

Examining Pre-Service Teachers' Perspectives on Culturally Responsive Education Using Q Methodology* Öğretmen Adaylarının Kültüre Duyarlı Eğitime İlişkin Görüşlerinin Q Metodoloji ile İncelenmesi

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Abstract: With globalization and migration, there is a rapid increase in cultural diversity in schools. Therefore, pre-service teachers' awareness, knowledge, and skills about cultural responsiveness and how to reflect them in the classroom environment have become important issues. This study aimed to explore the impact of a culturally responsive education course on pre-service teachers' views on culturally responsive education through Q methodology. The data collection tool utilized in the study was the "Q Set Statements on Culturally Responsive Education" grouped by the researchers under the sub-themes of awareness, knowledge, skills, and pedagogy. Data from the study group consisting of 39 volunteer pre-service teachers who took the culturally responsive education course were obtained through the HtmlQ program. Using the quantitative data obtained from the factor analysis and the qualitative data obtained from the semi-structured interviews, it was revealed that the pre-service teachers had three different subjective views on the effects of the culturally responsive education they participated in (a) Knowledge-Based Development (b) Awareness-Based Development and (c) Pedagogical Skills-Based Development. The results of the study point to valuable recommendations for culturally responsive teacher educators, pre-service teachers, and the Turkish education system.

Keywords: Culturally responsive education, culturally responsive teacher, pre-service teachers, Q methodology

Öz: Küreselleşme ve göçlerle birlikte okullarda kültürel çeşitlilik hızlı bir artış içindedir. Bu sebeple, öğretmen adaylarının kültürel duyarlılık hakkında farkındalık, bilgi, beceri ve bunları sınıf ortamına nasıl yansıtacakları önemli konular haline gelmiştir. Bu çalışma, kültüre duyarlı eğitim dersinin öğretmen adaylarının kültüre duyarlı eğitime yönelik görüşlerine etkisini Q metodoloji ile keşfetmeyi amaçlamıştır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu kültüre duyarlı eğitim dersini alan 39 gönüllü öğretmen adayı oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmacılar tarafından farkındalık, bilgi, beceri ve pedagoji alt temalarında gruplandırılan "Kültüre Duyarlı Eğitime İlişkin Q Seti İfadeleri" veri toplama aracı olarak kullanılmıştır. Ulaşılan veriler HtmlQ programı aracılığıyla analiz edilmiştir. Faktör analizinden elde edilen sayısal veriler ve yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerden elde edilen nitel veriler kullanılarak, öğretmen adaylarının katıldıkları kültüre duyarlı eğitimin etkileri üzerine üç farklı öznel görüşe sahip oldukları ortaya çıkmıştır: (a) Bilgi Odaklı Gelişim (b) Farkındalık Odaklı Gelişim ve (c) Pedagojik Beceri Odaklı Gelişim. Çalışma sonuçları kültüre duyarlı öğretmen eğitimcileri, öğretmen adayları ve Türk eğitim sistemi için değerli önerilere işaret etmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kültüre duyarlı eğitim, kültüre duyarlı öğretmen, öğretmen adayları, Q metodoloji

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Introduction

As a natural consequence of migration and globalization, cultural diversity is rapidly increasing worldwide. In addition to the longstanding local cultural diversity it has nurtured for centuries, the Republic of Türkiye is experiencing a growing diversity due to recent mass immigration. Consequently, pre-service teachers commence their careers in classrooms where cultural diversity is on the rise (Brand & Glasson, 2004). Teachers frequently encounter the challenge of delivering a uniform education to all students, given curricula and education systems that often do not consider the historical experiences and cultural backgrounds of their students (Bhopal & Danaher, 2013; Sharma et al., 2023).

The presence of students with diverse cultural characteristics in schools with ever-increasing numbers underscores the significance of highlighting the training of culturally responsive teachers. Aligning teacher education with this evolving demographic landscape necessitates substantial and timely revisions in teacher education programs (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). The intricate environment in schools where various cultures intersect shows the importance of fostering

cultural sensitivity and empathy among teachers and students (Shapira & Dolev, 2023; Wood & Wilson, 1996).

While there are studies examining pre-service teachers' views on cultural responsiveness (e.g., Banks & Banks, 2010; Hinojosa-Pareja & López López, 2018; Spraldin, 2009; Subasi Singh & Akar, 2021), the current research was designed to bridge the gap in the existing literature, which lacks post-training assessments employing Q methodology. The present study is focused on the examination of pre-service teachers' perspectives after their engagement in a culturally responsive education course, an uncommon practice within the Turkish teacher education landscape. Accordingly, the main research question of the study is: What is the impact of a culturally responsive education course on pre-service teachers? The sub-problems of the study are as follows: What is the impact of the training on pre-service teachers' (a) knowledge, (b) skills, and (c) value-based development towards culturally responsive education? The significance of the study is grounded in its emphasis on the importance of the culturally responsive course in teacher education, while also measuring its efficacy.

