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The Impact of Digital Stories on Gender Perceptions of 6th Grade Middle School Students[#]

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Research Article

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ABSTRACT

Digital storytelling is a powerful tool for understanding the complex dynamics of social gender and fostering awareness of this issue. It enables the sharing of personal experiences and collective narratives on digital platforms. Thus, this study aims to investigate the effect of digital storytelling on middle school students' perceptions of gender in Social Studies courses. To this end, the study employed an experimental design. The research sample was selected using typical case sampling, one of the purposive sampling methods. Of the sample of 72 sixth-grade students, 36 were in the experimental group and 36 were in the control group. The results revealed no significant difference between the pre-test scores of the groups. However, a significant difference favouring the experimental group was observed in the post-test scores. This result suggests that digital storytelling positively develops students' gender perceptions. Analysis of the post-test scores of the experimental group by gender reveals a significant difference in favor of female students.

Keywords: Education, social studies, digital stories, gender, gender role.

Dijital Hikâyelerin Ortaokul 6. Sınıf Öğrencilerinin Toplumsal Cinsiyet Algıları Üzerindeki Etkisi[#]

Bilgi

[#]Bu çalışma birinci yazarın yüksek lisans tezinin bir parçasıdır.

**Sorumlu yazar*

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ÖZ

Dijital hikâyeleme, sosyal cinsiyetin karmaşık dinamiklerini anlamak ve bu konuya dair farkındalık yaratmak için güçlü bir araçtır. Kişisel deneyimlerin ve kolektif anlatıların dijital platformlarda paylaşılmasına olanak tanır. Bu nedenle bu çalışma, dijital hikâyelemenin ortaokul öğrencilerinin Sosyal Bilgiler derslerinde cinsiyet algıları üzerindeki etkisini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu doğrultuda, ön test ve son test kontrol grubu içeren bir deneysel tasarım kullanılmıştır. Araştırma örneklemi, amaçlı örnekleme yöntemlerinden biri olan tipik durum örneklemesi kullanılarak seçilmiştir. 72 altıncı sınıf öğrencisinden oluşan örneklemin 36'sı deneysel, 36'sı ise kontrol grubundadır. Bulgular, gruplar arasında ön test puanları için anlamlı bir fark olmadığını ortaya koymuştur. Ancak, son test puanlarında deneysel grubun lehine anlamlı bir fark gözlemlenmiştir. Bu sonuç, dijital hikâyelemenin öğrencilerin cinsiyet algılarını olumlu şekilde geliştirdiğini göstermektedir. Deneysel grubun son test puanlarının cinsiyete göre analizi, kadın öğrencilerin lehine anlamlı bir fark olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Eğitim, sosyal bilgiler, dijital hikâyeler, cinsiyet, toplumsal cinsiyet rolü.

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Introduction

It has become essential for teachers to effectively follow technological innovations and implement applications to integrate them into education (Cloete, 2017). Therefore, teachers who aim to provide engaging and enjoyable learning experiences for their students must possess technological and digital competencies (Özpınar, 2017). In addition to traditional methods, materials are transformed through technology integration. One such example is digital storytelling, which serves as a material and a teaching method. Digital storytelling is a product of the fusion between literature and technology. By transferring a narrative based on specific content into a digital format, incorporating images, photos, music, and sound in a particular sequence (Malita & Martin, 2010).

To date, no research has been identified that specifically focuses on developing children's attitudes towards gender through digital storytelling. Existing focused mainly on collecting opinions rather than changing attitudes. In the 21st century, digital technology has proven highly effective in educational contexts. Therefore, this study explores the development of positive attitudes towards gender by utilising digital storytelling. Initially, a digital story will be presented, followed by an emphasis on gender. The study will examine how digital stories can foster positive attitudes towards gender. The impact of technology in education today is all-encompassing, and it is a situation that mirrors the dynamics of gender roles in education. However, digital tools may reinforce or undermine traditional gender role stereotypes in education. At the same time, technology significantly impacts gender equality, as it can provide content without gender bias while giving different genders an equal chance in all domains. Thus, influencing how technology mediates in education is key to understanding and achieving gender equality.

Storytelling and Digital Storytelling

Storytelling has always been a fundamental tool for transmitting knowledge, values, and cultural heritage throughout human and social development. Its enduring significance lies in its natural and powerful ability to communicate insights and share experiences (Smeda et al., 2014). Traditionally, storytelling brought people together, fostering community through shared narratives. While the practice remains central to human interaction, modern media tools have revolutionised how stories are created and disseminated. Digital storytelling, therefore, represents the intersection of ancient storytelling traditions and contemporary technology, enabling new modes of expression and engagement (Normann, 2011). The essence of storytelling involves a narrator creating mental imagery through vocal delivery, supplemented by facial expressions, body language, and words to maintain a dynamic interaction with the audience (Roney, 1996). Moreover, storytelling encourages children to connect with narratives, develop interpretative skills, and bridge the gap between their experiences and the broader world (Brewster et al., 1992).

