The Equality of Opportunities Perceptions of Social Work Students in Turkey: A Qualitative Study

Seda Attepe Ozden Instructor Department of Social Work Baskent University Faculty of Health Sciences Baglica Kampus Turkey 06810

Melike Tekindal Research Assistant Department of Social Work Hacettepe University Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences Beytepe Campus, 06800 Turkey

Abstract

This study aimed at explaining the concept of equality of opportunities, which has a frequent usage at the present time. In this regard, the definitions of the equality of opportunities by university students receiving social work education based on human rights and social justice were analyzed through the qualitative research method. Research findings included the opinions of students regarding the definitions of the equality of opportunities, people/groups among whom it should be provided, the fields in which equality is to be provided, and suggestions for the realization of the equality of opportunities. Results were provided in the light of those findings.

Keywords: Equality of opportunities; equality of opportunities between women and men; social work; qualitative study; youth

1. Introduction

The fact that the concept of the equality of opportunities confronts us in many fields including economy, society, education, health, social aid, social work, etc. reveals the necessity to use and analyze it correctly. Being a discipline and a profession, social work plays an important role in the construction of these analyses as its basis consists of human being and its fundamental philosophy is composed of social justice and equality.

Social work is also about society, politics, and economy besides working on individuals with regard to ensuring access to equal rights and regulating such rights. In respect to this, "the equality of opportunities" is one of the research focus that analyzed by social work in achieving its purpose. In other words; a social work expert who works with an individual should not only aim at "strengthening" the individual, but also analyze the relationship of the individual with social, political, and cultural structures as well as his/her "strengthening" and "weakening" experiences within this scope. Thus, the equal opportunities held or not held by individuals, groups, communities or societies should be evaluated. The analysis of the reason behind the fact that while some people, groups, and communities cannot reach the same opportunities within the framework of achieving social justice and equality makes it essential to focus on what we – social work experts and academicians – can do in this matter.

Within this scope, it is considered important that the prospective social work experts and academicians continuing their social work education at university can analyze the content of the concept of "equality of opportunities" and gain awareness concerning how they can use this concept. Based on the recognition of this importance, this study was designed and conducted.

The first section covered the definition and content of the concept of the equality of opportunities based on the literature on this subject. In the second section, participants' experiences reflected within the scope of qualitative research. The final section interpreted the research findings in the light of the relevant literature.

1.1. The Definition and Content of the Equality of Opportunities

As stated by Alkaya (2011: 61), equality is one of the human rights-related concepts which come to the forefront and are discussed most frequently due to the existence of the possibility that an order may make a distinction and discrimination between races, ranks, and classes in the society. The inclusion of the concept of "equality" in the constitutional laws verifies its existence. It is argued that real equality can be achieved only through the comprehension of the idea which suggests that inequalities in all fields (i.e. economic, social, cultural, etc.) should be eliminated (Boyraz, 2003: 27). Therefore, understanding and analyzing what equality means may have an important role in the effectiveness of the awareness to be raised in this matter.

In this regard, it is considered beneficial to investigate the equality of opportunities. Being the most common type of equality in modern democratic societies according to Unal & Ozsov (1999: 40: Cited in Yar, 2009: 29), the equality of opportunities is defined as a liberal principle suggesting that everyone can compete within the limits of their skills and abilities regardless of their social, political, and economic origins (i.e. class position). In addition, it is stated that the equality of opportunities means that the right to access important social institutions is provided to everyone and complies with universal principles (Turner, 1997; 36), and should be discussed in the same meaning as the equality of conditions. Bishop defines the equality of opportunities as giving every member of the society a chance to display their skills, not preventing anyone, and not providing any unfair advantage (Bishop, 1997: 115). The equality of opportunities refers to the availability of the same options for everyone (Roemer, 2002: 456). As stated by Ooghe, Schokkaert & Van de gaer, (2007: 209), the equality of opportunities is based on two approaches. The first one is equalizing the results of individual "efforts" and the "differences" held. The second approach involves an attempt to prepare equal opportunities to everyone in such a way that everyone can access them. Pignataro (2012) states that Roemer developed a public life oriented perspective for ensuring the equality of opportunities. He argues that everyone should participate in the welfare process with the support of the society regardless of their race, sex, economic class, and place of birth. In connection with the foregoing, both "opportunities" and "equality" should be discussed based on the concepts included in the equality of opportunities, as mentioned by Mason (2004: 387). A philosophical, economic, political, cultural, and social investigation and analysis are needed here. It is one of the subjects that are used very frequently, but whose content should be based on scientific studies.

