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International Journal of Education, Technology and Science
3(2) (2023) 319–341

IJETS
International Journal of Education Technology and Science

STUDENT PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHING ETHICS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Received: 22.03.2023 Revised version received: 29.05.2023 Accepted: 30.05.2023

Abstract

Education-teaching ethics encompasses the ethical challenges and decisions encountered by individuals participating in educational and instructional processes. The delineation of faculty members' ethical conduct is a topic of considerable discourse. This research aims to ascertain university students' perceptions of teaching ethics in higher education, with particular focus on respect towards students, course-related information, student protection, instructor proficiency, and valuing students. The study employed a quantitative methodology and utilized a cross-sectional survey design. The participants were composed of 424 students attending public universities established prior to and after 2006. The "Teaching Ethics in Higher Education Scale" developed by Erdemli et al. (2021) was utilized for data collection. According to the research outcomes, significant differences were identified across different groups concerning their perspectives on course-related information, student protection, and valuing students, predicated upon their academic year. Moreover, differences were discerned in instructor proficiency contingent upon gender. Additionally, the students' level of education brought about variance in their perceptions towards course-related information. Further, the establishment year of the universities the students were enrolled in influenced their viewpoints regarding student protection. Lastly, the students' field of study was seen to affect their outlook on both course-related information and student protection.

Keywords: Ethics, higher education, student protection, instructor proficiency

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1. Introduction

Ethics is defined as the study of rules that an upright society should adhere to from a societal standpoint, and the ethical quandaries faced by individuals as part of that society (Akarsu, 1998). It encompasses the entirety of regulations that govern individuals' behaviors and interactions within social life (Conaway and Fernandez, 2000). Furthermore, ethics provides the standards used for evaluating other people's behaviors, either positively or negatively (Yüksel, 2006). It encourages discussions, inquiries, and definitions of what constitutes right and wrong, or good and bad (Coşkun and Çelikten, 2020). An ethically correct approach in interpersonal relationships enables us to balance our behaviors in the context of benefits, harms, and responsibilities (Arslan, 2014).

A prominent area of ethical application is professional ethics. It is characterized as the adherence of professionals to their professional principles while conducting their duties (Kuçuradi, 2017). Salient features of professional occupations encompass knowledge-based expertise acquired through academic education, social status and economic return, professional standards updated and maintained by professional bodies, efforts towards control and enhancement of professional competencies, and a certain level of independence and autonomy (Aydın, 2015). Thus, professional ethics entails professionals' compliance with principles while executing their practices (Kuçuradi, 2017), and the field of professional ethics investigates the appropriateness and inappropriateness of behaviors within the professional application process (Mc Hugh, 1992).

These guiding principles, which shape the actions of individuals within a profession, incorporate their moral rules and inform their choices (Colnerud, 1997; Karataş et al., 2019), are established based on societal and universal values (Bahar, 2014). Professional and ethical responsibilities of educators include the ability to provide accurate and current information, pedagogical competence, sensitivity towards student-related issues, evaluation of students based on valid criteria, the development of students, the credibility of faculty members, and respectful behavior towards colleagues (Erdem et al., 2014: 42). Respect forms the bedrock of the student-teacher relationship. It should encompass mutual benefit, autonomy, non-maleficence, justice, and fidelity (Schulte, 2001: 42).

2. Ethics in Education

Educational institutions aim to cultivate individuals and imbue their personalities with ethical values through instruction (Rimawi and Naser, 2016). Specialists, known as educators, who design instructional activities to impart knowledge, skills, attitudes, and positive values within the education system, are tasked with initiating, implementing, evaluating, and enhancing these activities (Cüceloğlu and Erdoğan, 2020). Ethics within the teaching profession broadly encompasses the foundational professional responsibilities of teachers and educators towards their profession, academic discipline, educational institution, and society at

large (Resnik, 2015; Şentürk, 2009). This includes adherence to rules, responsibilities, and principles in their interactions with students, colleagues, parents, and the broader society (Ergün et al. 2018). Therefore, the professional and personal attributes, competencies, attitudes, and values embraced by educators frequently become subjects of educational research (Ariga & Lleras, 2011; Aslanargun, Kılıç and Acar, 2012; Cruickshank, Bainer and Metcalf, 1995; Köstereliоğlu and Köstereliоğlu, 2008; Wang, 2015), and the evolving roles of educators in a progressing society underline the importance of professional ethics.

In the teaching-learning process, ethics encapsulate the moral and values-oriented aspect of instructional practices (Campbell, 2003). Educators (teachers, faculty members) are not merely transmitters of information, but they also play a crucial role in shaping students' moral and ethical values. As such, the ethical practices of educators can significantly influence students' personal and moral development (Hansen, 2001). Ethics in education also touch upon how students comprehend their own moral and ethical values and their application thereof (Parker, 2003). Students can refine their abilities to understand and navigate ethical situations and dilemmas they encounter within the educational process, thereby enhancing their ethical consciousness and comprehension, and aiding them in making more ethically sound decisions (Rest, 1983). The ethics of teaching and learning encompass the processes of understanding and determining the dichotomy of right and wrong in education, assisting students, teachers, and other education workers in making moral and ethical decisions. This sphere also includes fundamental values and principles in education such as justice, equality, professional responsibility, and teacher honesty (Begley, 2006).

