



The Effectiveness of an Implemented Human Rights Course Designed around Non-Governmental Organizations¹

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of prospective teachers regarding a human rights course that introduces non-governmental organizations. The participants in this action research study were one-hundred prospective teachers (69 females and 31 males) who were enrolled in the Human Rights course consisted two similar groups, each consisting of 50 students. The same procedures were applied to both groups. Quantitative and qualitative data was obtained by means of close and open ended items through a questionnaire. Descriptive and inferential statistics and thematic analysis were performed for the analysis of the data. The results show that employing a NGO-based course greatly affected the students in that they recognized the relationship between human rights and NGOs. No significant difference was found in the prospective teachers' perceptions about the NGOs in relation to the gender or NGO membership variables. The results also yielded positive and significant responses regarding the constructivist implementation of this course designed around the NGOs. The findings of this action research leads to conclude that, the prospective teachers realize the great contributions of the NGOs to the human rights field. Findings also suggest that teaching-learning process designed around constructivist pedagogy should be offered to other departments in teacher training institutions.

Keywords: Human rights education, non-governmental institutions, constructivism, teacher training

Introduction

This study was conducted for three reasons. The first was an observed conversation held by a group of teachers-in-training in Turkey regarding the activities of some non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Some of these students supported the activities of a particular NGO, while other students criticized it in terms of its opposition to national interests. The second motivation was that the researcher realized that most of these student teachers were not aware of their rights. These teachers-in-training were all complaining about such things as their experiences with health services, stationery just across the street, mini-bus services that take them to the school every day, instructors who do not treat them as well as they deserve, pollution in the city, terror, and corruption in the society – but all without any apparent discussion of their rights. Thirdly and lastly, the researcher's other personal experiences, including several informal conversations held with students in classes during the last three years, related to their interests. The researcher informally questioned them about their interests, attitudes, knowledge, and current societal events in the country. When informed about the history of human rights and the rights of different groups of people, the students held extensive discussions about these topics. Although they had come to the classroom from different regional parts of the country, and had different origins and different socio-cultural backgrounds, they sometimes shared common attitude and practices regarding the field of human rights, but sometimes did not. The researcher decided to make a record of their statements, mostly their complaints, and to direct them to take action in the human rights field. To facilitate this, a Human Rights course outline was designed which was heavily based on student-driven activities. The new course would have an innovative design, suggested by the selected readings, the students' backgrounds and interests, and the researcher's personal experiences. All of these influences led to a focus on non-governmental institutions.

Before World War II, human rights were considered as the domestic affairs of the countries (Bernasky, 2004). Immediately after the Charter of the U.N in 1945, national and international linkages were established in order to prevent humanity from human rights

violations through several institutions, including NGOs. Since the 1970s, people especially in democratic societies witnessed a profound shift in the organization, roles, and discourses of NGOs (Lakshmi, 2009; Srirak, 2005). The rapid increase of NGOs as social organizations supporting human rights began to an international issue and they also became critical factors influencing national and international politics. A considerable number of national and international NGOs have emerged to deal with the human rights violations around the world. Involvement in NGOs has increased dramatically and this involvement by many people from societies paved the way for the laws and international relations that aim to facilitate the lives of people (Bernasky, 2004; Pejan, 2005; Snider, 2000; Srirak, 2005).

Some NGOs are nonprofit organizations; some are related to business; and others deal more with political, social, and economic issues. Although they are intended to be action groups that primarily promote common national or international goals, several critics have been also made about them as being integrated into capitalist relations as time passes (Choudry, 2008). They are generally described as organizations that are engaged in development, and the promotion of gender and economic equity, a fair judicial system, environmental awareness, citizenship involvement in governance, human rights, and poverty reduction at national and international levels (Clark, 2001; Lewis, 2001; Martens, 2002). In addition, NGOs are currently seen as more crucial and cost-effective than governments in providing social services that reach poor or needy groups in societies (Ebrahim, cited in Bradaschia, 2008).

