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Table of Contents: Volume 13 Number 1 10 January, 2018

ARTICLES

Conceptualizing group flow: A framework	1
Jana Duncan and Richard E. West	
Construction of academic success and failure in school memories	12
Gamze Inan Kaya	
Unpacking activities-based learning in kindergarten classrooms: Insights from teachers' perspectives	21
Charles Nyarko Annobil and Mumuni Thompson	
An analysis of 1926 inspection legislation document, named: "Law about inspectors of education ministry and their authorization"	32
Mehmet Emin Usta	
Relationship between teachers' perceptions of mobbing and their problem solving skills	51
Nejla MUTLU GÖÇMEN and Selma GÜLEÇ	
The difficulties experienced by teacher candidates in their own process of elementary reading and writing education, and their current solution	60
Hatice Değirmenci Gündoğmuş	

Full Length Research Paper

Conceptualizing group flow: A framework

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This literature review discusses the similarities in main themes between Csikszentmihályi theory of individual flow and Sawyer theory of group flow, and compares Sawyer's theory with existing concepts in the literature on group work both in education and business. Because much creativity and innovation occurs within groups, understanding group collaboration characteristics, including group flow, is critical to designing, leading, and sustaining effectively creative groups. Sawyer's theory, being the first to describe flow within groups, can be difficult to conceptualize because of the high number of included constructs. By synthesizing the ideas, we propose a simpler model for conceptualizing group flow consisting of the principles of vision, ownership and contribution, and effective communication. We propose that using this condensed version of Sawyer's leading principles might enable more research on this important topic, as well as improved practice in developing and leading innovative groups.

Key words: Flow, group flow, education, team productivity, organizational behavior.

INTRODUCTION

After researching the conditions of individual happiness, Csikszentmihályi (1990) identified certain conditions that were most likely to lead to individual flow, a state of work in which individuals are highly motivated. Many scholars have found that high levels of intrinsic motivation are closely correlated with creativity (Amabile et al., 1996; Csikszentmihályi, 1990; Hetland et al., 2007; Runco, 2007), suggesting a strong connection between individual flow and creativity.

More recently, researchers have continued to find evidence for the value of a flow-like state of engagement in everything from fiction writing (Paton, 2012), video games and transmedia (Velikovskiy, 2014), and music education (Custodero, 2012). Hamari et al. (2016) considered the effectiveness of two educational games

through the lens of flow theory, and found that this deep engagement in the game derived from flow clearly improved learning, in particular the challenge aspect of the game, since an appropriate level of challenges is key to flow. Yan et al. (2013) studied knowledge seeking and knowledge contributing behaviors within online virtual communities and found both to lead to a higher state of flow. Moneta (2012) also found in a study of 367 workers from a variety of fields that flow was best achieved when there was a good match between an individual with intrinsic motivation and an environment providing opportunities for creativity.

However, while research has continued on flow and its connection to creativity, scholarship on what flow might look like for group/collaborative environments are nearly

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non-existent. In his book, *Group Genius*, Sawyer (2003) suggested that the conditions of individual flow and similar conditions could also be applied in collaborative groups, leading to a state of *group flow*. Sawyer's theory of group flow could have significant implications in group work generally, but especially in education and business, where the tasks assigned are becoming more complex and group-oriented, and often require problem solving and creativity (Hirst et al., 2009). However, group flow has not been researched extensively in either of these areas. The purpose of this literature review is to use the conditions of Sawyer's theory of group flow to frame a discussion of pertinent research that explains possible implications for group flow in creative educational collaborations.

METHODOLOGY

In this article, we use Sawyer's work on group flow as a framework for understanding the current literature on group work in collaborative creativity. We begin this review discussing Csikszentmihályi's works on individual flow as a foundation for understanding group flow. Then in considering group flow we review Sawyer's works on group flow; other sources that cite his work; and sources from search results in Google Scholar, ERIC, and PsychINFO, and Business Source Premier. The study strategy for collecting sources involved multiple steps. First, we searched major databases such as Google Scholar and Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), primarily for articles containing phrases such as *group flow* and *groups and creativity*. However, we also included results from other searches using the following words and phrases: *group unity*, *collaboration*, *listening*, *creativity*, *innovation*, *group problem solving*, *group work*, and *teams*. From this pool of articles, we retained those that referenced *group flow* outright, or that appeared to be discussing a similar concept. Second, we were already familiar with Sawyer's work in group flow, so we reviewed his writing extensively, as well as those who cited his group flow theory. In addition, we primarily considered articles that applied these ideas to the contexts of higher education and/or business group creativity.

Individual flow

While individual flow is not the main focus of this paper, some review of the original theory is warranted. Csikszentmihályi (1990) developed the concept of "flow" to mean "the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter; the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it" (Csikszentmihályi,

1990). While this phenomenon was originally studied in leisure activities (Csikszentmihályi, 1975), studies have expanded to include a wide range of activities, including, but not limited to, research in education (Hamari et al., 2016; Egbert, 2004; Shernoff et al, 2003), work-related activities (Eisenberger et al., 2005; Fullagar and Della Fave, 2017; Fullagar and Kelloway, 2009; Ghani and Deshpande, 1994; Moneta, 2012; Salanova et al., 2006; Yan et al., 2013), and technology-facilitated environments such as video games, social media, and online learning (Peppler and Solomou, 2011; Velikovskiy, 2014; Hamari et al., 2016).

Recent discussions in flow theory discuss the relationship between flow and the individual, such as how flow may contribute to an individual's self-identity and their perception of the world (Fave Delle and Bassi, 2016). Massimini and Della Fave (2000) explored how individuals play active roles in selecting the values and preferences that shape their experiences, and how that process frames a person's flow experiences. Other contributions look more closely at the effects of flow, including intrinsic motivation in high opportunities for creativity (Moneta, 2012), associated creativity (Custodero, 2012), and even resulting dependence on flow activities (Partington et al., 2009). In addition, advances have been made through improvements in the measurement of flow (Jackson and Eklund, 2002; Moneta, 2012b).

The results of the research on flow suggest that not only are people happier when they were engaged in flow activities, and not only do they seek after opportunities for flow to happen (Csikszentmihályi, 1990), but when individuals experienced flow in what they were doing, it often resulted in a higher-quality, more creative output (Amabile et al., 1996; Csikszentmihályi, 2009; Hetland et al., 2013; Runco, 2004; Vollmeyer and Rheinberg, 2006). Besides increased creativity, individual flow is said to have a number of positive effects, including motivation for learning (Vollmeyer and Rheinberg, 2006), production of meaningful artifacts and an increased sense of satisfaction, achievement, ownership, sense of self and identity (Baker and MacDonald, 2013), and improved mood (Fullagar and Kelloway, 2009).

After collecting a variety of data on flow experiences in many contexts, Csikszentmihályi (1990) found five specific conditions make an activity more prone to flow: clear task goals, intense concentration, a sense of control, a perceived balance of skills and challenge, and clear feedback. Also, depending on the task, certain conditions can be more important than others. For example, perceived control is more important in jobs with high variety, identity, autonomy, and feedback than in other types of tasks (Ghani and Deshpande, 1994). Perhaps this explains why, in a sample of 526 high school students across the United States, students were more engaged when participating in individual and group

work than in listening to lectures, watching videos, or taking exams (Shernoff et al., 2003).

Clear task goals

In his research, Csikszentmihályi (1975) observed that flow often occurred in activities with clearly established rules for action—like rituals, games, or dances. “Flow usually has coherent, non-conflicting demands for action” (p. 46). More recently, Custodero (2012) noted that “having clear goals is a characteristic of flow experience” (p. 372). As long as the rules are respected, a flow situation is a social system with no deviance (Csikszentmihályi and Bennett, 1971), which leads to less distraction (Csikszentmihályi, 1975). More recently, Nakamura and Csikszentmihályi (2009) clarified that having clear goals for an activity does not mean having an overall goal for an activity, but the main thing was knowing what to do moment to moment—having a clear view of the next step, and receiving immediate feedback on what you have just completed. Providing clear goals can actually enhance, instead of restrict, creativity (Aleksić et al., 2016).

Intense concentration

Possibly as a result of minimal distractions, subjects in flow in Csikszentmihályi (1990) studies also often described a lack of self-consciousness, a perception that time passed more slowly. Csikszentmihályi (1990) frequently observed that this “intense concentration” regularly occurred for people in flow. It is in this condition of self-forgetting that professional artists can create, organize, and organize their work (Chemi, 2016).

Sense of control

Csikszentmihályi (1975) noticed that flow experiences seemed to have an overall theme of a sense of control of actions and environment. He suggested that flow depends partially on environment and structure, and also on the individual’s ability to restructure the environment—his or her surroundings for flow to occur. In addition, in his interviews Csikszentmihályi (1975) observed that flow occurs when people can cope with all the demands for action when the dangers are predictable and manageable. In Bakker (2008) study of work-related flow among hundreds of employees in different occupations, in which flow was measured by a “short-term peak experience characterized by absorption, work enjoyment, and intrinsic work motivation” (p. 400), it was found that employees who were able to control how fast they work and which methods to use experienced greater individual

flow. In addition, from a study regarding architectural students in studio work, Fullagar and Kelloway (2009) found that academic work that is high in autonomy is associated with flow. In contrast, boredom has been associated with reduced agency (Raffaelli et al., 2017).

Perceived balance of challenge and skill

Descriptions of flow have also included a feeling that skills were adequate for meeting the demands of the creative task (Csikszentmihályi, 1975). Armstrong (2008) explained it as a perception of the balance of skills and challenge, and said flow can occur when individuals’ skills are matched by the level of challenge involved during the activity for them to be motivated to continue pursuing the activity. In addition, many flow activities have opportunities for action-varying levels of difficulty and engagement. Some researchers have suggested that the need for a perceived balance of challenge and skill may be dependent on other conditions, if necessary at all (Løvoll and Vittersø, 2014). For example, in one study measuring flow for people using computers in the workplace, perceived control was more important for individuals with high task-scope jobs—jobs with high variety, identity, autonomy, and feedback—whereas challenge played a greater role for low task-scope individuals (Ghani and Deshpande, 1994). This suggested that different conditions of flow can be more important depending on the task, and also, that the perceived balance of challenge and skill might play a more significant role in jobs with low autonomy and feedback. In one study of employees’ perceived skill and challenge at work across many different occupations, which again measured flow by absorption, work enjoyment, and intrinsic work motivation, it was found that high skill and challenge were associated with higher performance, increased task interest, and a positive mood and task interest, but only for achievement-oriented employees (Eisenberger et al., 2005), suggesting that individual motivations may influence the need for a balance of challenge and skill.

Clear feedback

Another important element of individual flow is clear feedback (Custodero, 2012). According to Csikszentmihályi (1975), flow usually has coherent, non-conflicting demands for action, and provides clear, unambiguous feedback. In flow, you don’t stop to evaluate feedback; the process of action and reaction are so well practiced that they become automatic. This aspect of individual flow has often been coupled with autonomy, especially regarding the way in which feedback is offered. For example, in a study of

undergraduate business students, individuals exhibited less creativity when they received negative feedback in a controlling style, rather than positive feedback in an informational style (Zhou, 1998). Feedback in flow theory can also apply to feedback between individuals, or even with the activity itself. This suggests that feedback can be given in contexts where there is not a clear answer, as in during creative processes, and could be even more influential in that type of process. Recent research has been done to explore various methods of feedback, including sketching (Cseh et al., 2016) and technology-facilitated feedback (Muis et al., 2015).

Summary of conditions for individual flow

Clear task goals, intense concentration, a sense of control, a perceived balance of challenge and skill, and clear feedback accompany an experience of individual flow, leading to a higher level of individual performance. Some tasks are more conducive to flow than others, and how these five specific conditions create flow could vary in different situations. Also, depending on the task, certain conditions can be more important than others. For example, perceived control is more important in jobs with high variety, identity, autonomy and feedback than in other types of tasks (Ghani and Deshpande, 1994).

Group flow

Today in the workplace, people more often work in groups than alone (Hirst et al., 2009), and people generally acknowledge that groups can be more creative than individuals (Paulus et al., 1995). Many breakthrough innovations are a result of group creativity (Bennis and Biederman, 1997; Sawyer, 2007), or seen as a result of sociocognitive interaction (Glăveanu, 2011).

However it is also known that putting people in groups alone does not lead to success (Paulus et al., 1993), and “collaboration” can become more of a buzzword than an effective strategy (Bedwell et al., 2012). A few researchers have attempted to articulate the optimal group experience by applying principles of individual flow to groups, including the ideas of “social flow” (Walker, 2010), “collective flow” (Salanova et al., 2014), and “networked flow” (Gaggioli et al., 2011; Triberti et al., 2016). Some have even tried to measure similar phenomena through increased heart rates (Noy et al., 2015), longitudinal social signals (Gloor et al., 2014), and sociometric sensors (Hong et al., 2014).

To address these social dimensions, Sawyer (2000) proposed that the conditions that encourage individual flow might also encourage “group flow,” leading groups to produce more creative, higher-quality products. Sawyer (2003) defined group flow as “a collective state that

occurs when a group is performing at the peak of its abilities”. While conditions for group flow are derived from the conditions of individual flow, group flow is “a property of the group as a collective unit” (Sawyer, 2006).

To try to define the phenomenon of group flow, Sawyer (2007) revised Csikszentmihályi (1990) ideas to identify 10 conditions of group flow: goal, close listening, complete concentration, blending egos, equal participation, familiarity, communication, moving it forward, and the potential for failure. Because of the overlapping nature of these 10 conditions, we believe these can be grouped into three categories: vision, ownership and contribution, and communication. Grouping the conditions this way can facilitate greater communication and research by reducing the number of factors to consider when studying group flow. We now discuss each of these main categories, drawing on other literature to support Sawyer’s ideas, and discussing Sawyer’s 10 principles as sub-sections within the three main categories of vision, ownership and contribution, and communication.

Vision

In research concerning group creativity, creative collaboration requires some explicit preparation. There is often a concept of a vision, a goal, or a task at hand. In Sawyer (2007) discussion of a vision for group flow, he suggested that group flow occurs when there is a specific goal in mind and potential for failure.

Specific goal in mind

Many researchers have concluded that having a group goal is one of the most important factors in determining group effectiveness (Guzzo and Shea, 1992; Pritchard et al., 1988; Weldon and Weingart, 1993), and have researched the importance of group commitment to those goals (Aubé et al., 2014; Latham and Yukl, 1975; Locke, 1968; Maier, 1963; Vroom and Yetton, 1973). In addition, in a recent study of flow in team performance with 85 teams participating in a project management simulation, it was found that flow in groups is mediated by team goal commitment (Aubé et al., 2014).

In his explanation of group goals, Sawyer (2003) differentiated between unstructured and task-oriented groups. For example, with jazz improve or theaters improve, the group doesn’t have an explicit goal or task. However, Sawyer (2003) suggested, “group flow is more likely when the extrinsic collective goal is matched by the number of pre-existing structures shared and used by the performers”. An “extrinsic collective goal” can be generally implied by a deadline, or a specific question or problem to solve, such as “the task facing a business team when they know that by the end of the meeting they

have to come up with a resolution". On the other hand, "in improv, the only goals are intrinsic to the performance itself-to perform well and to entertain the audience" (Sawyer, 2003).

