



Sınıf Öğretmenlerinin Sınıf Öğretmenliği Bölümlerinde Verilen Derslere İlişkin Görüşlerinin Değerlendirilmesi

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Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı, sınıf öğretmenlerinin sınıf öğretmenliği bölümlerinde verilen dersler hakkındaki görüşlerini ortaya koymaktır. Çalışmada tarama yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Veriler araştırmacı tarafından geliştirilen üçlü derecelmeli anket formuyla toplanmıştır. Çalışmanın örneklemini 116 öğretmenden oluşmaktadır. Öğretmenlere göre pedagojik formasyon, alan dersleri ve genel kültür derslerinin nitelikleri birbirine yakındır. Öğretmenler bütün kategorilerdeki dersleri genellikle “kısmen yeterli” buldukları için derslerin niteliğine ilişkin net bir veri ortaya çıkmamıştır. Ancak derslerin niteliklerini yeterli bulanların oranı çoğunlukla % 20’ler civarında kaldığı için eğitim fakültelerinin sınıf öğretmenliği bölümlerinde verilen derslerde nitelik sorunu olduğunu iddia etmenin gerçeklerden uzak bir tespit olduğu söylenemez. Bu doğrultuda, sınıf öğretmenliği bölümlerinde verilen dersler başta öğrenciler olmak üzere ilgili bütün paydaşların görüşleri dikkate alınarak gözden geçirilmelidir.

The Evaluation of the Views of Primary School Teachers on the Courses Offered at Primary Education Departments

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to reveal the views of primary school teachers on the courses offered at primary education departments. Survey method was used in the study and the data were collected through a three-point graded questionnaire. The sampling of the study included 116 teachers. Teachers graded the quality of pedagogical formation, major area and general knowledge courses almost the same. Clear information concerning the quality of the courses weren't obtained as the teachers generally “partly” agreed with the idea that the courses are adequate in different respects. It is not contrary to reality to claim that there is a problem of quality regarding the courses provided at the departments of primary education at faculties of education. Thus, the courses offered at the departments of primary education should be revised taking into consideration the views of related stakeholders, most importantly the students.

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Introduction

Primary education is quite important as it is generally the first stage of children's being exposed to formal education provided by the government. Children are educated in nursery schools prior to primary schools, but attending a nursery school is not compulsory in many countries including Turkey. So, for many children with varying backgrounds, primary school is the first phase of their educational life. Primary schools equip children with basic knowledge and skills belonging to cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. The person who is primarily responsible for educating the children at primary school is the primary school teacher (Şahin and Kartal, 2013). Thus, the primary school teacher is assigned a serious responsibility. Because the expectations of families and the society in general from primary education were limited to acquiring basic skills and information such as reading and writing, basic mathematical operations and so on in the past, the responsibility of primary school teachers was not as heavy as it is today. However, in today's rapidly changing world, the expectations of society from primary education has both increased and diversified. As a result, the training process of teachers was restructured several times to keep up with the changing conditions.

Until 1983, Institutions of Education trained teachers for primary schools in a period of two years. In 1983, Institutions of Education were converted to Education High Schools and they were included in the institutional structure of universities. Training primary school teachers was undertaken by Faculties of Education with an amendment in the related regulation in the year 1992 (Başkan, 2001). It was restructured in the year 1997. The current structure of primary education departments was institutionalized again in the year 2006 (Karaca, 2008). Eventually, the structure of primary education departments has been revised in 2018 and it is to be implemented in the next fall semester. All these developments were the result of the search for more competent teachers.

Education consists of three components; student, teacher and curriculum (Ceylan and Demirkaya, 2006; Süral, 2015). As the teacher is the main component of education, qualities of teachers influence the quality of education as a whole (Aydın, Şahin and Topal, 2008, 121). Therefore, training process of teachers is important in that it can predict the quality of education. At present, faculties of education train primary school teachers in a period of four years. In order to have competent teachers, faculties offer prospective teachers courses that are classified under three main categories as stated in Basic National Education Law numbered 1739 in the 43rd item; Knowledge on Teaching Profession (pedagogical formation), Knowledge on Major Area and General Knowledge (Küçükahmet, 2007, 207). With these courses, it was intended to acquire prospective teachers the following main categories of competencies: a) Personal and professional values-professional development, b) Recognition of students, c) Learning and teaching process, d) Monitoring and evaluating learning and improvement, e) Relations with school, families and the society and f) Knowledge of curriculum and content (Taşpınar, 2014, 7-8).