Human rights education at teacher training institutions and schools has long been recognized by many educators as an important element of teacher education. For example, De Moulin and Kolstad (1999) and Torney-Purta (1981) have stated that teachers should possess a mature understanding of human rights and democracy, and that teacher training institutions should contribute more to develop the democratic maturity of teachers by including human rights courses in their programs. More recently, scholars have claimed that realizing human rights is one of the most important challenges confronting contemporary societies (Moghaddam & Vuksanovic, 1990)

Some also argue that educators have a responsibility to spread knowledge about human rights. Besides, encouraging this is one of the mostly emphasized goals of NGOs (Ramos, 2008). World Bank (2009) also explains that NGOs have a crucial role to play in helping to amplify the voices of the poor in the decisions that affect their lives.

The number of NGOs has boomed especially after 1997 in Turkey and they play a major role in human rights awareness in Turkey. The number of NGOs including associations, unions, foundations, or chambers has also reached around 150.000 by the 2008 (Kamp, 2009). However, from the researcher's experiences with prospective teachers in Turkey, NGOs that promote human rights have not received sufficient attention in teacher training programs.

The purpose of this research study was to investigate the effectiveness of an undergraduate-level human rights course designed around NGOs for prospective teachers. In order to realize this aim, the following research questions guided the study.

- 1- What are the perceptions of prospective teachers in relation to NGOs?
- 2- What are the perceptions of prospective teachers in relation to the constructively designed learning-teaching process related to human rights education based on NGOs?
- 3- Is there a significant difference in the prospective teachers' perceptions about the NGOs in relation to the gender variable?
- 4- Is there a significant difference in perceptions if the participants are members of an NGO?

- 5- What are the most emphasized human rights issues among the prospective teachers after they have taken the new course designed around NGOs?

Method

Research Design

As the teaching profession requires continuing reflective practices to improve the instructional process, teachers may occasionally undertake the role of the researcher. Action research is the most appropriate if the researcher's primary aim is to enhance and develop practice, rather than to demonstrate knowledge (Carter & Osler, 2000; Dana, Gimbert, & Yendol-Silva, 2001; Denzin & Lincoln 2003; Gay & Airasian, 2000; Mills, 2007; Tomal, 2003; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008).

Sample

The study participants were one-hundred teachers-in-training (69 females and 31 males) who were enrolled in two of the researcher's Human Rights courses within a Guidance and Counseling Department in a public university in Turkey during the 2007-2008 academic year. Two similar groups were created for the study, each consisting of 50 students. Participation was required of all students enrolled in these two classes. The same procedures were applied to both groups.

Research Instruments

Data collection in action research can be quantitative, qualitative, or both (Stringer, 2008; Thomas, 2005; Waters-Adams, 2006). In this study, quantitative data was obtained by means of close-ended and qualitative information was collected through close-ended questions in the questionnaire. Three experts from the field helped with the validation process of the questionnaire items. Then the questionnaire was administered to a pilot group of 20 students. In the final version, 29 close- and open-ended questions were included in the instrument. Its Cronbach Alpha reliability value was calculated as 0.80. The questionnaire was administered to both classes at the end of the Spring semester.

Procedure

The nature of the Human Rights course

The course was elective and designed to introduce various non-governmental organizations with different goals in human rights field in Turkey. The students attended class for two hours per week, and for 14 weeks in total, during one semester of the 2007-2008 academic year.

The activities during the semester

Planning phase- in the first week

Prior to the beginning of the academic semester, the researcher examined relevant literature, media, and several public and NGO websites, and decided to include 50 NGOs representing different aspects of Human Rights as could be fit into the course framework. In the beginning week of the course, the purpose of the course, its goals and objectives, this research study and its implementation process, and the grade evaluation criteria were all explained to the students through a course outline prepared by the researcher.

Implementation phase- subsequent activities

After two weeks of theoretical introduction (background, history, and account of the endeavors of human rights activists) through PowerPoint sessions, the students randomly drew the names of non-governmental institutions to be presented two weeks later, in

accordance with certain criteria. The prospective teachers prepared ten-minute length PowerPoint presentations that introduced their selected NGOs and discussed their functions in the human rights field.

The prospective teachers then watched two documentary movies related to human rights in Turkey and abroad (“Road to Guantanamo” by Mat Whitecross, and “Human First!” by Can Dündar). In the following weeks, two guest-speakers visited the classes. The first was a lawyer who was serving as a member of the Erzurum Human Rights Coordination Committee. He specifically mentioned committee procedures to address a human rights violation, and then informed the students about consumer rights, the current state of the prisons in the city, and the rights of the prisoners. The other guest was from TEMA (the Turkish Foundation of Afforestation and Struggle with Erosion), the biggest environmentalist NGO in Turkey. The guest-speaker introduced their activities, and then informed the prospective teachers about the current situation and environmental future of Turkey and the world. The prospective teachers received leaflets and brochures, and watched a short video about the activities of TEMA.

