinin kurum içindeki eylem ve söylemlerine toplumsal cinsiyete direnç pratiği aracılığıyla yansımaktadır. Öğretmen eğitimcilerinin odak grup tartışmalarındaki ifadeleri, onların çeşitli meşrulaştırma mekanizmaları kullanarak toplumsal cinsiyete karşı bir direnç örüntüsü izlediklerini göstermektedir. Toplumsal cinsiyet meselelerine şu ya da bu şekilde mesafe koyma davranışı, toplumsal cinsiyetin alandaki periferik konumu ile öğretmen eğitimcilerinin habituslarına nasıl yansıdığı arasındaki uyuma işaret etmektedir.

Öğretmen eğitimcilerinin rol ve sorumluluklarını belirleyen, cinsiyetlendirilmiş akademik çalışmaların üretilmesi ve sürdürülmesine zemin hazırlayan, alanda basmakalıp cinsiyetlendirilmiş rollere ve sorgulanmayan uygulama biçimlerine yol açan doxa yönelimli bir anlayışın var olduğunu söyleyebiliriz. Sembolik tahakkümü, akademide kadın olmanın gerekliliklerini belirleyerek ve normalleştirerek fakülteadaki eril kültürü sürdüren sosyal süreçler olarak gözlemliyoruz. Alanda kadın öğretmen eğitimcisi olarak kabul görmek için bazı gereklilikler ev içi roller ve annelikle ilgili imgeler çerçevesinde betimlenmektedir.

Toplumsal cinsiyetin alanda görünmezliği, toplumsal cinsiyeti öğretmen eğitimcilerinin gündemine getirecek itici bir gücün ortaya çıkmasını engellemektedir. Özellikle akademide tarafsızlık vurgusunun, kadınları dezavantajlı kılan süreçlerin üzerini örtterek ilişkilerin tarafsız olduğu yanlışlaması yaratması (Tuncer, 2019, s.177), alanda toplumsal cinsiyetin görünürlüğünü engelleyen mekanizmalardan biridir. Bu nedenle, öğretmen eğitimcileri toplumsal cinsiyet konularına ilişkin farkındalıklarını, örneğin kimin hangi koşullarda toplumsal cinsiyet üzerine araştırma yaptığı gibi sınırlı bir söylemle somutlaştırabilirler. Oysa, toplumsal cinsiyet farkındalığı ancak epistemolojik bir arka plana ve derin bir kuramsal ve söylemsel repertuara dayandığında mümkün olabilir. Bu repertuar, bütüncül bir toplumsal cinsiyet anlayışını gerektirir. Bu anlayıştan yoksun öğretmen eğitimcileri, toplumsal cinsiyet körü eğilimlerle alandaki konumlarını korumaya çalışmaktadır.

Sonuç ve Tartışma

Bir kurumun cinsiyetlendirilmiş yapısının varlığının değişmeden veya çok az değişerek sürmesi o kurumdaki faillerin pratiklerinden bağımsız düşünülemez (Tuncer, 2019). Çünkü ilişkisel düşünmek, toplumsal uzamda makro ve mikronun iç içe geçmiş biçimde var olduğunu kabul etmeyi gerektirir. İlişkiler, makronun belirleyiciliği değil kuşatıcılığı bağlamında incelendiğinde mikro düzeyde failliğin varlığı, görünümü ve makroya yanıtı daha kapsamlı biçimde yorumlanabilir. Bu bakış açısından hareketle, eğer akademinin cinsiyetlendirilmiş yapısının varlığından söz ediliyorsa bunun akademideki bireylerin kurum içi pratikleri dolayısıyla sürdürüldüğü sonucuna ulaşırız. Tuncer (2019) akademik alanda kendini eleştirel olarak konumlandıran akademisyenlerin bile gündelik yaşamda cinsiyetçi pratiklerini sürdürme olasılığına dikkat çekmektedir. Tam bu noktada bireylerin kendi pratiklerini sürekli ve bilinçli olarak sorgulamanın gerekliliği ortaya çıkmaktadır. Cinsiyet yüklü düşünömsellik akademisyenlerin kendi pratiklerini sorgulamaları için başvurabilecekleri güçlü bir araç olabilir.