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Cultural Responsiveness and Teacher Competencies

Cultural responsiveness can be defined as an individual's capacity to enhance their awareness and knowledge, both about themselves and others, and to apply these insights in social interactions. On a societal level, cultural responsiveness pertains to ensuring equitable and just access to resources and social life for the various cultural groups within a given society (Kotluk, 2018). In the realm of education, cultural responsiveness, often referred to as culturally responsive education or pedagogy, embodies culturally sensitive communication among school stakeholders, including teachers, students, administrators, and parents of diverse cultural backgrounds. This sensitivity is reflected in the teaching, learning, and assessment processes.

Culturally responsive education involves acknowledging students' diverse cultural knowledge, experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles to create a meaningful and effective learning environment (Gay, 2018). In this process, educators should not only integrate students' cultural values and experiences into their educational settings but also consider their cultural backgrounds and the cultural perspectives of other stakeholders, such as parents and school counselors (Rengi & Polat, 2014).

To nurture cultural sensitivity among educators, it is vital to encourage and enhance cultural diversity within schools. This is because the attitudes and behavior of teachers toward students from various backgrounds significantly influence the academic success of all (Banks, 1987; Johnson & Atwater, 2014). Hence, prospective teachers should undergo training that acknowledges these distinctions, creating an inclusive learning environment for students from diverse backgrounds (Pine & Hilliard, 1990). To design the content of this training, it is essential to begin by identifying the qualities that a culturally sensitive teacher should embody.

Irrespective of their backgrounds, individuals entering the teaching profession must be prepared to educate a student body characterized by diversity in terms of race, ethnicity, economic circumstances, and language (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Beyond the expected professional competence, a culturally responsive teacher is required to possess a specific set of qualities that encompass social awareness, cultural sensitivity, student understanding, utilization of cultural learning resources, and the use of effective pedagogical approaches and methodologies (Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

Furthermore, a culturally responsive teacher should demonstrate an awareness of their biases and assumptions about cultural differences, possess knowledge about cultural diversity, including their own culture and their students' cultures, and have the requisite teaching skills to build upon this knowledge (Gorski, 2010; Rodriguez, 1983). A culturally responsive teacher's pedagogical approach should incorporate students' cultural background knowledge, experiences, and learning styles into the teaching and learning process. This entails creating a culturally inclusive classroom environment, employing diverse assessment methods to gauge student learning, and providing support to help students maintain their cultural identities (Siwatu, 2007).

Extensive research has delved into the measurement of cultural sensitivity among educational professionals. Siwatu's (2007) study illustrated that teacher candidates with a culturally responsive pedagogical understanding exhibited greater competence in forming positive relationships with their

students, fostering a sense of belonging, and effectively communicating with students learning a second language.

Given that the teaching profession is often dominated by individuals from the majority culture in many communities, there is a contention that such individuals may harbor ethnocentric views when interacting with minority students (Yuen & Grossman, 2009). Ethnocentric teachers tend to frame all relational dynamics within their cultural perspective, leading to challenges in integrating the cultural diversity that students bring into the classroom, and also hindering their comprehension of its impact on teaching and learning (Kağnıcı, 2020). As a result, such teachers may resist curriculum and program changes (Yuan, 2017), relying solely on their own ethnic and cultural values to evaluate teaching and learning, which obstructs the creation of an inclusive educational environment.

The importance of cultural responsibility in educational settings is widely recognized, as it provides various benefits and advantages. Hence, educational researchers have conducted studies to identify the factors influencing cultural responsibility and the direction of their effects. While some studies have found age and gender variables to be significantly related to cultural responsibility, others have demonstrated that these variables do not consistently and stably correlate with it (Aydin & Şahin, 2017; Yılmaz & Göçen, 2015). Conversely, the literature suggests that teacher candidates' cultural responsibility levels are positively impacted by the cultural diversity and population density of the region in which they reside. Additionally, research has shown that cultural responsibility, as well as the general undergraduate education received by teachers and guidance counselors (Pientrantoni & Glance, 2019; Yılmaz & Göçen, 2015), professional experience (Yıldırım, 2020), and minority status (Yeh & Arora, 2003), are factors that positively influence their cultural responsibility attitudes and skills.

The Status of Culturally Responsive Teacher Education in Türkiye

The integration of cultural responsibility into teacher education has been a slow process due to factors such as a shortage of trained instructors, resistance, and political obstacles (Banks, 2004). To address this, teacher training programs offer elective courses on culturally sensitive education topics. For example, in Türkiye, the Inclusive Education course is offered as a General Culture Elective in the Social Studies Education Undergraduate Program, and the Occupational Knowledge course is provided as an Elective course in the Primary Education Undergraduate Program (Higher Education Council [HEC], 2018). However, the availability of Culturally Responsive Education courses depends on the presence of trained instructors. These courses aim to enhance teacher candidates' personal awareness and knowledge levels. While studies have shown that undergraduate and graduate courses on culturally responsive education help teacher candidates develop awareness and knowledge, their impact on skill and attitude acquisition is limited, as attitude and skill development require long-term and experiential studies (Kağnıcı, 2013).

