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## **Opinions of Classroom Teachers on In-service Training**

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**Abstract:** Continuous developments and changes have demonstrated the need for us to develop in every sense. In this respect, it is through in-service training that teachers adapt to this change and improve themselves in many ways. This research aims to determine the opinions of classroom teachers about in-service education. The research was conducted in the spring semester of 2020-2021. The research is qualitative and designed with a case study. Easy-to-access case sampling was used under pure sampling methods when selecting a study group. The interview technique was used as a data collection method. For this purpose, semi-structured interviews were conducted with classroom teachers (1 male, 4 female) working in various provinces and districts of Turkey. Interview questions were asked as five open-ended questions and five sub-questions. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the interviews were made by phone, and audio recordings were obtained with permission. Content and descriptive analyses were performed on the data obtained during the interview. According to the data obtained from the interviews, themes were created, themes were strategized and the opinions of the teachers were explained by quoting directly. Interviews were supported by photos. In the light of the findings of this study, it was concluded that in-service training should be based on practice, that the practitioner should be equipped, that there should be different types of training, and that there should be in-service training not only professionally, but also to improve communication. According to the results obtained, separate training should be given for the instructors to be better equipped, application-based training should be increased, and the subjects of the training should be diversified.

**Keywords:** In-Service Training, In-Service Training Approaches, Professional Development.

### **Introduction**

The rapid development in science and technology has revealed many important events in the society and this has made it necessary for teachers to train themselves by making it necessary to develop in every field (Günbayı & Taşdoğan, 2021). These developments and changes have made it necessary for people to gain new skills. Teachers need to adapt to these developments in order to improve themselves. A teacher who does not improve herself will not be enough to realize the goals of the education system (Aydın, 2021). It should be equipped in accordance with the requirements of the age, not only in the education system, but also in all institutions (Ertürkmen, et al., 2012). According to Karakelle (2005), an effective education will take place with teachers who can keep up with the requirements of the age and can use technology.

In-service training is a training given to the employee to do his/her job properly, to contribute to professional development, and to perform his/her profession better (Demir & Demir, 2021). In-service training includes various purposes. These purposes are; informing teachers about innovations and developments, increasing knowledge and skills, meeting educational needs, adapting, renewing the profession, ensuring unity and solidarity among teachers (Baskan, 2001; Şahin & Türkoğlu, 2017). Persons who participate in in-service

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training have the opportunity to keep up with professional development, to perform their duties more effectively and efficiently, to gain new knowledge and skills related to their job, to provide personal development, to develop professional satisfaction and positive attitudes towards the work they do (Aydın, 2021; Başkan, 2001; Kayabaş, 2008). According to Gültekin and Çubukçu (2008), while in-service training aims to develop teachers in all areas, continuous training should be provided through in-service training as well as pre-service training. Because, pre-service training may be insufficient in this regard due to the continuous developments. The success of the changes made in the education system is possible with teachers who can carry out effective and beneficial activities. In order for teachers to achieve this goal, they need to renew themselves with new knowledge and skills (Akbaş & Uzunöz, 2012).

In-service trainings in the Ministry of National Education are planned according to the in-service training regulations. The in-service trainings that teachers receive are planned as central trainings that all teachers in Turkey can apply to, and local events that teachers can apply and participate in in the provinces where they work (Kahraman, 2018). Teachers' in-service training approaches vary. Saban (2000) explains them as follows;

- Professional teacher approach: It is an approach that aims to raise new generations who are conscious, creative, who undertake the task of raising individuals who will shape the society, and who are creative and balanced in terms of body, mind, morals and emotions.
- Changeover approach: Changes and developments in various fields necessitated change. Therefore, the deficiencies occurring before the service should be met with in-service training later.
- Developmental approach: Teachers have various needs and different interests at each stage of their professional life. These developments make it necessary to apply in-service training models.

Aytaç (2000) states that as in-service problems, there are organizational problems, personnel rights problems, quantity and quality problems of personnel and coordination problems in in-service training. Accordingly, the teacher should be a person who constantly renews and develops himself and should meet this with in-service training (Ergin et al., 2012; Garuba, 2014). The environment, methods and techniques, training tools, equipment of the trainer, seating arrangement are important variables for in-service training practice (Buckley & Caple, 2007 cited in Ceylan & Gündoğdu, 2017).