Bu araştırma, toplumsal cinsiyet konularının mevcut öğretmen eğitimi tartışmalarında ön plana çıkarılması gerektiğini vurgulamaktadır. Temel politika belgelerinde toplumsal cinsiyetin anaakımlaştırılması yoluyla makro düzeyde yapılacak bir iyileştirmeye çeşitli destek mekanizmaları eşlik etmelidir. Bu, özellikle ‘konumlandırılmış düşünömselliğın oluşturulması meselesini’ (Adkins, 2004, s. 196) göz önünde bulundurduğumuzda çok önemlidir. Öğretmen eğitimcileri neden sürekli olarak bilinçsizce yapılan ve kanıksanan şeyler üzerine düşünme ihtiyacı hissetmeliler? Bu araştırma bağlamında öğretmen eğitimcilerinin alandaki toplumsal cinsiyet meselelerine ilişkin farklı farkındalık düzeylerine sahip olduklarını, ancak yine de eylemlerinde böyle bir ihtiyaç hissetmediklerini görebiliyoruz. Destek mekanizmalarından biri, öğretmen eğitimcilerine alandaki toplumsal cinsiyet konularını tartışma ve toplumsal cinsiyet alanında kuramsal bir araştırma zemininin oluşmasına katkıda bulunacak şekilde işbirliği içinde araştırma yapma fırsatları sunan çeşitli platformlar oluşturmak olabilir. Ayrıca, toplumsal cinsiyetin öğretmen eğitimi programlarının kalıcı ve temel bir bileşeni olarak kabul edilmesi, toplumsal cinsiyetin çevreden merkeze taşınmasını geliştirebilir ve öğretmen eğitimcilerinin fakülteadaki günlük deneyimlerinde kendilerini toplumsal cinsiyet konusuyla ilişkilendirmelerini teşvik edebilir. Bu tür destek mekanizmalarının yardımıyla toplumsal cinsiyetin alandaki marjinal konumlanışının kırılmasının, toplumsal cinsiyete dayalı düşünömselliğı kavramsal bir araca dönüştürmede faydalı olabileceğine inanıyoruz.

Introduction

The gendered nature of educational processes marks teachers as crucial players having an impact through their practices, discourses, expectations, attitudes, and beliefs on how students understand and construct gender (Younger & Warrington, 2008) and how prevailing gender regimes in schools are responded (Cushman, 2012). This underlines the significance of acknowledging gender studies as an essential component of teacher education policies and programmes. Gender issues in teacher education, on the other hand, seem to receive less attention compared to gender issues in school settings. Nearly 30 years ago, Coffey and Acker (1991) noted that gender occupied a marginal position in teacher education in the UK. In the following two decades, researchers pointed out that gender maintained having a low profile in teacher education in the UK (Coffey & Delamont, 2000; Younger & Warrington, 2008; Skelton, 2009; Cushman, 2012). Similarly, Menzies and Santoro (2018) mentioned the little impact gender has on teacher education at both policy and practice levels in Scotland. Lahelma’s (2011) work concentrates on the situation in Finnish teacher education and argues that the results of gender research in education have not been reflected in mainstream teacher education. Gender does not seem to be at the forefront in the field of teacher education in Sweden either although gender is a high-priority topic in the other domains of life in the country (Weiner, 2000; Malmgren & Weiner, 2001).

The positioning of gender issues in Turkish teacher education is no exception. The recently adopted Teacher Strategy Paper 2017-23 has not incorporated gender as a matter of concern (Ministry of National Education [MoNE], 2017a). The General Competencies for Teaching Profession of 2017 includes associating teaching processes with children’s individual differences and sociocultural

background as a competency while it makes no direct reference to gender (MoNE, 2017b). The MoNE Strategic Plan 2019-23 aims to increase girls' participation in secondary education and reduce absenteeism and grade repetition but does not include gender issues in teacher education (MoNE, 2019). Thus, we see that gender issues in teacher education are either totally missing or dealt with within the scope of such blanket terms as sociocultural background in relevant policies and strategies.

The invisibility of gender in teacher education policies leads to a lack of an integrated gender dimension in the teacher education curricula. Esen (2013) notes that teacher education curricula do not encompass any course dealing with gender in its own right, and gender issues are incorporated into the syllabuses of other courses or dealt with within the scope of elective courses generally attended by students who already have an interest in the topic. Teacher education curricula are essential to develop the necessary understanding of and knowledge about gender in teachers so that teachers can be prepared for challenging instead of confirming and maintaining gender stereotyping and inequalities in schools (Skelton, 2007; Younger, 2007; Skelton, 2009).

What does this low profile given to gender in teacher education mean for teacher educators and the field of teacher education? Weiner (2000) argues that the lack of feminist discourse in teacher education deprives teacher educators of theoretical or praxis insights into feminism that they can use to challenge existing gender regimes in the field. Besides, as Povey advocates, 'initial teacher education remains a site where it is possible to work with beginning teachers to resist dominant discourses of gender, to retain a capacity to act and to sustain a vision of ourselves as agents of change' (2000, p. 229). Thus, this research is an attempt to see whether gendered reflexivity could serve as an intellectual instrument for deconstructing teacher educators' intellectual configurations regarding gender.

We base our work on Bourdieu's reflexive sociology and his concepts of field and habitus to perform an in-depth analysis of embedded structures and stereotypes about gender in teacher education, which we believe can provide a sociological lens having a potential for broadening dominant gender debates in the Turkish context. As Kenway and McLeod put it, 'a central element of Bourdieu's work is his attempt to undermine the dualisms of objectivism and subjectivism, structure and agent, determinism and phenomenology' (2004, p. 528). Bourdieu advocates breaking with discussions heavily based on opposing objectivist or subjectivist viewpoints shaping how we understand the social world. What constitutes the social world is not interactions between agents or intersubjective connections between individuals but relations (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Examining these relations through field and habitus provides us with a holistic viewpoint in figuring out how social reality is constructed.