Ethics in education can further be perceived as a form of moral education instructing students about what constitutes right or wrong (Ryan, 2013). This phenomenon entails educating students about moral and ethical values and encouraging them to base their decisions on these principles. Comprehending and cultivating students' moral and ethical values can empower them to act as responsible citizens within their society (Lickona, 1991). Ethics in teaching-learning processes can thus serve as a vital instrument to enrich students' educational experiences and guide them to act based on ethical values within their communities (Sergiovanni, 1992). Accordingly, research on teaching-learning ethics can contribute significantly to the formulation of educational policies and practices.

3. Ethical Behaviors of Instructors

Defining the ethical behaviors of an instructor remains a subject of debate. However, studies underscore the significance, clarity, and exemplary nature of the teacher-student relationship (Raufelder, Nitsche, Breitmeyer, Keßler, Herrmann, & Regner, 2016). Slavin (2018) identifies personal qualities such as establishing warm relationships with students, possessing a sense of humor, valuing students, demonstrating diligence and self-discipline, and exhibiting leadership as integral to a competent instructor. Professionally, commitment to the vocation, excellent speaking skills, and high instructional abilities are deemed essential.

Mowrer Reynolds, Love, and Orem (2004) note that undergraduate students value characteristics such as accessibility, knowledge, enthusiasm, realism, supportiveness, flexibility, open-mindedness, respectfulness, and effective communication in a teacher.

Berliner (1987) describes a competent instructor as one who ensures appropriate timing of the lesson, reinforces learning through repetition, highlights key points and concepts, and employs questioning techniques effectively. According to Mowrer Reynolds (2008), teachers who are respected by students are patient, compassionate, empathetic, illustrative, communicative, disciplined, capable of class control, profound, aware of student motivation techniques, able to maintain class attention, adept at various teaching methods, creative, innovative, have high expectations, respect their students, and value their opinions. Such instructors care for their students and implement effective teaching activities (Bayraktar & Çınar, 2010; Dilekmen, 2008). As for the competence of instructors who hold pivotal roles in society, mastery of the subject matter (Moran, 2005), command of field-specific concepts (Polk, 2006), pedagogical knowledge (Polk, 2006; Tucker & Stronge, 2005), and content knowledge (Shulman, 1986) are deemed crucial.

Moreover, instructors are expected to provide information about the lesson, relate the subject matter to real-life scenarios (Tucker & Stronge, 2005), and be adequately prepared for the class (McArdle & Coutts, 2003). Essential teaching skills include lesson preparation, classroom management, learning-teaching strategies, methods and techniques, and assessment and evaluation (Polk, 2006; Saunders, 2000; Stronge, 2007). In the study by Raufelder et al. (2016), the quality of the teacher-student relationship is linked to the teacher's proficiency or lack thereof, and their personal attributes. These encompass compassion and helpfulness, lesson planning per standards, ability to conduct meaningful, engaging, and higher-order thinking skills in class, creation of a well-organized and student-centered classroom environment, mastery of the subject being taught, and execution of effective assessments to enhance lesson content.

4. Ethics in Higher Education

Higher education plays a vital role in equipping individuals with the requisite knowledge and skills to become contributing members of society, thereby bolstering a nation's socio-economic status by supplying a competent workforce (Hesapçıoğlu, 1994). Furthermore, higher education enriches individual prosperity by enhancing income levels through skilled labor, in turn elevating societal welfare (Carnoy, 1995). An individual who has received higher education can steer the course of their entire life by generating income and maintaining their livelihood through the application of their acquired knowledge and professional expertise and, furthermore, can seamlessly secure their position in society by augmenting their social interactions (Savaş, 2000).

The profession of academia, which deals with the issue of ethics, requires intense labor with intellectual skills and is a profession highly accepted in society (Maya, 2013). The

profession of academia, which delves into the subject of ethics, primarily involves contributing to the advancement of scientific fields through conducting research and cultivating a highly skilled workforce - essentially, being in the classroom (Tinto, 1997). Students develop their perceptions of the university from factors such as faculty members, curricula, course content, teaching techniques, and the behaviors they observe throughout their education (Cotton and Wilson, 2006). In this context, faculty members play a pivotal role in shaping these university perceptions (Geraldine, 1987). Students who acquire professional roles and ethics from faculty members also develop the values, practices, and attitudes deemed crucial in the exercise of a profession (Erimez and Gizir, 2013). Undergraduate students cultivate an understanding of ethics during their university years, and this comprehension is influenced by their intellectual surroundings (Schulte, Thompson, Hayes, Noble, and Jacobs, 2001). Thus, the role of the university is substantial in fostering the development of ethical comprehension.