Sawyer (2003) suggested that different types of tasks require different types of goals. First, a *problem-solving* creative task, which is when the goal is well-understood, and can be explicitly stated. This type of goal requires members to have worked together before, to share the same knowledge and assumptions, and to have a compelling vision and a shared mission in order to have flow (Sawyer, 2007).

In contrast, a *problem-finding* creative task is where group members have to "find" and define the problem as they're solving it. Most radical innovations occur when the goal isn't known in advance. However, it was also found that groups may need a good team-appropriate challenge in order to experience social flow-challenges that require group members to act harmoniously together (Nokes-Malach et al., 2012; Steiner, 1978), and thus when selecting a group's goal or purpose, it is important to have one that challenges the group.

Kavadia and Sommer (2009) found that brainstorming solutions in a group, as opposed to working independently to find solutions, produces better solutions in cross-functional problems in which the group maximizes the diversity of its participants. For group flow, Sawyer (2007) believed there should be a goal, but it should be a goal with flexibility and balance between clear direction, without demanding the specifics of the outcome. The goal in group flow evolves and emerges through the process of feedback and individual adaptation.

Potential for failure

In addition to having a specific goal in mind, Sawyer (2003) said there must be some potential for failure in order for group flow to occur. This may seem contradictory to Csikszentmihályi (1996), who said, "while in flow, we are too involved to be concerned with failure". However, Sawyer (2007) made a distinction that it is not the failure itself that leads to flow, but the potential for failure and the authenticity of the task at hand. Sawyer suggested that using feelings of pressure and stage fright can act as a force to push group members towards flow experience. "There's no creativity without failure, and there's no group flow without risk of failure" (Sawyer, 2007).

Sawyer (2007) compared this to the concept of deliberate practice in the business world. In deliberate practice, as you're doing a task, you're constantly thinking about how to do it better, looking for lessons you can use the next time. As creative groups pursue deliberate practice, they can treat every task or activity as

a rehearsal for the next time. A review of literature on problem-based learning suggests that students are more engaged when the problems involve risk and applicability (Albanese and Mitchell, 1993).

This is not to say group flow requires stress. Sawyer (2007) observed that group flow seems to fade in the presence of strict, high-pressure deadlines. In group flow, the group is focused on the natural progress emerging from members' work, not on meeting a deadline set by management. In a study of burnout in the workplace, it was found that work pressure generally had a positive relationship with absorption-losing a sense of time, and becoming immersed in work (Bakker et al., 2000). However, it was also found in the same study that emotional pressure had a negative relationship with work enjoyment. This supports the idea that certain kinds of pressure may enhance flow, but emotional pressure, such as clients who continuously complain despite an employee's efforts, can be distracting to the flow experience.

Ownership and contribution

It is nice to have clear goals and an authentic task, but group flow cannot occur without team members being committed to owning and contributing themselves to the team goal. One model of social flow (Thimot, 2016) explained this concept as self-trust, a pre-cursor and requirement for inter-personal trust, which enables the conditions of high-performing teams and the willingness to lose one's sense of self. Thus, the second key principle of group flow is group ownership and contribution, which arises from three of Sawyer (2007) 10 conditions: a general sense of control, equal participation in the group, and familiarity with group members and the guiding principles of the task.

Being in control of actions and environment

Autonomy and achievement have gone hand-in-hand in studies in education (Jang et al., 2010; Roth et al., 2007; van Loon et al., 2012) and in the workplace (Amabile et al., 1996). Similar to conclusions on individual creativity and flow, Sawyer (2007) declared that "group flow increases when people feel autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Many studies have found that team autonomy is the top predictor of team performance" (Cohen et al., 2017). But Sawyer (2007) definition of control also included a paradox, because in group flow, participants must feel in control, yet at the same time they must remain flexible, listen closely, and always be willing to defer to the emergent flow of the group. The most innovative teams are the ones that can manage that paradox.

Although Sawyer (2007) did not discuss applicable research concerning how to encourage a sense of control, some researchers have used self-determination theory to identify autonomy-supportive behaviors from an educational or management perspective. Autonomy-supportive behaviors include listening carefully, creating opportunities for others to work in their own ways, providing opportunities for conversation, creating an ideal environment with materials and seating arrangements that allow people to be physically engaged, recognizing improvement, and communicating an acknowledgement of others' perspectives (Deci et al., 1982; Flink et al., 1990; Reeve and Jang, 2006; Reeve et al., 1999).

In contrast, the following behaviors have been shown to thwart autonomy: physically exhibiting worked-out solutions and answers before others have time to work on the problem independently, uttering directives and commands, and using controlling questions as a way of directing others' work (Deci et al., 1982; Flink et al., 1990; Reeve and Jang, 2006; Reeve et al., 1999). While effects of these methods have been observed on an individual basis, these leadership principles have yet to be researched on a group level.

Equal participation

According to Sawyer (2007), group flow is more likely to occur when all participants play an equal role in the collective creation of the final performance. Group flow is blocked if anyone's skill level is below that of the rest of the group's members; all must have comparable skill levels... It's also blocked when one person dominates, is arrogant, or does not think anything can be learned from the conversation.

For example, Sawyer (2007) believed managers have to participate at the same level as everyone else in order to achieve group flow. "Managers can participate in groups in flow, but they have to participate in the same way as everyone else by listening closely and granting autonomy and authority to the group's emergent decision process" (Sawyer, 2007). By listening to and implementing ideas from group members, managers can help ensure equal participation. Whereas, if managers dominate all decisions, some group members may choose not to contribute any feedback at all, leading to unequal participation and a loss of group flow. These ideas are supported by one study of teams, in which members in good teams were found to speak in roughly the same proportion (Woolley et al., 2010).

Familiarity with group members

Sawyer (2003) suggested that when group members are familiar with each other, they know the performance styles of "teammates" and "opponents". Working with

group members towards a common goal can be compared to a community of practice. In communities of practice, groups of people gather together often to share ideas and develop unique perspectives on various topics. In so doing, they develop established ways of interacting, and a common sense of identity (Wenger et al., 2002).

In addition, working with familiar people allows individuals to more easily identify subject-matter experts within the group. In his research on transactive memory, Wegner (1987) surveyed couples who were dating or married, and found that as people come to know each other, they also become "storage devices" for information. Instead of remembering details of a particular topic themselves, they would remember that their partner knew the information so they wouldn't have to remember themselves. In other words, people can have questions about how to do a particular task, but instead of relying on their own memories to do the task, they can rely on the memory of the expert they know who knows how to do that task.

Individual experts become responsible to remember or know something, which might possibly lead to a more efficient use of knowledge (Wegner, 1987). In terms of group flow, this would suggest that knowing and understanding the strengths of each of the individual team members could lead to more efficient use of individual knowledge within the group. However, there is some controversy in the literature concerning familiarity versus diversity among group members.

Sawyer (2007) acknowledging this debate also referenced a study on group mind, which suggests that "groups may be smartest in their early stages" (Weick and Roberts, 1993). Sawyer (2007) warned that familiarity can also cause creativity to wane after two or three years. If everyone functions identically and shares the same habits of communicating, nothing new and unexpected will ever emerge because group members don't need to pay close attention to what the others are doing, and they don't continually have to update their understanding of what is going on (Sawyer, 2007).

Groupthink research suggests that because group members are familiar with each other, they will sometimes seek "unanimity and consensus rather than careful analysis of options" (Miranda and Saunders, 1995). In addition, prior experience can sometimes cause group members to fixate on the incorrect path (Duncker, 1926). Sawyer (2007) clarified that familiarity with group members might be more helpful for problem-solving activities, when the problem is already defined, because

If a group needs to find and define a new problem, too much shared information becomes a problem. Problem-finding groups are more likely to be in group flow when there's more diversity; problem-solving groups are more effective when more tacit knowledge is shared (Sawyer, 2007). In the theory of networked flow (Gaggioli et al.,

2011), individuals find flow in groups by forming sub-groups of individuals with similarities and shared intentions, supporting the importance of familiarity with other group members.

Familiarity with guiding principles

Another important type of familiarity is with guiding principles, a “common language and a set of unspoken understandings, or tacit knowledge” (Sawyer, 2007). Sawyer (2003) suggested that group flow is a function of goals and the number of “pre-existing structures shared and used” by group members. The pre-existing structures of a group are the basic rules and actions associated with a certain type of task, including:

- (1) An overall flow or outline of the task that all participants know in advance.
- (2) A shared repertoire of processes and a knowledge of how they sequence in order, and
- (3) A shared repertoire of conventions and terms (Sawyer, 2003, 2007).

This principle echoes the results found in a study done by Chang et al. (2012), in which they analyzed 148 individuals completing two sets of creativity tasks with different levels of task autonomy. They observed that when individuals are given greater autonomy in a task, that autonomy more often increases creativity if the person has previous experience with that kind of task. Similarly, in a study of pilots with varying levels, it was shown that expertise was associated with collaborative gains (Nokes-Malach et al., 2012). These studies suggest that while individual autonomy may play an important role in group flow, it may depend on the individual’s familiarity with the task at hand.

Communication

As opposed to individual flow, group flow requires communication, particularly improvisational communication such as spontaneous conversations in the hallway or in social meetings after work or lunch. Group discussion does not always lead to new ideas or an elaborated understanding (Eteläpelto and Lahti, 2008), and group members may vary over time on how central they are to the project, in responsiveness, and in amount of communication (Gloor et al., 2014). The constant communication in group flow is a combination of complete concentration, close listening, blending egos and moving the project forward.

Close listening

In order for group flow to occur, individual members must

become one with the group while practicing deep listening and building off of other group members’ ideas. Close listening occurs when members of a group are fully engaged, and responding to what they hear from the rest of the group, as opposed to coming into an experience with preconceived ideas of how to reach the goal. Sawyer (2007) suggested that innovation is blocked when one or more of the participants already has a preconceived idea of how to reach the goal. He said improvisers frown on this practice, disapprovingly calling it “writing the script in your head” (p. 46-7). Another finding from the study by Woolley et al. (2010) was that good teams had high average social sensitivity, meaning that they were skilled at knowing how others felt based on nonverbal cues. In a study of creativity at work, the most creative staff members were less central in the full corporate network, but were more responsive and responded to, which could be signs of characteristics of compassion and respect (Gloor et al., 2016). Close listening may be encouraged in corporate and group settings, by taking precautions including setting aside other distractions, being mentally present at a meeting, and asking good questions (Sawyer, 2007). Sawyer said “people who listen are energizing, and people who energize others are proven to be higher performers”.

Complete concentration

As seen in Csikszentmihályi’s model of individual flow, Sawyer (2007) suggested that groups in flow exhibit an intense, deep concentration, in which they are fully engaged in the activity and yet remain constantly aware of what their teammates and opponents are doing, as in playing basketball. Sawyer (2007) described this multi-tasking as dividing your senses, where you’re trying to decide your next move while being very aware of others. Some said they felt they couldn’t relax their attention or they would fall behind.

In a study observing video footage of groups of middle-school math students, Armstrong (2005) observed noticeable patterns of physical behaviors that accompanied concentration within the flow state. Armstrong noted that as group members got into this engaged state, group flow could be observed by observing certain behaviors between group members, including physical and verbal cues, such as physical closeness, copying of gestures and phrases, and “a quick, fragmented way of speaking where members seemed to be finishing off each others’ sentences”.

Armstrong (2005) suggested that “the more that group members appear to be ‘of one mind,’ the more likely it is that group flow may be observed” (Armstrong, 2008). Thus, complete concentration in groups is not a solitary experience and can actually be observed. Thimot (2016) also observed that participants associated social flow

with high levels of concentration.

Blending egos

With group flow comes a balance of contribution while listening, requiring each participant to blend with other participants, in a way that each person is “managing the paradoxes of improvisation by balancing deep listening with creative contribution” (Sawyer, 2007).

Sawyer (2007) discussed how group flow seems to be a continual conversation because of how every contribution builds on the previous contribution. “In group flow, each person’s idea builds on those just contributed by his or her colleagues. The improvisation appears to be guided by invisible hands toward a peak, but small ideas build and an innovation emerges”. Sawyer described the way the group works together as having an element of “magic” to it. “Group flow is the magical moment when it all comes together, when the group is in sync and the performers seem to be thinking with one mind”. This group unity is a product, Sawyer (2007) suggests, of blending egos between group members, so that the group acts as a collective unit, rather than individual heroes or stars of success.

Many of the examples of this aspect of group flow are found in sports, when team members work together to find success rather than attributing the success to any one particular player. In a description of blending egos on the Seahawks football team, Kotler and Wheal (2015) described it as a sort of collective humility among team members. This is another unique attribute of group flow that does not have an obvious equivalent in individual flow, which merits some attention in other work-related contexts.

Collaborative emergence/moving it forward

Sawyer suggested that group flow does not end with a product or performance. “Group flow flourishes when people follow the first rule of improvisational acting: ‘yes, and . . .’ Listen closely to what’s being said; accept it fully; and then extend and build on it.” (Sawyer, 2007). According to Sawyer (2007), group flow means not just coming up with a solution, but trying it out, following-through with it, continuing to expand on the innovation after it is done.

Conclusions

We know from research that individual flow can be motivating (Sheehan and Katz, 2012), and can be associated with improved performance, creativity, and enjoyment (Jin, 2012). Research has also shown that

creativity may be amplified in group settings (Paulus et al., 2012).

However, there is very little research that describes what group flow might look like in collaborative settings. We believe that one possible reason for this may be that Sawyer (2007) original 10 conditions appear overwhelming and have some overlapping concepts. In addition, the connection between group and individual flow may not always be clear, or the connection to other existing literature on group work that can inform studies of group flow to move forward. To address these issues, in this paper we have attempted to synthesize Sawyer (2007) 10 conditions into three main categories. These three categories are also related to Csikszentmihályi (1990) original conception of individual flow (Table 1).

As represented in Table 1, vision pertains to those elements that are directly related to the goal, purpose, and/or task of the group. The elements of ownership and contribution are elements that have to do with individual initiative, preparation, and sense of control or comfortability in the group. Within communication we have grouped together the elements that describe the quality or quantity of communication with the task itself or within the group. While some elements may be categorized differently by other researchers, these categories are meant to provide a preliminary frame of reference for a simpler discussion of group flow, in reflection of the principles of individual flow on which they were founded.

Some aspects of vision and ownership are heavily researched, but there is still much we can learn from the theory of group flow regarding the collaborative nature of creativity, especially regarding more subjective themes of really listening to other group members’ ideas, building from the ideas of group members, having a shared sense of group efficacy (Salanova et al., 2014) and supporting other group members-themes where research is sparse. Understanding what these elements look like in educational or business group settings will provide a fundamental stepping stone to being able to isolate the variables that allow us to facilitate and encourage group flow as teachers, managers, or even group members.