In the statements of the European Commission about the equality of opportunities, the equality of opportunities is described as the key of social restructuring that appreciates the contributions of women as much as those of men and regards the balance between professional and familial tasks, and is stated to encourage a culture where women and men are treated in a manner honoring the humanity and both sexes are represented in government and decision-making mechanisms at the same degree (Moroglu, 2004: 134). Within the scope of gender equality, the equality of opportunities means women and men having equal opportunities, rights, and responsibilities, and appearing and being strong at equal levels both in the public life and in the private life.

According to some sources, the equality of opportunities is defined based on the equality of opportunities in education, which refers to equality in access and use of the sources (Tezcan, 1995: 54). The equality of opportunities in education may also mean everyone having a chance to benefit from educational services at the same level in improving their skills in the most appropriate manner without experiencing any discrimination and obstacles. As it is understood from definitions; the concepts of equality and the equality of opportunities are constructed based on the statuses of women and men having (or not having) equal rights and enjoying (or not enjoying) such rights. At this point, it is deemed important to understand, "how young people who receive university education define the concepts of equality and the equality of opportunities." Since social justice and equality constitute the basis of social work philosophy, it is important to reveal and analyze the awareness of the young people who receive social work education. The investigation of the concepts of equality and the equality of opportunities may enable to perform the profession, which serves people, properly. This study aimed at analyzing the definitions of the equality of opportunities by university students receiving social work education, revealing their opinions concerning group/people that enjoyed the equality of opportunities as well as their definitions of the equality of opportunities between women and men, and analyzing their suggestions for preventing the inequality of opportunities in relevant fields.

2. Methods

Since this study attempted to learn and investigate the opinions of students regarding the equality of opportunities deeply, qualitative method was applied in the study. Qualitative research enables to comprehend the values, opinions, behaviors, and relations of individuals (Mack, Woodsong, Macqueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005: 1) besides playing an important role in understanding the social world (Darlington & Scott, 2002: 1-2). In this regard, focus group discussions – a qualitative method – were used in order to learn the perceptions and opinions of students concerning the equality of opportunities. A focus group discussion is conducted by an interviewer in a group made up of six or eight people, and aims at enabling participants to share their opinions and perceptions in the group environment (Krueger & Casey, 2000: 5). It provides participants with an opportunity to express their opinions in the group environment.

2.1. Data Collection Process

Focus group discussions were carried out with students from Baskent University Faculty of Health Sciences Social Work Department, who accepted to participate in the study, on the 9th of April 2013, the 11th of April 2013, and the 14th of May 2013. There were two female groups consisting of 4 and 5 female students respectively, and there was one male group consisting of 5 male students. Sessions lasted for approximately 30 to 90 minutes.

2.2. Participants

Research participants were second and third grade university students. The age average of the participants was 23. The table provided below demonstrates the characteristics of the participants. Female and male students were not included in the same group because it was thought that especially male students might not express their opinions easily as they would interact with female students. Due to the fact that male students number was less than female ones at the department, just one male group was formed while two groups were created for the female students. Table 1 indicates the characteristics of participants.

2.3. Data Analysis

Focus group discussions tape-recorded after the approvals of students. Voice records were decoded by researchers through blinding method. The results of decoding were divided into five main themes and sub-categories and were subjected to content analysis in accordance with the purpose of the study.

3. Findings

Five main themes formed in accordance with the purpose of the study are as follows: the definition of the equality of opportunities, people/groups among whom it should be ensured, what the equality of opportunities between women and men means, the fields in which equality is to be provided, and what should be done to ensure the equality of opportunities between women and men.