As stated above, the current form of primary education curriculum has been implemented since 2006-2007 academic year at faculties of education and 2018 curriculum is intended to start in the next fall term. Therefore, 2018 curriculum is not in the scope of this study as it hasn't been implemented yet and there aren't any data regarding its implementation. However, the efficiency of the curriculum has been discussed among scholars starting from 2006 up to the present. It has been questioned whether the intended competencies are acquired after all the courses offered under three major categories are taken. The scholars use scientific methods to collect data on teacher training process such as observation, questionnaires, surveys and interviews. The main source of information for these data collection tools are generally the faculty and prospective teachers. Of course, their views are of great importance to get an idea on the outputs of the teacher training process. However, the views of teachers, who use the knowledge and skills they acquired during the training process in real classroom environment, are also valuable so as to crosscheck the training process.

A great number of studies were carried out on the views and perceptions of primary school teachers concerning the subjects they teach at primary schools. Also, views of prospective teachers were taken in some studies regarding the teacher training programmes at faculties of education in general. However, there are very few studies on the views of teachers about the three categories of courses separately offered at faculties of education. This fact makes it essential to carry out such a study. As the experiences of teachers vary, the readers of this article can also have an idea about the teacher training programmes employed mainly in 1990s and partly in 1980s.

Research Method

It was aimed in this study to reveal the views of primary school teachers on the courses offered at primary education departments. Survey method was used in the study to gather quantitative data on participants' responses. The population of the study consisted of 315 primary school teachers working in the state schools in the city of Bartın in 2014-2015 academic year and the sampling of the study included 116 teachers who volunteered to fill in the questionnaire developed by the researchers. It was observed in the study that 56% (65 teachers) of the participating teachers were men and 44% (51) of them were women. The mean age of teachers was 44 years and the mean experience was 17 years. It can be claimed that the mean values are balanced as they are close to the mid-points of both age (roughly 22-60 years) and experience (0-25 years). Also, there is not a huge difference in the distribution of teachers in terms of gender.

The questionnaire, consisting of 3 items regarding demographic data (gender, age and experience) and 21 three-point likert-type items (Yes, Partly, No), was applied to teachers. The researchers visited the schools themselves and collected data directly from teachers. The questionnaire consists of three sub-categories; pedagogical formation (knowledge on teaching profession) courses, major area courses and general knowledge courses. Seven items were developed for one single category and same items were used for the other two categories again in order to compare them easily. The data were analysed using SPSS 22 statistics package programme.

Findings and Interpretations

Findings and Interpretations on Pedagogical Formation Courses

As it is stated above, seven items are developed for each sub-category of items and the same items are used for the other two sub-categories. The percentages regarding the items in pedagogical formation courses are given in table 1 below.

Table 1. Percentages regarding Teachers' Views on the Items under Pedagogical Formation Courses Category

Item	%			n
	Yes	Partly	No	
1- I regard the duration of pedagogical formation courses allocated for theory adequate in primary education departments.	48,3	38,8	12,9	116
2- I regard the duration of pedagogical formation courses allocated for practice adequate in primary education departments.	22,4	43,1	34,5	116
3- I regard using materials appropriate for the purposes of the course adequate in pedagogical formation courses in primary education departments.	19	48,2	32,8	116
4- I regard the expertise and competence of the teaching staff adequate in pedagogical formation courses in primary education departments.	27,6	49,1	23,3	116
5- I regard the course contents of pedagogical formation courses adequate in primary education departments.	26,8	49,1	24,1	116
6- I regard teaching staff's using instructional methods and techniques appropriate for the purposes of the course adequate in pedagogical formation courses in primary education departments.	21,6	56,9	21,6	116
7- The pedagogical formation courses offered in primary education departments have significantly contributed to my professional development.	19,8	53,4	26,7	116