The literature on group work is varied and extensive. Many of the elements of group flow discussed in this paper are consistent with findings from literature (Gaggioli et al., 2011; Salanova et al., 2014), and researchers have found that group flow can produce even positive effects more frequently than individual flow (Walker, 2010). However, there has been little research on these elements in the context of group flow as a recipe for group productivity and creativity, especially for higher education and business, where groups are becoming more critical for success. Additional research is needed to describe the application of the conditions of group flow, especially in teams. In addition, there is a need to better understand how teachers and group

Table 1. Comparison of conditions of flow versus group flow by theme

Theme	Flow (Csikszentmihályi, 1990)	Group flow (Sawyer, 2007)
Vision	Clear goals	Specific goal in mind
	-	Potential for failure
Ownership and Contribution	Sense of control	Being in control of actions and environment
	Concern for self disappears	Equal participation
	Task is comparable with skill level	Familiarity (with foundational principles)
	-	Familiarity (with others in the group)
Communication	Immediate feedback	Communication
	Concentration	Complete concentration
	Sense of time is altered	
	-	Close listening
	-	Blending egos
	-	Moving it forward

Note. Italicized phrases indicate new ideas introduced with Sawyer's theory of group flow.

leaders can effectively enhance group flow within their groups for greater enjoyment, creativity and success.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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Full Length Research Paper

Construction of academic success and failure in school memories

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The idea of 'Apprenticeship of Observation', proposing that pre-service teachers' early academic experiences might have effects on their professional development, has been a concern in teacher education in the last forty years. Early success or failure experiences of pre-service teachers in school may have a role in their professional identity development. This study aimed to understand the role of academic performance recollections of pre-service teachers on their professional identity construction from a discursive point of view. Accordingly, the constructions of pre-service teachers in relation to success or failure in their school memories were discursively analyzed. Eighty-one school memories were collected from 87 students who were enrolled in two teacher preparation programs. After the preliminary screening of data, 48 memories were classified as success or failure related in past academic lives of pre-service teachers. The remaining 33 memories were eliminated due to not matching the criterion of academic performance relatedness. Informed by (critical) discursive psychology, the memories of success or failure in school were discursively analyzed. Success and failure were constructed together as the two sides of a performance coin. The academic and professional understandings of pre-service teachers were not independent of their academic history. In their recollections, success or failure was constructed in relation to others and had a role on pre-service teacher's future academic and career preferences.

Key words: Success, failure, school memories, discourse analysis, pre-service teachers.

INTRODUCTION

In the beginning of their teacher profession, pre-service teachers already have a perception related to learning, teaching and academic content from the years they spent as students. 'Apprenticeship of Observation' is a notion that was proposed by Lortie (1975) in his seminal work on teacher socialization. That is prior experiences of teachers in schools as students had an influence on their future instructional practices. These early experiences

and memories serve as a 'frame of reference' for the pre-service teachers and when they begin to work, they construct their professional identities in an integrative manner between their previous reference frame and actual teaching experiences (Flores and Day, 2006).

However, according to Lortie (1975), 'apprentice of observation' may not be facilitative for further formal education on teaching. Instead, it may have inhibitory

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effects such as causing pre-service teachers to become conservative in professional education, especially learning and practicing innovative teaching methods. Therefore, limiting the inhibitory role of Apprenticeship of Observation has become a concern in teacher education (Martin and Russel, 2009; Mewborn and Stinson, 2007). According to Grossman (1991), the effect of autobiographical school memories, which may limit the perspective of pre-service students to only an observed form of classroom reality, might be lessened through ways such as reflective understanding, “over-correction” and modeling in the teacher education programs. Accordingly, Feiman-Nemser (2001) proposed that in pre-service teacher education, pre-service teachers should be supported to examine their teaching beliefs in light of good teaching examples.

In opposition to Lortie’s understanding, some scholars proposed that Apprenticeship of Observation might be used as a means to support learning in profession (Boyd et al., 2013; Knapp, 2012). These scholars utilized the previous background of pre-service teachers as means to learn in teacher education programs and emphasized the role of academic autobiographies. Autobiographical memory was defined as people’s capacity to reminisce about their lives (Baddeley, 1992). Autobiographical memories play a role in identity construction (Fivush and Buckner, 2003; McAdams, 2003). By telling stories of their own, people regulate past experiences and prospect for future and construct and negotiate identities developmentally and contextually (Fivush and Buckner, 2003; Søreide, 2006).

Autobiographical memory research focuses on what functions autobiographical narratives serve. Theoretically, these functions were classified as directive, social and self functions (Bluck, 2003; Bluck et al., 2005). Accordingly, the retrieval of autobiographical memories guides future decisions and problem-solving (directive function), promote social interactions (social function) and help development and sustaining of a self-concept (self-function). Therefore, autobiographical knowledge shared in memories contains self-related past, present and future constructions in terms of goals, plans, decisions, problem-solving strategies etc (Bluck, 2003). Since the autobiographical memories reflect personal beliefs, goals, motives, and identity constructions (Conway and Jobson, 2012; Fivush et al., 2011; McAdams, 2003), they may influence future decisions and pre-service life stories of people (Biondillo, and Pillemer, 2015; Kuwabara and Pillemer, 2010; Pezdek and Salim, 2011). So, although, Lortie (1975) was cautious about the inhibitory role of apprenticeship of observation on the education of pre-service teachers, on the ground of directive and self-functions that are served by autobiographical memories, critical autobiographical reflections may help them to negotiate professional teacher identities. For instance, reflecting upon autobiographical experiences in a public blogging, future teachers began to critically think about

the position of a teacher, pedagogical practice, and student needs (Boyd et al., 2013).

In this study, the main focus was pre-service teachers’ constructions related to academic performance in their school memories. In these autobiographical school memories, academic success or failure was investigated from a social constructionist perspective. Social constructionist thought in relation to education assumes that the practices of education were justified by epistemological beliefs of people and those beliefs belonged not to individual minds but to communal relationships (Gergen and Wortham, 2001). Similarly, a basic tenet of social constructivist thought in learning is that our knowledge has been constructed upon our previous beliefs and experiences and learning has been mediated by social interactions in cultural context (Vygotsky, 1998). That is, learning is not an isolated, personal process; instead in school memories, it is co-constructed in differing social and historical contexts (Tanggaard and Nielsen, 2013). So, being crucial academic concerns, success or failure is constructed in socio-cultural reality through social relations in school. Success and failure are common academic issues revealed in school memory research (Ivcevic et al., 2010; Rothenberg, 1991; Walls et al., 2001). However, the academic performance has not been studied through a discursive lens. In this study, the main objective was to discursively analyze the success or failure constructions of pre-service teachers in easily recalled school memories.

Academic performance (success or failure experiences) is the main dimension that has a role in identity development of learners in the educational context. Identity construction of pre-service teachers was affected by self, social and directive functions of autobiographical memories (McAdams, 2003). Discursive analysis of memory content reveals how these functions regulate the discursive practices in constructing a professional identity and may provide a basis for innovative teacher education ideas. In school memories, people usually report social and academic themes together (Pillemer et al., 2007; Walls et al., 2001), but the distinctive role of memories on academic performance needs elaborative investigation (Ivcevic et al., 2010).

This study aimed to understand the role of academic performance recollections of pre-service teachers on their professional identity construction from a discursive point of view. In discourse analysis the main concern is on how discursive objects are constructed, while the discourse itself is being constructed (Burr, 2015). In this reality construction, there are discursive resources available for speakers. Interpretive repertoires (Potter and Wetherell, 1987) and subject positions (Davies and Harré, 1991) are discursive means for meaning and identity construction in context.

Therefore the following were the main focuses in discourse analysis of memories on academic

performance (Edley, 2001):

1. How was “success or failure” constructed discursively?
2. What were the interpretive repertoires used in constructing academic performance?
3. What were the subject positions offered to the actors in the memories?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this research, a qualitative research method, discourse analysis was used. Discourse analysis is a common method to text or talk in analyzing constructed meanings. Parker (1992) defined discourse as “a system of statements, which constructs an object”. In another definition, “discourse refers to a set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories, statements and so on that in some way together produce a particular version of events” (Burr, 2015).

In the study, a discursive psychological perspective to discourse analysis was applied. In discursive psychology, there are three assumptions about discourse. These are (a) discourse is primary; (b) discourse is constructed; and (c) discourse is an action medium (Potter and Edwards, 2001). First, discourse assumed that language itself is not the means to report reality; it is the prime reality in context. Second, text and talk -discourse itself- are also constructed. Third, discourse is performative, so by talk and text people construct accounts of the world.

Data sources, collection tools and procedures

The participants of the study were senior year undergraduate students ($N=87$); attending German Language Teaching Program ($n=40$) and Science Education Program ($n=47$) at Istanbul University and enrolled in Classroom Management course. There were 39 men and 48 women, with a mean age of 21.72 ($SD=2.43$) who participated voluntarily and due to the participation, earned a small amount of extra credit as a bonus added to their final exam results.

The analytical material was collected in 2014 academic year at Istanbul University. Participants were asked to provide written descriptions of at least one easily recalled school memory. In the prompt the participants were reminded they were pre-service teachers and had been spending long years as students in schools. Thereafter, they were asked to remember the most vivid memory from the previous school years and write it down in detail. Each participant was given a blank paper to write down the memory he/she wanted to share. Data was collected as an in-class assignment and pre-service teachers were allowed 30 min to reply. They also asked for age and gender. Participants were asked to describe their memories in detail as much as possible.

The total number of memories they reported was 81. Some of the volunteers reported ideas related to their school lives instead of exact autobiographical memories ($n=13$). Some also described more than one school-related memory ($n=7$).

Data analysis

In consistence with the suggestions of (critical) discursive psychology (Edley, 2001; Potter and Wetherell, 1987), a discourse analysis was conducted on autobiographical memories of pre-service teachers related to success or failure in school. The data was read and re-read in order to reveal not just the explicit but also the implicit ways (Van Dijk, 1993) that the tellers had used while constructing success or failure in school. For instance, in some cases tellers explicitly reported performance-related content (e.g. “in the exam”, “teacher asks”) or meaning of academic success or

failure was constructed free of content specific words (e.g. “surprise of teacher”).

Since the focal point of the study was to discursively analyze the success and failure constructed by pre-service teachers, the data corpus was initially subjected to thematic screening. Initially, the data reviewed inductively for content related to successes or failures in school. Two independent coders (including the writer) coded the content on academic performance. Forty-eight memories were explicitly (exact word matches on performance, such as grade, exam, question etc.) or implicitly (global meaning was on performance) related to success or failure in the past academic lives of the volunteers. In qualitative analyses trustworthiness is tested by asking for the expert opinion for the meaningfulness of the reports (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011). For establishing the trustworthiness of the preliminary classification of the data, the opinions of two other researchers, working in the Department of Educational Sciences of Istanbul University were asked for the correspondence of the codes and the inconsistencies were discussed in a meeting including two reviewers and two coders. The inter-coder reliability was 87%.

In this study, the quality of the work was compared to the criteria set for discursive psychology (Madill, Jordan, and Shirley, 2000). Internal coherence and openness to reader evaluation were taken in consideration. Internal coherence refers to the degree the analysis presented harmoniously and free of contradictions. Additionally, the validity of discursive work mainly relies on being transparent to reader evaluation and how the analysis makes sense for the reader (Potter and Wetherell, 1987). In order to meet the criteria, the analysis was open to peer review. Besides, the findings reported in detail, interconnected and open to alternative readings of readers. Constructionist studies, instead of prediction, aims to explain mainly relying on language used (Madill et al., 2000). The study adopting a social constructionist perspective, epistemologically believed multiple readings and interpretations of the data. Since the data was collected in Turkish, after the analyses, the extracts below were translated verbatim.

RESULTS

The memories, which were initially classified as being related to academic performance, were used as the data set. In the analyses, it was observed that success and failure were recalled together as the two sides of a performance coin. As the discourse was constructed, the tellers defined and constructed success and failure simultaneously. Specifically, in the analyses, two distinctive interpretive repertoires were revealed in the memories, which offered differing subject positions for the actors.

Success or failure based on social referencing

The first interpretive repertoire defined the meaning of success or failure by social referencing. Specifically, in autobiographical memories of pre-service teachers, others' especially the teachers' acts as noticing or overlooking to academic initiatives of students used to construct success and failure as discursive objects.

Extract 1

“In high school, I never forget that my teacher called me

to her side and in front of the class announced that when she had read my exam paper she had been very pleased with the answers. She said she had nearly burst into tears because of her happiness. I never forget her praise in front of the whole class” (Female, 25).

In this extract, constructing success in relation to teacher’s praise and the rest of the class as the audience, allowed the speaker to evaluate herself as a high achiever. She also justified her position as defining this memory unforgettable. In respect to the traditional roles of teachers (e.g. questioning, assessing and evaluating etc., Mehan, 1982), in this memory the teacher was positioned as the evaluator and teacher’s positive evaluation was the criterion for success.

In telling a story of success in school, teachers were the most cited party in interaction. Similarly, in another account from primary school, success was constructed in relation to teacher’s reactions to an extraordinary performance.

Extract 2

“In primary school ... and one day in the music class I went near the piano and played a piece from Mozart, although I had very little knowledge of the notes. The teacher was surprised. She gave me a harmonica as a gift. I started to compose my own songs using that harmonica...” (Male, 24)

In this account, the surprise of teacher and limited knowledge of himself on the notes, stressed the extraordinary nature of his success. Accordingly, success was negotiated as a significant event and teacher noticed that significant event. In both accounts, success was constructed in relation to teachers’ reactions as noticing and reinforcing those performances by rewards.

Similarly, in the following account (Extract 3), success or failure was something generated depending on the acts of teachers. It is a special example, since the same student compared her two different teachers witnessed or overlooked her academic performances.

Extract 3

“In primary school, I used to think that I was unsuccessful since my teacher was just focusing on my lower performance in quantitative subjects and overlooked my higher performance in reading and writing. However, in secondary school, my Turkish teacher noticed my performance and I never forget that she gave me a pen as a reward. I still keep the pen” (Female, 22)

In the third extract, the first teacher was positioned as overlooking, but the second teacher positioned as the

witness of the higher performance of the student. By doing so, the speaker legitimized her position as a successful student from the early years of education. Yet, she had been thinking that she was unsuccessful due to the limited feedback from the first teacher. Parallel to previous accounts, in this extract the pen as a reward also functioned as the signifier of teacher’s positive evaluation and contributed to the unforgettable nature of the success.

In the analyses of memories, it was also revealed that failure was not independent of success and the meaning of failure was constructed in a similar way to that of success. Teachers were the mostly cited witnesses of lower performances since they not only instruct the students but also evaluate the performance of them upon a particular criterion in their formal relationship pattern (Bernstein, 2004). Therefore, whether lower performance was judged as failure or not in the classroom was usually dependent on teachers’ evaluations on the situation.