Recent advancements in digital technology have provided educators with innovative methods to help students construct and share knowledge. Digital storytelling efficiently combines traditional narrative structures with modern media to enhance learning and communication (Standley, 2003). Defined as "a short story, 2-3 minutes long, told in the storyteller's voice with a personal connection to people, places, or interests," digital storytelling emphasises individuality and personal engagement (Normann, 2011). Meadows extends this definition by highlighting the use of accessible digital tools to create multimedia narratives for educational and social purposes. This approach not only integrates technology into classrooms but also democratises storytelling by enabling user-generated content (Meadows, 2003).

As an educational method, digital storytelling supports constructivist teaching and learning by combining digital media with collaborative work and problem-solving tasks. This method enhances students' technological skills, motivation, and higher-order thinking, contributing to deep learning and interdisciplinary curriculum integration (Dakich, 2008; Smeda et al., 2014). It fosters student engagement, reflective thinking, and project-based learning while enabling personalized expression of ideas (Barrett, 2006; Robin & Pierson, 2005). Additionally, digital storytelling offers diverse advantages, including making learning more engaging, simulating real-life experiences cost-effectively, and increasing student participation (Gils, 2005). Its flexibility supports multiple cognitive processes by incorporating auditory, visual, and sensory elements, aligning with various intelligence domains such as verbal-linguistic, spatial, musical, and interpersonal intelligences (Lynch & Fleming, 2004).

Nevertheless, to maximise its educational potential, the development of a comprehensive framework for digital storytelling is crucial (Smeda et al., 2014). Particularly in social studies, where visual and abstract concepts are prevalent, storytelling provides an engaging, accessible, and reusable approach to delivering information, reducing monotony, and capturing learners' attention (Atıcı & Yürük, 2016). Consequently, digital storytelling is particularly suitable for social studies courses as a product of integrating technology with traditional methods. Moreover, listening to stories offers children scenarios that can influence their understanding of gender roles.

Gender and Its Societal Dimensions

Integrating technology into education demands not only developing educators' technological skills but also equipping them to handle the challenges students might face in their engagement with society (Koltuk & Kocakaya, 2015; Gömleksiz & Pulu, 2017; Başaran, 2019). Individuals both shape and are shaped by the culture they engage with, and societal issues, such as gender-based

discrimination, prejudice, and violence, can have significant consequences (Poplin, 1978; Adak, 2016; Timurturkan, 2016). Although gender perceptions fundamentally encompass inherent male and female identities, they are also shaped by societal perceptions (Faiz, 2018).

While biological sex is determined by chromosomes, gender encompasses the structural, functional, and behavioural characteristics shaped by society. It influences social participation and integration through gender perceptions shaped by societal expectations and roles assigned to men and women. Although closely associated with masculinity and femininity, gender is not merely a product of biological sex (Dökmen, 2004; Torgrimhencen & Minhencen, 2005; Giddens, 2008). Roles reflect societal expectations linked to specific statuses or social positions and analyse the process of fulfilling these expectations (Marshall, 1999). Gender includes the psychosocial traits characterising an individual as feminine or masculine (Rice, 1996). When inherent male and female identities intersect with societal culture, gender emerges (Seçgin, 2012). In summary, gender is shaped by societal expectations and assigned roles, reflecting perceptions of masculinity and femininity. These roles are tied to fulfilling expectations related to social norms and positions. Gender arises from the interaction between inherent male and female identities and cultural influences, emphasising its psychosocial dimension.

According to Giddens (2000), gender identity is learned through unconscious processes in early childhood. Sexual socialisation is a critical aspect of human development, with children recognising and internalising gender roles even before preschool (Faiz, 2018). Gender identity comprises masculinity and femininity, which individuals develop based on self-perception and societal reinforcement. Schools are key institutions in the formation process, responsible for passing cultural and social values from one generation to the next (Kurtdaş & Tuncer, 2020). Beyond knowledge acquisition, schools' function as agents of socialisation, embedding societal norms and cultural expectations into education (Seçgin & Kurnaz, 2015)

Social Studies and Gender Education

Social studies, as a fundamental institution for societal continuity, plays a vital role in fostering cultural and value interactions through gender education, aligned with the curriculum's learning outcomes and objectives (Çengelci, 2013; Kılıçoğlu, 2014; Pala, 2020). The social studies course seeks to develop learners' abilities to integrate into society, uphold democratic principles, and apply knowledge to maintain their lives (Ministry of National Education, 2018).