3.1. The Definition of the Equality of Opportunities

When the meaning of the equality of opportunities was asked to the participants, similar answers were given. Answers were based on the thought that the equality of opportunities means every member of the society having the same rights.

What comes into my mind when the equality of opportunities is mentioned is that everyone can enjoy all opportunities, services, and facilities equally (Female group 2, Participant 4).

It means enjoying the existing opportunities at the same level (Male group, Participant 5).

It means every individual enjoying human right, right to receive good education, and right to health equally (Female group, Participant 5).

It means everyone enjoying law, justice, health, education, social security, and all other rights equally whether they are female or male, poor or rich(Female group, Participant 3).

The equality of opportunities implies that whether a person is young, old, child, disabled or has a different sex (e.g. travesty), every individual has the same professional opportunities. The equality of opportunities may be defined as enjoying the same rights in the same manner. It may include right to receive education, right to be promoted, and right to reach the top level in any position (Male group, Participant 3).

It refers to the possession of the same rights by everyone (Female group, Participant 3).

Due to the educational and professional knowledge of the students in parallel with the literature, the definitions of the equality of opportunities by students include everyone's enjoying the same rights.

3.2. The People/Groups among whom the Equality of Opportunities Should be Ensured

In general, the participants believed that the equality of opportunities should be ensured for all individuals:

They vary among citizens and people depending on state policies. However, they should be for all people (Female group 2, Participant 2).

Poor people, rich people, or disabled individuals should have the same opportunities (Female group, Participant 3).

There should be an order where a person from a rich segment does not have more rights, but everyone has the same rights (Female group 2, Participant 1).

The opinions of the participants concerning among whom the equality of opportunities should be provided were divided into four sub-categories: Female-male, family, education, and professional life. Based on the statements of the participants, female-male distinction in the first category implied that women and men should have the same rights. However, the participants also told that female-male equality was not achieved in every field. Gender inequalities were manifested in some discourses in the male group where it was stated that women were superior to men in some fields or such patriarchal expressions as "protecting our women/daughters" were used.

The equality of opportunities refers to women and men having the same conditions, opportunities, and sanctions (Male group, Participant 3).

Low level of education is understood in our community. Because; it is thought that women should not be in the forefront, and they should not be promoted (Male group, Participant 4).

There is a general equality. There is equality in education at maximum level. However, it does not exist in the professional life (Male group, Participant 3).

There is no equality in the family (Male group, Participant 4).

It seems that there is no equality in the professional field. This is because; women always have a better chance in such professions as marketing, salesmanship and medical representativeness which are associated with sexuality and sexist things and where the female image is at the forefront. For instance, when a coke company prepares commercial films, women always play a more important role in such films (Male group, Participant 3).

My girlfriend goes to anywhere in Turkey by taxi even if she goes out with her friends. For example, I can give any unlimited freedom to her, but she should not go out alone when it is dark (Male group, Participant 1).

When we try to protect our women/daughters, we think that they cannot make good decisions by themselves for protecting themselves and do not know the life as well as we do. Is that so? I do not make any distinction between women and men. For example, I think that everyone should be at home by 10 or 11 until s/he is 20 years old whether it is a girl or a boy (Male group, Participant 3).

3.3. The Equality of Opportunities among Women and Men

When the participants were asked to express their opinions concerning the current status of the equality of opportunities between women and men, patriarchy and gender roles came to the forefront. Especially the female students made significant emphasizes on the subject of patriarchy.

We can see the general characteristics of a patriarchal society in relations among family members and women's and men's roles in our society. They say that women cannot succeed because they are women. However, men are created to be stronger. We know that even religions regard men as superior beings. It is very difficult for people not to be affected by that (Female group 2, Participant 3).

The participants stated that gender roles within the scope of the equality of opportunities between women and men affected every field of life in different dimensions (i.e. family, education, professional life). While the female groups mostly focused on equality, the male group argued that women and men could succeed in different fields.

They say that it is man's duty to earn a living for home. That is not true. In other words, the woman may fulfill this responsibility in the unit of marriage, too (Female group 2, Participant 3).

It is true that women have started to take part in certain points, but different issues come to the forefront. For example, well, the body of woman is used as a sexual object.