When the literature is examined, the studies on in-service training between the years 2010-2021; (Yılmaz & Dügenci, 2010; Çepni & Çoruhlu, 2010; Gurcan et al., 2010; Özdemir, 2010; Özcan & Bakioglu, 2010; Metin & Özmen, 2010; Doğan et al., 2011; Uzunöz et al., 2011; Baştürk, 2012 ; Arslan & Şahin, 2013; Önen et al., 2013; Arslan, 2013; Erdem & Şimşek, 2013; Karasu et al., 2014; Serin & Korkmaz, 2014; Şahin & Güçlü, 2010; Şen et al., 2013; Taşlibeyaz et al. , 2014; Görmüş & Kahya, 2014; Sarıtepeci et al., 2016; Karadağ, 2016; Kayıkçı & Turan, 2017; Bağ & Çeviker Ay, 2017; Şahin & Türkoğlu, 2017; Gümüş, 2018; Mahmutoğullari & Perçin, 2019; Taymaz, 2019; Küçükahmet, 2019; Yalnız et al., 2020; Yıldırım & Ayık, 2020; Albez et al., 2020; Sarısoy & Alcı, 2021).

The study is important to reveal the opinions of classroom teachers about in-service training. In the light of the above literature, the aim of this study is; to determine the opinions of classroom teachers about in-service training. For this purpose, the answer to the following question was sought:

1. How do you choose the in-service trainings you attend?
2. Do you find the activities carried out in in-service trainings sufficient? Can you explain?
3. Do you think that in-service training contributes to professional development? Can you explain?
4. As primary school teachers, is there any training that you think all class teachers should attend? Which are these?
5. Could you give information about the positive and negative aspects of the in-service trainings you attended?

## **Method**

### **Model of the Research**

The research conducted to determine the opinions of classroom teachers about in-service training is a qualitative research and was conducted with a case study as a design. A case study is an approach in which themes are

defined by comprehensively describing a single entity, phenomenon and examining a current event in depth with data collection tools such as observation, interview, and documents (Creswell, 2007; Meriam, 2015).

### **Working group**

This research was applied to 4 classroom teachers who received in-service training working in various provinces and districts of Turkey in the spring term of 2020-2021. Demographic information of classroom teachers is given in the table below.

Table 1. Demographic information of classroom teachers

	Demographic Information	N
Gender	Male	1
	Female	4
Age	30	1
	31	2
	32	1
	50	1
Seniority	6-10 years	4
	21 years and above	1

### **Data Collection**

Interview technique, one of the qualitative data collection methods, was used in the research. In order to get the opinions of the classroom teachers about the in-service training, questions about personal information were asked first, and then semi-structured interview questions were asked. Interview questions were prepared after a literature review. In this study, expert opinion was obtained from a lecturer and a classroom teacher on the reliability and validity of the questions, the questions were corrected, and then the pilot application was made to take its final form. The interviews were made with the classroom teachers working in various provinces and districts of Turkey on a voluntary basis. While determining the Working Group, easily accessible case sampling was used under purposive sampling methods, one of the qualitative research methods. Easily accessible case sampling is a case sampling that provides speed and practicality, is less costly, and saves time (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). Due to the Covid-19 epidemic, interviews were made over the phone and audio recordings were allowed, and they were held for an hour they deemed appropriate. Interview questions were asked as five open-ended questions and five sub-questions. Apart from this, additional and probing questions were asked to the participants during the interview in order to make the interviews more detailed. For the elaboration of the research, photographs taken at the time of the teachers' in-service training were requested and shared in the aforementioned themes.

Before the interview started, they were informed about the in-service and they were informed that the interview would not be used for other purposes and that their names would be kept confidential, so that they could express themselves more easily. Reporting the collected data in detail and explaining how the researcher reached the results are important criteria of validity in the research. Validity is an important criterion of reliability, and the importance given to validity is also aimed at ensuring reliability (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018).

### **Analysis of Data**

Content analysis and descriptive analysis were performed on the data obtained from the interview. These data were then divided into four themes according to the answers given by the teachers and these themes were divided into subcategories. The interview data were taken in their original form and quoted directly without adding any comments. Interviews were supported by photographs. Classroom teachers were coded as "SÖ", their genders as "K and E", and symbols as "KSÖ1, KSÖ2, KSÖ3, KSÖ4, ESÖ".