The field of education-teaching ethics can be defined as an area that addresses ethical dilemmas and decisions encountered by individuals involved in education and teaching processes (Strike & Soltis, 2009). This field includes ethical guidelines and rules for teachers, students, and other education professionals. Education ethics typically cover issues such as educational policies, teaching methodologies, student rights, justice, equality, professional responsibilities of teachers, and honesty (Noddings, 1992). Ethics in education also play a significant role in the formation and implementation of educational policies (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016). These policies can influence teaching practices, student assessment methods, student discipline, and many other essential educational matters. Therefore, such policies should be grounded in moral and ethical values and applied fairly and equally to all students. It outlines the behaviors and actions that should comply with moral standards in all educational, teaching, and research institutions (Nartgün, 2006). In this context, academic staff are required to serve with ethical values such as truthfulness, honesty, equality, justice, and trust (Demirtaş, Şener & Karabatak, 2013).

While the role of university life on acquiring professional ethics is significant, the ethical values, behaviors, and principles that educators should abide by within the classroom are not as explicitly defined as in other professions (Barrett, Headley, Stovall, and Witte, 2006). This topic remains a subject of ongoing debates (Willemse, Lunenberg, and Korthagen, 2008). Among these discussions, there are scholarly views suggesting that higher education ethics may vary according to disciplinary fields (Kidwell and Kidwell, 2008). Kienzler (2004) contends that the ethical areas in higher education are student assessment, teaching techniques, course content, and the sharing of this content with students. Blevins-Knabe (1992) highlights that the greatest ethical responsibility in higher education rests upon the educator, primarily due to the instructor's power to evaluate the student. Studies on ethics in higher education usually focus on professional ethics (Oldenburg, 2005; Schulte et al., 2001), and such studies generally deal with aspects such as time management in classes, being student-centered, attitudes and behaviors towards students, exhibiting objectivity in student assessments, and

placing a high value on education and teaching (Branstetter and Handeslman, 2000; Büken, 2006; Ertekin et al., 2002; Maya, 2013, Owen and Zwhar-Castro, 2007; Özcan, Balyer, and Servi, 2013; Pınar, 2002).

In teaching practices, ethics encompass the moral and ethical obligations of both teachers and students during the learning process (Sanger & Osguthorpe, 2011). Teachers bear the responsibility of not only disseminating knowledge and skills to students but also instilling in them moral and ethical values, and prompting their application. Students, on the other hand, are tasked with comprehending the ethical problems and dilemmas they encounter during their education and making ethical decisions. The role of ethics is also significant in student evaluation methodologies and disciplinary practices (Nucci & Narvaez, 2008). Assessment techniques should be fair and objective, measuring students' performance and achievements accurately. Disciplinary practices should educate students on behaving justly, respectfully, and in compliance with school regulations (Colnerud, 2015).

In Turkey, the number of universities and consequently higher education students, are on the rise. Currently, there are a total of 208 universities, with 129 public universities, 75 private (foundation) universities, and 4 private vocational colleges (Higher Education Council [YÖK], 2023). While the number of universities in Turkey was just 75 between 1933 and 2006, it has risen to 131 between 2006 and 2023. This data suggests that the quantitative increase in Turkish universities primarily occurred post-2006. This study will explore the effects of factors such as the growing number of universities and the increased student population in universities on the ethical comprehension of faculty members in education and teaching.

The ethics of education and teaching is a comprehensive subject covering all aspects of the educational process. The objective of ethical practices in education is to render the educational process fairer, more equitable, and respectful, while encouraging students to understand and apply moral and ethical values. Over time, the academic ethical comprehension of faculty members will significantly contribute to the enhancement of the quality of academic and applied activities within universities. Within this framework, the aim of this research is to ascertain the views of students enrolled in universities established post-2006 concerning the ethics of education and teaching implemented in higher education. The perspectives of these students on education and teaching will be assessed in relation to the dimensions of respect towards students, course-related information, student protection, instructor proficiency, and valuing students.

5. Method

5.1. Research Model

This study was conducted utilizing a quantitative approach in a survey research design. Survey research designs are quantitative strategies that gather information by investigating a sample or the entire population of interest to describe attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, or

characteristics (Creswell, 2017). In this study, the perceptions of students enrolled in universities established post-2006 regarding ethics in higher education teaching are examined, hence the employment of a cross-sectional survey design. In a cross-sectional survey design, the researcher forms a snapshot of the current attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and data (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2006; Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtle, 2006, pp. 285-286).