When the table above is examined, it is observed that almost half of the teachers (48%) think that the time allocated for theory is enough; however, teachers don't think the same for practice in the second item, which has the highest negative percentage (34,5%) among the remaining items. As for the lowest positive percentage (19%) in the 3rd item, it can be said that most of the teachers don't agree with the idea that teachers use appropriate materials during pedagogical formation courses. They don't have a clear decision

on 4th, 5th and 6th items, the percentages for “yes” and “no” are very close to each other. Lastly, only one fifth of the subjects think that pedagogical formation courses have positive effects on their professional development.

Findings and Interpretations on Major Area Courses

The seven three-point likert items, which are used under the category of pedagogical formation courses, are again used for major area courses. The percentages obtained as a result of statistical analysis are given in table 2 below.

Table 2. The Percentage Values of the Items under Major Area Courses Category

Item	%			n
	Yes	Partly	No	
1- I regard the duration of major area courses allocated for theory adequate in primary education departments.	44	37	19	116
2- I regard the duration of major area courses allocated for practice adequate in primary education departments.	19	49,1	31,9	116
3- I regard teaching staff's using materials appropriate for the purposes of the course adequate in major area courses in primary education departments.	16,4	52,6	31	116
4- I regard the expertise and competence of the teaching staff adequate in major area courses in primary education departments.	22,4	55,2	22,4	116
5- I regard the course contents of major area courses adequate in primary education departments.	25	52,6	22,4	116
6- I regard teaching staff's using instructional methods and techniques appropriate for the purposes of the course adequate in major area courses in primary education departments.	24,1	50,9	25	116
7- The major area courses offered in primary education departments have significantly contributed to my professional development.	19,8	50	30,2	116

The most remarkable similarity of the values in table 3 with the previous one is that items with the highest (44%) and the lowest (16,4%) agreement rates are the same. The remaining items also have very close percentage values. It can be claimed that the similar problems exist for the major area courses category and similar interpretations are also valid. Time allocated for theory is regarded enough but, for practice a considerable number of teachers think that it is not. The agreement rates of 4th, 5th and 6th items are slightly above 20% again and only one fifth of teachers think that major area courses peculiar to their own field contribute to their professional development (19,8%) as is the case with the courses under pedagogical formation category.

Findings and Interpretations on General Knowledge Courses

The seven items used for the previous two categories were again used for the category of general knowledge courses. The percentage values of the items are given in table 3 below.

Table 3. The Percentage Values of the Items under General Knowledge Courses Category

Item	%			n
	Yes	Partly	No	
1- I regard the duration of general knowledge courses allocated for theory adequate in primary education departments.	44,8	39,7	15,5	116
2- I regard the duration of general knowledge courses allocated for practice adequate in primary education departments.	25	49,1	25,9	116
3- I regard teaching staff's using materials appropriate for the purposes of the course adequate in general knowledge courses in primary education departments.	20,7	50,9	28,4	116
4- I regard the expertise and competence of the teaching staff adequate in general knowledge courses in primary education departments.	25	49,1	25,9	116
5- I regard the course contents of general knowledge courses adequate in primary education departments.	27,6	44,8	27,6	116
6- I regard teaching staff's using instructional methods and techniques appropriate for the purposes of the course adequate in general knowledge courses in primary education departments.	18,1	55,2	26,7	116
7- The general knowledge courses offered in primary education departments have significantly contributed to my professional development.	23,3	53,4	23,3	116

As is seen in the table, the highest agreement rate (44,8%) belongs to the first item as it is the case with previous two categories. However, the lowest percentage value (18,1%) belongs to the 6th item. Thus, only one fifth of the teachers think that teaching staff use instructional methods and techniques adequately. When the percentage values of the items are evaluated individually for all three subcategories, it can be claimed that the problems are similar but not very clear as the participants "partly" agree with the most of the items with an agreement rate generally close to 50%. Only the first item, regarding the time allocated to theory, can be distinguished from the group as it has a clearly higher agreement rate than the rest. As the agreement and disagreement rates of the teachers for all the items under the three categories are similar, it can be claimed that the qualities of the courses are similar and teachers don't have a clear decision about their quality as the percentage of the ones who "partly" agree is usually around 50%.