In 2017, the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in Türkiye updated the General Qualifications of the Teaching Profession list, outlining the competencies required for the teaching profession, which consists of three main areas and 65 indicators (MoNE, 2017). Kotluk and Kocakaya's (2018) study confirms that these indicators align with the cultural

responsiveness education approach. However, despite this alignment, culturally responsive education courses are not mandatory in teacher education programs as designated. Consequently, teachers are left to rely on their efforts and experiences to establish a culturally sensitive learning environment.

While the importance of preparing teacher candidates for diverse classroom environments is acknowledged, current research in this area remains insufficient, warranting further investigation (Russell & Russell, 2014; Trent et al., 2008). Therefore, research exploring the awareness, attitudes, and beliefs of teacher candidates regarding different cultures and their implementation in the educational environment would yield valuable insights in this field. To be effective in their profession, teacher candidates must possess meaningful personal and professional awareness of diverse cultures. It is well-established that teachers' beliefs toward different cultures influence their professional judgments and actions (Banks & Banks, 2010). Additionally, in societies where cultural values are prioritized, attending to teachers' perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes during their education process becomes a pivotal factor (Hinojosa-Pareja & López López, 2018). Hence, this study aims to investigate the effects of a 16-week culturally responsive education course on teacher candidates' views. By evaluating the quality of education provided and allowing teacher candidates to reflect on their personal views, this study contributes to the field of teacher education in a culturally diverse society.

Method

Q Methodology

In the current study, Q methodology was utilized to investigate how teacher candidates transformed their perceptions as a result of a culturally responsive education course. Q methodology has been widely adopted in social sciences (Aydogan et al., 2022; Watts & Stenner, 2023). In the current study, participants were asked to rank a set of prepared statements (Q set) based on their thoughts and opinions, using a scale that ranges from negative to positive. The Q scale (depicted in Figure 1) consists of three sections: the middle part for neutral or undecided statements, the left part for statements that oppose participants' views, and the right part for statements that align with their views.

Two traditional methods of applying Q arrays are the free method, where participants determine the number of expressions to be placed in each column, and the fixed method, where participants allocate a specific number of expressions to particular columns, as exemplified in this study (Watts &

Stenner, 2023). Employing the latter method, the participants in this study were instructed to arrange predetermined statements in the Q array and subsequently express their views regarding the expressions with the highest and lowest levels of agreement during semi-structured interviews. The study's objective is to unveil participants' subjective interpretations and internal references rather than the meanings and connections attributed by the researchers (McKeown & Thomas, 2013; Ramlo, 2021). Q methodology is a combination of qualitative opinions expressed by participants during the semi-structured interviews and serves as the main data collection method in this research.

Training Provided to Participants

In Türkiye, due to a shortage of faculty who can offer multicultural education at the higher education level and resource constraints, colleges of education seldom provide culturally responsive education courses (Akalin & Türküm, 2021; Kağnıcı, 2013). Therefore, this section of our study aims to offer an overview of the Culturally Responsive Education course, which served as the treatment for the study participants, providing a point of reference for educators and researchers planning to offer a similar course to teacher candidates.

This course, conducted within a college of education, aims to enhance participants' multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills. As an overview provided in Table 1, the educational process is designed to assist teacher candidates in developing personal and professional awareness and perspectives regarding the sociological, historical, philosophical, and psychological impacts of their own religion, language, ethnic origin, age, ability status, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status on society through self-reflection and practical application. During the first half of a 16-week semester, the course concentrated on defining, exploring the effects of, and recognizing obstacles and ethical considerations associated with multiculturalism. During this period, a combination of didactic and experiential learning methods was employed to underscore concepts such as cultural humility, social privilege, power dynamics in dominant and non-dominant groups, and micro-aggressions.

In the latter part of the course, various social identities that hold minority status in Turkish society were introduced. The syllabus initially presented some of these identities to the students (e.g., ethnic origin, sexual orientation), while others were incorporated into the course content through a series of class discussions (e.g., being an immigrant or a war victim).