Reflexivity can be seen as a continuous and conscious questioning of the circular causality between positions and dispositions and between habitus and field (Bourdieu, 1988) and, thus, questioning of resulting practices. It requires '...the systematic exploration of the unthought categories of thought which delimit the thinkable and predetermine the thought' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 40). According to Bourdieu, 'by developing reflexivity, [the sociology of sociology] can teach people always to be aware that when they say or think something, they can be moved by causes as well as

by reasons' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, pp. 181-82). Such awareness can be expected to impact provided that it is achieved by all agents in the field (Bourdieu, 2004). Reflexivity as a collective practice is regarded as more meaningful in this respect (Schirato & Webb, 2003). Developing a self-reflexive practice on an individual basis is not sufficient, given that reproduction of certain structures and dispositions can be impeded through transforming those embedded in the field as long as all agents are equipped with a common collective consciousness.

What makes reflexivity appealing for our research is its potential for ensuring a viewpoint that can provide valuable insights into deconstructing embedded structures and dispositions regarding gender in the teacher education field. Bourdieu's relational approach to understanding the social world lets us break with a deterministic viewpoint concerning events and phenomena and helps us free ourselves from our illusions about these events and phenomena. Gendered reflexivity, which can be regarded as agents' awareness of their own practices and discourses concerning gender and as a continuous and conscious questioning of what mediates these practices and discourses, can serve as a conceptual tool to deconstruct and transform teacher educators' existing gendered intellectual configurations. Reflexivity, which 'can emerge therefore only from distanciation provoked by the conflict and tension of social forces operating within and across specific fields' (McNay, 1999, p. 110) offers a basis for seeing and elaborating on mechanisms operating in and out of agents' control concerning gender issues in the field. Gendered reflexivity can serve teacher educators as a conceptual tool enabling their scrutinizing and questioning unconscious processes which influence their epistemological assumptions about gender. Besides, an analysis of the relation between subjective dispositions of teacher educators and objective structures of the teacher education field can ensure an alternative means of reflecting on mechanisms reproducing gender regimes in the field and how these mechanisms can be transformed.

Methodology

We draw on the phenomenological approach (Schutz, 1967; Husserl, 1983; Merleau-Ponty, 2012) to investigate teacher educators' gendered experiences in the field. We focus, through the phenomenological lens, on the essences of teacher educators' gendered experiences in the peculiar settings of teacher education, which help us elaborate on their perception of their actions, such as teaching or doing research as gendered practices, their awareness of gender stereotypes and inequalities operating in the field and more importantly awareness of their gender stereotypes, and their response to the prevailing gender regimes in teacher education. Moreover, we focus on, as Merleau-Ponty emphasizes, 'the interweaving differences between subjective experiences and objective existence' (Thorburn & Stolz, 2020, p. 99) since we draw on the understanding of relevant features of context that can be related to gendered experiences of teacher educators to see the essences of these experiences, and to reveal the implications of them for teacher educators' self-reflexive practices challenging their gendered configurations through the lens of Bourdieu's reflexive sociology and field theory.

We conduct the research at a public university in Turkey with 21 teacher educators (10 females, 11 males). All teacher educators volunteered to participate in the research. As can be seen in Table 1 below, the participants are composed of 11 research assistants (6 males and 5 females), six assistant professors (3 males and 3 females), and four associate professors (2 males and 2 females). Reflecting our aspiration for a better understanding of long-established gender patterns in the faculty where we conducted the research, we tried to reach teacher educators that have been faculty member for ten years or above. We also made an effort to approach faculty members from various departments with different interests of research in order not to limit our understanding of the context to specific areas of research in the field.

Table 1.

Participants of the Study

Title	Focus Groups	Department				
Research Assistant	First Focus Group	Educational Administration (1 Female)	Guidance and Psychological Counselling (1 Male)	Computer Education and Instructional Technology (1 Female)	Philosophical, Social and Historical Foundations of Education (1 Female, 1 Male)	Social Studies Education (1 Male)
	Second Focus Group	Preschool Education (2 Females)	Special Education (1 Male)	Measurement and Evaluation (1 Male)	Lifelong Learning and Adult Education (1 Male)	
Assistant and Associate Professor	First Focus Group	Primary Education (1 Female, 1 Male)	Guidance and Psychological Counselling (1 Female, 1 Male)	Curriculum and Instruction (1 Female)		
	Second Focus Group	Educational Administration (1 Female)	Measurement and Evaluation (1 Male)	Social Studies Education (1 Female)	Philosophical, Social and Historical Foundations of Education (1 Male)	Primary Education (1 Male)

We constructed data through focus group discussions. Considering the hierarchical nature of the relations in the field, we decided to interview research assistants, and assistant and associate professors in separate groups. For the same reason, we preferred not to include professors in the research, which otherwise, we believe, would impede the openness of other participants. Thus, we first held two focus group discussions with research assistants, followed by two more discussions with assistant and associate professors.

We used MAXQDA, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software, to analyze our data. We started data analysis with focus group discussions with research assistants, just as we did in

data generation. In this way, we aimed to reveal the dominant gendered practices embedded in the experiences of emerging teacher educators. In this analysis, we found that research assistants' practices and discourses embedded in their experiences in the field converged around three main axes: Discourses about appearance, roles and responsibilities within the faculty, and research practices. We used these axes as the discussion themes of focus group discussions with assistant and associate professors. After completing these discussions, we analyzed all focus group discussion transcripts by uploading them to the MAXQDA program. The program facilitated storing and coding data, comparing codes, and collaborative analysis.

