

Best Practice Research Scholarship –

The Achievement and Aspirations of Turkish and Kurdish Girls at Key Stage 4

I have been awarded a BPRS scholarship for a project which aims to investigate reasons for underachievement in Turkish and Kurdish speaking girls at KS4 . The project considers student, parent and teacher perceptions of the problem. Individual interviews with a focus group of 12 girls in years 10 – 11 have been held, focussing on student aspirations, language use and views of how schools respond to Turkish and Kurdish speaking students. Group interviews with girls, their parents and key staff in schools have also been held to find out their views. I am supported by Professor Viv Edwards at Reading University, who has done a lot of work in this area.

The intention is to build up a multi-dimensional picture of Turkish girls` achievement. It is hoped that the project will increase levels of awareness among the Turkish-speaking girls themselves, emphasising their role as stakeholders in the educational process. Also, the project aims to create conditions which would encourage Turkish and Kurdish parents to become more involved in their daughters` education. The project will encourage a greater appreciation of the perceived needs of Turkish and Kurdish speaking girls, leading to more focussed pastoral support, classroom resources, teaching strategies and school policies. This in turn will help to promote the achievement of a group whose underachievement has been a cause of concern for some years.

The project began in July 2002, and all the interviews and discussions have now taken place. Many these were held in Turkish and the tapes have been translated and transcribed. The findings and recommendations will be published in a report on this website and the BPRS website in December 2003.

If you would like to know more about the project, or are involved in research of a similar nature, do contact me.

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