Least Agree -4 (3 cards)	-3 (4 cards)	-2 (4 cards)	-1 (5 cards)	Neutral 0 (7 cards)	+1 (5 cards)	+2 (4 cards)	+3 (4 cards)	Most Agree +4 (3 cards)

Figure 1. Ranking and distribution grid for 39 Q-sorts

Table 1. Overview of the semester-long culturally responsive education training

Week	Weeks and Content Overview	Learning Activity	Objectives
1	Introductions, cultural competence, why is it necessary?	Introductions of class members with a cultural focus, ground rules, multicultural competencies group check	Understand multicultural and pluralistic trends, including characteristics and concerns between and within diverse groups nationally and internationally
2	What are the barriers? Cultural awareness, worldview.	Scenarios of barriers in school. Discussion and self-reflection of “why I may be nervous with a student of a different culture”	Promote cultural social justice, advocacy, and conflict resolution in school and society
3	Cultural humility, taking risks in multicultural communication	Example humility statements, discussions of ethnocentrism	Individual and group-level strategies for working with and advocating for diverse students
4	Privilege, Power, and Oppression in Education	Role-plays for privileged and oppressed communication	Eliminate biases, prejudices, and processes of intentional and unintentional oppression and discrimination
5	Cultural Identity and Intersectionality	Experiential activity with multiple identities through which students have privilege or lack of privilege	Implement multicultural/transcultural education awareness and knowledge of cultural identities
6	Microaggressions and Teachers, Communication, and Body Language	Role-plays, didactic learning, and class discussion	Examine bias and microaggressions in daily interactions
7	Trust, History, and Cross-Cultural Communication, Broaching Cultural Issues	Introduction of broaching continuum and broaching statements for different levels with role-plays	Demonstrate knowledge and skills in broaching cultural aspects with students and parents.
8	Ethical and Legal Responsibilities Related to Cultural Diversity	Didactic presentation and scenario-based discussions	Learn about ethical and legal considerations in cultural diversity
9	Social Class, Wealth, Socioeconomic Background		
10	Ability Status, Inclusion, Special Education	Student presentations of each identity’s history, current perspectives, and possible effects on the educational process in Türkiye. These presentations included a photo album of each identity, role-plays, and experiential in-class activities.	
11	Immigration, National Identity		
12	Gender, Sexual Orientation, LGBTQ+ Community		Demonstrate awareness, knowledge, and skills working with each of the introduced identity areas in contemporary Türkiye’s society.
13	Race, Ethnicity, and Education		
14	Elderly, Religion, and Spirituality		
15	International Aspects of Teacher Education		
16	So, what, now what, then what? Advocacy in Education and Society: A Life-long Goal		

The primary emphasis was on fostering knowledge, awareness, and skill development related to these identities. Course evaluation took place through a combination of assignments, cultural group presentations, and examinations. Participants were tasked with completing a self-cultural identity exploration assignment, designed to raise their awareness by encouraging them to delve into their cultural backgrounds. For this assignment, students were expected to concentrate on 4-5 identity components, such as ethnic origin, language, gender, age, spirituality (religion, denomination, atheism), sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, and ability status. Additionally, students worked in small groups to research one of the cultural groups in Türkiye that holds a minority status and created a photo album showcasing the cultural group they studied, departing from traditional presentation methods.

Concourse Development and Q Statements (Q set)

The initial step of the Q methodology involves generating a set of statements, referred to as the discourse area or concourse, that are likely to emerge around a particular phenomenon (Brown et al., 2019). To create this discourse area, as outlined by Brown (1980), researchers can draw on various sources such as existing literature, personal experiences, and current-popular cultural materials. In this study, a comprehensive literature review was conducted on multiculturalism, cultural sensitivity, immigration, special education, and gender studies, resulting in the identification of 100 statements. Next, to ensure the representativeness of the concourse area, researchers should select a sample group that captures the breadth of discourse based on criteria such as the scope of the statements, their relevance to the study, and their comprehensibility (Watts & Stenner, 2023). Accordingly, the researchers in this study agreed on 39 statements that formed

the final Q set (see Table 3) with the sub-themes of Knowledge, Awareness, Skills, and Pedagogy.

Participants (Q Set)

Q studies are typically conducted with small sample sizes due to the emphasis on individuals' subjective views and consensus of opinions (Watts & Stenner, 2023). Thus, selecting participants who possess diverse experiences, perspectives, and a strong interest in the research topic may yield varied and nuanced study findings (Karasu & Peker, 2019). To this end, the study's participant group included nine undergraduate students in their third and fourth years of teacher education. These individuals voluntarily joined the study after completing a multicultural education course, which originally consisted of 24 members. Of the participants, four identified as female and five as male. The participants reported their ages as ranging from 21 to 24, with an average of 22.5. Regarding minority group membership, three participants reported having a minority identity in contemporary Türkiye. Additionally, eight participants stated that they had not received any prior education in multicultural education beyond the course in which the study was conducted. Each participant was given a number based on their completion time (e.g., P1, P2, ...). These codes are then used for reference in the results section.