5.2. Population-Sample

The population of the study comprises students enrolled in Turkish universities during the 2022-2023 academic year. Upon examining the establishment years of universities in Turkey, it appears that a distinct policy was put into effect from 2006 onwards. This policy prompted a significant rise in the number of universities in Turkey. There were 49 state universities established prior to 2006, whereas 80 state universities were established in 2006 and later. As a result, the sample for this study consists of students enrolled in state universities established before and after 2006. The population of the study is made up of 5,735,579 university students attending state universities in Turkey during the 2022-2023 academic year (Higher Education Council [YÖK], 2023).

Table 1. Number of students enrolled in associate and bachelor's degree programs at universities established before and after 2006.

		Established before 2006		**Established in and after 2006**		
		Frequency (f)	**Percentage (%)**	**Frequency (f)**	**Percentage (%)**	**Grand Total**
Associate Degree	Male	961.816	47,34	230.950	55,23	1.192.766
	Female	1.069.721	52,66	187.173	44,77	1.256.894
	Total	2.031.537	100,00	418.123	100,00	2.449.660
Bachelor's Degree	Male	1.290.138	49,68	333.380	48,37	1.623.518
	Female	1.306.561	50,32	355.840	51,63	1.662.401
	Total	2.596.699	100,00	689.220	100,00	3.285.919
Grand Total	Male	2.251.954	48,66	564.330	50,96	2.816.284
	Female	2.376.282	51,34	543.013	49,04	2.919.295
	Total	4.628.236	100,00	1.107.343	100,00	5.735.579

Source: https://istatistik.yok.gov.tr

Upon examining Table 1, it is noted that a total of 4,628,236 students are studying at state universities established before 2006, including 961,816 males (47.34%) and 1,069,721 females (52.66%) in associate degree programs, and 1,290,138 males (49.68%) and 1,306,561 females (50.32%) in undergraduate programs. On the other hand, at universities established in 2006 or later, there is a total of 1,107,343 students, comprising 230,950 males (52.23%) and 211,393 females (47.77%) in associate degree programs, and 333,380 males (48.37%) and 355,840 females (51.63%) in undergraduate programs. In the 2022-2023 academic year, the

total number of students studying in associate and undergraduate programs is 5,735,579, consisting of 2,816,284 males (50.96%) and 2,919,295 females (49.04%).

In this study, a non-probabilistic purposive sampling technique was adopted, specifically targeting students studying at universities established in 2006 and later. Purposive sampling allows the researcher to intentionally select samples, with the choice being more influenced by the purpose of the study rather than methodological imperatives (Creswell, 2017; Patton, 2002). The sample size was calculated using optimum sample size tables (Sencer & Irmak, 1984; Anderson, 1997). A confidence level of .95 and a margin of error of .05 were employed in determining the sample size. Therefore, for the 6,204,078 individuals studying at state universities in Turkey during the 2022-2023 academic year, the most suitable sample size corresponding to the error level of the study is 384. Nonetheless, to offset the effect of invalid responses or unanswered surveys, and to ensure the target number was achieved, additional scale applications were conducted. The return level exceeding the targeted number was accepted due to the high return rate and the distribution of the scale being in line with the ratios encompassed in the study. The "Higher Education Teaching Ethics Scale," developed by Erdemli, Timur, and Kurum (2021), was administered online to the selected sample group. A total of 424 university students partook in the measurement tool. The personal characteristics of the student participants are outlined in Table 2.

Table 2. Demographic Information about the participant students

	Variables	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	237	54,6
	Female	197	45,4
	Total	434	100,0
Education Level	Associate Degree	70	16,1
	Bachelor's Degree	364	83,9
	Total	434	100,0
Field of Study	Educational Sciences	118	27,2
	Natural Sciences	134	30,9
	Social Sciences	109	25,1
	Health Sciences	73	16,8
	Total	434	100,0
Year of University Establishment	Established in and after 2006	242	55,8
	Established before 2006	192	44,2
	Total	434	100,0
Class Level	1st class	63	14,5
	2nd class	65	15,0
	3rd class	104	24,0
	4th class	197	45,4
	Total	429	98,8

Upon scrutinizing Table 2, it can be noted that among the university students participating in the study, 237 (54.60%) are female and 197 (45.40%) are male. Regarding the education level, 70 (16.10%) are associate degree students, while 364 (83.90%) are bachelor's degree students. In the context of their field of study, 134 (30.90%) hail from sciences, 118 (27.20%) from education sciences, 109 (25.10%) from social sciences, and 73 (16.80%) from health

sciences. When the data was categorized according to the establishment year of the students' universities, 242 (55.80%) were found to be studying at universities established in 2006 or later, and 192 (44.20%) at universities established prior to 2006. With respect to their class levels, 197 (45.40%) of the students are in their 4th year, 104 (24.00%) in the 3rd year, 65 (15.00%) in the 2nd year, and 63 (14.50%) in their 1st year.