Extract 4

“It was the second year of primary school. Although I had been successful in the first year, I was not successful at Math in the second year. One day, our teacher wrote a Math question on the blackboard and called my name to solve the problem. I could not answer the question. He kept me waiting near the blackboard till the end of the lesson and made the other students solve the problem. I was feeling guilty since I could not solve the problem and at the same time I was embarrassed in front of my friends” (Female, 22).

Just like the case of success, in the case of failure, being noticed by the others was the focal issue. In the account, the failure was constructed in relation to reaction of teacher and perceived existence of others as the audience. Similar to construction of success, teachers’ positioning as evaluator justified speaker’s definition of the situation as a failure. According to this definition, the speaker reported negative effect (guilt and embarrassment) as a legitimate associate of failure. So, failure was constructed as depending mainly on the negative feedback from the teacher and negative feelings experienced due to this feedback.

Since failure construction is a social issue, the meaning of failure changed according to the reaction of evaluators. In the following extract, the reaction of the teacher was different from the previous ones and failure was negotiated as a transient state between the teacher and student.

Extract 5

“I never forget how my teacher cared for me in the first

grade. It was the reason that my school life became one of happiness. I started school at the age of 7. I knew Math, addition and subtraction but I could not say the letter R. I used to hesitate to talk to my friends. For that reason, in the class hours I could not participate; but during every break my teacher tried to teach me by repeating 'R' sound. Whenever he pronounced 'R', I could only pronounce 'Y' instead of 'R' and he used to smile upon my mistake. In the end I learned but my participation in the lesson did not change" (Female, 23).

In Extract 5, in a positively defined teacher-student relationship school was associated with positive feelings. The speaker described herself as a knowledgeable student who had only one problem, which prevented her from social contacts. By doing so, she construct failure as a minor problem that could be revealed by the help of the teacher and justified teacher's act as helping a student who already had a good academic background. Teacher's reaction to student's failure in pronouncing 'R' was legitimized as persistence in teaching and providing necessary feedback. Therefore in the end, even though it was possibly resolved through development, the student explained the recovery because of learning. In this case, failure was constructed as something transient and possible to be overcome developmentally.

To sum up, in the first interpretive repertoire, academic success or failure was constructed as socially relevant issues. That is the meaning of success or failure was based on social reference and not independent of the evaluations and feedback from the school social group, primarily of teachers.

Success or failure based on future referencing

The second interpretive repertoire, which was also related to the social referencing repertoire, was about the effects of success or failure in the long run. That is, success or failure was discursively constructed as important factors on future academic lives of students. Similar to the social referencing repertoire, in this repertoire, teachers positioned as witnesses of success. After that, the academic lives of the students became more successful.

Extract 6

"In the 7th grade, my beloved Math teacher called me to the blackboard, and made me solve a problem. Then she said 'You are the first student I have ever given 100 points to in the oral exam'. This event made me so happy and my positive attitude toward Math continued. Besides, I was planning to be a Math teacher, but it did not happen" (Female, 25, currently Science Education Student).

In Extract 6, success was constructed as something that

had effects on the future. Even in the end she could not manage the most desired career choice, her successful experience in Math influenced her future career preferences and she succeeded in a related career in the university entrance exam. In the autobiographical memory reported, although the student was reported as being an achiever, the success was again constructed in relation to reaction of the teacher. The effect of that event on the academic life of the student was prolonged and the student defined her career choice on teaching profession in relation to this anecdote from the secondary years. Similar to the previous accounts, the academic success was again constructed on the "the first time discourse". The act of the student was beyond expectation and influential that the teacher for the first time decided to give 100 points. This first time and uniqueness discourse also discursively used to legitimize the effect of this recollection on the future academic career.

In another account, success had effects for the future in a positive way:

Extract 7

"Until the second year of primary school I was not a brilliant student. In the second year our teacher asked a difficult question. Since I was a timid student I did not raise my hand. Fortunately, my teacher called me to solve the problem and I did it successfully. As a result, the whole class applauded and the teacher praised me. Since then, because of this care, I think I have been more active and successful as a student" (Male, 30).

The account beginning with the word 'until' announced a significant event for the rest of academic life. In reporter's words, the student emphasized his timidity and 'non-brilliant past' as inhibitory factors for success. While he cited the reasons for his expected failure, he positioned his teacher as encouraging him to try for a possible success. And here again, success was constructed based on positive feedback of teacher and the rest of the audience.

Similarly, academic failures were constructed as having prolonged effects for the future. McAdams et al. (2001) categorized narratives of students on success or failure in two domains: redemption and contamination stories. In stories of redemption, a negative start (e.g. lower performance) may generate positive results and this experience becomes a motivating and inspiring self-story. So these stories, supports self-esteem and make people optimistic for the future. In the interpretive repertoire of future reference, redemption stories were observed (Extract 8).

Extract 8

"At the second year of primary school, I was a mute,

passive and lazy student. One day the teacher asked me a question but I could not answer it. Then she smashed into my face. Sure, I was very offended. After school my mother saw me and asked for the reason why I was very unhappy. When she learned the reason and talked to my teacher, though I was not sure what she told the teacher about me; the manner of my teacher changed significantly and she became more attentive to me. I appreciated this positive manner and started to study harder. After a short while, I was one of the most successful students in my class. Since then I have become successful through my academic life" (Male, 23).

In the account above, the student defined his situation from a pessimistic perspective and constructed a context where very less was expected from him. However, the negative reaction of the teacher had a significant influence on his academic story. Here, failure was signified as a point for change, and the teller legitimized his position in relation to his feeling of being offended. Yet, by the help of his mother and cooperation of his teacher he could turn this negative start to a satisfying future.

Through the analysis, in construction of failure, contamination stories were also revealed. In stories of contamination, events, which were initially positive, turned in negative consequences. The tellers of contamination stories are pessimistic, unmotivated for future commitments (McAdams et al., 2001). The following extract can be given as an example of contamination stories in the data corpus.

Extract 9

"In the second year of high school we had our first Math exam. Until this exam I was very successful on school subjects including Math. On that exam I had a very low score. I remember it was 18 over 100. I never forget that day and I will not forget. I began to cry and worse than that my teacher came by my side and said that he could not do anything as I was the one who failed and got that low score. In the end of the term, I totally failed in Math. Ever since that year, I could hardly pass the Math exams and my performance got worse. Unfortunately I am very bad at Math and actually I hate learning Math. For that reason I chose a major on language teaching." (Female, 24)

In this narrative, initially the student had higher academic performance on school subjects. But, she had a very low score that was an unexpected incident for her. In relation to the first interpretive repertoire revealed in the study, the social referencing repertoire, the reaction of the teacher to her low score had a critical role in her perception for the failure everlasting. That is, the student legitimized her future pessimism for Math as a result of both the low score itself and the inappropriate reaction of

the teacher. She constructed her low performance as a failure that had long lasting negative results. In other words, she defined a contamination story, which had global negative effects on future of her academic life. By constructing failure as a negative start for a negative academic legacy, the student defined herself cursed to be unsuccessful in Math. Therefore, she reported that because of her low expectation of success in Math she made a career choice free of Math.

DISCUSSION

Since the participants of the study were pre-service teachers, their early experiences and how they recalled those experiences became significant on constructing a professional teacher identity (Miller and Shifflet, 2016; Pritzker, 2012). In the autobiographical recollections of pre-service teachers, academic success and failure were constructed through social referencing and future referencing. Previous research reported that when school-related memories were asked, people recalled social issues more than the academic issues (Walls et al., 2001). Corresponding to the social constructionist thought, discursive analysis of school memories revealed that academic performance gained meaning in the social context of school. Especially, in the social interaction, the feedbacks of teachers directed the perceptions of students. Besides, success or failure was interpreted as factors that impacted the future academic lives of students.

The results demonstrated that teachers' feedback was influential on the self-evaluations of students on academic performance. The complementary characteristic of relationship between teachers and students in school determined alternative subject positions and identities to negotiate for both sides (Søreide, 2006). Accordingly, in the memories, the meaning of success or failure was built discursively on the quality of the relationship between teachers and students and the type of feedback received by the students. In social and future referencing repertoires, pre-service teachers emphasized reinforcing, punishing or helping roles of teachers on the academic performance of students. In the recollections, pre-service teachers reported that teachers witnessed or overlooked their attempts. In the literature, effective classroom teachers fostered learning by monitoring the progress of their students closely and provided them with necessary feedback (Berliner, 2004). In the case of success, Cüceloğlu and Erdoğan (2013) suggested that teachers might positively use their witnessing power over the academic achievements of students. Since learning (Vygotsky, 1998) and achievement occur in social interaction, teachers may use their social influence by focusing on learning and success initiatives for the academic development of their students.

In the current data corpus, success or failure was not

constructed as something in a vacuum; it gained meaning in real time social interactions. The feedback from teachers had a significant role in improving student achievement (van den Bergh et al., 2013). In the discourse of the memories, in some cases, the results of academic tasks (e.g. a high grade) were treated as less significant until the teacher noticed and provided feedback over the results. Teachers with higher expectations for their students provided more feedback and therefore clarified the cooperation between teacher and students in a caring social environment (Rubie-Davies, 2007). In terms of social referencing repertoire, besides the influence of teachers, the role of audience in interpreting success or failure was monitored in the findings. Especially, the positive or negative feelings experienced before the classroom community were highly cited as facilitative or inhibitory effects for the future attempts of students. Similarly, a relational approach emphasizing group work skills such as effective communication and mutual respect, classroom arrangements and instructional designs for group work, and teacher involvement through scaffolding was effective in fostering student learning and achievement (Baines et al., 2009).

In the memories, by use of the second interpretive repertoire, academic success or failure was constructed depending on their effects on future academic lives of students. That is, success or failures were longitudinal concerns in academic identity construction. In easily recalled memories from school years, success or failure experiences were the anchors in the academic lives of students (Rothenberg, 1994). Success or failure experiences had a role in the academic identity development of the participants.

Pre-service teachers, who attend formal education on teaching, are also the students of years. So they are knowledgeable both on being teacher and student. As an initial work in the literature, Lortie (1975), reminding us that previous experience of being a student might have inhibitory effects on being an effective teacher, was cautious about the phenomenon known as apprenticeship of observation. Yet, the autobiographical narratives of people had a significant effect on their past, present and future identity constructions (Fivush and Buckner, 2003). The directive function of autobiographical memories helped pre-service teachers generate problem-solving strategies, which were inspired by early experiences in school and self-function of autobiographical recalling served for a well-developed academic and professional self-concept (Bluck, 2003; Pillemer, 2003). Future referencing interpretive repertoire provided evidence on both directive and self functions of autobiographical memory reports. That is, in affecting the future, pre-service teachers constructed success or failure by telling redemption or contamination stories (McAdams et al., 2001), which resulted in productive or inhibited academic identities in the future, respectively.

In teacher education, autobiographical memories can

be used as effective tools. The self-reflective use of early school recollections in the formal training of pre-service teachers suggested and supported previously (e.g. Blake, 1995; Boyd et al. 2013; Grossman, 1991; Knapp, 2012). The findings of the study provided evidence, specifically on academic performance related beliefs and constructions. Since, emotions experienced in recollections were performative and related to the professional identity of teachers (Zembylas, 2005), utilizing vivid autobiographical memories in teacher education (Pillemer, 2003), especially emotionally bounded memories on academic performance may direct intentions and academic decisions of pre-service teachers (Kuwabara and Pillemer, 2010). In teacher education, reflective thinking over memories of academic success and failure, and analyzing subject positions offered in discursive practices to teachers and students in schools, may support pre-service teachers for constructing adaptive academic and professional identities.

Lortie (1975) argued that students, who were successful in school and had positive sentiments for teaching, were more likely to choose to teach as a profession. Cole (1985) commenting on Lortie's argument proposed that the reasons for students to chose teaching profession might not rely upon only conservatism of positive sentiments. Some pre-service teachers may enter the profession because of an idea to reform particular aspects of schooling. Analysis of autobiographical memories of pre-service teachers supported preliminary evidence for both reasons of entry to the profession. A future study may examine the connections between self and directive functions of autobiographical memories and reasons of entry to the teaching profession. Specifically, the role of academic performance can be the main focus.

In the literature, higher academic performance was related to positive self-regard in school memories, yet negative self-regard was reported in memories with interpersonal content (Pillemer et al., 2007). In the discursive analysis of memories, both positive and negative themes (success or failure experiences) had interpersonal referencing.

Especially, the role of teachers in regulating academic discourse was overtly stated from accounts of pre-service teachers. Further investigation of affiliation concerns in academic performance is needed. Besides, discursive psychology analysis used in the study mainly focused on discursive resources and practices in interpersonal level. Future studies may also analyze macro discourses that regulate the cultural understanding (Ganapathy-Coleman, 2014) of academic experiences in school memories of pre-service teachers.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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Full Length Research Paper

Unpacking activities-based learning in kindergarten classrooms: Insights from teachers' perspectives

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Even though previous research points to the significance of kindergarten teachers' practices which consider the nature of children and how they learn, there is still limited research regarding how learning activities impact children's development. To address this gap in literature, a qualitative multi-case study into teachers' perceptions of classrooms practices of four kindergarten teachers' in two Ghanaian schools, Tata and Kariba, were carried out over a six-months period. One research question guided the study, namely, 'what kinds of learning activities do teachers engage kindergarten children. The sources of data comprised transcripts of audiotaped semi-structured individual interviews, pair-based interviews and field notes of classroom observations. Both within the case and across case interpretive analyses were constructed. The study revealed that teachers in both rural and urban settings described child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities they believed impacted children's development in diverse ways.

Key words: Learning activities, cognitive constructivist theory, development, children, Piaget, spirituality.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching in early childhood settings is becoming increasingly characterised by teachers' knowledge about children and how they learn. In this vein, there is the need for a growing number of early childhood educators to be abreast with the nature of children and how teachers can use developmentally teaching approaches to enhance effective teaching and learning in classrooms to harness and develop children's potentials. Moreover, the teachers are expected to have insights into the needs, interests and potentials of individual children before they can effectively plan the curriculum

(Bredenkamp, 2014) by selecting learning activities to deal with the developmental needs of individual children.

Although, extensive academic research has explored preschool and kindergarten teachers' beliefs and practices regarding developmentally appropriate practices (DAP) (Charlesworth et al., 1993; Hyson et al., 1990; Hedge and Cassidy, 2009; Parker and Neuhart-Prichett, 2009; Abu-Jaber et al., 2010; Sekellariou and Rentzou, 2011; Riojas-Cotex et al., 2013), much less research has investigated learning activities and how they support children's development in kindergarten

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classrooms in diverse ways such as child-initiated activities as well as teacher-initiated activities within the classroom setting (McMclam et al., 2008; Astriayulita, 2017; Kim, 2017; Tan and Roo, 2017). The continuing use of learning activities conveys the need for research that extends beyond teachers' beliefs and their practices-oriented context into activity-oriented context. The need is illustrated in two main ways; for instance, almost all learning in kindergarten classrooms are supported by various kinds of learning activities yet, there is limited evidence regarding how they support children's development in variety of ways. Early childhood teachers use variety of learning activities to enhance and promote children development in diverse ways.