This course offers learners the opportunity to develop skills and values such as thoughtful response, questioning, taking responsibility, demonstrating sensitivity to cultural similarities and differences, empathy, respect, expressing opinions, and understanding how to engage with opposing views (Seçgin, 2012). In addition to these skills and values, the learning objectives outlined under the "Individual and Society" learning domain in the 2018 6th-grade social studies curriculum—"SB.6.1.1. Examines changes in social roles over time" and "SB.6.1.3. Questions prejudices toward differences for harmonious living in society"—highlight the importance of social studies in gender education. Through these objectives, students not only learn about the concept of roles and their evolution over time but also explore the responsibilities associated with these roles, as well as the similarities and differences between male and female roles. Furthermore, they increase their awareness of these biases by analysing observed prejudices and stereotypes toward individuals and groups. Therefore, social studies serve as a suitable course for addressing gender education. Perceptions of gender, which impact individuals' quality of life, are essential for society because individuals shape society, and society shapes individuals (İçli, 2005).

Furthermore, developing and promoting gender awareness is a cornerstone of creating an egalitarian and democratic society. Creating an egalitarian society necessitates an education system and schools that exist devoid of gender stereotypes (Kurtdaş & Tuncer, 2020). Discrimination, which can lead to violence, inequality, injustice, and societal chaos, can be primarily addressed through individuals' family experiences and early education. The school environment, teachers' attitudes and behaviours, course content, and instructional materials are critical.

As a subject that examines individuals, society, and life, social studies have a crucial impact, in raising sensitive, responsible, and socially integrated citizens, thereby contributing to the prevention of discrimination and social unrest (Çengelci, 2013; Alptekin, 2014; Öztürk, 2023). Through social studies, discriminatory and negative perceptions, attitudes, and prejudices related to gender can gradually shift, enabling future generations to develop healthier decision-making mechanisms. This fosters the development of effective, self-confident, and more egalitarian individuals who, most importantly, respect their own and the opposite gender. In addition to its suitability for gender education, the social studies course is also well-suited for the use of digital storytelling, which integrates literature and technology (Atıcı & Yürük, 2016). Enriched with abstract concepts and visuals, the social studies curriculum aligns with the increasing use of technology, providing materials that meet students' needs.

Literature Review on Digital Storytelling and Gender

A review of the literature highlights various studies exploring digital storytelling. These studies primarily focus on areas such as writing skills (Baki, 2015), scientific process skills (Torun, 2016), motivation (Sever, 2014; Demir, 2019), values education (Atıcı & Yürük, 2017; Yürük, 2015; Polater, 2019), academic achievement and attitudes toward courses (Demir, 2019; Karataş, 2019), essential life skills development (Köseoğlu, 2023), and

social skills (Kandemir, 2023). Moreover, the other topic is gender. After touching upon studies on digital stories, studies on gender should be included. Studies focusing on gender perceptions have examined various groups, including secondary school students (Seçgin, 2012), elementary and high school students (Eryiğit, 2021), high school and university students (Trommsdorff & Iwawaki, 1989; Kimberly & Mahaffy, 2002; Pınar et al., 2008; 2010; Akkoç, 2018; Alabaş et al., 2019; Çelik Demirtaş, 2019), as well as teachers and teacher candidates (Seçgin & Tural, 2011; Aslan, 2015; Önsan, 2021; Ceylan, 2022), academics (Faiz, 2018). Additionally, studies are focusing on role-sharing attitudes within families (Smith & Reid, 1986; Cooper et al., 1985), male and female gender roles (Bradbury & Fincham, 1988), and the relationship between gender roles and marital satisfaction (Lye & Biblarz, 1993; Juni & Grimm, 1994; Guzman, 1996; Lee, 1999). Key topics include perceptions and attitudes toward gender, social studies unit design (Karaçalı Taze, 2018), gender education design in education faculties (Şener Özel, 2019), and the examination of gender perception patterns in social studies and science textbooks (Lee & Collins, 2009; Aşcı, 2020; Demirdöven, 2020). A review of the existing studies reveals that no research has explored learners' views on gender issues using digital storytelling. Except for one study conducted with middle school students, there appears to be no research examining the effect of digital storytelling on attitudes.

Gender perception involves the views and attitudes individuals develop about the societal roles of women and is mainly shaped through socialisation and education processes, particularly in social studies courses.. Social studies education helps individuals understand how gender roles are constructed and how they evolve by teaching social structures, cultural norms, and historical processes. Furthermore, it promotes awareness of gender equality by addressing fundamental concepts such as rights, equality, justice, and democracy. By fostering critical thinking, social studies education encourages students to question gender perceptions and adopt a more egalitarian perspective.

With advancements in science and technology, digital resources have significantly diversified learning opportunities and enriched students' educational experiences. Digital tools facilitate implicit learning while providing interactive and engaging instructional methods. In particular, digital storytelling has emerged as a reconstituting approach to enhancing education by integrating narrative-based learning with technological innovation. It is believed that incorporating digital storytelling into education can broaden students' perspectives and serve as a valuable tool for addressing complex social issues such as gender perception.

Although research has been conducted separately on digital storytelling and gender perception, a significant gap in the literature regarding their intersection remains. Very few studies have examined gender perception in conjunction with digital storytelling, particularly within the context of children's education. Observational learning, an effective method for shaping young students' attitudes, suggests that digital stories can be powerful tools for fostering awareness and critical reflection. This study seeks to address this gap by exploring how digital storytelling influences children's perceptions of gender.