The students were also required to choose an actual human rights violation in Turkey to analyze with regard to given criteria provided by the instructor. All of the students received a written sheet containing information about the submission procedures and evaluation rubric. This task was substituted for the final exam.

Data Analysis

The quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS 12.00. In the data analysis, the mean values of the participants’ responses to each item were computed. In order to make clear comments on the data, arithmetical mean intervals of the items were recalculated. Considering that the intervals are equal, the point interval coefficient for the arithmetic mean was 0.80. Point interval = (Highest value – Lowest Value)/5 = 4/5 = 0.80. The evaluation intervals for the arithmetical means are given in Table 1. According to the table, for example, if the prospective teachers indicated their responses with a mean score of 3.80, this was considered “positive.” In order to determine if there were significant differences between the responses of the prospective teachers with regard to certain variables, t-tests and ANOVAs were conducted.

Table 1. *Evaluation intervals for the arithmetical means*

Grading	Mean intervals	Explanation
Strongly disagree	1.00–1.80	Completely negative
Disagree	1.81–2.60	Negative
Undecided	2.61–3.40	Undecided/Neutral
Agree	3.41–4.20	Positive
Strongly agree	4.21–5.00	Completely positive

According to the table, for example, if the prospective teachers indicated their responses with a mean score of 3.80, this was considered “positive.” These comments are presented with other descriptive findings, such as frequencies and percentages, in the tables. In order to determine if there were significant differences between the responses of the prospective teachers with regard to certain variables, t-tests and ANOVAs were conducted. The qualitative data obtained from the close-ended questions was analyzed using inductive thematic analysis. This was used to identify patterns in the prospective teachers’ responses, which yielded major themes. The themes thus came from the data rather than from a pre-existing framework (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Yıldırım, A & Şimşek, 2008).

Results

As can be seen in Table 2, a vast majority of the prospective teachers ($\bar{x}=4,51$) thought that human rights and NGOs share a close relationship. They also thought that NGOs contribute to the development of human rights and democracy in Turkey ($\bar{x}=4,08$), and that NGOs promote the candidacy of Turkey for the EU. The prospective teachers also admitted that the comprehension of human rights among Turkish people was not sufficient ($\bar{x}=2,46$). Other responses can be seen in the Table 2.

Table 2. Responses of the Prospective Teachers in Relation to NGOs

	SA	A	U	D	SD	\bar{X}	S.D
	f/%	f/%	f/%	f/%	f/%		
1. Human rights have close relationships with NGOs	61	29	10	--	--	4,51	,67
2. NGOs contribute to human rights and democracy in Turkey	27	54	19	--	--	4,08	,67
3. NGOs promotes the EU candidacy of Turkey	26	36	24	10	4	3,70	1,08
4. All NGOs make efforts to promote better human rights conditions in Turkey	28	28	29	11	4	3,65	1,12
5. NGOs have very clear missions and visions	16	41	33	9	1	3,62	,89
6. Some NGOs conduct harmful activities that are detrimental to national interests	14	23	27	21	15	3,00	1,27
7. Human rights are sufficiently understood by the Turkish people	5	12	24	42	17	2,46	1,06
8. Some NGOs make use of human rights in order to benefit their own organization	4	--	37	44	15	2,34	,87
Total Mean						3,42	

Note → (5) Strongly Agree (1) Strongly Disagree ; N=100, therefore (f) and (%) values are the same

Table 3 presents the responses with regard to constructivist learning-teaching process based on NGOs. Regarding the teaching and learning process in the Human Rights course, the prospective teachers stated that the most effective element of the course was the documentary movies ($\bar{x}=4,78$). These documentaries helped them to understand the course better ($\bar{x}=4,71$). They also stated that they understood the course content better because of the involvement of the guest-speakers in the class ($\bar{x}=4,65$). Most of the prospective teachers stated that the students in other departments should be enrolled in the Human Rights course ($\bar{x}=4,60$). They thought that the course was beneficial ($\bar{x}=4,57$), and that the “Human Rights Violations Project” helped them to understand how human rights issues can be incorporated into their daily lives ($\bar{x}=4,55$). They learned many things while they were searching for their project topic ($\bar{x}=4,43$), and they regarded human rights issues more positively ($\bar{x}=4,38$). The classroom discussions ($\bar{x}=4,44$), the “Human First!” documentary ($\bar{x}=4,41$), and the PowerPoint presentations by the prospective teachers ($\bar{x}=4,20$) were other crucial activities in the structure of the course. Other responses can be seen in the table.