When we see a successful woman, some of our friends make some claims regarding the reason for her to be promoted to that particular position. People think that men are more suitable for some positions. In my opinion, there is such a perception among people (Female group 2, Participant 2).

Today, there are some policies preventing women from working. I have done a research. When recruiting women in the private sector in particular, the marital statuses of women are taken into account. This is because; it is thought that they may quit the job when they have a child in the future. It is thought that after a baby is born, her mother should stay at home and look after her child. For that reason, they give permission to mothers. These policies discourage women from working (Female group 2, Participant 3).

I am not sure about its truth, but I have read that female primary education students are more successful than male students. On the other hand, some familial reasons (especially her father) prevented my mother from receiving education. There are these kinds of challenges, too. In my opinion, women are conditioned for marriage as of their childhood in some regions (not all regions). In other words, education and studying are ignored. Many people stop working temporarily when they have a child. As a result, certain inconveniences emerge (Female group 2, Participant 2).

One of the issues that have not changed from past to present is that lower wages are provided for female labor. To my way of thinking, this prejudice results from the perception that women cannot work much, and cannot produce the same output as men (Female group 2, Participant 3).

Women cannot succeed in the professional life as much as men can. There is not a rule that men will work in a field related to the undergraduate program they have graduated from. They do not think about it. They can make use of other opportunities and reach higher positions. They can achieve a better economic position, too. However, this level is very low among women. It is really very low. You have graduated from social work department. If you established a business now, could you operate it? Men find their ways in one way or another. Of course, there are women succeeding in that, too. But, the number of these women is very small (Male group, Participant 4).

I think men have more commercial minds (Male group, Participant 1).

The participants benefited from thoughts on the effect of gender roles while explaining the inequality of opportunities between women and men. In this regard, the participants criticized that male children were appreciated and given freedom more in comparison to female children, and male and female children were brought up with different value judgments.

This is true for education, too. It is not for adults alone. For example, if we asked a family in the eastern Turkey whether a female child or a male child should be sent to school, they would prefer the male child in the first place. It is the male child who comes first (Female group, Participant 2).

There is another example. Two siblings may go out in the evening. A girl, on the other hand, has to be at home by five or six o'clock. The family explains this situation by saying "he is a boy, and you are a girl" (Female group, Participant 5).

Some people think in the following way: She will already get married, and leave our family. Thus, the male child is more important. All in all, she will be a member to another family. Thus, they do not provide their daughters with as good education as they do their sons (Female group, Participant 4).

For example, when families in our community grow their children, they give lunch boxes and dolls to their daughters by telling them to look after them. In this way, these kinds of thoughts are put into the minds of children (Female group 2, Participant 3).

For instance, elder brothers/son do not help the mother at home or in the daily life. However, the daughter has to be with her mother and fulfill the orders of the elder brother. Even if he is a younger brother, the mother and the father may have a different perception of the son. A woman has to respect the mother and father of her husband more. This is not expected from men. They are always respected. For example, firstly men are served in the dinner table (Female group, Participant 4).

It is said that men do not cry. Why is that so? They may cry, too (Female group 2, Participant 3).

While the participants criticized gender inequality, they touched upon regional differences in the country.

In my opinion, this is something depending on regions. It is true for the western part. However, it is not possible in the eastern part. In my opinion, that cannot be corrected.

This is because; most of the women in the eastern part do not have any status. I am talking about professional life. I am talking about acquiring a profession, graduating from a university. In this case, all roles are laid on men. Then, equality disappears. Men become superior. For that reason, I think it changes by regions and traditionalism (Female group, Participant 2).

It is interesting that some unique features of family – the environment where gender inequalities are experienced most – were described by male participants. According to them, women participate in decision-making processes more, and families are managed by mothers in fact.

I mention it in everywhere. Turkish community seems to be patriarchal, but it is matriarchal in fact. We only seem to be patriarchal. It is the mother who manages a family. To whom would children go if there were a problem? I could not go to my father. They go to their mothers, which results from patriarchy, too. All in all, who fulfills the meditating function for you? The mother mediates when you want something, too (Male group, Participant 4).