The significance and uniqueness of this research lie in its innovative approach to reshaping students' gender attitudes through digital storytelling. Unlike traditional methods, integrating digital narratives fosters active student engagement, promoting critical thinking and deeper reflection. The study's experimental design, which includes both control and experimental groups, enhances its reliability in evaluating the effectiveness of the intervention. Moreover, by utilising technology-driven and interactive learning strategies rather than passive awareness programs, this research contributes to the discourse on gender education. Ultimately, this study not only advances gender equality education but also underscores the transformative potential of digital tools in driving social change.

Problems Arising from The Study

The emergence of this research problem stems from the aim of contributing to the goal of educating active, responsible, and socially compatible citizens through the examination of gender perception while addressing what can be done to improve the existing level of gender perception. In this context, the issue lies in the necessity to make the abstract concept of gender perception more tangible, taking into account the needs of today's students and the significance of incorporating digital storytelling into the social studies curriculum. This study explores whether there are notable differences in gender perception levels by comparing the pre-test and post-test results of the groups. It also looks into the changes within each group over time and examines whether post-test scores vary based on gender, family decision-making style, and parents' education levels. The main research question was: 'What is the effect of using digital stories in social studies courses on students' gender perception levels?' To address this, students were trained with digital stories, and their attitudes were examined.

Methodology

Research Design

Experimental studies are conducted to examine how variations introduced by the researcher affect the dependent variable (Büyüköztürk et al., 2020), consist of three components: participants, design, and measurements. In experimental studies, the differing characteristics of participants are eliminated to prevent them from affecting the results. This ensures that the differences arising from the study can be attributed to the predetermined variable or variables established by the researcher (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2008). Accordingly, the study adopts a pre-test/post-test control group experimental design, targeting sixth-grade middle school

students. In this model, data are collected from both the experimental and control groups before and after the intervention (Creswell, 2013). While the experimental group undergoes interventions related to the variable under investigation (McMillan & Schumacher, 2009), the control group continues with the existing instructional method without any changes. The experimental group engaged in digital storytelling activities, whereas the control group continued with traditional instruction.

The dependent variable observed during the application process constitutes gender perception, and the independent variable constitutes the digital story. The pre-test/post-test control group design was chosen as it allows comparison of group similarities, provides higher measurement reliability with less error, and requires fewer participants.

Participants

The study group consists of 72 sixth-grade students from a public middle school during the 2023–2024 academic year. The participants were chosen through typical case sampling, a form of purposive sampling. This involves identifying a profile of a person or case's "average" or typical qualities and characteristics and selecting samples from these conventional individuals or cases. This method allows researchers to focus on common patterns and representative insights within a population (Cohen et al., 2007). Typical case sampling was used to obtain insights from students who represent the average characteristics of the target population, ensuring the findings reflect common patterns.

Regarding gender distribution, the experimental group comprises 21 female and 15 male students, while the control group includes 20 female and 16 male students. Regarding family decision-making style, most students in both groups reported coming from egalitarian families (experimental: n=32, control: n=31). A smaller proportion of students identified their family structure as patriarchal (experimental: n=2, control: n=4) or matriarchal (experimental: n=2, control: n=1). The educational background of the student's parents varies. Among mothers, the highest proportion are university graduates (experimental: n=15, control: n=8), followed by high school graduates (experimental: n=10, control: n=10), middle school graduates (experimental: n=8, control: n=7), and primary school graduates (experimental: n=3, control: n=11). Similarly, among fathers, the majority in the experimental group are university graduates (n=20), whereas in the control group, the highest number are high school graduates (n=20).

Data Collection Instruments

The data collection tools used in this study include “The Gender Perception Scale," developed by Altınova and Duyan (2013), and the "Personal Information Form," prepared by the researcher.

Personal information form (PIF)

In this study, the researcher developed a Personal Information Form (PIF) to gather demographic data about the students. During the form’s development, relevant literature was reviewed, and feedback was obtained from an expert in measurement and evaluation and two faculty members specialising in social studies education. The finalised PIF consisted of seven items to collect information on participants’ gender, family decision-making style, parents' education levels, and occupations.

Gender perception scale (GPS)

The Scale (GPS), developed by Altınova and Duyan (2013) and consisting of 25 items, was employed to assess the gender perception levels of sixth-grade students. Designed as a 5-point Likert scale, the GPS demonstrated a Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient of 0.872 during its initial development. In the present study, the reliability coefficients were calculated as 0.792 for the experimental group and 0.691 for the control group, indicating a high level of reliability within the acceptable range of 0.60–0.90 (Can, 2019). The response options ranged from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," with possible scores between 25 and 125. Negative worded items (2, 4, 6, 9, 10, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, and 25) were reverse-coded.