Consequently, the questionnaire included two major sections, as seen above. The responses of the prospective teachers ($M=3,42$) revealed that they tended to “positively” regard the roles and contributions of the NGOs in the human rights field. Their responses also show that they enjoyed the activities and the teaching-learning process in this course ($M=4,00$) much better than the NGO elements. Both major dimensions in the questionnaire were within the limits of “positively recognized” intervals. Thus, the

introduction to NGOs through an authentic process was regarded positively by the prospective teachers.

Table 3. Responses of the prospective teachers in relation to the learning-teaching process based on NGOs

	SA	A	U	D	SD	\bar{X}	SD
	f/%	f/%	f/%	f/%	f/%		
1. The movies we have seen in the course provided more amusing lessons	81	16	3	--	--	4,78	0,48
2. The movies we have seen in the course helped me to understand the course better	72	27	--	1	--	4,71	0,47
3. The involvement of the guest-speakers in the course was beneficial for understanding human rights	73	20	6	1	--	4,65	0,64
4. This course should be delivered in other departments	71	21	6	1	1	4,60	,73
5. The Introduction of this course was beneficial	65	29	4	2	--	4,57	,67
6. The "Human rights violations project" helped me to understand that human rights are integrated with daily life	62	32	5	1	--	4,55	,64
7. Classroom discussion was beneficial and helped the class to become more familiar with NGOs	58	34	5	--	3	4,44	0,84
8. I learned much about human rights during the preparation of the "Human rights violations" project	55	34	10	1	--	4,43	,71
9. I understood the NGO movement in Turkey better when I watched the "Human First!" documentary	55	33	10	2	--	4,41	0,75
10. The NGOs-based Human Rights course helped me to perceive human rights in a more positive manner	52	37	8	3	--	4,38	,76
11. I understood that there are many human rights violations that I did not consider previously	48	37	11	4	--	4,29	,82
12. The data show projections and PowerPoint presentations helped me to understand NGOs	50	26	19	4	1	4,20	0,95
13. The structure of the NGOs-based human rights course was more beneficial than a traditional lecture design	48	24	20	6	2	4,10	1,04
14. The presentation handouts helped the class to understand the role of NGOs	45	29	16	5	5	4,04	1,12
15. I never thought that human rights was such an involved and important topic	33	30	27	7	3	3,83	1,06
16. The NGOs-based human rights course should be more visual	32	26	23	14	5	3,66	1,20
17. This course should be more than 2 hours per week	27	21	25	11	16	3,32	1,39
18. The crowded classroom / class size was a barrier for the course to be more effective	20	15	26	23	16	3,00	1,35
19. The lectures were helpful for understanding NGOs and their roles in human rights	11	22	28	25	14	2,91	1,21
20. Human rights related information, concepts, and its brief history should have been discussed in more detail in lectures	10	19	26	24	21	2,73	1,27
21. The learning environment was a handicap in the delivery of the course	4	12	34	32	18	2,52	1,04
Total Mean						4.00	

Not→ (5) Strongly Agree (1) Strongly Disagree (M=4.00); N=100, therefore (f) and (%) values are the same

The Prospective Teachers' Perceptions about NGOs According to the Gender Variable

A t-test was conducted to examine the differences in the prospective teachers' perceptions of NGOs in terms of the gender variable. No significant difference was found between the female and male respondents.

Table 4. Responses of the students in relation to the gender variable

Gender	N	M	SD	t	p
Female	69	27,34	3,11	.058	0.95
Male	31	27,38	3,15		

*p<0.05

Membership and Non-Membership in NGOs

As can be seen in Table 5, 33% of the prospective teachers were members of a NGO. The prospective teachers were asked whether they had previously attended any activity of an NGO. Twenty prospective teachers (52,6%) who were all members of a NGO stated that they had attended NGO activities. Eighteen of the prospective teachers (47,4%), all of whom were not members of any NGO, did not attend to any activities of NGOs. It was assumed that the remaining 49 prospective teachers (79% of the non-members) who were not member to any NGOs never participated to any NGO event.