5.3. Data Collection Tool

The research implemented the "Higher Education Teaching Ethics Scale" formulated by Erdemli et al. (2021) within an online setting. Erdemli et al. (2021) conducted both Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) on this scale. The EFA revealed the scale to encompass a single factor and five components, establishing its reliability as indicated by a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of .92. The fit indices derived from the subsequent CFA ($\chi 2$/sd=1.87, RMSEA=.05, NFI=.89, CFI =.94, GFI =.89, AGFI =.86, CR=.96) affirm the scale's validity. The research findings demonstrate the developed scale as a reliable and valid instrument for gauging student perspectives on higher education teaching ethics (Erdemli et al., 2021).

The data collection instrument employed in this study comprises both demographic information and the "Higher Education Teaching Ethics Scale". The demographic section of this instrument was designed by the researchers to align with the specific objectives of this study and the relevant literature. Prior permission was secured from the original authors to utilize the "Higher Education Teaching Ethics Scale", which has undergone rigorous reliability and validity testing. This data collection tool was disseminated to the chosen sample group using various communication methods and was administered online via Google Forms.

5.4. Analysis of Data

Data forms provided by student participants through online collection were digitized using SPSS 25, following the removal of forms containing excessive missing data. Outliers within the research data were identified and removed. Prior to the data analysis in accordance with research objectives, the results of the normality assumption tests related to the dimensions of the higher education teaching ethics scale are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Normal Distribution Analysis According to APA Guidelines

	N	M	Median	Skewness	Kurtosis	P
Respect Towards Students	432	4.07	4.20	-.91	.99	.00
Course-related information	432	4.04	4.00	-.65	.39	.00
Student Protection	432	4.31	4.33	-1.06	1.52	.00
Instructor Proficiency	432	4.13	4.20	-1.04	1.52	.00
Valuing Students	432	4.07	4.20	-1.07	1.41	.00
Total	432	4.17	4.16	-.42	-.35	.00

Table 3 details the total skewness and kurtosis values for the higher education teaching ethics scale. Büyüköztürk (2007) posits that similar values for mode, median, and arithmetic mean are indicative of a normal data distribution. For the higher education teaching ethics scale, the median (4.16) and arithmetic mean (4.17) are found to be closely aligned, confirming the assumption of normality. As per George and Mallery (2010), for data to exhibit a normal distribution, the kurtosis and skewness values should range between +2 and -2.

For analysis of the scale's dimensions according to gender, educational level, and university establishment years, an independent samples t-test was employed to ascertain the significance of the difference between two independent sample means. The independent samples t-test scrutinizes the significance of the difference between two independent sample means (Büyüköztürk, Çokluk, and Köklü, 2020). A one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was utilized for the analysis of the scale's dimensions according to study field and study grade level. The one-factor ANOVA was chosen as it measures the difference between the means of more than two independent samples (Büyüköztürk et al., 2020). Statistical discrepancies in subgroups, or the source of the difference, were examined using the Scheffe post-hoc test, which provides conservative estimates due to equal variances and unequal sample sizes within the compared group (Kayri, 2009).

6. Findings

This section outlines the research findings obtained by analyzing students' opinions on higher education teaching ethics (respect towards students, course-related information, student protection, instructor proficiency, and valuing students) as they relate to gender, educational level, university establishment years, fields of study, and class level. Table 4 presents the t-test results of students' perspectives on higher education teaching ethics, categorized by gender.

Table 4. T-Test for Students' Views on Higher Education Teaching Ethics, Categorized by Gender.

Dimensions	Groups	N	M	SD	t test		
					t	df	p
Respect Towards Students	Female	237	4.10	.69	.16	432	.86
	Male	197	4.09	.68			
Course-Related Information	Female	237	4.18	.71	1.34	432	.17
	Male	197	4.09	.67			
Student Protection	Female	237	4.38	.60	1.80	432	.07
	Male	197	4.27	.57			
Instructor Proficiency	Female	237	4.25	.65	2.53	432	.01*
	Male	197	4.09	.68			
Valuing Students	Female	237	4.08	.72	.04	432	.96
	Male	197	4.08	.75			
Grand Total	Female	237	4.21	.55	1.39	432	.16
	Male	197	4.13	.55			

*. 95 confidence interval

As demonstrated in Table 4, no significant difference was observed at the .95 confidence interval regarding respect towards students, course-related information, student protection, valuing students, and the total score on the higher education teaching ethics scale. However, within the "Instructor Proficiency" sub-dimension of the higher education teaching ethics scale, a statistically significant difference was detected at the .95 confidence interval (t(432)=2.53) in terms of university students' agreement levels according to gender. Female students' views on teaching ethics (M=4.25) were higher in the dimension of instructor proficiency compared to those of male students (M=4.08). This suggests that female students perceive instructors as more proficient compared to their male counterparts. The t-test for the views of students on higher education teaching ethics according to their educational level is given in Table 5.