Data Collection and Analysis

This study, examining the impact of digital stories on middle school students' gender perceptions in social studies classes, was conducted over three weeks. In the first week, the researcher informed the school administration, students, and parents about the study’s purpose, content, procedures, and duration. In the second week, consent forms were collected from students and their parents. During the third week, the Gender Perception Scale (GPS) was administered as a pre-test to the experimental group over three lessons. Instruction then proceeded with digital stories aligned with the learning objectives SB.6.1.1 (examining changes in social roles over time) and SB.6.1.3 (questioning prejudices toward differences to foster societal harmony). Digital story activities continued in the third session, and the GPS was applied again as a post-test. Meanwhile, the control group received regular instruction based on the teacher’s lesson plan without any intervention. The researcher also administered the GPS as pre- and post-tests for the control group.

In the data analysis phase, outliers were removed, and missing data were checked. Normality was assessed through skewness and kurtosis values, with ranges between -1.5 and +1.5 considered acceptable (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). The skewness and kurtosis values indicated that the data approximated a normal distribution (experimental group: skewness = 0.141, kurtosis = -0.120; control group: skewness = 0.571, kurtosis = -0.625). Consequently, parametric tests were employed: dependent samples t-tests for two-category comparisons and one-way ANOVA for variables with three or more categories (Can, 2019). Descriptive statistics, including percentages, means, frequencies, and standard deviations, were also reported.

Validity and Reliability Applications

Data collection tools with established validity and reliability were carefully selected based on a review of the relevant literature. Expert opinions were incorporated throughout the process to ensure accurate implementation. To minimize potential errors, the researcher personally conducted the applications. For content and face validity, feedback was obtained from faculty members experienced in the field, as well as experts in social studies education and measurement and evaluation, and the tools were revised accordingly. Following the application, Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were calculated to confirm the scale's reliability, yielding values of 0.792 for the experimental group and 0.691 for the control group. These results indicate that the scale demonstrates high reliability, as the coefficients fall within the acceptable range of 0.60–0.90 (Can, 2019).

Results

This section presents the results related to the problem situation and sub-problems of the research. The first sub-problem constitutes "Is there a significant difference between the pre-test scores of gender perception levels among the experimental and control group learners?" Below exist the results of the t-test conducted for GPS.

The results of the GPS for the groups pre-tests indicate that there is no significant difference between the two groups [t (70) = 1.307; p = 0.195 > 0.05]. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no difference between the pre-tests of the two groups.

The other sub-problem is "Is there a significant difference between the post-test scores of gender perception levels among the experimental and control group students?

The results of the GPS for the groups' post-tests show that a significant difference was found, favouring the experimental group [t (70) = 3.154; p = 0.002 < 0.05]. While the average post-test score of the control group was 91.58, the average post-test score of the experimental group was 100.30. The statistical analysis of the participants' post-test scores indicates that the significant difference in favour of the experimental group suggests that the digital story application positively affected their gender perceptions.

The other sub-problem is, "Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of gender perception levels among the experimental and control group students?"

In comparing the pre-test and post-test scores for students who used digital stories on gender in social studies, the results of the dependent samples t-test indicated a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores. This significant difference was found to be in favour of the post-test [t (35) = -5.322; p = 0.000 < 0.05]. The average pre-test score of the students was 91.02, whereas the average post-test score increased to 100.30 as a result of the intervention. The results of the dependent samples t-test conducted to compare the pre-test and post-test scores of students who did not use digital stories about gender issues indicate that a significant difference was found between the pre-test and post-test scores, favouring the post-test [t (35) = -2.249; p = 0.031 < 0.05]. The average pre-test score of the students was 87.41, while the average post-test score increased to 91.58.

The other sub-problem is "Do the post-test scores of the experimental and control group students show a significant difference based on the gender variable?"

Table 1. The results of participants' pre-test scores

Test	N	$\bar{X}$	SS	t	Sd	P
Experimental Group	36	91.02	15.08	1.307	70	0.195
Control Group	36	87.41	6.85			

Table 2. The results of the participants' post-test score

Test	N	$\bar{X}$	SS	t	Sd	P
Experimental Group	36	100.30	12.23	3.154	70	0.002
Control Group	36	91.58	11.21			

Table 3. The result of participants' pre-post test scores

Groups	Test	N	$\bar{X}$	SS	t	Sd	P
Experimental	Pre-Test	36	91.02	15.08	-	35	0.000
	Post-Test				5.322		
		36	100.30	12.23			
Control	Pre-Test	36	87,41	6,85	-	35	,031
	Post-Test				2,249		
		36	91,58	11,21			

Table 4. The results of participants' post-test scores according to gender

Groups	Test	Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	SS	t	Sd	P
Experimental	Post-Test	Female	21	103,90	12,23	2,200	34	,035
		Male	15	95,26	10,66			
Control	Post-Test	Female	20	93,80	7,33	1,341	34	,189
		Male	16	88,81	14,51			

The t-test analysis conducted to examine the differences in the post-test scores of the experimental group based on gender revealed a significant difference favouring female students [t (34) = 2.200; p = 0.035 < 0.05]. Thus, it can be seen that the digital story applications positively influenced the gender perceptions of female students compared to male students. The t-test analysis conducted to examine the differences in the post-test scores of the control group based on gender did not reveal a significant difference [t (34) = 1.341; p = 0.189 > 0.05]. Therefore, it can be concluded that gender did not create a significant difference in the control group's post-test scores.