Table 5. Membership and participation in NGO activities

	Participated		Did not participate		N
	F	%	f	%	
Member	20	52,6	13	21	33
Non-member	18	47,4	49	79	67
	38	100	62	100	100

A t-test was conducted to examine whether membership in an NGO made a difference in the prospective teachers' perceptions of NGOs. No significant difference was found between those with membership and those with no membership in a NGO. In other words, membership is not a factor that affected the perceptions of the students in relation to NGOs (Table 6).

Table 6. Responses of the students on perceiving the NGOs in relation to the membership

	N	M	SD	t	p
Member	33	27,6061	3,1018	.552	0.582
Non-member	67	27,2388	3,1387		

*p<0.05

As can be seen in Table 7, another t-test was conducted to examine whether membership in a NGO made a difference in the prospective teachers' perceptions with regard to the constructivist learning-teaching process experienced during the course based on NGOs. There was no significant relationship between holding a membership and no membership in an NGO in relation to the learning-teaching process.

Table 7. Responses of the students on the learning-teaching process based on NGOs in relation to the membership

	N	M	SD	t	p
Member	33	30,3333	3,3323	-	,502
Non-member	67	30,8060	3,2764	,675	

*p<0.05

Lastly, a correlation analysis test (0.33, $p>0.01$) was conducted to examine whether there is a relationship between the perceptions of the prospective teachers about NGOs and their perceptions about the learning-teaching process based on NGOs in the Human Rights course. This result shows that there is a moderate positive correlation. This means that as scores for the prospective teachers' perceptions about the learning-teaching process based on NGOs increased, their scores for perceptions about the NGOs also increased positively.

Results of the Open-Ended Questions

One goal of this study was to ascertain which three things the prospective teachers remembered most from the overall course, and why. They were asked in an open-ended question format to write down three things they remembered from the course best after the end of the semester. Their responses were analyzed and categorized into four major themes: the nature of human rights, the rights themselves, NGOs, and the course content and implementation. These themes are presented with their frequencies in Table 8.

Table 8. Major themes identified from the open-ended question

The Course Content & Implementation	NGOs	The Nature of Human Rights	The Rights
-Movies (N=16)	-NGOs and their contributions to human rights (N=36)	Positive:	-Right of free thought, faith and speech (N=14)
-Presentations (N=8)		-Awareness of human rights (N=36)	-Right to live (N=12)
-Positive impact of the course (respectful & peaceful atmosphere, comfortable interactions, free speech, attitude of the instructor... etc.) (N=6)	-NGOs and their negative aspects (N=4)	-Relationship with law (N=7)	-Right to education (N=10)
-Guest-speakers (lawyer and TEMA activist) (N=5)		-Universal Declaration of Human Rights (N=2)	-Consumer rights (N=7)
-Discussions (N=3)		-Democracy and human rights relationship (N=2)	-Patient rights (N=5)
		-History and the endeavors of activists for human rights (N=2)	-Rights of children (N=3)
		Negative:	-Rights of free press (N=2)
		-Human rights violations (N=14)	-Right to be informed (N=2)
		-Conditions in which human rights are lacking in Turkey (N=2)	-Economic rights (N=2)
			-Women's rights (N=2)
			Meaning of human rights:
			-Equality (N=14)
			-Freedom (N=12)
			-Universality (N=11)
			-Respect (N=6)
			-Peace (N=5)

At first glance, the responses of the prospective teachers show they learned that all people have rights merely because they are human beings. Regarding the course content and implementation, the responses clarified that movies were a highly beneficial and remembered activity in the course (N=16). Presentations (N=8), the positive impact of the course (N=6), guest-speakers (N=5), and class discussions (N=3) were the other important categories identified from their responses. Regarding the positive effect of the course atmosphere, one prospective teacher stated, "this was the first time in my higher education that I felt quite confident, and it was the first time I expressed myself pretty clearly" (PT, 14).

As can be seen in table, the prospective teachers (N=36) regarded the NGOs, and their relationships with and contributions to human rights positively. Most of the responses were related to the statement, "I have never thought that human rights and NGOs are so related, and that they go hand-in-hand in most cases." Only four prospective teachers stated that "some NGOs act against the national interests of the country." Therefore, they viewed the roles and contributions of some NGOs negatively.