Results, Discussion and Recommendations

In this study, the main aim was to determine the views of teachers on the courses offered at faculties of education. Teachers stated their views on pedagogical formation, major area and general knowledge courses through a likert-type questionnaire. Teachers graded all three categories almost the same. The items with the highest and the lowest scores were usually similar. The main problem discovered through the views of teachers is that teaching staff don't use appropriate materials during the classes adequately. However, it doesn't seem to be such a big problem as perceived by teachers since not all the participants think so. Ceylan and Demirkaya (2006) also questioned teaching staff's use of materials during the classes and they discovered that roughly 47% of students disagreed with the idea that instructional materials are used efficiently during the courses and 26% of them were uncertain on this item. Kavcar (2002) also questioned the qualities of teaching staff at the faculties of education and concluded that academicians who train prospective teachers lack some qualities like pedagogical formation. Teachers regard the duration dedicated for theory adequate in all three categories. In the study carried out by Akbaşlı (2010), it was concluded that teachers were competent in theory but not in practice, which complies with the results of this study. In the light of these data, it can be said that the duration allocated for theory and practice should be determined based on the findings of comprehensive research on teachers.

In this study, the expertise and competence of teaching staff along with their use of instructional methods and techniques were evaluated by the teachers. They were uncertain about these qualities in

general which implies that they can't tell clearly whether they are competent or not. Ceylan and Demirkaya (2006) also questioned these qualities from the viewpoint of students and they concluded that 33% of students say clearly that their quality is satisfactory; only 31% say that their academic competence is satisfactory, which does not yield a clear idea on these qualities as is the case with this study. Again, only 16% say that teaching staff use instructional methods and techniques efficiently, which supports the findings obtained in this study.

Almost all the percentages obtained from the participating teachers indicate that they don't have certain ideas about the quality of the courses in general, which is one of the most remarkable findings in this study. In other words, they think the courses offered at the departments of primary education are "partly enough" in general. This can result from the fact that it has been a long time for a considerable number of teachers since they graduated from university and they may have started to forget the details concerning the courses they took at university. In a study carried out by Yılmaz, Orhan and Uğraş (2010), it was stated that students at a faculty of education are satisfied with the courses in pedagogical formation and major area categories. Their ideas may be different compared to the teachers practising their job in this study as the students haven't practised yet what is taught at faculty of education in real life conditions. The major implication of the results obtained in this study for faculties of education and especially for primary education departments is that all the courses should be revised for a higher satisfaction rate among students based on the views of teachers, who have experienced the process of education at faculties of education and most of whom have had opportunities to implement what they were taught at university. Kavcar (2002) attracted attention, in his study, to the revision of faculties of education with the participation of all the related stakeholders.

To conclude, the study demonstrates that teachers are uncertain regarding the quality of the courses provided at the primary education departments at faculties of education. This means that the quality of the courses along with those of the teaching staff didn't convince teachers that they had a high quality education at their faculties. So, the courses offered at departments of primary education should be reviewed taking into account the views of students together with those of working teachers. Thus, the students and graduates can be more satisfied with the instruction they get at the faculties of education and become competent teachers in their fields of instruction.

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Geniş Özet

Bu çalışmanın amacı, sınıf öğretmenlerinin sınıf öğretmenliği bölümlerinde verilen dersler hakkındaki görüşlerini ortaya koymaktır. Pedagojik formasyon, alan dersleri ve genel kültür dersleri olmak üzere üç kategoriye ayrılmış olan dersler hakkında bu dersleri almış olan öğretmenlerin görüşlerinin bilinmesi, derslerin niteliği konusunda ilk elden bilgi alınmasını sağlayacak ve derslerin veriminin artırılması ve gerekirse yeniden yapılandırılmasında yol gösterici olacaktır.