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

In addressing the first sub-problem of the study, the pre-test scores from the Gender Perception Scale (GPS) were compared between the experimental and control groups prior to the intervention. The results revealed no significant difference between the groups' scores, suggesting that both groups had comparable levels of gender perception at the outset. This is a positive outcome, as it ensures that any effects observed later can be attributed to the intervention rather than pre-existing differences. This equality between the groups before the study is essential for the research.

A significant difference emerged between the groups' post-test scores following the intervention. The analysis revealed that this difference favoured the experimental group. This suggests that the digital storytelling application positively influenced the participants' gender perceptions. While foreign studies have found that digital storytelling positively impacts students' attitudes, language skills, academic writing, and self-efficacy toward educational technology, there is a lack of similar studies in both domestic and international literature supporting this specific result. Nevertheless, digital storytelling has been shown to contribute positively to listening comprehension (Collen, 2007), the acquisition of values (Yürük, 2015), attitudes and motivation toward listening, class participation (Ciğerci & Gültekin, 2017), and development of computer, thinking collaborative working, and communication skills (Polater, 2019), the concretisation of abstract concepts, and the expression of emotions (Karabulut, 2020), and an increase in academic achievement (Göçen, 2014; Pala, 2021). Studies by Tecedor (2021), Karimova et al. (2020), Balaman (2020), and Yoon (2013) have shown that digital storytelling improves student attitudes and encourages active participation. Similar results have also been observed in studies by Doğan and Robin (2009), Öztürk (2023), Sandaran and Kia (2013), and Yang and Wu (2012). However, Nam (2017) found no significant difference in student attitudes in online collaborative learning environments using digital storytelling indicate discrepancies in the literature. The examples provided are just a few of the topics in which digital storytelling has been utilised and its effects observed, as discussed in various studies. Although studies demonstrate the positive effects of digital storytelling, challenges such as time limitations, technical shortcomings, and insufficient knowledge among participants or digital storytellers have influenced their outcomes.

There was a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group students, with the post-test scores showing a more favourable outcome. According to the analysis, the use of digital storytelling positively influenced the experimental group's perceptions of gender. The results highlight digital storytelling as an impactful approach to advancing middle school students' perceptions of gender. Moreover, the control group's post-test scores were significantly higher than their pre-test scores. However, this difference is less pronounced than the significant difference observed in the experimental group. These findings align with expectations, as both groups, whether in the experimental or control group, gained knowledge and cultivated attitudes through the educational process.

The study also investigated the impact of gender on the post-test scores. The results showed that there were no significant gender differences in the control group's final scores, implying that gender did not affect their performance. In contrast, a significant difference was found in the post-test scores of the experimental group, with female students showing a more favourable outcome. This suggests that the digital storytelling intervention led to a more positive change in the gender perceptions of female students compared to their male counterparts. At this point, studies conducted on gender perceptions have consistently found that women hold higher gender perception scores than men. Research conducted both domestically and internationally that reached similar results include (Akkoç, 2018; Alabaş et al., 2019; Arıcı, 2011; Başçı & Giray, 2010; Çelik Demirtaş, 2019; Çifçi, 2018; Frieze et al., 2003; Freund et al., 2013; Hajnalka, 2014; Kharouf & Daoud, 2019; Kimberly & Mahaffy, 2002; Kuluroğlu Sevinç, 2019; Özkan, 2019; Seçgin, 2012; Sis Çelik et al., 2013; Vefikuluçay et al., 2007; Yağan Güder, 2014; Yogev, 2006; Zeyneloğlu, 2008).

McDonald and Stahl (2024) discuss the concepts of "men's work" or "women's work," emphasising the need to overcome such traditional mindsets. They advocate for fostering a counter-attitude to confront these

stereotypical perceptions. Moreover, Lee and Collins (2009) emphasized the importance of incorporating gender roles, particularly those related to men's and women's occupations, into course materials, while also highlighting the biases found in textbooks. Studies examining gender perceptions based on gender found that women generally exhibited higher levels of gender perception compared to men. These findings suggest that women tend to have a more egalitarian, modern, and less gender-biased attitude, reflecting a positive outlook on gender perceptions.

In contrast to the studies mentioned, a survey conducted by Baykal in 1988 reached an opposite conclusion, showing that women participants held more traditional views than men. Socioeconomic, educational, and social development differences between the time of the study and the present may have contributed to this result. Furthermore, a study by Marquez et al. (2022) found that girls derive less enjoyment from life than boys, which may perpetuate traditional perspectives among women. The analysis of this sub-problem revealed that women have higher gender perceptions than men, a result supported and expected in the literature. This finding can be attributed to women's awareness of the negative experiences they face or observe in their family, school, and daily lives, as well as the education they receive, which influences their more positive attitudes toward gender perception.