It is increasingly evident that learning activities will continue to be a critical component of effective teaching and learning process in kindergarten classrooms. Bonwell and Eison (1991) argue that 'instructional activities promote active learning because they involve students in doing things and thinking about what they are doing' (p.5) which in turn, support children's cognitive development in diverse ways.

To further our understanding, various kinds of learning activities and their perceived impact on children's development were explored in kindergarten settings. The research question driving the study is as follows: With what kind of learning activities do teachers engage kindergarten children?

The rest of the article is structured as follows: First, the literature on teachers' instructional practices in early childhood classroom settings is reviewed. This is followed by the description of the research methods and procedures. The results of the study are then discussed. Finally, implications and directions for future research are offered.

Instructional practices of early childhood teachers

Teachers' practices in early childhood settings can be classified into two; child-initiated exploration and discovery on one side and activities-initiated by the teacher at the extreme end of the trajectory (Mangione and Mamates, 1993). These practices point to differences in perception regarding how young children learn. Child-initiated learning is linked to cognitive development theory (Piaget, 1952). This standpoint sees the child as an active learner who relies on direct-physical and social experiences as well as culturally transmitted knowledge to find meaning of the world around them (Bredenkamp, 2014). However, teacher-directed learning is closely linked to the behaviourist theory which mandates schools to organise learning into smaller sequential tasks and provide external reinforcement to mould children's behaviour. Developmentally, appropriate practices in early childhood settings appear to draw from three different theoretical perspectives which comprise constructivism, behaviourism, and socio-cultural theory.

From a theoretical standpoint, it serves a useful purpose to classify teachers' instructional practices into teacher-directed or child-centred. But in practical terms, individual teachers tend to occupy different spectrum within the context of teaching practice (Coople and Bredenkamp, 2009; Bredenkamp, 2014).

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The study consisted of 4 participants (Kate and Sophia from Tata School and Ramatu and Akotia from Kariba School) purposively sampled from two kindergarten classrooms sited in different socio-economic contexts within the Cape Coast Metropolis, Ghana. Kate has 25 years teaching experience whereas Sophia has 19 years teaching experience. Each of them has a degree in early childhood education. On the other hand, Ramatu has 9 years teaching experience whereas Akotia has 7 years teaching experience. Each of them has a Diploma in early childhood education. A multi-case qualitative study approach was used in this study because to establish the differences regarding teachers' practices in Tata and Kariba Schools sited in different socio-economic settings.

Instruments

Two main instruments were used for this study. These included semi-structured interviews and observations. The interviews made it possible for the researcher to gain insights into participants' perspectives about their practices in kindergarten classrooms. The participants were interviewed in pairs once and individually twice. Interviewing teachers in pairs provided a platform for them to share their rich experiences with each other and the researcher as well. The interview enabled the researcher to establish the consistencies of the responses of the participants across the interview sessions. It allowed for the interviewees to talk at length and elaborate because they were given the opportunity to react to questions multiple times. The interviews were conducted at a time when children were on break. In all, each of the visits to the classrooms lasted one hour. At the end of each interview session, the data was transcribed and sent back to each of the participants to cross-check whether it reflected their views. In short, member-checking was used to cross-check the validity of the instruments. In the second phase, observation took place in all the two kindergarten classrooms. The observations provided an opportunity for the researcher to determine how teachers' level of knowledge about their practices unfolded in real-life classroom context. During my observations, on occasion, and in an unobtrusive manner as possible, the researcher conversed with the kindergarten teachers while the children were engaged in small group or individual activities to seek clarifications from them reasons for engaging children in various kinds of activities. After, the end of every lesson, the researcher engaged them in a discussion for about ten minutes to seek further clarifications on certain issues. This process of interacting with the teachers provided each one of them an opportunity to clarify an issue that was perplexing to me arising while observing the teachers' instructional practices in the classrooms. The teachers were seen moving from one group to another giving guidance to the children on how to accomplish a task whenever any of them encountered a challenge. This method provided an opportunity for the researcher to observe and interact with the teachers two or three times to explore teachers' perspectives about their practices in the classrooms. Field notes rather than recording reduced such intrusions. Such observations allowed the enactment of issues beyond self-reporting because how teachers describe their actions

and how their actions unfold in real-life teaching and learning context differ. The observations of the teachers were done after each of the teachers had been interviewed. Apart from been a technique for generating primary data, observations serve as a check on the other data collection method. This method was used to check individual biases that were likely to be exhibited in the in-depth interviews. Also, the gathering of data using two research instruments allowed for triangulation of data.

Procedure

The instruments were administered to the participants in the two case schools from May 2015 to November 2015. The data analyses were on case by case basis to identify key themes within each of the cases to answer the research questions. The teachers' thoughts were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. The teachers' thoughts were further organised into categories. The themes that emerged from the analyses were further validated by the observational data. In short, the themes were determined through open and axial coding (Boeijie, 2010). From the analyses, it can be concluded that a theme is a pattern across data sets that is important to the description of a phenomenon which is linked to a research question.

RESULTS

In particular, the study's results are reported as follows: the case of two teachers at the southern school, Tata; the case of two teachers at the northern school, Kariba; and finally, a cross-case analysis.

Case study analyses of the teachers at the southern school (Tata)

Learning activities and children's development

With respect to the second research question, the study's findings revealed that in Tata School's kindergarten classroom children are engaged in a variety of learning activities. In particular, the kind of learning activities that these kindergarten teachers used to promote their children's development included those that provided an opportunity for the children to understand their environment and the existence of God; to become creative, to understand content, and to develop holistically. In addition, three broader themes emerged in relation to the kinds of learning activities which pointed to the basis (that is, children's interests, the nature of children and how they learn, and the differences in children's abilities) upon which they planned learning activities and how they used guided participation to aid their children effectively engage in learning activities.

Both Kate and Sophia were of the view that classroom activities that were relevant to children's development were the ones that promoted children's understanding of their world. However, the teachers saw hands-on activities and observations as means of helping their children to understand their world in different ways.

Kate: "I engage them in activities that help them to understand their environment. For instance, if I want the children to understand the existence of air, I engage them in activities such as running around with a piece of cloth tied around their waist with both hands holding the edges of the cloth. I also instruct them to fill bottles with water for bubbles to pop up. I even go further to ask the children about the one who created the air because we believe in the existence of God as Ghanaians".

Sophia: "To enable children to understand their environment and how they can relate to it, we usually tour the school environment. When we come back to class, I draw a chart and record whatever each of the children observed during our tour of the school environment. Before I do the recording, I ask them questions about what they saw in the environment. While others will mention the names of different plants, others will even pick dead insects".

For Kate and Sophia, the objects that children see around them in their immediate context might appear unfamiliar with them because of their limited experiences. But through classrooms activities, which explore the children's immediate environment and the integration of their learning experiences (e.g. link between objects and teachers' explanations of how they came into being) children come to understand their world.

However, as both Kate and Sophia continued to discuss such activities, they further explained the importance attributed to linking God's existence with the children's everyday experiences:

Kate: "And this adds a spiritual dimension to it because they will come to understand that it is not their daddy who did it so they must give credit to God because it is God who does everything. To illustrate this, I ask them to hold their noses tightly for a moment, but within seconds, you see them fidgeting because they cannot breathe. After the activity, I then tell them that the air around us is what we breathe in, and God, created the air, so there is the need for them to make God an important part of their lives."

Sophia: "I even go further to find out from them about the one who created the things that they observed."

Also, both Kate and Sophia perceived physical hands-on experiences as effective ways of harnessing the creative potentials of children. Kate specifically named grafting (that is, creating graphite rubbings of the object) as helping children become creative. She explained:

Kate: "The creative aspect of the lesson helps the children to manipulate things using their hands. For instance, we have a topic such as 'grafting' where we use varied materials around us such as leaves to create

patterns on pieces of paper. The activities leading to the creation of a grafted product help the children to explore things with their hands. And this is what creativity does. It helps a child to become creative in what he does."

In a similar vein, Sophia valued activities which provided children with the opportunity to act on objects, such as arranging natural objects in an orderly manner. She explained:

Sophia: "I engage children in some hands-on activities to enable children to create patterns using various kinds of leaves. I always inform them what they are expected to do and how to go about it such as arranging the patterns in a sequence in any order of their choice. So, they should arrange the patterns on pieces of paper according to how they want it to be. These processes leading to the creation of a pattern helping the children to manipulate objects with their hands and present them in a logical sequence [through the examples, I set for them]."

In addition, Kate spoke of how such creativity impacted children's moral, social and skills development. She explained:

Kate: "The design of the curriculum is such that we have the hidden aspect and the skills aspect. Obeying instructions come under the hidden aspect, while the creative aspect falls under the skills aspect. The moral aspect directs the children regarding how to do things and how to relate to others while completing a task. So, as they are engaged in their creative activities, they develop the social and moral aspects of their lives. They interact with their peers during the lesson. I also ask them to come out with their sets of rules whenever I engage them in activities. As time goes on, they can come out with new rules such as 'do not pour any colour on the table or on the ground' to deal with emerging challenges."

Moreover, Kate perceived that hands-on activities impacted children's moral development because when children could come up with their own rules during a creative art lesson, they were more likely to obey them. She explained:

Kate: "I ask the children to make the rules because I want to make the lesson child-centred. However, if I make the rules for them, they are likely to disobey them. But if they make rules themselves they will appreciate it and obey."

Understand content

Kate and Sophia valued activities that assisted children to understand the subject matter as developmentally appropriate, for a kindergarten setting such as theirs. To illustrate, they each described an activity that involved

sorting and classifying objects in math class, where sorting bottle tops by colour permitted children to gain knowledge that led them to recognise the "blue" colour elsewhere in their environment. Two elements (sorting by colour or length) were of significance to them, as Sophia indicated "If we are sorting by colour or length, the opportunity is given to children to engage in this activity." And as Kate revealed, "A child may be instructed to pick a bottle top which is blue in colour." This process helps the child identify any blue colour around him or her.

Holistic development versus content

Interestingly, the two teachers differed in their views about the type of development they associated with certain activities. For example, Kate was of the view that activities that promoted the holistic of development children were the most valued ones. She explained:

Kate: "I think activities should be organised in such a way that it will help children develop every aspect of the human person, such as intellectual, physical, social, emotional, moral and spiritual as they engage in activities. So, I engaged the children in play-based activities [during every lesson]"

She further explained how to realise children's holistic development through activity-based learning settings. Kate explained:

"Kate...when I am planning the activities, I integrate various kinds of elements into a play-based activity which allows the children to emphasise key issues concerning the lesson as they sing or recite a rhyme."

For Kate, play-based activities provide children with the opportunity to interact with their peers, express their emotions and regulate their behaviour and be regulated by others.

On the other hand, Sophia valued hands-on physical activities that helped children understand the content of what they had learned in class because it helped them progress steadily in their learning. She explained:

Sophia: "It is becoming increasingly difficult for some children to progress from the primary level of education to other higher levels of education because of the limited spaces in the schools or due to mediocre performance of students in public run examinations. So as a class teacher [it] is my duty to help children understand activities we do in this class. So I engage them in hands-on activities to ensure that they understand what we are doing in class."

Sophia further perceived that her conscious effort tended to impart in children the habit of learning. She explained:

Sophia...“I always impart to children the desire to learn because I always tell them that they can only become important people in life and help others if only they are prepared to learn.”

Planning learning activities

More generally, Kate and Sophia believed that for learning activities to impact children’s development, the selection of these activities, should be planned. All the responses of the teachers indicated that the nature of children and how they learn constituted the basis for planning learning activities. For example, Kate perceived that the gradual nature of how children develop influenced her selection of learning activities in a kindergarten setting. She explained:

Kate: “I think what helps me most to plan activities for the children, is my knowledge about how children develop. Children develop gradually, so usually, I introduce them to few concepts for some minutes, and after that, I introduce play-based learning activities concerning the lesson, and after that, the children go for a break.”

Kate further reiterated how needs of children influenced her selection of learning activities. She shared: “I plan the curriculum because it helps me to take into consideration the needs of each [child as I observed] in class so that I can include activities that meet the needs of each one of the children.”

Similarly, Sophia believed that her insights about how children learn and the uniqueness that each child brought to the learning context were factors influencing her selection of learning activities. She explained:

Sophia: “I usually stick to the guidelines spelt out in the kindergarten curriculum. The guidelines consider how children learn and what I am expected to do as a teacher to promote their learning. I also consider...the time within which teaching and learning should come to an end, and the relevant activities [in which] children are expected to be engaged. Also, I consider the needs of every child when I am selecting activities for children.”

Similarly, Sophia saw effective planning of learning activities in a kindergarten classroom as a function of many factors. For example, she explained:

Sophia: “So, I also want to add that there are other activities that go on [in] this school which affect the planned activities that go on in this school such as staff meetings, PTA’s meetings and statutory public holidays. So, I take all these factors into consideration when I am planning activities for the class.”

It will seem then that, Sophia recognises that the larger

school context influences her classroom context.

Guided participation activities

Although not discussed in their interviews, analysis of the field notes, documenting classroom observations, revealed that Kate and Sophia used guided participation to give their children insights into what they were expected to do while engaging them in mathematics, language, and literacy activities. These two teachers, at Tata School, used the whole class instructional format to provide such guidance. Interestingly, such a whole class instructional format indicated thematic linkages between math activities and language and literacy.

In one mathematics and one language and literacy lessons observed, children were expected to complete specific tasks during the lesson. For instance, Kate, during the observed language and literacy class which focused on a story titled “The Lion and the Mouse”, showed the children pictures depicting the various incidents in the story. The children were expected to describe and predict what was likely to occur in the next episode of the story as the teachers flipped through the story. The children in Sophia’s class, during a math lesson which centred on sorting, the children were tasked to sort various kinds of objects into colours and sizes. These activities occurred two weeks apart.

Observations during both these lessons revealed that the teachers’ provided the necessary guidance to the children by directing their behaviour and supplied them with things they needed. In directing children’s behaviour issues such as rules concerning classroom conduct and how to complete a specific task were emphasised by the teachers. When providing information to the children, the emphasis was on most of the time telling and showing children something for them to observe. In addition, in the language and literacy lesson, teacher also guided the conversation, whereby children were expected to reflect on an issue and predict what was likely to happen in the next episode of a story.

Overall, then, evidence from the data appears to suggest that these teachers engaged the children in a variety of activities, which aimed to impact children’s development in diverse ways. That said, the teachers at Tata School also perceived that if teachers planned the curriculum and used whole class guided participation instructional format, it too could enhance, promote and improve children’s learning.

Case study analyses of the teachers at the Northern School (Kariba)

Learning activities and children’s development

Concerning, the second research question, the study’s

findings revealed that at Kariba School kindergarten classroom, the teachers believed learning occurred when children engaged in certain types of activities. In particular, the kind of learning activities teachers used to promote children's development included those that: promoted children's understanding of their environments; provided children with the opportunity to become creative; promoted children's understanding of content; developed their motor and fine motor skills, integrated their learning experiences; and unearthed their potentials. In addition, these two teachers believed activities connecting children's in-school experiences, and out-of-school experiences optimised learning. A related theme that emerged from the interviews concerned the basis upon which teachers planned learning activities (e.g. children's interests; children's attention span in class) in their kindergarten classroom and how they used guided participation activities to help their children effectively engage in them.