Data Analysis

We employed HtmlQ, a Q study-specific tool that participants could access through a computer browser, for the data collection stage of the study (Banasick, 2019). HtmlQ provided an interface where participants could view all the Q items and place them on a Q grid based on their preferences, facilitating the collection of nuanced subjective viewpoints. Upon completion of the data collection, researchers analyzed the data through Ken-Q Analysis, a program designed for Q data analysis (Banasick, 2019). Q data analysis includes correlation and factor analysis stages.

Findings

The Ken-Q program created a correlation table of all participant rankings and used it to group participants with similar views into factors. The analysis produced factor arrays, correlation values between factors, and unique and consensus statements among the factors (see Table 2 and Appendix 1). As shown in Table 2, between-factor correlations in the current study are considered low (e.g., 0,16) and moderate (e.g., 0,41). In Q, lower correlations between factors indicate fewer shared viewpoints between the two factors while higher correlations represent a higher degree of shared perspectives. The three factors of the current study have small to moderate shared perspectives. This is ideal for the current project as the research was designed to provide distinguished viewpoints on the effectiveness of the responsive education course. Finally, the factor narratives presented in the study were created by combining the factor analysis results with participant comments obtained through semi-structured interviews along with demographic information. This method is particularly suitable for Q studies prioritizing qualitative and subjective opinions (Brown, 1980; Karasu & Peker, 2019; Ramlo, 2021).

Table 2. Correlation among factors

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Factor 1	-	0,41	0,33
Factor 1	0,41	-	0,17
Factor 1	0,33	0,16	-

According to the results of the data analysis, three distinct perspectives were identified among the teacher candidates who completed the multicultural education course, namely (a) Knowledge-Oriented Development, (b) Awareness-Oriented Development, and (c) Pedagogical Skill-Oriented Development. The three-factor structure accounted for 53% of the total variance. Factor 1 included four participants and accounted for 25% of the variance. Factor 2 comprised three participants and explained 17% of the variance, while Factor 3 consisted of two participants and explained 17% of the variance. Further details of the factor loadings and ranking of the determining participants are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Factor distributions and flagged Q rankings

Participants	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
P1	0,05	0,00	0,89X
P2	0,83X	-0,11	0,2
P3	0,82X	0,3	0,06
P4	0,12	0,76X	-0,21
P5	0,62X	0,24	0,42
P6	0,09	0,68X	0,3
P7	0,68X	0,45	0,06
P8	0,43	0,13	0,63X
P9	0,31	0,54X	0,39
Explained Variance (%)	25	17	17

Factor 1: Knowledge-Based Development

Factor 1 participants emphasized their knowledge about cultural minorities in society and their advantages and disadvantages (18, +4; 20, +4). For example, participant P2 expressed this in their post-sort interview:

"I am aware that there is a lot of discrimination in society, and that there are advantaged groups. For example, gender factors greatly affect our advantages."

Participants in this factor also noted that their cultural sensitivity education (27, +3), along with personal experiences, made them more sensitive to cultural issues, enabling them to notice microaggressions experienced by minority groups at the societal level (22, +4). One participant who identified themselves as a member of a minority group in Türkiye expressed this issue:

"Being a minority citizen can make me more sensitive to these types of issues, also based on my past experiences" (P7).

Factor 1 representatives view the education they receive as a cause of an increase in their knowledge level, but also believe that acquiring more knowledge is necessary (7, +3). These themes were also frequently expressed in the interviews. For example, P5 stated:

"I realized the importance of microaggressions in our lives, what it really means to be sensitive, that accepting the existence of certain groups is not the same as respecting them, and that more needs to be done."

P2 added to this discussion, saying:

"I definitely think that in order to establish the healthiest communication with my students, I need to be knowledgeable about their culture, and I have no problem with that."

As a result of their increasing knowledge, advocacy for rights has become a part of their educational identity (37, +3). The ranking priorities of participants associated with this factor show that their cultural identities, in addition to their knowledge accumulation, are among the reasons for assuming

a role in advocating for rights. According to these participants, cultural values and issues that are important for students also become a priority for them (28, +3). Personal interests and the importance they give to their students play a key role here (39, +2). As expressed in semi-structured interviews, this importance can lead to their personal sensitivity and even cause them stress:

"I know that some cultural issues are sensitive. I try to choose my words carefully in order not to be misunderstood or hurt anyone's feelings" (P3).

However, their personal concerns do not prevent them from organizing educational environments at a professional level to support the sense of belonging of students who demonstrate cultural diversity (3, +2).

Factor 2: Awareness-Based Development

Factor 2 is primarily associated with a developmental focus on increasing participants' awareness, resulting from their education. The high-scoring statements indicate that this heightened awareness is evident at two levels: firstly, increased sensitivity towards the cultural identities of others (27, +4), and secondly, personal change and awareness (21, +4). Participants in this factor attributed their increased awareness to a self-cultural identity discovery assignment within the course content. As one participant noted in the post-ranking interview:

"It made me review my own culture, especially while writing the cultural resume, and thus my awareness increased" (P6).