Additionally, there may be reasons supporting the belief that women can develop better gender perceptions than men. Women may gain awareness through their experiences of facing responsibilities and expectations imposed by traditional gender roles. Exposure to discrimination and gender bias enhances their empathy skills and resilience. This process can lead women to question societal roles and become more sensitive to gender issues. Consequently, their capacity to overcome personal challenges and to understand and support individuals in similar situations increases. These reasons are just a few of the potential explanations for why women have higher gender perceptions than men. They may not universally apply to every woman or man, as everyone is unique. The living conditions, behaviours, and attitudes can differ among individuals, and the underlying reasons for varying levels of gender perception may also vary.

Finally, the study methodology and sample can also affect the results. The research methods, questions, selected samples, and data collection tools can all impact the results obtained. Therefore, rather than considering the effect of parents' education levels on gender perception in isolation, it may be more effective to consider it alongside the cultural and social environment, education content, and the research methodology and sample.

It is deemed necessary to provide some recommendations for future research:

- The study can be replicated at different educational levels and with a larger sample size.
- Digital stories used in social studies can be adapted to address various skills, attitudes, and perceptions.
- Conducting the study in different regions and settlement types would allow for comparative analyses.
- Digital stories can be designed to address not only gender perception but also contemporary global issues.
- Research and educational programs can be developed to enhance men's gender perception.

Genişletilmiş Özet

Giriş

Öğretmenlerin teknolojik yenilikleri takip etmeleri ve bunları eğitime entegre etmeleri artık bir zorunluluk haline gelmiştir (Cloete, 2017). Geleneksel yöntemlerin yanı sıra, öğretim materyalleri teknolojiyle dönüşmekte ve dijital hikâye anlatımı bu dönüşümün önemli bir örneğini oluşturmaktadır. Dijital hikâye anlatımı, edebiyat ve teknolojinin birleşimiyle ortaya çıkan bir öğretim yöntemi olup, anlatıları dijital formata aktarıp görseller, fotoğraflar, müzik ve ses öğeleriyle desteklemektedir (Malita & Martin, 2010).

Eğitimde dijital hikâyeler, öğrenci katılımını artıran, derin düşünmeyi teşvik eden, proje tabanlı öğrenmeyi destekleyen ve teknoloji entegrasyonunu sağlayan etkili bir araçtır. Farklı disiplinlerdeki öğretmenler, öğrencilerin fikirlerini ve bilgilerini anlamlı ve kişiselleştirilmiş bir şekilde ifade etmelerine yardımcı olmak için dijital hikâye anlatımını kullanabilmektedir (Robin & Pierson, 2005; Barrett, 2006). Dijital hikâyeler, geleneksel öğretim yöntemlerine kıyasla daha fazla çeşitlilik sunmakta, öğrenme deneyimini kişiselleştirmekte, açıklamaları ve uygulamaları daha ilgi çekici hâle getirmekte ve gerçek yaşam senaryolarını düşük maliyetle simüle edebilmektedir (Gils, 2005). Ayrıca, işitsel, görsel ve duyusal öğeleri bir araya getirerek farklı bilişsel süreçleri harekete geçirdiği ve çoklu zekâ alanlarıyla uyumlu olduğu belirtilmektedir (Lynch & Fleming, 2004). Bu çalışmada, dijital hikâyelerin öğrencilerin toplumsal cinsiyet algısını nasıl etkilediği incelenmiştir.

Yöntem

Araştırma deseni: Bu çalışma, ortaokul öğrencilerinin sosyal bilgiler derslerindeki toplumsal cinsiyet algıları üzerindeki dijital hikâyelerin etkilerini deneysel olarak incelemektedir. Deneysel çalışmalarda, katılımcıların farklı özelliklerinin sonuçları etkilemesini önlemek amacıyla bu farklılıklar ortadan kaldırılır. Böylece çalışmadan kaynaklanan farklılıkların, araştırmacı tarafından belirlenen değişkene veya değişkenlere atfedilebilmesi sağlanır (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2008).

Çalışma grubu: Çalışma grubu, 2023-2024 akademik yılında bir devlet ortaokulunda öğrenim gören 36'sı deney, 36'sı kontrol grubu olmak üzere 72 altıncı sınıf öğrencisinden oluşan bir çalışma grubudur. Öğrenciler, amaçlı örnekleme türlerinden biri olan tipik durum örnekleme yöntemi kullanılarak seçilmiştir. Tipik durum

örnekleme, bir bireyin veya durumun "ortalama" ya da tipik nitelik ve özelliklerinin belirlenmesini ve ardından bu tipik bireyler veya durumlardan örneklerin seçilmesini içerir (Cohen vd., 2007).

Veri toplama araçları: Bu çalışmada kullanılan veri toplama araçları, Altınova ve Duyan (2013) tarafından geliştirilen "Toplumsal Cinsiyet Algısı Ölçeği" ve araştırmacı tarafından hazırlanan "Kişisel Bilgi Formu"dur.