We are positioned as an insider in this research, serving as teacher educators. Such positioning, however, influenced the research process in various ways because two of us are female research assistants while one is a male associate professor. For instance, being a female research assistant seemed to impede access to the field at the outset. It was difficult for two of us as female research assistants to approach assistant and associate professors, and they responded reluctantly to our invitation to research. However, they changed their reaction when they were contacted one more time by one of us being male associate professor. In another instance, the presence of a male associate professor as the interviewer in the first focus group discussion with research assistants put a pressure on them and affected their openness and expression. However, the research assistants interviewed by the two female research assistants in the other focus group discussion expressed themselves more easily and openly. These indicate the power relations dominant in the faculty. As Bourdieu advocates 'one's social past is particularly burdensome when it comes to doing social science-whatever that and that identity may be, working class or bourgeois, male or female' (2004, p. 109). Each stage of the research process made the presence of our positions in the research visible to us. So, we kept reflexive journals to constantly and consciously question the relationality between our subjective dispositions and the objective structures in the field.

Results

Positioning of gender in the teacher education field

Gender does not seem to occupy a prestigious position at the policy level in the teacher education field in Turkey. In a sense, gender is 'commatized', as O'Brien (1984) puts it, in the policy papers, which makes it hard to bring gender issues to teacher educators' agenda. This leads gender to occupy a marginal position in the field. One of the main obstacles to gender studies in Turkey is politically charged cultural references. The idea that gender is a kind of Western invention and a threat to the Turkish family is becoming increasingly widespread. We see that this understanding is reflected in university systems in various forms. On the one hand, the fact that gender studies were first brought directly to universities by middle-class women who knew the West and could read texts in other languages has created a situation that gender as a political concept was not internalized by faculty members of education who did not have similar social class characteristics in general. On the other hand, people who predominantly produce knowledge at universities put the issues of gender on the research agenda of universities without having them fully understood by other faculty members

while creating several points of resistance. Gradually, gender has become a standardized demographic variable with no apparent reference to its social construction side. Politically correct stories of gender which do not go beyond parity discussions have been adopted by almost all mainstream researchers in the field. Teacher education is not an exception to this intellectual atmosphere. It would be argued that the field of teacher education has always been more vulnerable to political impositions and discourses about gender as a Western invention.

There is a tendency among some of our interviewees and in the field, in general, to approach gender only as a demographic variable, no more than one's sex. We believe that this tendency is the result of the abovementioned intellectual atmosphere regarding the concept of gender, which prevents researchers from concentrating on gender in its own rights and serves to maintain its marginal positioning of it in the field.

Well, I also think that gender can be a variable on its own from one point of view, but when it is considered in the field of education our main dependent variable is the learning outcomes of individuals. When we consider variables that can influence learning directly or indirectly, gender is an independent variable. Gender is an independent variable in much research. I have not come across any study yet that takes gender as a dependent variable in the field of educational sciences. We can associate it with learning or learner attitudes. (Male Assistant Professor 2)

Such an understanding of gender, as expressed by the male assistant professor above, lets us see that gender is conceptualised based on its relationship with the elements perceived to be more relevant in the education field. The most basic obsession of educational research is either student achievement or learning outcomes. The effect of gender on these is usually defined at the independent variable level. Such data seems to suffice for a politically correct research study. Many descriptive studies do not wish to move the word beyond this point. Morley draws attention to 'the unproblematic notions of polarized gender identities' in the literature on higher education (2013, p. 126). However, such a conventional understanding and employment of gender has the potential to create the illusion that gender is a matter of importance to everyone. On the other hand, many people who do not want to look at the issue in terms of categories, such as women and men, may also feel compelled to look at the differentiation in gender as they want to come to alignment with the dominant discourse. The persons we interviewed showed other academics as the source of this obligation.

The conceptualization of gender as a variable that can be used in statistical analyses can be attributed firstly to the impact of the positivist paradigm. Wyn (1997) points to the binary division of knowledge into soft disciplines, such as drama, health, women's studies and gender studies, and hard disciplines, such as educational administration, educational psychology, and assessment. This kind of categorisation has also a gendered attribute considering the tendency among female teacher educators to engage in research on soft disciplines like women's studies, and gender studies. Tuncer (2019) draws attention to the existence of a similar situation in the Turkish academic field. The number of male and female academics varies according to fields. For example, there are more female academics in fields where "the professional skills of child education and care, that are seen as a public

extension of domestic labour, are developed” (Şentürk, 2015, p.12). Şentürk (2015) states that this situation “masks the problem of equality in representation” (p.12). Similarly, as to the title hierarchy, the number of female academics is concentrated in lower-level titles. When the distribution of university staff is analysed, it is stated that the proportion of female academics decreases at the upper levels of the hierarchy (Şentürk, 2015). This situation is an example of the segregation of labour according to gender in the academic field. Secondly, the lack of the required epistemological background ends up with the use of gender at the variable level in educational research. Although the number of gender research especially concerning gender issues in schools has increased in recent years, one teacher educator in focus group discussions pointed to the scarcity of research having a sound theoretical framework and based on a holistic and in-depth understanding of gender. According to this teacher educator, because gender has become a popular research topic, it is understandable that many researchers in the field do research into gender:

... I think the academics are not that knowledgeable about this topic. I mean academics do not have the background knowledge about feminist movements. But they may need to do research into gender because it is a trendy topic. ... So, it is related to the popularity of the topic. I believe my colleagues research gender without knowing how to do it because they do not know the topic and they are in an outsider position, so they do it superficially and just with an aspiration for adding what is trendy into their research profile. (Male Associate Professor 1)

Some teacher educators participating in our research believe that such mainstreaming of gender studies because of its popularity as a research topic has a positive effect in a way that it can carry gender to the centre of relevant discussions. The others, on the other hand, approach this suspiciously, thinking that it is nothing more than a superficial way of handling the issue, and it also creates a dangerous illusion that gender has been researched sufficiently, considering the volume of gender research in the literature. Some teacher educators also stated that one of the negative results is the emergence of gender orthodoxy in the field. This inevitably maintains the marginalisation of the topic through associating it with certain groups following research traditions or ideologies. In the second focus group discussion, a female assistant professor mentioned the hierarchical structure of academia and how it determines entry into the area of gender studies:

Should gender be a specific field of research on its own? I think it should definitely be... but considering the hierarchical structure of academia in Turkey, a group can dominate a research topic, and we can come up with a superficial understanding that only this group can do research on the gender. The existing conditions in the field lead researchers in that direction. Researchers do not want to intervene in others' areas of research. We have this problem in the field, but of course, it is ideal to see gender as a research area on its own and open to any researcher. I believe it should not be regarded only as a variable anymore. (Female Assistant Professor 3)

Interestingly, the position of gender in the field of teacher education is two folds, albeit contradicting each other at the level of discourse and practice. This is because there is a group of academics who do not want to use 'gender' as a specific category or an issue to look at but are compelled to do so, and there is another group of academics who want to study gender but are not allowed to enter the field of discussion because of power relations. In other words, it seems that doing research into gender or having gender sensitivity in research practices in the field of teacher education is highly important as long as one stays in the realm of gender as a categorical variable. If one wants to move forward and takes gender as an issue itself, not a category, then one needs to comply with the power relations embedded into the system. This last argument deems more research because, just like many other concepts or notions, gender is now an industry within academia.

Teacher educators' resistance to gender

The marginalized positioning of gender in teacher education is mirrored in teacher educators' actions and discourses within the faculty settings via the practice of resistance to gender. Teacher educators' remarks in the focus group discussions indicate that teacher educators follow a pattern of resistance to gender by employing various legitimization mechanisms. This behaviour of distancing oneself from gender issues, in one way or another, marks the fit between the periphery status of gender in the field and how it is reflected in the habitus of teacher educators.

Weiner points to 'a general absence of feminist or gender discourse within teacher education' (2000, p. 244). A similar pattern emerging from our analysis of focus group discussions demonstrates that teacher educators tend to avoid placing gender in a central position in their research practices. The following exchange of remarks between research assistants in the first focus group discussion about the incorporation of doing research on gender as one of the criteria for being promoted to an assistant professorship position is a clear expression of the pressure research assistants feel to publish:

Male Research Assistant 3: As far as I know, researching gender is listed among the optional work we can do to be appointed as an assistant professor. This means we can research gender to meet this criterion even if we're not interested in this topic.

Female Research Assistant 2: Oh?

Male Research Assistant 3: When I saw it, I thought this would be an asset for me because I work on gender anyway. And somebody who doesn't work on it can think, 'Oh, there is this criterion, and it's easy to meet... I can present a paper on gender and meet the criterion easily.'

Female Research Assistant 2: So, do we have to work on gender to become an assistant professor?

In Turkish academia, neoliberal policies are reflected in academic promotion criteria resulting in a competitive atmosphere relying on the publish-or-perish culture. One of the mechanisms underlying this culture is academic capitalism (O'Hagan et al., 2019). Academic capitalism poses pressure on especially emerging teacher educators seeking permanent positions at universities. The

abovementioned criteria for publishing gender studies cause indirectly resistance to gender in the first place and the production of superficial and categorised handling of gender in the second place. Malmgren and Weiner (2001) mention the existence of such a resistance to gender, or as they put it, 'fear of feminism' in the field of teacher education, not just in one country context but generally. According to them, this fear may result from interpreting feminism or gender as 'too political, too middle-class (as in Sweden), too theoretical or too risky to an overworked and low-status profession' (p. 240). Similarly, Hollingsworth (1995) argues that gender has emerged as a taboo in teacher education because it is perceived as too emotional, controversial, or sensitive. The focus group discussions indicate that most teacher educators in Turkey also interpret feminism or gender as too critical or too political and tend to attach it to a specific ideology. In the Turkish context, feminism is seen as the manifestation of the left wing believed to lead the feminist movement in the country. In this respect, some teacher educators, as expressed in the discussions, identify gender with their ideologies and confine it to a space the borders of which are defined by these teacher educators. Teacher educators who are not aligned with and do not want to be associated with certain ideologies resist, distance themselves from the topic, and refuse to accept gender as a crucial component of discourses in teacher education. This can be interpreted as they are concerned about being placed in a marginalized position in academia due to their choice of research topic (Tuncer, 2019). This practice of resistance or distancing can also be an action against being aligned or associated with the identifying themselves with gender and specific ideologies and renowned for their gender studies in the field. Such an embodiment of gender understanding is believed to perpetuate the existing orthodoxy in the field. So teacher educators who want to dissociate themselves from a space of action that is delimited by a group of academics with certain ideological positions are automatically excluded from gender discourse, as one of the male research assistants expressed in the first focus group discussion:

I suppose this has become an ideological point of view. I mean it can lead to a differentiation between those who are sensitive and insensitive to gender. It is like if you do not mention it, you are insensitive, or 'I am sensitive to it, and I want to say it publicly!'. I do not think it's necessary to show one's ideological views in that way. (Male Research Assistant 1)

One point that needs to be made here is that feminism or gender cannot be considered regardless of cultural context. Weiner (2000) notes that feminism is associated with left-wing or politically progressive ideas in European countries, while there are also feminist movements having their own spaces. In Turkey, nevertheless, it is hard to talk about a connection between feminism or gender and an ideology based on a historical or theoretical basis, although some teacher educators tend to associate gender with specific ideologies. So, this association is nothing more than an illusion resulting from the existing orthodoxy in the field.

Teacher educators try to stay outside the borders of this synthetic space of gender by using different legitimization mechanisms. The analysis of the focus group discussion with research assistants and assistant/ associate professors has revealed two patterns of legitimization. Research assistants as emerging researchers and teacher educators in the field feel themselves under pressure

in terms of working on gender and justify themselves by lacking the background knowledge that is required to do research on gender or to integrate gender as a crucial component into the courses they teach. Assistant/ associate professors, on the other hand, having a more powerful position in the field, do not lean on a lack of knowledge which would conflict with their position vis-à-vis other faculty members, but a lack of need for focusing on gender in their research and lectures because they work on a specific area of research which is not directly related to gender.

I do not include gender as a specific title in my courses because I am not knowledgeable about this topic. I am aware of gender inequalities, but I have never felt competent enough to handle this topic in my courses systematically. (Female Research Assistant 3)

I talk about quantitative studies, large-scale international studies, OECD, TIMSS... These are what I am talking about. Within the context of what you have mentioned, it is not my area of research. (Male Associate Professor 2)

Research assistants utilize their lack of knowledge about gender issues in the field or, in general, as a way of legitimization and thus resort to a pedagogical justification. However, assistant/ associate professors base their justification on political grounds by identifying gender as a specific area of research in which they do not claim an interest. This differentiation in how teacher educators legitimize can be interpreted as a result of agents' appraisal to sustain their positions vis-à-vis other agents in the field. These mechanisms can be regarded as strategies employed by agents shaped by and embedded in the field.

A doxic understanding of roles and responsibilities

While Acker (2012) points to the gendered structures and cultures of universities, O'Hagan et al. (2019) stress the fact that universities as gendered organisations are dominated by senior male academics in a manner that reflects masculine domination in society. This structure and culture are evident in faculties of education as 'being the symbolic female of the university' (Acker & Dillabough, 2007, p. 312). We can say that there is a doxic understanding that determines the roles and responsibilities of teacher educators, functions as a basis for generating and maintaining gendered academic work, and results in stereotypical gendered roles and unquestioned forms of practice in the field. We observe the symbolic domination as social processes perpetuating the masculine culture in the faculty by determining and normalising the necessities of being a woman in academia. To gain recognition as a female teacher educator in the field, some necessities are depicted within the frame of domestic and maternal imagery.

Conversations come to a level at one point that women should be married, happy, and with children so that they can internalize the desired academic personality. Actually, there is a perception like this. I am exposed to this whether the person I communicate with is a woman or a man. It is as if this is how it should be or something so normal. I ask myself: Should women also think like that while experiencing it all? ... If you are not married, happy, and with children, you are not normal. And if you are a woman and especially at an

advanced age, all the problems you experience are related to this position of yours. (Female Research Assistant 2)

As this exemplary situation to which a female teacher educator was exposed show, Tuncer (2019) states that the gendered structure of academia in Turkey supports the production and dissemination of symbols of approved forms of femininity and masculinity in the academic field as in all institutions in society. Poyraz (2013) concluded in his research that many female academics are single or married but have no children because the heavy working conditions in academia disrupt the domestic duties they are held responsible for. As domestic duties are seen as women's responsibility in society, female academics are expected not to disrupt their domestic responsibilities while maintaining their careers (Tuncer, 2019). While the negative impact on women's professional careers is normalized through the domestic responsibilities imposed on women, being a female academic who is not married or does not have children, as experienced by the female research assistant, is perhaps interpreted as a threat to the existence and maintenance of the masculine culture of academia. As Acker and Dillabough (2007) remark, we can understand that female teacher educators embody the male domination and symbolic inheritance of female subordination both in labour and academic culture and what is more some of them resist to this actuality. The inherited cultural form of symbolic domination creates gendered distinctions in work life (Acker, 2010). The roles like caregiver, helper, and teacher linked with domestic, emotional, and democratic attributes are ascribed to women (Acker & Dillabough, 2007; Acker, 2012). O'Hagan et al. (2019) criticise the stereotypical perception that men = scientists and women are more suitable for teaching because of the maternal and caring positions attached to them. Wyn's work (1997) highlights the striking finding that women play a central role in faculties of education having heavy teaching and administrative loads while at the same time being marginalized in terms of the hierarchical structure in faculties. The doxic understanding which makes actual these roles commonly held assumptions, demarks the lines concerning which position agents will occupy in which conditions. So, the roles and responsibilities ascribed to individuals are perceived as a requirement of natural order and are carried out without question. There are clear lines defining areas indicating the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the faculty. When we question their experiences of being a woman or a man in faculty, the moments they feel like this, they preferred to give examples about the tasks given to them.