Furthermore, the participants in this factor maintain active engagement in learning about cultural issues (39, +3) and often address such issues beyond their professional identities (30, +1). They view this personalization of learning as crucial and aim to be exemplary individuals not only in their professional lives but also in their daily lives (P4).

The participants' heightened awareness at a personal level also positively impacts their professional practice. They feel competent in implementing their theoretical knowledge (16, +3), integrating different cultures into their course content (4, +2), and addressing cultural values in school-family cooperation relationships (6, +3). Additionally, they recognize the importance of shaping their teaching practices to suit the learning styles of students from diverse cultural backgrounds (1, +2).

Factor 2 participants share similarities with those in Factor 1 regarding the importance of cultural values in educational environments and organizing educational materials within the framework of students' cultural backgrounds. However, unlike other factors, they place significant importance on their reporting obligations on issues such as child abuse and child marriage (16, +3). As one participant emphasized:

"I do not think it is appropriate for such a person to do our job either" (P9).

Furthermore, these participants consider ethical and legal considerations in educational environments and believe that ignoring cultural values and judgments is not feasible (13, -4).

Factor 3: Pedagogical Skills-Based Development

In contrast to Factors 1 and 2, participants in Factor 3 prioritize their cultural development as a means of enhancing their pedagogical skills. Their expressions reveal a strong emphasis on the interaction between their cultural backgrounds and educator identities (17, +4; 5, +3). They recognize the potential ethical conflicts that arise in this interaction and view these

conflicts as expected rather than indicative of indecision or incompetence. As one participant stated, "I have learned that even if there are such things (ethical responsibilities), I cannot ignore culture" (P1). At the end of their education, these participants hold the view that ethical decisions may sometimes conflict with cultural factors and should be questioned when necessary.

Factor 3 participants also exhibit a relativistic approach to ethical issues in their communication with students. They recognize the potential positive and negative effects that their cultural backgrounds may have on their communication with students and aim to effectively address these effects rather than ignoring them (36, -4). This skill-focused approach highlights their competence in this area and supports their belief that they should take the lead in addressing cultural issues in the classroom (25, +3).

Despite their strong focus on cultural issues in the classroom, Factor 3 participants appear distant from some social issues at the societal level (20, -3). However, their concern about implementing theoretical knowledge into practice and not overlooking cultural advantages in the school environment underlines their pedagogical and classroom-focused approach (35, +3). This is further supported by their respect for individual differences among students, as one participant noted,

"I don't expect my student to bring up these (cultural) issues since I feel competent talking about them - of course, being careful" (P8).

Consensus Among Factors

The study identified three prominent cognitive styles, or "factors," among the participants who shared certain viewpoints. Generally, the participants prioritize collaborative projects between schools and families that address cultural differences, as evidenced by the positive scores in Factors 1, 2, and 3 (6, +1; +3; +3). Moreover, they recognize the daily challenges faced by students from diverse cultural backgrounds and exhibit competence in selecting topics that reflect these cultures pedagogically in the classroom, as indicated by positive scores in Factors 1, 2, and 3 (19, +1; +2; +2). Participants also unanimously reject statements that suggest they feel incompetent in matters related to language, religion, and race (38, -3; -4; -3), ignore cultural differences among students (13, -4; -4; -4), or base their communication with minority-culture students on feelings of pity or sadness (10, -4; -3; -2).

Discussion

The current study focuses on eliciting the perspectives of teacher candidates regarding culturally responsive education. While there are prior studies that have examined teacher candidates' views on cultural responsiveness (Barry & Lechner, 1995; Garmon, 2005; Kayaalp, 2019; Öztürk & Ergül, 2023; Sarıgöz, 2023; Turner, 2007), the novelty of this study lies in its focus on investigating the effects of a culturally responsive course on teacher candidates' comprehension of culturally responsive education. Through the Q methodology research approach, data were collected and analyzed to reveal three distinct subjective viewpoints held by teacher candidates. These viewpoints, named per the Q methodology literature (Watts & Stenner, 2023), signify the dominant ideas and reflect the personal and professional views of teacher candidates on culturally responsive education, categorized as

(a) knowledge-oriented development, (b) awareness-oriented development, and (c) pedagogical skill-oriented development. The findings of this study demonstrate that the participants' knowledge of culturally responsive education increased as a result of the culturally responsive course. The study results indicate that participants' learning on topics such as minorities, social advantages and disadvantages, social privilege, microaggressions, and advocacy had a positive impact on their understanding of culturally responsive education. As it is known, pre-service teachers' knowledge about educational inequalities, racism, and equality traps affects how they perceive and react to class content, their teacher/student relationships, and the educational outcomes of disadvantaged students (Kayaalp, 2019). Prior literature suggests that teacher candidates often lack sufficient knowledge and awareness about different cultures and may hold negative views on certain cultural identities (Karaçam & Koca, 2012). The root cause of this deficit is attributed to the insufficient emphasis on multiculturalism in in-service training and teacher education programs (Polat & Kılıç, 2013). Thus, this study's finding supports the idea that the education provided in the culturally responsive course can help to prevent problems arising from a lack of knowledge about cultural differences among teacher candidates.