The participants emphasized that there was no inequality of opportunities between women and men in the field of health.

In my opinion, there is no difference between men and women in terms of accessing health facilities. This is because; everyone benefits from hospitals (Female group, Participant 5).

I think we are equal in the field of health (Female group 2, Participant 4).

3.4. The Fields in which Equality is to be Provided

The participants stressed that the equality of opportunities must be principally provided in the fields of education, health, and professional life, and stated that it was important to raise/change the social awareness.

I think it is about the education of society in the first place. If we complain about that, it must be about raising awareness. I think education is mandatory to change the perceptions of people. You said it was by 30%. At this point, education is of vital importance. Health is important, too (Female group 2, Participant 2).

It must definitely be provided in education and health. The state/government must change its policy (Male group, Participant 3).

The participants stated that even if women participated in educational life and found a place for themselves in the professional life, they were still exposed to different discriminations in the professional life. For instance, women have difficulties in being promoted to high positions.

There are not many women in high positions. For example, how many women are there in the Grand National Assembly? A decision is made about women, but the issue is evaluated by men (e.g. abortion). The decision is about women, but does not include women. Another example is that there are more men in higher positions of companies in comparison to women (Female group, Participant 1).

Traditionalism has an effect on this situation, too. There are some taboos which are very difficult to be broken (Female group, Participant 2).

Some participants stated that gender inequality in the society was supported by women through mother's roles.

In my opinion, female-male inequality is created by women. Everyone who has a brother knows that mothers always say, "You are a boy, you are a son, you cannot do that, you are a man. I am the mother of a son." As a result, a status difference is created for men as of childhood (Female group, Participant 5).

Some participants made mention of the importance of education for women to be stronger. They argued that participation in educational life had primary importance for participation in professional life, which, in turn, enabled them to feel themselves stronger in making their own decisions and maintaining their lives independently.

In my opinion, the first step should be education. This is because; the educational levels of people increase every passing day. For example, girls did not go to university much in the past. Now, however, the number of female students is higher in our department. It may change from department to department somewhat. However, when women are educated, their husbands expect less from them as they start working. Furthermore, these women are not dependent on their husbands financially. They earn their own money by themselves. They can say to their husbands that they can work, too. I think education is the most important thing (Female group, Participant 4).

The determining role of social structure in ensuring female-male equality manifests itself in the quotation below in the most striking manner:

That is to say; we can say that there should be equality of opportunities at every point where women and men are unequal in the society (Female group 2, Participant 3)

3.5. Suggestions

The suggestions of the participants for ensuring the equality of opportunities among women and men mostly involved in creation process of social policies and political regulations.

Regulations should be made in family policies (Female group 2, Participant 4).

In my opinion, the social policies determined by countries should be focused on more (Female group 2, Participant 3).

New policies may be developed (Female group, Participant 3).

A particular emphasis was put on the unchanging aspects of social and cultural structure besides political regulations. Here, the effect of religion was touched upon, too.

The cultural structure should be changed (Male group, Participant 3).

They should change. Their discourses should change. Their mentalities should change (Male group, Participant 1).

Religion and fatwa say that you can beat your wife or do another thing to your wife. That is to say; religion has a big effect on the attitudes towards women (Male group, Participant 4).

Another suggestion concerning providing the equality of opportunities between women and men was about raising awareness in the society.

To my way of thinking, awareness should be raised in the first place. Then, the political stage should be employed. In my opinion, it is the supporting stage. Awareness should be raised first. You can make policies, but how many people will abide by such policies (Female group, Participant 1)

Such awareness should be raised among not only men but also all women and men (Female group, Participant 5).

No pressure should be imposed on women or men. They should be set free as they already know what to do (Male group, Participant 2).

Another suggestion for ensuring the equality of opportunities was that women should be organized among themselves or inequalities should be reduced by creating the exchange of awareness among women. It is interesting that men complained that women were not organized. Women had similar thoughts, too.