Understand their environment

Both Ramatu and Akotia valued classroom activities that impacted children's understanding of their environment. For example, Ramatu believed that children came to understand weather patterns through observation. She explained:

Ramatu: "I use environmental studies lessons to help the children understand their environment. If the topic is 'sources of Light' I take the children outside the classroom for them to observe the sky. If it is cloudy, the children will be able to tell me that the weather is dark so they cannot see the sun. If it is sunny, they would also be able to tell me that it is sunny. Based on what they have seen, I will tell them that the sun is the source of natural light."

Ramatu further explained her thinking about why children might need to be engaged in such activities in order to understand their environment.

Ramatu: "It helps them to relate to the environment and understand the environment because all that they know is that we have light in the room, and we put it on and off. But they do not know that the sun as a source of light. So, it is a topic such as this that I use to make them understand the sun as a source of light, and during the daytime, it gives us light."

Akotia also valued learning activities, which provided children with the opportunity to observe their outdoor environment. For example, she described a weather activity, which spanned across the children's school and home experiences.

Akotia: "During environmental studies lessons, I take the children outside the classroom to observe objects in their

surroundings because it is not a class-based activity but an outdoor one. For example, once I was teaching about the weather, so I took them outside the classroom to observe the sun and the clouds. Then I asked them to observe the weather in the evening when they go home and take note of the differences between the two weather patterns. At times, some of the activities cannot be completed at the school, so I usually instruct them to go home and continue with the activities and come back the next day and share their experiences with the class."

Indeed, Akotia valued such activities in kindergarten settings because it "helped children value nature and understand their world".

Thus, Ramatu provided examples of creative hands-on activities children were engaged in while Akotia tended to describe more context related activities.

Develops children's creativity and content knowledge

However, both teachers, Ramatu and Akotia recognised that different learning activities (that is, creating artefacts, sorting by colour or size) afforded learning outcomes related to their children's creativity and knowledge acquisition.

Ramatu: "In a creative art lesson such as artefact making we engage the children in hands-on activities. We use materials such as waste papers or clay to help the children create any artefact of their choice. If we are using waste papers, I engage the children in series of activities such as soaking the papers in water and pounding it in a mortar with a pestle. After that, I guide the children to add glue to the product that we obtained from the papers. If we are using clay, I also guide them to pound it in a mortar with a pestle. After a while, we add water to it to make it soft and malleable so that the children can create any artefact that they want."

Akotia: "In a math lesson, if I am teaching a topic such as sorting, I engage the children in a lot of hands-on activities to help them understand what we are doing. For instance, I bring some real objects such as bottle tops of varied sizes and colours to class for the children to sort them into colours first and then into sizes later."

It is evidently clear that Ramatu valued activities which provided opportunities for the children to become creative through hands-on physical experiences such as producing of artefacts. Akotia, however, valued activities that provided children with the opportunity to understand content through hands-on physical experiences where they creatively sorted materials.

Develops children's motor skills

Also, both teachers, Ramatu and Akotia perceived that

hands-on activities impact children's motor skills development.

Ramatu: "The series of activities leading to the creation of artefacts develops children's gross motor skills because the activity of pounding involves the use of larger muscles. Also, the activities leading to the creation of artefacts helps the children develop their fine motor skills because they use their fingers to engage in hands-on activities which involve the use of the smaller muscles."

Akotia: "I think these activities help the children to manipulate the objects with their hands, which helps them develop their fine motor skills because it involves the use of the muscles of the fingers."

As such both teachers perceived that hands-on activities supported children's development of gross and fine motor skills through the necessary manipulation of objects inherent in them.

Integrate children's learning experiences

When further considering the kinds of learning activities they perceived as developmentally appropriate, Ramatu described activities more generally, in terms of providing an opportunity for children to integrate their learning experiences. She explained:

Ramatu: "I think one useful thing that I can talk about is creating an opportunity for children to incorporate what they learn in class to other learning experiences they might have gone through so that they can see linkages and differences in whatever they learn in class."

She further elaborated her thinking behind the need to organise learning activities in such a way so that children can integrate their learning experiences when, she shared:

Ramatu: "I think children should be taught in such way that they can reconstruct what they already know to fit a new learning situation that is like what they already know."

Activities which address different developmental needs of children

On the other hand, Akotia described learning activities that consider the differences regarding the uniqueness that each child brings to the classroom setting, and explained how she organised lessons to address the needs of individual children in class. She shared:

Akotia: "I think children come to the classroom with

different abilities, so I usually provide various kinds of learning activities for children to explore their talents. Also, when I am selecting the activities, I include activities that are challenging and those that are less challenging to meet the needs of different ability groups."

Linking in-school and out-of-school experiences

Finally, it was Ramatu who believed that connecting children planned in-school experiences and lived out-of-school experiences optimised learning in kindergarten settings. She explained:

Ramatu: "I am always guided by the activities that have been spelt out in the kindergarten syllabus before I engage children in activities in class. But at times, I go beyond the activates that [are] specified in the syllabus by bringing in activities that go on within the child's environment such as a market scene, hospital scene and so on."

Ramatu further explained that in and out-of-school experiences that children go through in class helped them make connections between their daily experiences within their immediate environment.

Ramatu: "As a teacher, it is my responsibility to bring into the classroom setting other experiences that children go through outside the classroom context to enable each of them to understand their environment and draw linkages and differences between what they already know and their current experiences. To help children draw the linkages, I have created different learning centres in class such as shop, hospital, science and so on in this class."

Planning learning activities

With regard to planning of learning activities which have the desired impact on children's development, both teachers, Ramatu and Akotia, recognised that the selection process had to be strategic. In their interviews, these teachers revealed that their children's interest and ability constituted the basis for the selection of learning activities. For instance, Ramatu perceived that children's interests served as a basis for selecting learning activities that she believed would appeal to them. She explained:

Ramatu: "Sometimes I am guided by what children like doing. What I have observed over the years is that some of the children will do one activity repeatedly. At times, I direct some of them to a different activity, but at a point, they come back to engage in the same activity again."

Akotia, on the other hand, was of the view that the length of time children could concentrate in class was a

determining factor in how she planned learning activities in class. She shared:

“As we saw today, usually in the morning the children are more active in class when I assign any task to them. But in the afternoon, it always seems as if they have lost interest in the activity that they have been tasked to do. But rather what this reveals to me is that the children are getting tired. So, I schedule most of the activities in the morning when they are very active and full of energy. But there are some days I do not assign any task to them.”

Guided participation activities

Although these teachers did not discuss it in their interviews, analysis of the observational field notes revealed that Ramatu and Akotia used guided participation to give children insights into what they were expected to do while engaging them in math and language and literacy activities. These two teachers, at Kariba School, used whole class instructional format, to provide such guidance. Interestingly, whole class instruction within math activities and language and literacy activities pointed to commonalities for this theme.

In one mathematics lesson and one language and literacy lessons observed, the children were expected to complete specific tasks during the lesson. For instance, during the observed language and literacy class, which focused on a story titled “Ananse and the Wisdom Pot” Ramatu, showed the children pictures depicting the various incidents in the story. The children were expected to predict what was likely to happen in the next episode of the story as the teacher flipped through the pictures. In Akotia’s class, during a mathematics lesson that centred on sorting, the children sorted out diverse kinds of objects into colours, shapes and so on. These activities occurred at various times.

Observations during these lessons, revealed that the teachers provided the needed guidance to children included directing their behaviour, and showing them something. When directing children’s behaviour, issues emphasised included; rules concerning classroom conduct, and how to complete a specific task. While presenting “information”, the issues included telling and showing children something. Finally, the issues involved in guiding children’s “conversation” included reflecting on an issue and predicting what is likely to happen in the next episode of a story.

Overall, then, evidence from the data appear to suggest that these teachers engage the children in variety of activities, which aimed to impact children’s development in diverse ways. That said, the teachers at Kariba School also perceived that if teachers planned the curriculum and used guided participation as an instructional format, it too could enhance, promote and improve children’s learning.

Across case analyses: Teachers’ practices at Tata and Kariba Schools

To further understand the ways in which learning activities support children’s development in diverse ways, across-case analyses (by school) is reported next.

Learning activities and children’s development

With regard to these teachers’ perceptions of learning activities in relation to children’s development, cross-case analysis indicated that in both rural and urban school settings teachers tend to focus on learning activities that support children’s holistic development, including their understandings of their environments, content-related and language specific skills as well as harnessing their creative potentials. Nonetheless, within the urban school (Tata), Kate and Akotia linked learning activities to children’s understanding of the role of God (as creator) and as a means of addressing children’s spiritual development. This emphasis appears less related to the urban location and more to do with the Christian beliefs of these teachers and partly due to the content of the kindergarten curriculum which emphasises moral and religious education in kindergarten settings. That explains why, at one point, Kate attributed such a ‘spiritual’ focus to culture, when she claimed: “as Ghanaians, we believe in the existence of God, so I go further and ask them who created the air?” Interestingly, since Kate at Tata School is the only participant who mentions promoting young children’s moral and social development, examining this theme across the cases raises the possibility that such an emphasis may be due to an individual teacher’s orientation. Overall, when choosing learning activities to address children’s developmental needs, analyses across these two cases revealed that these teachers used three sources, namely, the recommended curriculum, children lived experiences and specific needs of individual children such as cognitive.

The participants in both cases valued planning as an effective tool for maximising the development needs of individual children in kindergarten classrooms. However, the teachers had different ways of planning their learning activities. When examined, cross cases these teachers reported idiosyncratic priorities and considerations when it comes to planning. Although three of the teacher’s used aspects of the children (their interest, attention span, and individuals need) to inform their work, the fourth teacher relied heavily on curriculum guidelines, whereby Sophia strictly adhered to the centralised curriculum demands.

DISCUSSION

As detailed in the results, all four kindergarten teachers described various learning activities they used to promote

their children's development (e.g. a science lesson about air; using plants to show patterns), elaborating at times with respect to additional foci they believed to be relevant. Accordingly, the themes that emerged (that is, understand their environment and the existence of God, understand content, become creative, develop fine motor skills, or develop holistically) seemed to delineate "the kinds of activities" in terms of the broader aims associated with them. While there were differences regarding how these teachers viewed these developmentally appropriate learning activities, one common thread appeared to be the inter-relationship between children's in-school and out-of-school experiences.

Indeed, analyses of the reported and observed learning activities revealed these participants explicit and implicit recognition of the importance of linking children's in-school-experiences with their out-of-school experiences in order to attend to and support children's development. This particular finding then points to the significance of children's lived experiences (inside and outside of the classroom learning environment) when planning and implementing effective teaching and learning in kindergarten classrooms. Within the two classrooms in this study, such connections were found to occur at two levels, namely engaging children in real-life learning activities and inter-relating children's classroom and at-home experiences with particular respect to the Ghanaian sociocultural contexts.

As the four participants elaborated, the promotion of children's understanding of concepts taught in class is tied intrinsically to children's sociocultural contexts (out-of-school experiences). Children's experiences within their social and cultural contexts point to the kinds of learning experiences that they bring to the kindergarten settings and in turn, impact how these experiences enhance and promote their development. Hence, culturally situated learning experiences are paramount. For instance, within the Ghanaian cultural settings parents mentor their children into roles that require children to learn and apply norms and values within real-life contexts as they interact with their peers and adults within their social settings. The experiences that children gain from such interactions provide opportunities for them to construct their understandings about their world (as shown in this current study's finding). This, in turn, suggests interactions between children within the classroom provide further opportunities for them to learn from each other, regarding their sociocultural settings. Nsamennang (2008) succinctly articulates the essence of children's interactions with their peers when he asserts that within "the African context, a child is seen as a cultural agent of his or her development from an early age" (p.2). This is significant because it suggests that learning is not limited to only the school (Kindergarten) context but extends beyond it, in that in the Ghanaian sociocultural context, young children are believed to be

actors of their development, beginning with experiences gained from daily interactions with peers and adults. Moreover, the value these teachers placed on, and the familiarity they seemed to have with their children's out of school experiences point to their recognition of learning as a continuous process (Pinar et al., 1995) between home and school. To further complicate this perspective, it is important to bear in mind the occasions when teachers' perceptions of children's everyday experiences may have positioned the learner at a disadvantage or unduly limited the kinds of learning activities offered to children. For example, Akotia indicated that she would not use think-pair-share because children in Kariba school would not be familiar with expressing their opinions because they "are coming from homes where parents take all decisions". While respecting her children's "out-of-school" context influences her to choose more familiar hands-on learning activities to assure their success, it raises the question as to whether these children would/should benefit from expressing themselves in the kindergarten setting (if not at home). Of course, an answer to such a question is complex and goes beyond the scope of the current study.

When considering the engagement of children in real-life contexts, the close link between children's spiritual development and particular hands-on activities the two teachers, Kate and Sophia at Tata School described are noteworthy. Although, the data collected, precludes us from knowing the extent to which these young children may understand the theoretical implications of the concept of a creator (God) in their daily lives, the connections these teachers addressed within learning activities (e.g. the presence of air around us) concerning children's daily lives (e.g. the essence of breathing) provided contextualized opportunities for them to understand such a complex phenomenon. Arguably, then, this particular finding, whereby these kindergarten teachers infuse an overt appreciation of how the things children see around them came into existence into lessons about their environment, calls our attention to ways in which learning activities and children's spiritual development might be connected in certain settings, which appears unreported in previous research into DAP. That said, teaching young children a phenomenon such as the existence of a creator, appears to related to these teachers' understanding of the philosophical basis of kindergarten curriculum in Ghana (MoE, 2007) and possibly, Carter's (2013) activity theory. For instance, the kindergarten curriculum in Ghana (MoE, 2007) emphasises the use of developmentally appropriate means to lay a foundation for the development of a well-balanced human person, who in the long run would appreciate the existence of a creator and how one is expected to lead a life worthy of emulation. Thus, while this suggests that within the Ghanaian contexts under study children's spiritual development is valued, its development appears to depend on a teacher's creativity

and the kinds of learning activities with which the children are engaged. Even though the participants from Tata School engaged their children in natural science activities, the dexterity with which the Kindergarten teachers in the urban setting (Tata School) used these activities to develop a concept such 'spirituality' is revealing and intriguing. For example, it appears all four teachers believed, as Carter (2013) asserts, that it is through the active participation of children in a variety of activities that they can make meaning of their experiences yet for Kate and Sophia, the meaning included both the scientific and the creationist perspectives:

Kate. ... "To illustrate this, I ask them to hold their noses tightly for a moment, but within seconds, you see them fidgeting because they cannot breathe. After the activity, I then tell them that the air around us is what we breathe in, and God, created the air, so there is the need for them to make God an important part of their lives (pp.124)."