Another key finding is that cultural sensitivity education allows teacher candidates to become more aware of their cultural background and values, influencing their perspectives on culturally sensitive education and their interactions with students from diverse cultural backgrounds (Arslan & Kozikoğlu, 2017; Johnson, 2002). This awareness is crucial for enhancing their relationships with students and their professional roles during their education (Flynn, 2023). This study also underscores the importance of incorporating cultural sensitivity courses within education faculties. These courses provide teacher candidates with opportunities to explore, deconstruct, and reconstruct their beliefs and knowledge (Kyles & Olafson, 2008). The heightened personal awareness achieved by teacher candidates empowers them to confidently adopt a culturally responsive approach to school-family partnerships and create culturally sensitive educational environments.

Participants in the current study recognize the value of school-family partnerships in integrating cultural values into educational settings. Understanding families is a fundamental aspect of culturally sensitive education, helping students better appreciate their own cultures (Çoban et al., 2010; Warren, 2018). Therefore, the emphasis placed on the significance of families as integral components of students' cultures, by the participants is noteworthy.

Another significant finding from this study is that the teacher candidates did not view a division between pedagogical and skill sub-dimensions in teacher candidates' cultural sensitivity development (Polat & Kılıç, 2013). Instead, Factor 3 participants acknowledged that cultural responsiveness skills develop within their pedagogical frameworks. It underscores the connection between addressing cultural issues and pedagogical competence, evident as teacher candidates actively incorporate cultural considerations when interacting with students from diverse backgrounds in their classrooms. This development suggests that teacher candidates' cultural sensitivity and pedagogical competencies have improved (Feiman-Nemser, 2008).

In addition to the varied perspectives in the aforementioned developmental areas, participants achieved consensus on

specific aspects of culturally responsive education. Teacher candidates reported a heightened awareness of the challenges faced by minorities and a shift in their choice of topics that reflect cultural values in educational settings. While there is no existing data to directly explain this finding, Öztürk and Ergül (2023) demonstrated that as teachers spend more time in the profession, their biases towards students' cultural values significantly decrease. Similarly, Kozikoğlu and Tosun (2020) supported the notion that new teachers and those residing in the Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia regions have more positive attitudes toward pedagogy that is sensitive to cultural values. Consequently, teachers tend to become more cognizant of their biases toward students, particularly those from minority groups, as they draw from their personal life experiences. This awareness drives them to structure educational environments with strategies aimed at supporting and including these student groups (Polat & Kılıç, 2013).

Limitations and Future Directions

This study aimed to investigate the post-training views of pre-service teachers on culturally responsive education and the impact of training on their knowledge, awareness, and pedagogical skills. The findings indicated that the training contributed positively to these aspects of pre-service teachers' professional development. In light of these findings, this section offers suggestions for teacher educators, pre-service teachers, and practicing teachers.

The literature reveals a lack of resources on cultural sensitivity in teacher education in Türkiye, indicating a need for academics to develop various training modules, such as courses on culturally responsive education, workshops, and panels. These training modules should address critical concepts such as cultural prejudice, social privilege, microaggressions, and cultural humility, emphasizing the promotion of cultural issues in light of scientific data rather than political discourses. To produce culturally responsive teachers, it is also essential to integrate culturally responsive perspectives into school experiences supporting pre-service teachers through the supervision process.

The insufficiency of teacher training programs in Türkiye for culturally responsive education, due to a shortage of academic staff and political reasons, has been highlighted in previous research (Akalm & Türküm, 2021; Aydoğan, 2022). Thus, lecturers in faculties of education must receive adequate training and support on culturally responsive teacher education, which can then be imparted to pre-service teachers. Increasing the number of courses on cultural sensitivity, diversifying topics, and providing opportunities to practice is also recommended. These courses should focus on critical issues related to cultural sensitivity, including:

- Pre-service teachers gain knowledge and awareness about cultural groups in society,
- Recognize their own culture and explore its potential impact on personal perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors,
- Critical thinking, seeing, and respecting different perspectives, recognizing, and empathizing with stereotypes and prejudices against different groups,
- As pre-service teachers, they should lead their students to reflect on their own culture,
- To be able to make the subject selections, teaching materials, methods and techniques, measurement and

evaluation sub-dimensions that make up the teaching processes culturally sensitive,

- Taking personal responsibility for culturally responsive problems and solutions in society.