... I swear you that women should provide the biggest support. We talk about equality all the time. However, women do not behave equally themselves. They do not do anything at all. The minister says straightforward that women should sit at home. Is that possible for God's sake (Male group, Participant 1)

Women have a very big role at this point, too. Children are educated by their mothers. Fathers have also an effect, but such equality can be provided by women through training and education. Thus, we should strengthen women, too (Female group 2, Participant 2).

Women should provide support for solution, but women do not give support themselves... They should be organized and defend their rights (Male group, Participant 1).

Women should unite among themselves (Male group, Participant 4).

Another suggestion about ensuring the equality of opportunities involved the use of media.

Programs can be prepared to show the power of women. Advertisements can be published/broadcasted about them (Female group, Participant 5).

The works and activities of women may be demonstrated in the public spots. The power of women can be mentioned (Female group, Participant 4).

The participants put forward different suggestions in various dimensions by using their professional knowledge and experiences.

If we work in a community center, we may open profession-acquiring courses and make them more functional and effective. Then, those women whose husbands allow them to work may be provided with a job.

The awareness of those husbands who do not allow their wives to work may be raised by explaining to them that women may work in any field and provide financial support to family. In my opinion, education is mandatory in the first place. This is because; the best source of power for a woman is education (Female group, Participant 4).

Inspections may be performed on the subject of the marriage of little girls every year. The girls who are below 18 can get married when their parents give signature. In my opinion, this rule should be abolished (Female group, Participant 4).

4. Observation

It was observed that the participants combined their opinions at a common point during group sessions in accordance with the purpose of focus group discussions. While the participants took part in the research process equally in the first female group, two people came to the forefront in the second female group (Participant 2 and 3). The members of the male group had differences of opinion from time to time. The female groups put more emphasis on gender roles. Gender roles were not criticized much in the male group.

5. Conclusions

As is known, the equality of opportunities refers to every member of the society demonstrating their skills, not being prevented, and having a chance to enjoy the same advantages (Turner, 1997). In parallel with that, the research participants constructed the equality of opportunities through right-based discourses by using similar expressions. They focused on the equality of women and men within the context of gender. They argued that the equality of opportunities should be provided for everybody regardless of gender, socio-economic condition, educational status, and professional life.

Anderson defines four different types of equality of opportunities in education: 1) The equality of all individuals in a society in terms of enjoying right to education at minimum level; 2) Providing everyone with an opportunity to receive education until the highest level; 3) The right of every individual to improve their skills and potentials up to the highest level; 4) Increasing the number of students at an educational level (i.e. enlarging the scope of the equality of opportunities) and improving (at least not lowering) efficiency at that level along with the decrease in number (Develioglu, 1993: 5). The participants argued that there was gender equality and the same opportunities were offered to women and men on the subject of university education, and women and men were equal in terms of inclusion in the university system. However, they failed to provide an analysis concerning the meaning of the equality of opportunities at primary education level.

Another interesting result of the study is that participants addressed the equality of opportunities within the context of gender inequality between women and men. The statements of the European Commission support this, too. As stated by Moroglu (2004), offering equal opportunities to women and men and enabling them to enjoy such opportunities equally may allow restructuring the society.

When expressing their opinions on the subject of the equality of opportunities among women and men, the participants focused on gender and patriarchal discourses. It was observed that especially the female groups internalized and normalized this situation, and even wanted to lead such a life. In this regard, awareness-raising activities to be conducted with women may help to restructure the patriarchal and gender role patterns. Especially the feminist group activities may be guiding on this subject. Therefore, the courses about gender analysis to be provided within the scope of social work undergraduate education are important for raising awareness among women and men.

According to the statement of Pignataro (2012) the equality of opportunities should be ensured in the public sphere was supported by the participants who emphasized that the equality of opportunities should be provided in the fields of education, health, and professional life. Apart from that, the participants stated that the changes to be introduced at social level may be effective in ensuring the equality of opportunities. The participants touched upon that it was necessary for women to participate in the educational life in the first place, the participation in educational life was important for participation in professional life, women were exposed to discrimination in reaching high level positions even if they could be included in the professional life, and education and promotion in professional life were interrelated basic equality of opportunities problems.

The participants firstly put an emphasis on political regulations in their suggestions about ensuring the equality of opportunities between women and men. In addition, they stated that social structure also reflected inequality.