The responses of the prospective teachers (N=36) show that their awareness of human rights increased after the course. A female prospective teacher's statement is very indicative of how and why their awareness and positive attitudes increased during the course:

I only knew that human rights are used to condemn my country in the news, and I had a really negative reaction to this term. I was always hearing that this term was also negatively used by terrorist organizations and their representatives, as propaganda tools. Therefore, for me, it was impossible to deal with human rights literature or activities. However, this course taught me that this was a misunderstanding or a misconception... Human rights are found in many aspects of our lives... In shopping, in traffic, in schools, in the post office, and in my job application, and anywhere else... So I will deal more with human rights related issues, and I will certainly become a member of a NGO or the NGOs. (F.4-2)

The prospective teachers also indicated that they learned about human rights violations (N=14) that occurred in Turkey and throughout the world during this course. The responses of the prospective teachers clarified that when someone talks about rights, they mostly thought of the rights of free thought and speech, and of faith (N=14), the right to live (N=12), and the right to education (N=10). Other rights that they indicated can be seen in Table 9. The meaning of human rights, according to the prospective teachers, are equality (N=14), freedom (N=12), universality (N=11), respect (N=6), and peace (N=5). The meaning of human rights was clearly understood by the prospective teachers.

Discussion and Conclusion

This research study investigating the effectiveness of constructivist planning, implementation, and evaluation of an action-based Human Rights course that introduces NGOs. One of the crucial lessons of this study is that providing real-life situations and designing an interactive learning-teaching environment can greatly affect students' perceptions of the course itself. Another important finding is that prospective teachers knew very little about Turkish NGOs. However, their responses to closed and open-ended questions show that, following this course, they realized the great contributions of the NGOs to the human rights field. The submitted written reports on the NGOs also reflected that they enthusiastically studied the topics they chose, and that they used interactive media, newspapers, journals, web-sites, and many other materials for their research. The open-ended responses of the prospective teachers revealed that they mainly remembered the implementation of the course, the recognition of NGOs within the human rights field, the positive endeavors of human rights activists throughout the world and in Turkey, and the recognition of a wide range of rights. This seemed to be appropriate considering the goals and objectives of the course as were stated in the course outline.

In this action research study, the researcher mainly benefited from the constructivist approach based on several authentic activities. Cochran, DeRuiter, and King (1993) stated that a constructivist learning environment in teacher training can bridge theory and practice meaningfully, and establish opportunities for prospective teachers to develop higher order thinking skills through utilizing authentic learning activities. Research on the constructivist approach (Abdal-Haqq, 1998; Akar, 2004; Bay, 2008; Bay, Kaya, Gündoğdu, and Karakaya, 2009; Demirel et al., 2000; Deryakulu, 2001; Jonassen, 1994; Kesimal & Aksu, 2005; Koç, 2007; Tynjälä, 1999; Yurdakul, 2004) shows that it can be effectively used for teacher education. Within this understanding, the researcher attempted to use contemporary, real-life based methods and materials, and also a learning

environment that is in keeping with the constructivist approach. In similar but traditional courses during previous years, the researcher found that the students were merely passive receivers, taking notes and participating in question and answer sessions as unwilling participants. This study also revealed that all the students studied eagerly in all of the activities, because their lives and their rights were the topics of study. As they investigated several NGOs throughout the course, they realized that they are also parts of the democratic life in their society.

Consequently, this study also contributed to our understanding of the effects of authentic activities in teacher training. Although, the authentic activities created a heavy workload for the instructor (Akar, 2004; Aschbacher, 1994; Lawrence and Pallrand, 2000), the experiences in an authentic-styled teacher training course also helped to see both the effects of authentic activities and the difficulties involved with the process (Akar, 2004).

The paucity of empirical findings on the relationship between NGOs in Turkey and teacher training is challenging. More research is also needed to further our understanding of the civil society movement in Turkey in terms of teacher training institutions. A constructivist-based course focusing on the introduction of the NGOs in Turkey would also deepen the awareness of democracy and human rights for prospective teachers and other actors in education. Human Rights course should be offered to other departments. As Wharton (2007) suggests, students need to be taught affectively, as well as cognitively. The course may also be beneficially redesigned using constructivist pedagogy for teacher education, so that they can internalize the human rights in their lives.

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