This study investigates the impacts of culturally responsive education on pre-service teachers in Türkiye, but the results should be evaluated while considering some limitations. Firstly, the sample group of the study is composed of students from the education faculty of a mid-sized urban university, and therefore, the results should be generalized to other pre-service teachers with caution. Although Q method studies prefer rich content over a large sample size, the findings need to be confirmed by conducting a similar study with students from diverse regions and demographics across Türkiye. Furthermore, the first author of the study was also the course instructor, which may have caused some students to feel uncomfortable during the data collection process. While the study attempted to mitigate this limitation, it is still important to conduct similar research with different instructors and settings.

The Q method was utilized in this study to emphasize the subjective views of the participants. It is noteworthy that this approach is well-suited to address issues related to culturally responsive education and should be employed more frequently to highlight the subjectivity of such issues. By doing so, educators can gain a deeper understanding of students' unique perspectives and needs related to cultural diversity.

In light of these limitations and methodological considerations, the findings of this study have important implications for teacher educators, pre-service teachers, and practicing teachers. Providing culturally responsive education to pre-service teachers can improve their knowledge and awareness of cultural issues, enhance their pedagogical skills, and foster critical thinking and empathy towards different cultural groups. To achieve these outcomes, educators should integrate courses and training sessions on cultural sensitivity into teacher training programs and provide support for practicing teachers to develop their skills in this area. Finally, incorporating Q methodology into research on culturally responsive education can provide valuable insights into how different individuals perceive and respond to cultural diversity issues.

Author Contributions

All authors took an equal part in all processes of the article. All authors have read and approved the final version of the study.

Ethics Declaration

This study was conducted with the approval decision taken at the Ethics Committee for Human Research (Protocol No. 2022/163-189) of Sinop University, dated 19.10.2022.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest with any institution or person within the scope of the study.

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Appendix 1: 39-Item Q Sample and Factor Arrays

39-Item Q Sample and Factor Arrays

#	Statement	F 1	F 2	F 3
1	I know that different cultures have different learning styles	-2	0	3
2	I can use different teaching methods and techniques according to the needs of the students	1	-1	1
3	I can make arrangements in my class so that students from different cultures can feel like they belong	1	0	-2
4	I can choose topics that reflect different cultures	1	0	2
5	It is the responsibility of a good teacher to respond to the pedagogical needs of students from different cultures	0	3	0
6	I can collaborate with students, school administration, families, and the community while considering different cultures	0	2	1
7	I can learn about cultures to better understand my students.	4	0	0
8	I am aware of my pedagogical responsibilities in classes with students from different cultures.	0	1	-1
9	Educators play an important role in helping students from different cultures adopt the prevalent culture at school and behave accordingly	-3	0	1
10	I feel close to the students from different cultures because I feel sad	-4	-3	-1
11	I choose topics based on the prevalent culture	-3	-1	0
12	Cultural differences do not affect my professional identity	-2	-3	4
13	I can ignore the cultural differences of my students	-4	-3	-4
14	I am knowledgeable about the different cultural groups in Türkiye.	1	1	4
15	I know that cultural diversity encompasses not only certain groups but also broader ones.	0	0	3
16	I am aware of my reporting obligations (abuse, child marriage, etc.).	2	0	4
17	I know that my ethical responsibilities influence my understanding of cultural differences	-1	4	-1
18	I am more knowledgeable about specific issues that some cultural groups face.	4	-2	0
19	I understand the daily life challenges of students from different cultures.	2	1	2
20	I am aware that certain cultural groups have advantages over others in society.	3	2	-1
21	I am aware of my own cultural biases	0	-2	2
22	I am aware that micro-aggressions, even well-intentioned ones, are harmful.	4	3	-2
23	I choose my words carefully when talking about cultural issues.	3	2	0
24	I feel more comfortable discussing certain cultural issues.	-1	3	1
25	I am aware that my own culture can have positive or negative effects on my students.	-1	-1	-2
26	I can communicate better with my students on topics that I am personally comfortable with.	-2	-1	0
27	My personal life experiences make me more sensitive to cultural issues.	3	4	3
28	If culture is important to my students, it is important to me as well.	2	-4	-1
29	My approach to education develops independently of my cultural background.	-4	-4	-4
30	I discuss cultural issues in my personal life.	0	3	1
31	I feel competent in discussing some sensitive cultural issues.	-1	2	-3
32	I feel that I am more empathetic when discussing cultural issues.	1	1	-3
33	I feel competent in applying theoretical knowledge.	-2	-1	3
34	I feel brave to discuss cultural issues openly	0	4	-3
35	My teaching style changes according to my student's culture.	-3	-2	-2
36	I wait for my students to bring up cultural topics first.	-1	-4	-3
37	Advocacy is an important part of my profession.	3	-2	0
38	I feel inadequate discussing topics such as religion, language, race, etc.	-3	-3	-4
39	I have a personal curiosity about cultural issues.	2	1	2