Table 5. t-Test for Students' Views on Higher Education Teaching Ethics, Categorized by Educational Level

Dimensions	**Groups**	**N**	**M**	**SD**	**t test**		
					t	df	p
Respect Towards Students	Associate Degree	70	4,17	,49	.95	432	.22
	Bachelor's Degree	364	4,09	,72			
Course-Related Information	Associate Degree	70	4,28	,53	1.76	432	.03*
	Bachelor's Degree	364	4,12	,72			
Student Protection	Associate Degree	70	4,28	,45	-.75	432	.36
	Bachelor's Degree	364	4,34	,61			
Instructor Proficiency	Associate Degree	70	4,18	,57	.09	432	.91
	Bachelor's Degree	364	4,18	,69			
Valuing Students	Associate Degree	70	4,20	,57	1.42	432	.08
	Bachelor's Degree	364	4,06	,76			
Grand Total	Associate Degree	70	4,22	,43	.74	432	.36
	Bachelor's Degree	364	4,17	,57			

*. 95 confidence interval

When the t-test results regarding students' views on higher education teaching ethics are examined in accordance with their level of education, no significant difference is detected at the .95 confidence interval in terms of respect towards students, student protection, instructor proficiency, valuing students, and total scores. As observed in Table 5, in the dimension of "Course-Related Information" concerning higher education teaching ethics, there is a statistically significant difference within the .95 confidence interval (t(432)=1.76) in the levels of agreement among university students based on their level of education. The perceptions of associate degree students regarding teaching ethics (M=4.28) in the area of course-related information are higher than those of bachelor's degree students (M=4.12). This suggests that associate degree students perceive instructors as more effective in providing course-related information than bachelor's degree students. Table 6 presents the t-test of students' views on

higher education teaching ethics according to the establishment years of the universities they are attending.

Table 6. t-Test for the Views of Students on Teaching Ethics in Higher Education According to the Establishment Years of the Universities They Attend

Dimension	Groups	N	M	SD	t test		
					t	df	p
Respect Towards Students	Established in and after 2006	242	4,12	,74	.62	432	.53
	Established before 2006	192	4,08	,62			
Course-Related Information	Established in and after 2006	242	4,15	,71	.14	432	.88
	Established before 2006	192	4,14	,67			
Student Protection	Established in and after 2006	242	4,40	,59	2.60	432	.01*
	Established before 2006	192	4,25	,58			
Instructor Proficiency	Established in and after 2006	242	4,23	,65	1.73	432	.08
	Established before 2006	192	4,11	,68			
Valuing Students	Established in and after 2006	242	4,09	,78	.30	432	.76
	Established before 2006	192	4,07	,68			
Grand Total	Established in and after 2006	242	4,21	,56	1.40	432	.16
	Established before 2006	192	4,13	,53			

*. 95 confidence interval

As observed in Table 6, at the .95 confidence interval, there are no significant differences in terms of respect towards students, course-related information, instructor proficiency, valuing students, and total scores on the higher education teaching ethics scale. However, in the dimension of "Student Protection" within higher education teaching ethics, there is a statistically significant difference within the .95 confidence interval ($t(432)=2.60$) in the levels of agreement among university students based on the establishment year of their university. The perceptions of students at universities established in and after 2006 regarding teaching ethics ($M=4.40$) in the dimension of student protection are higher compared to students at universities established before 2006 ($M=4.25$). This suggests that students at universities established in and after 2006 perceive themselves as studying in a more protective environment than those at universities established before 2006. The F-test results of students' views on higher education teaching ethics according to their fields of study are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. F-Test for the Views of Students on Teaching Ethics in Higher Education According to their Fields of Study

Dimensions	Groups	*n*	M	*SD*	*df*	*F*	*p*	Source of Difference
Respect Towards Students	Educational Sciences	118	4.19	.74	433	1.788	.14	
	Natural Sciences	134	4.03	.72				
	Social Sciences	109	4.04	.72				
	Health Sciences	73	4.17	.39				
	Total	434	4.10	.69				
Course-related information	Educational Sciences	118	4.33	.65	433	4.169	.00	ES > SS
	Natural Sciences	134	4.07	.70				ES > NS
	Social Sciences	109	4.09	.74				ES > HS
	Health Sciences	73	4.04	.63				
	Total	434	4.14	.69				
Student Protection	Educational Sciences	118	4.51	.57	433	7.452	.00	ES > SS
	Natural Sciences	134	4.27	.62				ES > NS
	Social Sciences	109	4.34	.59				ES > HS
	Health Sciences	73	4.13	.47				
	Total	434	4.33	.59				
Instructor Proficiency	Educational Sciences	118	4.26	.78	433	.905	.43	
	Natural Sciences	134	4.14	.64				
	Social Sciences	109	4.16	.64				
	Health Sciences	73	4.12	.57				
	Total	434	4.18	.67				
Valuing Students	Educational Sciences	118	4.18	.79	433	1.120	.34	
	Natural Sciences	134	4.02	.72				
	Social Sciences	109	4.09	.79				
	Health Sciences	73	4.04	.56				
	Total	434	4.08	.74				
Grand Total	Educational Sciences	118	4.30	.60	433	3.061	.02	ES > SS
	Natural Sciences	134	4.12	.54				ES > NS
	Social Sciences	109	4.16	.58				ES > HS
	Health Sciences	73	4.10	.38				
	Total	434	4.17	.55				

*. 95 confidence interval

As indicated in Table 7, there is no significant difference at a 95% confidence interval in the dimensions of respect towards students, instructor proficiency, and valuing students within the scale related to higher education teaching ethics. However, a significant difference at the same confidence interval was identified in the dimensions of course-related information, student protection, and the total teaching ethics score.