What remains unclear from the study, however, is why the teachers in the urban setting used context appropriate learning activities to inform and support their children's spiritual development when those in the rural setting did not.

When considering the theme, "understand content", all four participants reported engaging their children in different forms of activities meant to promote the children's cognitive development regarding the acquisition of different forms of knowledge. The extent to which learning activities focused on children's cognitive development was also apparent from the observations of several learning activities within both settings. In contrast to research which emphasises a proclivity towards providing opportunities in kindergarten settings for young children to construct knowledge (Copple and Bredekamp, 2009), in the current study, teachers in both schools included teacher-centric activities. In doing so, they seemed to perceive such direct teaching as developmentally appropriate, and to a limited extent, the evidence seemed to support their view. For example, Piaget's (1952) assertion that children acquire socio-conventional knowledge when they are taught names of objects and symbols could be conceived as a support for these teachers' direct teaching of letters of the alphabets and number names during literacy and numeracy lessons. Likewise, activities wherein these teachers guided their children's manipulation of objects (e.g. hitting a ball or a stone against a wall to determine if and how they react differently when acted upon) could be construed as complying with Piaget's (1952) assertion that children acquire physical knowledge when given opportunity to see how objects move and function in space. And since DAP originated from Piagetian theories of learning, adherence to such principles would readily reinforce the notion that such actions are developmentally appropriate. In turn, drawing from

Vygostkyian underpinnings of DAP, the teachers' direct teaching and explicit guidance during such activities can readily be seen as the necessary mediation by the significant others that allows for inter-psychological development. That said, within these adult controlled activities there seemed to be a focus on in-school experiences (that is, reciting letters in isolation; throwing a rock against a wall) to the exclusion of out-of-school experiences (e.g. children's funds of knowledge (oral language, properties of balls and rocks from play), which stands in contrast to what was previously discussed with respect to other themes. Bearing in mind, however, that these teachers peppered their interviews with descriptions (some cursory, others detailed) of a variety of activities (some teacher-centric, others much less so) used to help children "understand content", a more elaborated analysis would be needed to ascertain to what extent this was isolated to a few, or prevalent across most, of them. It is also clear from the study that engaging children in a variety of learning activities impact on the holistic development of children in kindergarten settings.

Conclusions

The study's findings bring to our awareness the richness of sociocultural contexts in curricular opportunities for teachers to engage children in kindergarten classrooms activities which would enable children to understand what they are learning which would, in turn, develop children's problem-solving abilities. Thus, the study's findings reinforce and in a limited way extend the constructivist theories that consider sociocultural contexts of children as key determinants of kindergarten curriculum content and the way it is taught. It is therefore, recommended that child-initiated activities and that of teacher-initiated activities should inform how activity-based learning settings should be organised. This sort of learning context integrates the learning needs of individual children and professional insights of teachers which tend to impact children's development in terms of unearthing the potentials of individual children. In light of this future research should explore the kinds of learning activities teachers engage children in the socio-cultural contexts.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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Full Length Research Paper

An analysis of 1926 inspection legislation document, named: “Law about inspectors of education ministry and their authorization”

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In this study, 1926 official legislation document was analyzed taking the role and duties of inspectors at that time in mind. These roles and duties were explained based on the authorization, investigation, interrogation methodology, and employment of inspectors. This study was carried out by implementing documentary research methods. Like other early Republican legislations, the inspectorate document was prepared at first in Arabic using the grammatical rules of Ottoman language. After 1928, because of alphabetical change in Turkey, official documents were prepared in Latin using Turkish rules. Since the document was done in 1926, it was first transcribed into Latin, and then translated where necessary. It can be understood from this document that inspection was more about control and guidance in the early years of Turkish Republic period. It is also understood that cultural and educational activities were not separated at that time. The main duties of inspectors include improving of education, investigation, and interrogation. Finally, differences in inspection between early Republican era and contemporary Turkey were compared.

Key words: Educational inspectors, legislation, authorization, inspection history, inspection, employment of inspector.

INTRODUCTION

Education started with human history. In order to meet the requirements of this age, humans need education, which means transferring experiences of past generations. To satisfy that kind of requirements, schools were established. Schools -like other social institutions- have also transformed through ages. Consequently, mass education was preferred to aristocratic education after the industrial revolution. Preference of mass education has made schools more important than before. Inspectorate

has contributed to the transformation of schools as well. Every single organization's target is to achieve its purposes. To achieve this, companies need to establish a healthy management structure. A healthy management structure depends on a clear plan, praxis of that plan with an organization structure, employment of skilled staff, and deployment of regulations needed. At the final stage, inspection of efficiency and effectiveness of this system should be carried out. Inspectorate builds bridges

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between the targets and results processes at institutions (Özalp et al., 2000).

Inspection is described as inspecting the staff of an organization based on the legislations related to each staff's work. Inspectors check, audit, or inspect whether they are careful enough about their duties and responsibilities (Taymaz, 2010). Inspection is also about whether everything goes as planned or not. Auditing should take pre-decided and preplanned activities within an organization into account while leaving space for flexibility in making local decisions. An inspection should include precautions and suggestions for future risks and it should support economic decisions. Inspection is objective, takes place often, and has clear instructions (Özalp et al., 1996). The main things expected from an inspection include (Başaran, 2000; Hesapçioğlu, 1994):

1. Standardization: There should be pre-declared criteria of two layers: Firstly, monitoring performance level and secondly, realistic sharing of work among staff.
2. Assessment: It involves taking picture of an organizational performance and finding the differences between that performance and targeted standards. For this, specific scale tools are needed.
3. Fixing: After reaching deflected results, a route fixing is needed to meet the targets. To correct the direction, reasons of deflection should be understood clearly. At this stage, staff and experts should cooperate effectively.
4. Comparison: When the route is fixed, another comparison should occur comparing the expected standards and current situation after fixing.
5. Final Evaluation: It is about making a judgment based on previous experience and learning for future cases.

Inspection of schools

Sergiovanni and Starrat (2007) pointed out three goals of inspection at schools: Quality control, professional development, and teachers' motivation. Quality control involves a comparison of current situation and standards. Professional development means understanding the teaching profession better, improving basic teaching abilities, and increasing the knowledge of teachers about teaching methods. Motivation of teachers mainly depends on job satisfaction. The aim of educational inspection is to make schools to be effective. An effective school is one that has the capacity to achieve its educational goals. Inspection of schools is carried out by heads of schools, inspectors, and managers of higher educational bodies. School inspection should be done with strict rules; room should be given for the creativity of school heads and educational staff should be given the respect they deserve. Team work of staff, teachers, and inspectors has an important place in school inspections. Inspectors should encourage teachers to go for self-actualisations' (Başaran, 2000). Inspection of schools encompasses

institutional inspection and the inspection of teaching in classrooms (Balci et al., 2007). Inspection takes place on behalf of the government and public to provide benefits to the society. It is necessary to reach the goals of an institution in an effective way (<http://rdb.meb.gov.tr>).

A brief history of educational inspection in Turkey

Though Taymaz (2010) stated that the exact date for the beginning of educational inspections is not yet found, the first samples of inspectorate appeared during Tanzimat (Reform [Regulation]) Period in Ottoman times (Taymaz, 2010; Aydın, 2014; Öz, 2003; Şahin et al., 2013 <http://rdb.meb.gov.tr/>). The ever first document about educational inspection was found in 1838, and it is about finding out and compensating for the physical and materialistic needs of Rüşdiye schools. After declaring the start of Tanzimat Period, the skeleton of educational inspectorate was constructed. Later on scaffolding legislations were added (Buluç, 2008).

The second one was dated 1846 and was about employing vice inspectors for primary (Mekatib-i Sibyaniye) and secondary schools (Mekatib-i Rüşdiye). Another one was 1862 and was about naming the people responsible for primary and secondary schools as "müfettiş" (inspector) for the first time. While one document dated 1875 orders schools to have an inspectorate notebook and to show it to inspectors; 1876 document, prepared by education council, describes how inspection should be implemented at schools (Taymaz, 2010; Aydın, 2014; Öz, 2003; Şahin et al., 2013: <http://rdb.meb.gov.tr/>).

At the beginning of the 20th century, a paper dated 1911 declares that Ministry of Education would have two departments afterwards: administration and inspection departments. According to the same paper, it was ordered that inspectors would be employed amongst secondary and high school teachers. A 1912 by law document includes the title of the department as General Inspectorate [for education] (Müfettiş-i Umumilik). A legislative document dated 1913 was dedicated to announce that primary school inspections should be practiced by only primary school inspectors and those inspectors were responsible for inspection, investigation, and education of the public. Finally, a paper of inspection standards was released in 1914 (<http://tkb.meb.gov.tr/>).

In 1923, the instruction letter of the Ministry of Education Inspectorate was published. In 1926, the supervisors of the deputies, who were divided into central and regional inspectors, were reunited in 1931. The formation and duties of the 1933 Inspection Board were rearranged (<http://tkb.meb.gov.tr/>). Educational inspectors were assigned in various ways especially after 1950. Güngör (1960) stated that there were thirteen types of inspectors and they were responsible for the inspection of courses that they teach originally such as literature, arts,

foreigner language, etc. The inspectors involved are candidates doing two and four months' courses, auditors, pedagogically educated inspectors, and inspectors educated in other countries (Güngör, 1960; Güçlü, 2011).

Later, though the amendment of the foundation law of the Ministry of National Education was made at various dates, the structure of the inspection in general was maintained. In 1992, according to the Law on the Organization and Duties of the Ministry of National Education, the Inspection Board took place as the "supervisory unit" within the central organization of the Ministry of National Education.

In 1993, the Ministry of National Education Inspection Board Regulation and Regulation entered into force. In 2011, the Board of Inspection of the Ministry of National Education was abolished and instead, the Directorate of Guidance and Supervision was established. In 2014, the titles of National Education Supervision and Provincial Education Supervision were merged with the titles of Education Inspector and National Education Supervisors were appointed to the Presidency of Education Inspectors established within the Provincial National Education Directorates. In 2016, the Board of Inspectors Board of Education was removed and the Board of Inspectors was established at the Ministry of National Education (<http://tkb.meb.gov.tr/>).

Research questions

This study focuses on the paper dated 1926 about inspectors' duties and roles. The research questions are:

- (1) What orders are given to inspectors in this paper?
- (2) During early republican era, what are the duties and roles of inspectors in Turkey?
- (3) What is the organizational scheme of the education inspectors during the foundation period of the Republic?
- (4) What are the duties and roles of inspectors in Today's Turkey?
- (5) What is the organizational scheme of the education inspectors today?
- (6) What are the similarities and differences about educational inspection between early Republican era (1926) and today's Turkey?

METHODOLOGY

This article is prepared by using document analysis method (Karasar, 1999; Balci, 2006). After the declaration of Turkish Republic, inspection legislations were written in Ottoman language using Arabic. In 1928, Latin was preferred to the previous one and Turkish became the official language. So, official documents were written based on these preferences (Akyüz, 2013). That is why the documents before that date were written originally in Arabic; they were changed into Latin and then translated. In this context, the relevant document was converted to Latin (Appendix 1) and the document was added to the original work (Appendix 2). Finally, the findings were evaluated.

Data collection

The researchers visited Prime Ministry Achieve Directorship for old official documents. Achieved documents related to educational inspection were picked out and translated to Turkish. One of the documents was a paper dated 1926 and named "Ministry of Education inspectors' duties and authorizations before the law" (*Maarif Vekaleti Müfettişlerinin Hukuk ve Selahiyet Vazifelerine Dair Talimatname*, see affixment 1 and 2) was transcribed.

FINDINGS

Having studied the document, it was recognized that the instructions consist of three parts: organizational structure, roles and authorizations. In addition, information was provided about the current situation.

The early period of the republic in 1926: Findings related to organizational structure

An inspectorate council was established by the Ministry of Education to observe and audit educational institutions and fine art faculties; and to enlighten teachers and administrative staff, too (Clause 1). Inspectorate council was designed to be directed by an Educational Minister. This council consisted of two departments: central inspectors and regional inspectors. Central inspectors were assigned to three different branches according to their roles: education and teaching inspectors, administration inspectors, and inspectors of libraries, fine art faculties, and museums (Clause 2).

Education and teaching inspectors were responsible for auditing the education and teaching activities at schools and for guidance of administrative staff and teachers. This kind of inspectors was chosen amongst teachers who had worked as heads of school and trained as branch teachers (Clauses 3, 4, 5). Their assignments to their roles are decided based on the interview evaluations by Education Ministry (Clause 10). Administration inspectors were responsible for inspecting the administrative and fiscal issues. Additionally, they were accustomed with specific investigations assigned by the ministry. They were chosen amongst experienced heads of schools. Libraries, fine art faculties, and museum inspectors form the third group of inspectors and they are responsible for the inspection of institutions that they carry in their titles (Clauses 3, 4, 5). To be recruited as a central inspector, the person should be at least thirty years old, know a foreign language to the point of being to understand his or her course in that language, be a graduate of Dar'ul Fünun or a higher education, and have five years' teaching experience at secondary schools (Clauses 7, 8). Central inspectors are chosen by the assessment of an interview carried out by a council consisting of permanent undersecretary and active working principals of fine art faculties, libraries, and museums (Clause 11).

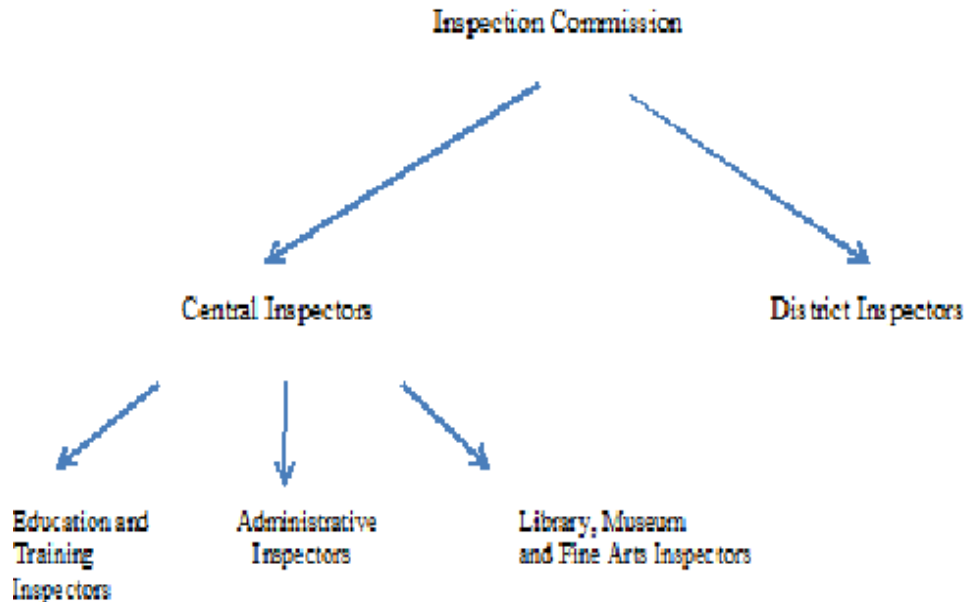


Figure 1. Organizational chart of inspectors (Year: 1926).