### **Results and Discussion**

According to the findings obtained from the semi-structured interviews with five teachers in this section, "What are the opinions of the classroom teachers about in-service training?" The answer to the question has been

sought. Accordingly, the findings were analyzed under four themes according to the answers given. The titles of the themes are as follows; (1) the training that classroom teachers should receive, (2) the effect of in-service training, (3) the positive aspects of in-service training, (4) the negative aspects of in-service training.

### **1. The training that primary school teachers must receive**

In this theme, in-service training opinions, which the teachers say they should take, are discussed in two sub-categories. Below are the findings that include teachers' views on communication skills and according to the constructivist theory.

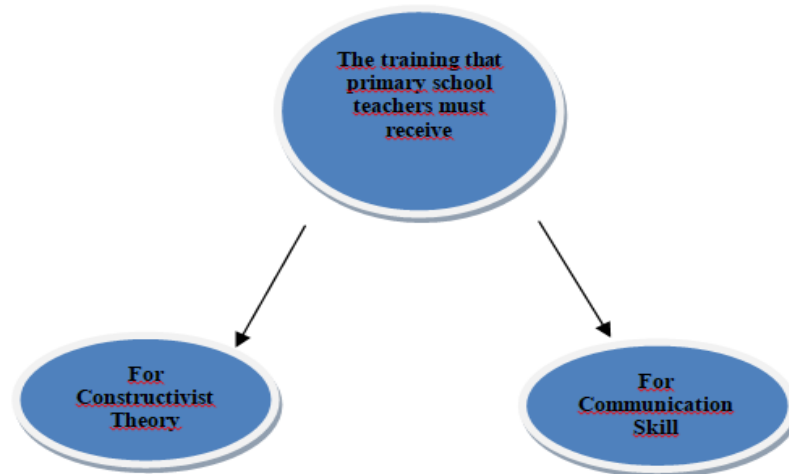


Figure 1: Educational opinions that primary school teachers must take

#### *1.1. In-service training for constructivist theory*

The teachers participating in the research advocated student-centered education, which includes more active teaching methods and techniques than the constructivist theory, and defended learning by doing, where information is not given directly, and these views are discussed in this category. According to these views, teachers expressed their opinion that there should be more memorable and useful seminars.



Photograph 1: In-service training where KSÖ4 shared her views

*ESÖ: "I think the creative drama method will be beneficial when considering the effect of student-centered coursework on success. This needs to be taught to teachers, even at a basic level".*

*KSÖ1: "I think all classroom teachers should receive customary education. .... Brain teasers, web2 tools, coding"*

*KSÖ2: "They need to attend in-service training for special education children. It's about children's games... in the primary school part, because most of our lessons are based on games, this part is a bit lacking because the teachers don't know what games to play with the new generation children".*

*KSÖ3: "... mind games, classroom management, game techniques, different approaches in teaching".*

*KSÖ4: "I definitely see the customary education as it should be, the education that they will usually get involved in with games is very important, especially drama. If there are activities that will be embodied in the mind of the child more than the*

*knowledge and theory part, they can participate if there are trainings that deal with this”.*

He/she prefers that this method should be used because the in-service training KSÖ4 received is an education in which all teachers are active except for classical lecture methods. “Photo 1” of the teacher, which reflects the teacher's opinion, supports this view.

### *1.2. In-service training for communication skills*

Teachers need in-service communication based on communication in this direction in order to further improve their communication skills with parents, students and schools that they need regarding in-service training. Teachers' views on this area were gathered under this category. Some of the teachers who expressed their opinions below also stated that in-service training should be given in the direction of communication and that there is a lack of teachers in communication.

*KSÖ3: “1. I would like to tell you how to approach a child who starts the classroom, how to get into the classroom, how to communicate, what to pay attention to during a year in literacy. Because I see the biggest deficiency here”.*

*ESÖ: “Apart from this, training on student and parent communication is required. Let me give an example, I came across a speech by a teacher's parent in our school. Although it was the first week of school and the letters had not even started, the teacher asked the parents to send the child to the kindergarten. Velide said he didn't want to send it. The teacher said okay, but don't expect too much. This made me think that a teacher should receive training on this subject”.*

## **2. The Effect of In-Service Training**

In this theme, the effects of teachers' participation in in-service training were discussed in two sub-categories and teachers' opinions were explained by quoting directly.