The first thing that comes to my mind is that most of the time women are assigned to work in scientific events such as symposiums, workshops, and congresses organised by the university or faculty. We can't say this is the case because the female population is higher. For example, men are less preferred for presenting gifts or flowers to guests or speakers. (Male Assistant Professor 3)

We can see the work distribution in the faculty through the male teacher educator's account. How relations and practices in the academic field support the production of gendered characteristics can be examined through the type of tasks assigned within the institution, which tasks are assigned to whom, and how these tasks are performed (Tuncer, 2019). It is obvious that 'woman as adjunct labour... a form of inclusion in the academy, which exemplifies Bourdieu's understanding of symbolic

domination' (Acker & Dillabough, 2007, p. 303). According to Bourdieu, doxa is 'the point of view of the dominant, which presents and imposes itself as a universal point of view – the point of view of those who dominate by dominating the state' (1988, p. 57). It, therefore, operates as a crucial mechanism in the field-habitus relation by mediating fields and determining limits. Doxa is a set of pre-reflexive and taken-for-granted thoughts, beliefs, assumptions, and perceptions acknowledged to be acceptable in a field and shaping practices and attitudes in the habitus (Deer, 2008). On this background, it can be seen as a set of deep-seated perceptions which serves reproduction and at the same time impede reflexivity and the process of deconstruction.

Gender blind dispositions

Leonard describes academia as a site actively constituting gender rather than solely reflecting pre-given gender identities. Thus, agents in academia 'construct and reconstruct themselves as gendered subjects by engaging in masculine and feminine ways of thinking and talking and sexual and other social interactions' (2001, p. 7). This marks the powerful effect of academia on the generation and maintenance of a deep-seated doxic understanding leading to gender blindness in teacher educators. So, gender becomes invisible in the field and impedes the emergence of a driving force for bringing gender to teacher educators' agenda. That the emphasis on neutrality, especially in academia, creates an illusion that relations are neutral by covering up the processes that disadvantage women (Tuncer, 2019, p.177) is one of the mechanisms preventing the visibility of gender in the field. The fear of feminism discussed above prevents teacher educators from challenging their gender perspectives and sustains the doxic understanding in the field. So, teacher educators can embody their awareness of gender issues through a limited discourse of, for instance, who do research on gender in which circumstances. On the contrary, gender awareness can only be possible when based on an epistemological background and a deep theoretical and discursive repertoire. This repertoire requires a holistic understanding of gender. Teacher educators lacking this understanding draw on a restricted repertoire with an ambition to preserve their positions in the field and gender-blind dispositions discussed below.

Acker and Dillabough note that 'education holds a place as the symbolic 'female' of the university ... dominated by men' (2007, p. 312). Such feminisation of the field accompanied by a high proportion of women causes gender issues in the field to be disregarded and become invisible. Hollingsworth (1995) also states that the high number of women in teacher education leads to the emergence of a thought that gender is not an issue, on the one hand, and is seen as a source of depreciation on the other. In our context, the reaction of a female associate professor to the expression of disadvantaged situations faced in the faculty because of being a woman by another female faculty member signals how the high number of women in the field may result in a taken-for-granted view that gender is not regarded as an issue:

Female Assistant Professor 2: I can feel it in meetings. We can be interrupted more easily. Men talk more than us. And our opinions are less valued. I always feel that in department meetings, faculty meetings...

Female Associate Professor 1: I don't feel that way because there are few men in our department, but I have never felt that way in the department or the faculty.

...

Male Associate Professor 1: I can notice that I am not interrupted because I am male.

This extract from the focus group discussion indicates that masculine hegemony remains to prevail in the field, and it is not possible to assume that it is easier to guarantee gender equality when women outnumber men in the field. However, this situation does not mean that women use this domination as an effective deconstruction mechanism. What is noteworthy here is not the number of women but which positions women have in the field (Coffey & Acker, 1991). For instance, Wyn (1997) underlines the situation in faculties of education having women outnumber junior and non-continuing while men in senior and continuing positions. Thus, the majority of women in faculties of education have a risk of cementing the gender-blind point of view. As is expressed in the following extract, female faculty members have the potential to normalize, confirm and maintain masculine culture:

Female Associate Professor 1: When I first heard about the gender certification programme it sounded so weird to me. I asked myself why we would need this certificate. So what? I don't know what it stands for.