Katılımcıların görüşleri hakkında nicel bilgiler toplamak için betimsel istatistik yöntemlerinden tarama metodu kullanılmıştır. Çalışmada veriler araştırmacılar tarafından geliştirilen anketle toplanmıştır. Çalışmanın evreni 2014-2015 akademik yılında Bartın ilindeki devlet okullarında çalışan 315 sınıf öğretmeninden; örnekleme ise araştırmacılar tarafından geliştirilen ölçeği doldurmayı kabul eden 116 (51 kadın, 65 erkek) öğretmenden oluşmaktadır. 3 adet demografik veri ve 21 adet üçlü derecelendirme maddesinden oluşan anket sınıf öğretmenlerine uygulanmış ve veriler SPSS istatistik programı kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Ölçekte yedi adet derecelendirme maddesi yer almış ve bu maddeler kıyaslama yapabilmek amacıyla pedagojik formasyon, alan dersleri ve genel kültür dersleri kategorilerindeki dersler için aynen kullanılmıştır. Verilerin analizinde betimsel istatistik tekniklerinden yüzde kullanılmıştır.

Elde edilen bulgulara bakıldığında, öğretmenlere göre her üç kategorideki derslerin nitelikleri birbirine çok yakındır. Her üç ders kategorisindeki madde puan ortalamalarına bakıldığında, en sorunsuz maddenin teoriye ayrılan zaman; en sorunlu maddenin ise öğretim elemanlarının derslerde uygun materyal kullanmaması olduğu gözlemlenmiştir. Bu maddeden sonra öğretmenlerin en az katılım gösterdikleri maddelerden yola çıkılarak tespit edilen diğer sorunlar sırasıyla öğretim elemanlarının uygun öğretim yöntem ve tekniklerini yeterince kullanmamaları, alınan derslerin öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimine yeterince katkıda bulunmaması ve uygulamaya yeterince zaman ayrılmamasıdır. Hemen hemen bütün maddelerde “kısmen katılıyorum” seçeneğini işaretleyen öğretmenlerin oranı %50’ye yakın olduğu için uygulanan anket sonucunda net sorunlar tespit etmek güçleşmiştir.

Öğretmenler her üç kategorideki derslerin niteliklerini birbirlerine çok yakın değerlerle denk olarak değerlendirmiş ve bu konuda ortaya net bir görüş koymamışlardır, ancak Yılmaz, Orhan ve Uğraş’ın (2010) yaptıkları çalışmada eğitim fakültesindeki öğrenciler pedagojik formasyon ve alan derslerinden memnun olduklarını belirtmişlerdir. Öğretmenlerin yaptıkları değerlendirmelere göre en sorunsuz görünen madde derslerde teoriye ayrılan zamandır. Akbaşlı (2010)’nın yaptığı çalışmada ise öğretmenler kendilerini teori konusunda yeterli, uygulama konusunda yetersiz görmüşlerdir ve bu bulgu bu çalışmada elde edilen sonucu desteklemektedir. Ceylan ve Demirkaya (2006), en sorunlu bulunan madde olan öğretim elemanlarının derslerde uygun materyaller kullanmadığını bildiren maddeye benzer bir madde ile öğretim üyelerinin bu özelliğini sorgulamış ve katılımcıların yaklaşık yarısı kullanmadıklarını belirtmiş ve dörtte biri ise kararsız kalmıştır. Öğretmenler bütün kategorilerdeki dersleri çoğunlukla “kısmen yeterli” buldukları için derslerin niteliği konusunda ortaya net bir veri koymak zor olmuştur. Ancak derslerin niteliklerini yeterli bulanların oranı çoğunlukla % 20’ler civarında kaldığı için eğitim fakültelerinin sınıf öğretmenliği bölümlerinde verilen derslerde nitelik sorunu olduğu iddia edilebilir. Bu doğrultuda, daha nitelikli ve öğretmen adaylarının mesleki gelişimlerine daha fazla katkıda bulunacak derslerin verilmesi için sınıf öğretmenliği bölümlerinde verilen dersler, başta öğrenciler olmak üzere ilgili bütün paydaşların görüşleri dikkate alınarak gözden geçirilmelidir.