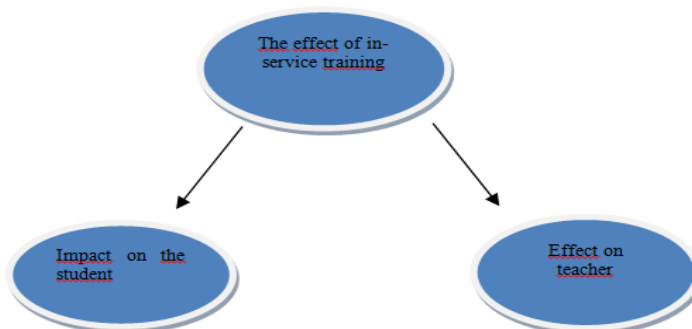


Figure 2. The effect of in-service training received by classroom teachers

### *2.1. The effect of in-service training on students*

It is a fact that receiving in-service training is not only a professional development for the teacher, but also an education that reflects on the student. When evaluated in this respect, the opinions of teachers about their effects on students are discussed in this category. Classroom teachers think that when they do classroom practices with in-service training, it is beneficial for students and contributes to students' learning.

*KSÖ4: A teacher gives  $2+2=4$  in every way. But if he teaches this in a more permanent way, it will be very practical to teach in the mind of the child, and the students will learn”.*

*KSÖ1: “For example, I had traditional training in the past years and had a lot of fun. Although it was a practical education, it was enough for us. We never had a day free. We had full training every day. I think this is a very useful education for children as well”.*

## 2.2. The effect of in-service training on the teacher

The effects of teachers participating in in-service training on themselves were included in this category. Below are the teachers' views on this. Classroom teachers participating in the study improve their social relations by receiving in-service training and use what they have learned in their lessons.



Photograph 2. In-service training where KSÖ3 shared her views

*KSÖ3: "We didn't want to leave when we left, we added each other on whatsapp. They also improve social interaction and commitment among teachers."*

*KSÖ1: "...I participated and found it very successful. It was the training we did by using the things we use every day more consciously. I use it in my lessons in education. This has been very beneficial for me".*

*ESÖ: "It is absolutely beneficial during and after the in-service trainings that are planned with good activities ... in the classroom practices".*

KSÖ3 stated that teachers' interactions with each other in in-service training showed that they developed socially. Photograph 2 supports the teacher's view.

## 3.3. Positive sides of in-service training

In this theme, teachers' views on the positive aspects of in-service training were divided into two sub-categories and their views were explained by quoting directly.

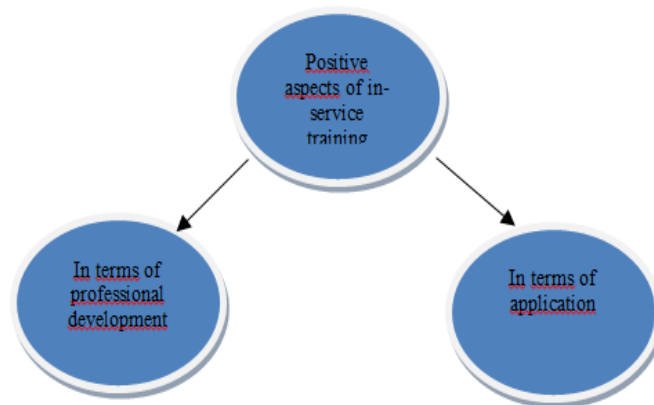


Figure 3. Positive aspects of in-service training

### 3.1. In terms of professional development

Considering the positive aspects of in-service training, the benefits it provides to teachers are discussed in this sub-category according to teacher opinions. Below are the opinions of teachers in this sub-category. Teachers find it positive that in-service trainings are carried out to renew themselves and to make up for their deficiencies.



Photograph 3. In-service training in which ESÖ shared her views

*KSÖ2: “We are constantly updating ourselves on the positive side. It enables us to keep up with innovations. It allows us to see and make up for our shortcomings”.*

*KSÖ1: “As a positive teacher, the education we received at the university is not enough for us. In-service training keeps us alive. Although we have acquired some techniques at university, some techniques may be lacking because they are newly developed”.*

*ESÖ: “Some of its positive aspects have positive aspects such as contributing to professional development and enabling us to perform a different activity outside of our daily activities, albeit for a short time”.*

ESÖ stated that teachers' performing different activities and contributing to professional development in in-service training. Photograph 3 supports the views of ESÖ.