Female Assistant Professor 2: For awareness-raising.

Female Associate Professor 1: ... Most of the participants are women. So, it is not meaningful.

Female Assistant Professor 2: But women aren't aware of inequalities either.

This can be interpreted as a reflection of the androcentric vision that 'imposes itself as neutral and has no need to spell itself out in discourses aimed at legitimating it' (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 9). The androcentric vision operates in such a powerful and invisible way that it blocks out thinking out of the normalized schemes of perceptions.

Furthermore, this point of view can be accompanied by a gender-neutral stance (Coffey & Acker, 1991; Lahelma, 2011), making it even harder to raise awareness among teacher educators as the following remarks of the female research assistant working on preschool education expressed:

Male prospective teachers ask, 'Should we help children put on their clothes after they go to the toilet? What would be the reaction of parents in that case?' And I keep telling them that they are genderless in the classroom. I say, 'You have no gender in the classroom.' (Female Research Assistant 4)

The gender-neutral stance can make gender issues invisible and have discriminatory results (Coffey & Acker, 1991). It is significant, therefore, to internalise reflexive practice as a conscious action rather than to take a neutral stance vis-à-vis gender inequalities. In our research, it can be seen that most of the teacher educators perceive the field as being freed from gender issues.

Discussion, conclusion and suggestions

The persistence of the gendered structure of an institution with little or no change cannot be considered independent of the practices of the agents in that institution (Tuncer, 2019) because relational thinking requires recognizing that macro and micro intertwine in social space. When relations are examined within the context of the encompassing, rather than the determining nature of the macro, the existence and appearance of micro-level agency and its response to the macro can be interpreted more comprehensively. From this perspective, if we talk about the existence of the gendered structure of the academy, we can conclude that this is sustained through the internal practices of individuals in academy. Tuncer (2019) draws attention to the fact that even academics who position themselves critically in the academic field are likely to maintain their sexist practices in everyday life. At this point, the necessity of constantly and consciously questioning one's practices emerges. Gendered reflexivity can be a powerful tool for academics to question their practices.

We analysed teacher educators' lived experiences in the field through this lens, and we can see how the gender patterns prevailing in the field are reflected in teacher educators' lived experiences, and there is a fit between habitus and field in this respect. What underlies this, we believe, is mainly teacher educators' practice of dissociating themselves from gender issues and resisting what is relevant to them. They tend to legitimize their cautious approach to gender by using various resistance mechanisms. More strikingly, teacher educators keep their distance when it comes to talking or writing about gender but still try to show their awareness of this topic. This effort can be attributed to their aspiration to be politically correct, and it is still hard to say that teacher educators have a deep and holistic understanding of gender issues, which eventually gives rise to a gender-blind point of view in their actions. Hence teacher educators tend to use this limited repertoire on gender issues to survive in the field by avoiding any relevant criticisms and labelling they would face based on such a lack of knowledge and sensitivity.

What does the mentioned fit between objective structures in the field and subjective dispositions of teacher educators mean for our research? Bourdieu's reflexivity can only be possible in case of a tension between field and habitus. Teacher educators can be urged on by this lack of fit to reflect on the unconscious categories and become aware of and challenge their taken-for-granted actions (McNay, 1999; Adkins, 2004). One of the rationales of our research is this potential of reflexivity as a means of gendered awakening for impeding the reproduction of gender inequalities in the field. The lack of tension between habitus and field required for a gendered self-reflexive practice makes us elaborate on what informs and influences this situation in the first place.

It is in our context obvious that enabling a gendered self-reflexive process is not easy. But we still believe by drawing on Bourdieu's work and by keeping in mind the advantages it can bring along that it is not undoable although it is hard, and we are aware of potential contributions it can make to the field and relevant research base. A crucial work to this end is identifying and elaborating on the mechanisms marginalising gender in the field. This, of course, should be supported with more attention given to gender at the teacher education policy level. Such a policy gap with the busy

agenda of teacher educators occupied with trend topics of the day like standardisation, accreditation, etc. does not make it any easier to deal with gender issues placed under a taboo in teacher education.

An improvement on the macro level via mainstreaming gender in key policy papers should be accompanied by various support mechanisms. This is especially crucial when we consider ‘the issue of the constitution of situated reflexivity’ (Adkins, 2004, p. 196). Why would teacher educators feel the need for reflecting on what is unconscious and taken for granted continuously? Within the context of this research teacher educators have different levels of awareness concerning gender issues in the field, but still, we can see that they feel no such need in their actions. One of the support mechanisms can be establishing various platforms providing teacher educators with opportunities to discuss gender issues in the field and do research in collaboration in a way to contribute to the emergence of a theoretical research basis in gender. Besides, acknowledging gender as a permanent and basic component of teacher education curricula can improve the moving of gender from the periphery to centre and can encourage teacher educators to associate themselves with the topic of gender in their daily experiences in the faculty. Breaking with the marginal positioning of gender in the field through the help of such support mechanisms can be useful, we believe, in turning gendered reflexivity into a conceptual instrument.

Ethical Committee Approval

The ethical committee approval for this research was obtained from Ankara University Ethical Committee (No: 85434274-050.04.04/936814, Date: 15.05.2023).

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