Veri toplama ve analizi: Dijital hikâyelerin ortaokul öğrencilerinin sosyal bilgiler derslerindeki toplumsal cinsiyet algıları üzerindeki etkilerini inceleyen bu çalışma, üç hafta boyunca yürütülmüştür. İlk hafta, okul yönetimine, çalışmaya katılacak öğrencilere ve velilere araştırmanın amacı, konusu, uygulama aşamaları ve süresi hakkında bilgi verilmiştir. İkinci hafta, öğrencilerden onam formları, bilgilendirilen öğrencilerin velilerinden ise veli izin formları toplanmıştır. Uygulamanın üçüncü haftasında, araştırmacı öncelikle deney grubuna Toplumsal Cinsiyet Algısı Ölçeği (TCAÖ) ön testini üç ders saati boyunca uygulamıştır. Daha sonra, öğrenme kazanımları doğrultusunda toplumsal cinsiyet algısı konusuyla ilgili dijital hikâyeler kullanılarak deney grubuna öğretim verilmiştir. Üçüncü derste dijital hikâye uygulamalarına devam edilmiş ve sürecin sonunda, deney grubundan veri toplamak amacıyla TCAÖ yeniden uygulanarak son test gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Normal dağılımda çarpıklık-basıklık değerleri; -1.5 ile +1.5 arasındaki ise normal dağılıma oldukça yakın olarak kabul edilmektedir (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). Deney grubu için çarpıklık değeri 0.141, basıklık değeri ise -0.120 olarak hesaplanmıştır. Kontrol grubunda ise çarpıklık değeri 0.571, basıklık değeri -0.625 olarak bulunmuştur. Bu sonuçlar, verilerin normal dağılımdan önemli bir sapma göstermediğini ortaya koymaktadır. Bu nedenle, normal dağılan veriler için analizler parametrik testler kullanılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Geçerlik ve güvenirlik: Araştırmadaki Cronbach Alpha katsayıları, deney grubu için 0.792 ve kontrol grubu için 0.691 olarak belirlenmiştir.

Bulgular

Deney ve kontrol grubunun ön test puanları arasında anlamlı bir fark bulunmazken, her iki grubun da ön test ve son test puanları arasında anlamlı farklılıklar tespit edilmiştir. Son test sonuçları karşılaştırıldığında, deney grubu lehine anlamlı bir fark görülmüştür. Ayrıca, deney grubunda cinsiyete bağlı anlamlı bir fark gözlemlenirken, kontrol grubunda böyle bir farklılık saptanmamıştır.

Tartışma, Sonuç ve Öneri

Gruplar arasında öntest puanları açısından anlamlı bir fark bulunmamıştır, bu da beklenen bir sonuçtur. Hem deney hem de kontrol grubunda öntest ve sontest puanları arasında anlamlı farklar tespit edilmiştir. Deney grubunun sontest puanları, kontrol grubuna kıyasla anlamlı derecede yüksek bulunmuştur. Dijital hikayelemenin çeşitli alanlarda olumlu etkileri olduğu literatürde tartışılmaktadır. Örneğin, dijital hikâyelerin dinleme-anlama becerileri, değerlerin kazandırılması, sınıf içi katılım, işbirlikli çalışma, bilgisayar ve iletişim becerileri gibi birçok faktör üzerinde olumlu etkileri olduğu belirlenmiştir (Collen, 2007; Göçen, 2014; Ciğerci & Gültekin, 2017; Çağlayan, 2018; Karabulut, 2020; Pala, 2021; Polater, 2019; Yürük, 2015). Ayrıca, dijital hikayelemenin öğrenci tutumlarını iyileştirdiği ve aktif katılımı teşvik ettiği de araştırmalarla ortaya konmuştur (Yoon, 2013; Tecedor, 2021; Karimova vd., 2020; Balaman, 2020) Cinsiyet değişkenine göre deney grubunda anlamlı bir farklılık gözlenirken, kontrol grubunda böyle bir fark görülmemiştir. Bu durum, kadınların erkeklere göre daha yüksek cinsiyet algısına sahip olduklarını gösteren önceki araştırmalarla tutarlıdır (Altuntaş & Altınova, 2017; Akkoç, 2018; Alabaş vd., 2019;).

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Yapılan bu çalışmada bilimsel, etik ve alıntı kurallarına uyulduğu, toplanan veriler üzerinde herhangi bir tahrifatın yapılmadığı, karşılaşılacak tüm etik ihlallerde “Cumhuriyet Uluslararası Eğitim Dergisi ve Editörünün” hiçbir sorumluluğunun olmadığı, tüm sorumluluğun “Sorumlu Yazar”a ait olduğu ve bu çalışmanın herhangi başka bir akademik yayın ortamına değerlendirme için gönderilmemiş olduğu sorumlu yazar tarafından taahhüt edilmiştir.

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