### *3.2. In terms of application*

The classroom teachers who participated in the study also mentioned the teaching methods and techniques applied while expressing their opinions on the positive aspects of in-service training. The opinions of the teachers on this subject are given below. Classroom teachers find it more effective to carry out activities during the implementation of in-service training. Being more active in education also makes learning positive.



Photograph 4. In-service training in which KSO shared her views

*KSÖ4: “...I went to a related training. We got involved there. We learned by doing. Because it was taught through games. They showed a lot of game techniques to improve our empathy skills. This was a very positive aspect. If we get involved in the process, it will be productive”.*

*KSÖ3: “If there is an event, a person experiences his student life again, refreshes his blood, feels like he has been reborn”.*

Photograph 4 supports the views expressed by KSÖ4 through in-service training, which provides learning by worshipping and teaching through games.

## **4. Negative sides of in-service training**

In this theme, the opinions of the classroom teachers about the negative aspects of in-service training were divided into five sub-categories and explained by taking the opinions of the teachers directly.

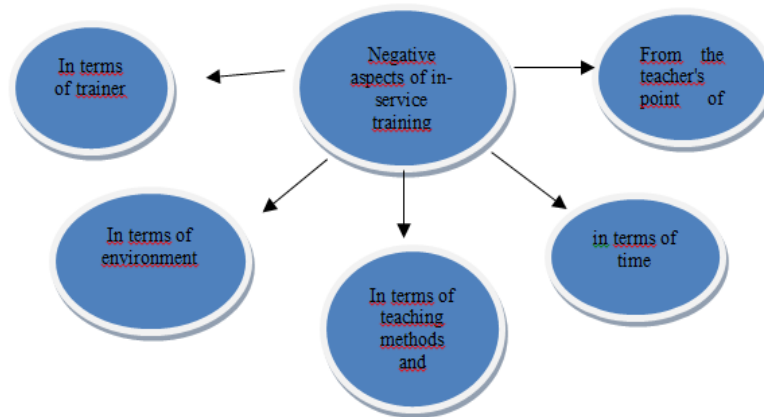


Figure 4. Negative aspects of in-service training

#### 4.1. In terms of trainer

Classroom teachers who participated in the study also stated that there are negative aspects of in-service training in terms of trainers. Below are the opinions of teachers that they see as negative in terms of educators. According to the teachers, as the negative features of in-service training for the trainer; not to have them practice, to find it insufficient in explaining, to do it with the thought of fulfilling the task.

*ESÖ: "...Some of them have good events. In some, there are activities that are done to be done outside the subject. If I give an example, in order to use the drama method in all the activities I attend, everyone is a part of a machine, some make a sound, some make a move, but it has nothing to do with the subject and we do it for the sake of doing it. Because the person doing it does not know the purpose of doing that activity. Insufficient knowledge on this subject. He acts with the aim of implementing and finishing the program given to him. Of course, we cannot say that for all of them."*

*KSÖ1: "I sometimes find some of them inadequate. While some of them are sufficient for us due to their trainers, in some trainings that should be applied theoretically, the application part may be insufficient".*

*KSÖ2: "I think it was done with the logic of "Let it be done and finished". I think that the people who did it did it just because it was their duty. Our participation is less. The content of the trainings seems to be full, but since they cannot convey it to the other party, the content does not matter much."*

*KSÖ3: "The downside is that the training of teachers who only call unwilling people there or do it for money, or teachers who have no talent, and whom the principals choose so that one of us can go, is terrible".*

#### 4.2. In terms of environment

The classroom teachers who participated in the study also stated that there are negativities in terms of the environment related to in-service training. Below are the opinions of teachers that they see as negative in terms of the environment in which in-service training is given. Teachers stated that there was a negative experience of having crowded classrooms and preferring environments where practice could not be done.

*ESÖ: "There are also negative aspects regarding the educational environment. Due to the space, there is not enough activity in the trainings held in a classroom environment".*

*KSÖ3: "We don't expect a 5-star place while studying, but there may be environments that make you feel better and more valuable".*

*KSÖ4: "If it is done in a place without infrastructure, even the person at the back cannot hear the person speaking".*



#### *4.3. In terms of teaching methods and techniques*

Classroom teachers who participated in the study also stated that there are negative aspects in terms of teaching methods and techniques related to in-service training. Below are the opinions of teachers that they consider negative in terms of teaching methods and techniques of in-service training. In terms of teaching method and technique, the use of plain teaching method and not having activities were found to be negative for teachers.