The difference in the dimension of course-related information provision was observed between the fields of education sciences and social sciences, education sciences and science, and education sciences and health sciences. Upon examining the average scores in the course-related information dimension, they rank as follows: education sciences (M=4.33), total score (M=4.14), social sciences (M=4.09), science (M=4.07), and health sciences (M=4.04).

Similarly, the difference in the dimension of student protection originated between education sciences and social sciences, education sciences and science, and education sciences and health sciences. When analyzing the average scores in the student protection dimension, the order is as follows: education sciences (M=4.51), social sciences (M=4.34), total score (M=4.33), science (M=4.27), and health sciences (M=4.13).

The difference at the total score level of higher education teaching ethics was also detected between education sciences and social sciences, education sciences and science, and education sciences and health sciences. Reviewing the average scores at the total level, they rank in the following order: education sciences (M=4.30), total score (M=4.17), social sciences (M=4.16), science (M=4.12), and health sciences (M=4.10). The F-test results showing student perspectives on higher education teaching ethics, segmented by their educational grade level, are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. F-Test Results of Student Perspectives on Teaching Ethics in Higher Education, Segmented by Class Level

Dimensions	**Groups**	***n***	**M**	***SD***	***df***	***F***	***p***	**Source of Difference**
Respect Towards Students	1st class	63	4.28	.65	428	1.996	.11	
	2nd class	65	4.01	.59				
	3rd class	104	4.09	.51				
	4th class	197	4.06	.79				
	Total	429	4.09	.68				
Course-related information	1st class	63	4.27	.68	428	3.401	.01	1st Class>4th Class
	2nd class	65	4.14	.61				1st Class>2nd Class
	3rd class	104	3.96	.62				1st Class>3th Class
	4th class	197	4.18	.75				
	Total	429	4.13	.69				
Student Protection	1st class	63	4.50	.54	428	8.435	.00	1st Class>4th Class
	2nd class	65	4.14	.55				1st Class>3th Class
	3rd class	104	4.16	.55				1st Class>2nd Class
	4th class	197	4.41	.60				
	Total	429	4.32	.59				
Instructor Proficiency	1st class	63	4.34	.68	428	2.451	.06	
	2nd class	65	4.10	.60				
	3rd class	104	4.07	.54				
	4th class	197	4.20	.73				
	Total	429	4.17	.67				
Valuing Students	1st class	63	4.34	.68	428	3.308	.02	1st Class>3th Class
	2nd class	65	4.06	.64				1st Class>2nd Class
	3rd class	104	4.07	.55				1st Class>4th Class
	4th class	197	4.01	.84				
	Total	429	4.08	.73				
Grand Total	1st class	63	4.36	.56	428	3.896	.00	1st Class>4th Class
	2nd class	65	4.09	.50				1st Class>2nd Class
	3rd class	104	4.08	.42				1st Class>3th Class
	4th class	197	4.18	.60				
	Total	429	4.17	.55				

*. 95 confidence interval

As indicated in Table 8, there is no significant difference at a 95% confidence interval in the dimensions of respect towards students and instructor proficiency within the scale of higher education teaching ethics. However, a significant difference at the same confidence interval has been found in the dimensions of course-related information, student protection, and valuing students, as well as the overall teaching ethics score.

In the dimension of course-related information, when examined according to the students' grade level, the source of the difference lies between the 1st and 4th grades, 1st and 2nd grades, and 1st and 3rd grades. The average scores for course-related information, in descending order, are: 1st grade (M =4.27), 4th grade (M= 4.18), 2nd grade (M = 4.14), total score (M = 4.13), and 3rd grade (M = 3.96).

Likewise, in the dimension of student protection, the difference is between the 1st and 4th grades, 1st and 2nd grades, and 1st and 3rd grades. The average scores for student protection are ranked as follows: 1st grade (M =4.50), 4th grade (M= 4.41), total score (M = 4.32), 3rd grade (M = 4.16), and 2nd grade (M = 4.14).

In the dimension of valuing students, the difference is observed between the 1st and 4th grades, 1st and 2nd grades, and 1st and 3rd grades. The average scores for valuing students are in the following order: 1st grade (M =4.34), total score (M = 4.08), 3rd grade (M = 4.07), 2nd grade (M = 4.06), and 4th grade (M= 4.01).