Thus, they suggested that the efforts to be launched at social level may be effective. In general, the recommendations of the participants were at macro level.

All in all, the equality of opportunities and the equality of opportunities between women and men have an important place in social work. Therefore, the importance of ensuring the equality of opportunities and the ways of ensuring the equality of opportunities should be conveyed to students. If the analytical and emphatic thinking skills of students on this subject are improved, they may see different perspectives by creating differences in their personal and professional lives.

References

- Alkaya, T. (2011). Giving equality of opportunity to women and men workers at the adaptation process to European Union and a study about the reasons of not rising women to senior positions [in Turkish] (Unpublished master's thesis). Istanbul University, Istanbul, Turkey.
- Bishop, G. D. (1997). Alternative of societes. New Jersey: Prentica Hall.
- Boyraz, I. (2003). Concept of equality as a human right [in Turkish]. In G. Erdost (Ed.), Proceedings of Turkey Human Rights Movement Conference 2000 (pp. 21-27). Ankara, Turkey: Türkiye İnsan Hakları Vakfi Yayınları.
- Darlington, Y., Scott, D. (2002). Qualitative research in practice: Stories from the field. Singapore: South Wind Productions.
- Develioglu, Ş. (1993). An overview of transition to higher education in Turkey in terms of equality of opportunities [in Turkish] (Unpublished master's thesis). Hacettepe University, Ankara, Turkey.
- Krueger, R. A., Casey, M. A. (2000). Focus groups: a practical guide for applied research (3rd Edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Mack, N., Woodsong, C., Macqueen, K. M., Guest, G., Namey, E. (2005). Qualitative research methods: A data collector's field guide. USA: Family Health International.
- Mason, A. (2004). Equality of opportunity and social differences. The Philosophical Quarterly, 54 (216): 368-388.
- Moroglu, N. (2004). Equality of women and men in the European Union Accession Process [in Turkish]. In A. Güçhan (Ed.), Women's Studies Interdisciplinary Meeting (pp. 131-143). İstanbul, Turkey: Yeditepe Üniversitesi Yayını.
- Ooghe, E., Schokkaert, E., Van de gaer, D. (2007). Equality of opportunity versus equality of opportunity sets. Social Choice & Welfare, 28 (2): 209–230.
- Pignataro, G. (2012). Equality of opportunity: policy and measurement paradigms. Journal of Economic Surveys, 26 (5): 800–834.
- Roemer, J. E. (1998). Equality of opportunity. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Roemer, J. E. (2002). Equality of opportunity: a progress report. Social Choice & Welfare, 19 (2): 455-473.
- Tezcan, M. (1995). Sociology of education [in Turkish]. Ankara, Turkey: Feryat Matbaası.
- Turner, B. (1997). Equality [in Turkish]. Ankara, Turkey: Dost Kitabevi Yayınları.
- Unal, L. I., Ozsoy, S. (1999). Equality of opportunity in education: the myth of sisyphus of modern turkey. [in Turkish]. Ankara, Turkey: 75 Yılda Eğitim, Türkiye Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarih Vakfı Yayınları.
- Yar, A. M. (2009). Teacher Appointment Policies Based on Equal Opportunity Approach Analysis / Subjective Testimony- [in Turkish] (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Kocaeli University, Kocaeli, Turkey.
- Yıldırım, A., Simsek, H. (2011). Qualitative Research Methods in Social Sciences [in Turkish]. Ankara, Turkey: Seçkin Yayıncılık.

	Age	Sex	Grade	
Female Group 1	<u> </u>			
Participant 1	22	F	3	
Participant 2	23	F	3	
Participant 3	23	F	3	
Participant 4	22	F	3	
Participant 5	22	F	3	
Female Group2				
Participant 1	23	F	3	
Participant 2	22	F	3	
Participant 3	23	F	3	
Participant 4	22	F	3	
Male Group				
Participant 1	24	М	3	
Participant 2	23	М	3	
Participant 3	25	М	3	
Participant 4	24	М	3	
Participant 5	23	М	2	

Table 1: The Characteristics of Participants

F: Female, M: Male