*KSÖ2: "Although the negative aspects seem to be full of content, there are superficial expressions and progress based on one-sided narration. I think it would be more beneficial if in-service training was provided for them in a more interactive or activity-based way".*

*KSÖ3: "They give the training to certain people, they also open the blackboard, reflect it like an old-style classical lecture, and read the slide to us. They read it like that without doing anything without any activity. They get really boring. It doesn't add much."*

*KSÖ4: "When it is explained as theoretical knowledge, it does not reach its purpose when it is passed with slides, it is done for doing".*

#### *4.4. In terms of time*

In terms of time, if in-service trainings are given as compulsory, in-service training at an hour that is not suitable for teachers is evaluated negatively. Below is the teacher's view of in-service training, which is seen as negative in terms of time.

*ESÖ: "... obligatory in-service trainings being held after classes or in the evening may also hinder the benefits of training".*

#### *4.5. From the teacher's point of view*

In terms of time, when in-service trainings are given as compulsory, the hours that are not suitable for teachers are evaluated negatively. Below is the teacher's view of in-service training, which is seen as negative in terms of time.

*KSÖ4: "Teachers come there if it is necessary, as if to say why are you telling this, or saying it's late, it breaks the motivation of other teachers, it also breaks the pleasure of learning there".*

*ESÖ: "...some of the attendees are in a hurry to finish and leave as soon as possible because they think we should go home even if the time runs out. As such, it is of no use."*

## **Conclusion**

In this study, findings regarding the opinions of classroom teachers on in-service training were obtained and discussion, results and suggestions were included according to the findings obtained. According to the results obtained from the research, teachers defend the view that lessons should be taught according to the constructivist theory. Önen et al. (2009) conducted a single group experimental study before and after in-service training, and it was determined that in-service training increased knowledge on teachers compared to the constructivist approach. When we compare it with our study, we can think that this way of teaching achieves similar results in terms of providing a better learning for them. Gültekin and Çubukçu (2008) conducted a study to determine primary school teachers' views on in-service training, and similar results are seen in this study, with the conclusion that teachers have a positive attitude towards in-service training and that in-service training is necessary. Hamdan (2003) primary school teachers' views on in-service training given by the Ministry of National Education to improve themselves, the views of physics teachers about in-service training in the study conducted by Gönen and Kocakaya (2006), Durmuş (2003), Kanlı and Yağbasan (2002). In the studies, the opinions of the teachers in our research that they make positive contributions to the profession support each other. Sarıgöz (2011), Çepni et al. (2005) and Küçüktepe (2013) findings that in-service training should be given

in practice are similar to the opinions of teachers in our research that there should be applied in-service training. Gül and Aslan's (2009) study supports the finding obtained in our research with the view that the trainer providing in-service training should be an expert. Karasolak et al. (2013) found that teachers had a negative attitude towards in-service training activities, and Uçar and İpek (2006) found that there were no adequate practices in the study of primary school teachers, which aimed to determine their views on in-service training practices. Ergin et al. (2012), Günbay and Taşdoğan (2012) and Karadağ (2015) according to the findings obtained in our research with the positive attitude of teachers towards in-service training, being open to newcomers, the trainers explaining with slides and not being an expert on the subject, and the fact that there are problems about the place where in-service training is given. Obtaining similar results also support each other.

The results obtained in the light of the findings obtained from this study are as follows: Teachers want to receive education with active teaching methods based on constructivist theory as a must-have education and education should be based on practice. These; orff, mind games, creative drama, game techniques. As for communication skills, training should be taken to improve communication with parents and students. In-service training is also seen as a tool that enables teachers to socialize. In-service training should always be done. Apart from teachers, this is also necessary for students to whom information is transferred. Teachers can be aware of innovations, learn different techniques, and make up for their shortcomings. A more effective education occurs when they are involved in the process. Regarding the negative aspects of in-service training, the trainer, environment, teaching methods and techniques vary in terms of time and teacher. It has been concluded that the environment where the teachers are given in-service training should not be crowded, there should be a place where practice can be made, the activities will be organized with the active participation of everyone, and the trainer should be well-equipped in this regard.

## **Scientific Ethics Declaration**

The authors declare that the scientific ethical and legal responsibility of this article published in EPESS journal belongs to the authors.

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