Lastly, at the total score level of the higher education teaching ethics scale, the difference, according to the students' grade level, is between the 1st and 4th grades, 1st and 2nd grades, and 1st and 3rd grades. The average scores at the total level are ranked as follows: 1st grade (M =4.36), 4th grade (M= 4.18), total score (M = 4.17), 2nd grade (M = 4.09), and 3rd grade (M = 4.08).

7. Discussion and Conclusions

The perspectives of university students on higher education teaching ethics differ according to gender within the dimension of instructor proficiency. Female students express more positive views about the proficiency of university instructors compared to their male counterparts. This indicates that female students perceive instructors as more proficient. Yılmaz and Ünsar (2019) propose that female students consider instructors to be more professionally proficient and ethical than male students.

Variations also exist in university students' views on ethics in higher education in terms of course-related information, which are dependent on the level of education. Berliner (1987) characterizes the instructor as someone who reinforces learning for its permanence, emphasizes crucial points, highlights key concepts, and employs effective questioning techniques. Mowrer Reynolds (2008) concurs, suggesting that instructors who support course content with concrete examples are more favorably received by students. Moreover, it is expected that they possess expertise in their subject matter (Moran, 2005), command of the

field's concepts (Polk, 2006), pedagogical knowledge (Polk, 2006; Tucker & Stronge, 2005), and content knowledge (Shulman, 1986). Associate degree students have a more positive view of the manner in which instructors provide course-related information than undergraduate students. This suggests that undergraduate instructors are not as effective in providing course information, as supported by the views of Berliner (1987), Mowrer Reynolds (2008), Moran (2005), Polk (2006), and Tucker & Stronge (2005).

There is a variation in university students' views on higher education ethics according to the establishment year of their university within the sub-dimension of student protection. Raufelder et al. (2016) stress the importance of the teacher-student relationship, Slavin (2018) emphasizes the desirable traits of a good instructor, particularly valuing their students, while Mowrer et al. (2004) argue that the supportive roles of instructors foster their ethical behaviors. Students attending universities established in 2006 or later have a more positive perspective on student protection than those studying at older universities. This suggests that instructors at newer institutions possess the positive characteristics outlined by Raufelder et al. (2016), Mowrer et al. (2004), and Slavin (2018).

University students' views on higher education ethics also differ according to their field of study within the sub-dimensions of course-related information, student protection, and total score level. Students in the field of education sciences hold the most positive views, followed by those in social sciences, natural sciences, and health sciences respectively. In other words, education sciences students believe they receive more comprehensive course-related information, study in a safer environment, and have a more favorable view of ethics in higher education compared to students in other fields. Similar findings were reported by Başaran, Ekinci, and Arıkan (2017) as well as Güner Demir, Erdemli, and Kurum (2021), who found that students in education faculties hold positive views on education ethics. Dinç and Gizir (2019), in their research examining instructor ethical behavior from student perspectives, identified instances of unethical behavior related to student protection. Dinç (2016) reported that education faculty students believe instructors largely adhere to ethical rules, despite occasional unethical classroom behavior.

The perspectives of university students on teaching ethics in higher education vary according to their academic level within the dimensions of course-related information, student protection, and valuing students, as well as in terms of the total score. Upon comparison according to students' academic level, first-year students hold the most positive views. In terms of course-related information, first-year students are followed by fourth-year, second-year, and third-year students; in student protection, the order is fourth-year, third-year, and second-year students; in valuing students, third-year, second-year, and fourth-year students follow first-year students. Regarding total scores in teaching ethics, first-year students lead, followed by fourth-year, second-year, and third-year students. This suggests that first-year students hold more positive views regarding course-related information, student protection, valuing students, and overall teaching ethics in higher education. Duncan and Geist (2022)

found similar results, with first-year students scoring higher on ethics-related courses. Hürler (2018) also reported that first-year students' views on abuse they faced aligned with these findings.

8. Recommendations

Training programs can be organized for faculty members to address the observed differences related to gender within the competence of faculty members. These programs should aim to enhance faculty members' professional competencies while emphasizing the significance of adhering to ethical values.

Students' views on course-related information differ according to their education levels. To address this issue, faculty members can be offered pedagogical training to enhance their ability to illustrate course content with concrete examples and to stress essential concepts.

There are disparities in the student protection dimension based on the founding years of universities. In response to this, training emphasizing supportive roles and ethical behaviors could be arranged for faculty members at older universities.

Differences exist in the dimensions of course-related information and student protection based on students' fields of study. To mitigate this, faculty members in each field should tailor their teaching to meet the needs and expectations of their students.

Students' views on course-related information, student protection, and valuing students differ according to their academic level. Accordingly, faculty members should be encouraged to review their methods according to academic level and to develop teaching strategies that cater to student expectations and needs at each level.

9. Declaration of Conflicting Interests and Ethics

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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