Regional inspectors are also directly connected to the Minister of Education. The main responsibility of regional inspectors is to help province education administrators in terms of auditing and controlling. The number of regional inspectors was to be decided according to business of the local educational administration (Clause 6). In order to be a regional inspector, the person should be at least twenty eight years old, know a foreign language, be a graduate of Dar’ul Fünun or a higher education, and have an experience of three years at secondary school (Clause 9). Regional inspectors are chosen by the assessment of an interview carried out by a council of heads of schools (Clause 10). The organization scheme of the inspectors is shown in Figure 1.

Findings related to duties and authorization

Educational inspectors were not only responsible for auditing and teaching branch courses they were good at, but also propagated the official ideology of young Republic of Turkey. Inspectors were under the obligations to take precautions to enhance the wellbeing of Turkish society (Clause 14).

In addition to these, they were expected to inspect the followings: finances of schools, time spent on goals pre-decided by ministry, relationships amongst administrators, teaching staff, and students at schools, sports education and scouting activities in nature, educational and health research, students’ records and dossiers, physical situation of schools, usage of time by

educational commissions, teachers’ content knowledge and teaching methods, time spent in laboratory, library, students’ workshops, students’ preferences of resources such as books, journals, and newspapers and their benefits to students, and out of classroom activities of students.

Moreover, activities, conference, and plays of students inspected should be related to patriotism, beneficial to the society, and economy. Preparing students for social and economy life, teaching them how to be helpful, handy and kind, teaching them manners, commitment to family ties, and preparing girls for marriage, school safety issues, occupational tendencies of students, family-school cooperation and time dedicated to it and awareness of people about this cooperation (Clause 15) were also included as duties of inspectors.

Educational inspectors gather members of Instruction and Education committee to discuss and prepare auditing programmes. The ministry approves and applies the suggested programme. Inspectors might be asked to do additional inspection programmes by other committees (Clause 17). In order to audit, inspectors should listen and observe teachers’ classroom performances in different classrooms. To be able to determine the understanding levels of students, they could ask questions about previous topics. Having written down some notes about teaching performances of teachers, they can discuss those notes with the teachers to show them their mistakes. When necessary, inspectors may perform samples of teaching in the classrooms for the enhancement of teachers. Inspectors could also give

conference speeches about teaching methods (Clause 18). To be able to observe students in detail, inspectors could stay in boarding schools. Inspectors should share their observations and experiences about a school to its administrators and teachers in a meeting (Clause 19).

Administrative inspectors could be sent by the ministry for auditing and investigation whenever needed. This type of inspectors could inspect local educational authorities. If they do not find the reports of regional inspectors satisfactory, they have the authority to inspect schools administratively and financially. They are allowed to carry out research and give opinions about their results (Clauses 20, 21, 22). Administrative inspectors are authorized to sack a staff member when the law asked for it. However, they should inform the ministry in the first 24 hours as well as local educational authorities (Clause 22). If sent by the ministry, local educational authorities should give every document to the inspectors whenever they ask for it (Clause 23).

Library, fine arts faculty, and museum inspectors are obliged to inspect mentioned institutions. They are to write investigation reports and handbooks, give conference speeches, help councils while establishing ethnographic museums. They are responsible for inspecting the security staff of museums and fine arts faculties. These types of inspectors are expected to shed light on local histories, prepare biographies, and guide to set up local museums. Libraries are under their inspection and these inspectors assist the libraries to protect and copy valuable documents and books (Clause 24).

When it comes to regional inspectors, they are responsible more for the local educational authorities and institutions. If there is a conflict between local educational authorities and regional inspectors, administrative inspectors are sent by the ministry to solve the conflict. Regional inspectors gather under the leadership of an administrative inspector once a year to discuss educational issues and their inspection with the guidance of Instruction and Education committee. Regional inspectors inspect in demand from local educational authorities, too (Clauses 25, 26, 27, 28).

Findings related to auditing and investigation issues

Inspectors of the education ministry are obliged to report their own activities monthly to the ministry. Inspectors visit to inspect randomly and without prior notification. They are not allowed to stay as guests at the houses of staff and teachers that they would inspect. Inspectors should be careful about protecting the image of the people being inspected. To get the truth, inspectors are not allowed to lie to people they were interrogating and mislead them to reveal the truth (Clause 30).

The ministry inspectors should complete the inspections that they start. Any unexpected situation that

prevents inspection processes to be completed should be reported to the ministry urgently. If an investigation or interrogation ever starts, it can only be postponed by the education minister (Clause 31). Every inspection is to be reported separately. The reports are presented and sent to the departments where they are thought to be related to. The reports should be written in a clear and certain language. The findings should be presented in a lawful and scientific manner (Clause 32). After the first inspection, inspectors could continue the processes depending on the need. They should give the person complaining the opportunity to defend himself/herself about the complaint (Clause 33).

When necessary, witnesses could be separately listened to, asked questions clearly and understandably, answers are to be written down as they are, and the reports should be sealed at the very end (Clause 34). Whenever the views of a staff member of a different ministry are needed, only managers of that staff member are allowed to take testimony of him or her. Non-civil servants (non-governmental staff) should be invited for an interrogation by inspectors if needed. If the person does not accept the invitation, then s/he should be brought by local police officials (Clause 35).

Inspectors should add their comments to their reports as well (Clause 36). If there are under-construction education facilities, and an abuse of financial sources, inspectors should inform the ministry and local governmental bodies. Then, the educational ministry has to report the situation to the interior affairs ministry, and inspectors of later ministry have to work with education inspectors on the case. Final report is presented to the education ministry (Clause 37). Instruction and Education community could also demand inspectors from the education ministry to investigate educational issues (Clause 38).

Findings about the processes related to the investigation reports

Administrative inspectors are responsible for sending their reports to the related department. Education inspectors process similar steps with an additional instruction and education community review (a copy is taken in this department). Reports about Fine Arts Faculties and libraries are sent to their responsible bodies, too (Clause 39). Regional inspectors report to the local educational administrator and educational inspectors. Later on educational inspectors are to inform the regional colleagues. If local educational administrators do not find the reports satisfying then they could ask for deficient of reports to be re-evaluated. Once the judgment on the reports is not applied by the local educational administrators, inspectors are expected to inform the ministry about the lack of activity. Reports of regional inspectors are sent to Instruction and Education

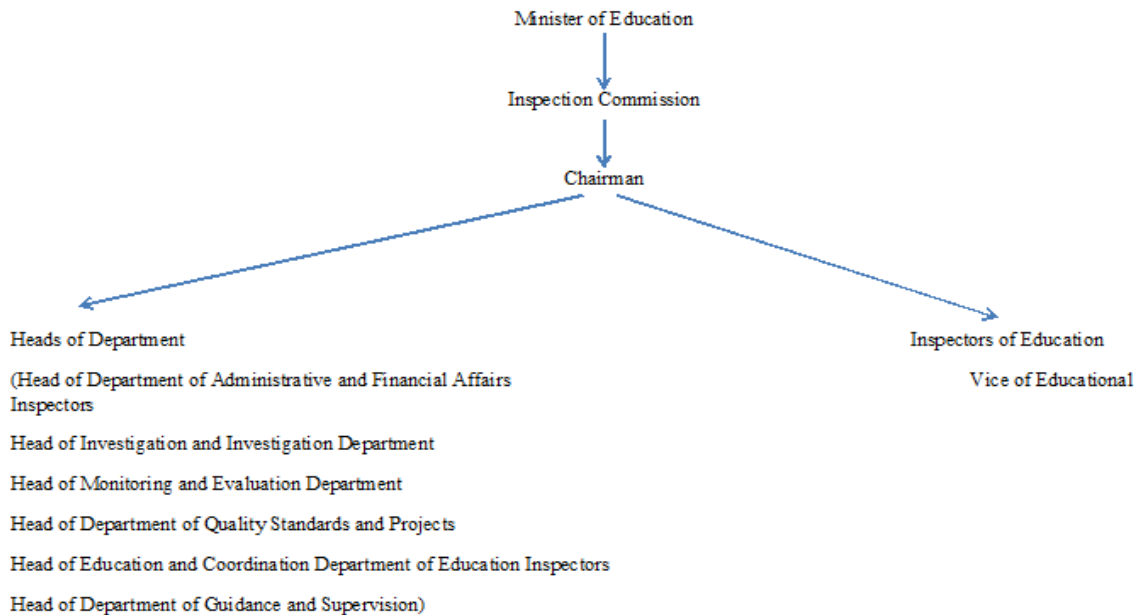


Figure 2. Organizational chart of inspectors (Year: 2017).

Community (Clauses 40, 41, 42, 43). Outstanding reports of regional or central inspectors are published in the journal of education ministry (Clause 44).

Findings related to recording on official notebooks and files

Every recording of ministry inspectors should have original official documents sent to them, copy of their own official writings, educational laws, bylaws, and regulations, work tables, calculations sent to the ministry about monthly salaries, travel expenses, and daily wages (Clauses 45, 46, 47, 48).

Current situation (in 2017)

There are 2 legal texts to be considered in this issue. The first is the Decree on the Organization and Duties of the Ministry of National Education. This decree was published in 2011, updated in 2016. The second is the Ministry of National Education's inspection board regulation issued in 2017.

Findings related to organizational structure

In order to be appointed as an education inspector, it is necessary not to be thirty-five years old. The candidates who will take the exam for the inspectorate consist of two groups: the first is the inspector candidates who are not teachers. These are graduates of law, political knowledge, economics and administrative sciences, economic and business faculties, or equivalent higher

education institutions. The second one is the inspector candidates of teacher origin. They must have been teaching for at least 8 years (Clause16). Inspector candidates are first taken to a written examination of their field. Those who pass this exam will be taken to the oral exam. Those who succeed in this exam are appointed as vice inspectors. The assistant inspector lasts three years. At the end of this training, prospective inspectors are taken to a qualification examination. Those who succeed in the exam are appointed as inspectors. Employees who work as inspectors for at least 8 years may be appointed chief inspector. They have to enter a new test to be appointed chief inspector (Clause 31). The inspectors who succeed in this exam become chief inspector. According to the Inspection Board Regulation issued by the Ministry of National Education published in 2017, the Inspection Board is composed of the Chairman and the heads of departments, and the inspectors and vice inspectors. The chairman depend on the Minister (Clause 4). The organization scheme of the inspectors is shown in Figure 2. As can be seen in Figure 2, all training inspectors depend on the inspection board first, then the inspection board chaired by the head of the inspection board. The inspection board also directly depends on the Minister of National Education.

Findings related to duties and authorization

According to the Regulation on Inspection Board of the Ministry of National Education published in 2017, inspectors report on the results of audit, guidance, investigation, and investigation. Inspectors contribute to the professional development of the inspector assistants

they work with. Inspectors carry out the work in the units, boards and commissions to be assigned. In addition, inspectors shall immediately notify the Chairman of the Board of Inspectors of the facts they have learned during the inspections and for the corruption outside the mandate, so that they can quickly take account of their responsibilities in accordance with the procedure of their investigation. Inspectors gather evidence. They conduct research in various subjects both domestically and abroad. They participate in commissions, courses, seminars and meetings they are assigned. They fight against bribery and corruption (Clause 34).

Findings related to auditing and investigation issues

Vice inspectors can not independently audit, investigate and preliminary investigate. These tasks can be carried out by the inspectors who are working with them. However, after they have actually worked for eighteen months after their entry into the profession, those deemed appropriate may be authorized to carry out these duties independently, with the proposal of the President and the approval of the Minister (Clause 34). Inspectors may remove an officer from duty because they are harmful in relation to the matters for which they are appointed, interfering with investigations, corruption and forgery (Clause 35). Inspectors have to pay attention to the following principles when guiding and supervising (Article 47). Inspectors:

- (1) Inspectors should take into consideration individual and institutional differences and environmental factors.
- (2) Inspectors should base their remediation, improvement and improvement on the basis of guiding and preventive guidance.
- (3) Inspectors should disseminate good practice examples.
- (4) Inspectors should ensure that the system's risk areas are identified and remedied.
- (5) Inspectors should prevent irregularities and corruption.
- (6) Inspectors should be open, transparent, equal, democratic, holistic, reliable and impartial.
- (7) Inspectors should take cooperation and participation as basis.
- (8) The inspectors should make the achievement a priority, encourage and reward them.
- (9) Inspection should be based on scientific and objective principles.
- (10) Inspection should be effective, economical and efficient.

Findings about the processes related to the investigation reports

Inspectors are obliged to complete the reports they will arrange for supervision, guidance, investigation and

investigation activities within twenty days at the latest and in the extra time provided for comprehensive work. They must also carry out investigations before judicial proceedings. The reports are written in a short, clear, easy-to-understand, non-recurring style and in a style appropriate to the writing rules. Opinions and conclusions reached in the reports and the proposals shall be explained on the basis of documents and legislation that do not create any hesitation (Clause 53). The inspectors identify the results of their audit, guidance, research, evaluation, review and preliminary review work with the following report types (Clause 53):

- (1) Audit report.
- (2) Guidance report.
- (3) Monitoring and evaluation report.
- (5) Research report.
- (6) Report of the crime proclamation.
- (7) Review report.
- (8) Investigation report.
- (9) Preliminary examination report.

Findings related to recording on official notebooks and files

A seal and identity certificate is issued for the inspectors (Article 57). In addition, there is no statement in the existing legal regulations regarding the books and files that should be kept.

DISCUSSION

It is understood that the 1926 law and discretionary mission of inspectors of ministry of education was published by council of education and morality department. This department was founded by the law no 789 which was enforced on 3rd April, 1926 (Akyüz, 2013). The most flashing point in the related regulation is the union of educational and cultural activities and the decision to administrate it by only one hand. But in the said ordinance, there exists regulations on the inspection education, museum, and fine arts. Besides, as a probable result of such an approach, the name, ministry of education was used instead of ministry of culture from 1935 to 1941.

The first point in which the regulations lined up is the structure of the committee to which the education inspectors belong. According to this organizational structure, it was deemed as urban or rural. The inspectors working in the urban inspection organization were named as urban inspectors and they were also called education and instruction inspectors, administration inspectors, library, museum, and fine arts inspectors. It is understood that there was a branching up in the affairs of inspectors, and work sharing was done.

According to this work sharing, the inspectors of

education and instruction control schools' educational and instructional activities and guide administrative staff. These inspectors were appointed based on the following criteria: whether they have higher education, have taken a course which is in the curriculum of the schools they inspect and whether they pass those courses or have worked as teachers and principals in a school. In the appointment, an oral exam by a committee from the head council of education and morality was used. Administrative inspectors are the staff who control the administration and economic status of schools, and the staff who follow the inspection given to them by the ministry. These kinds of inspector staff are appointed among the experienced principals of schools. The inspectors of library, fine arts and museums in third group are charged to work in the fields related to their business.

To be appointed as an urban inspector, the person must be thirty years old, know a foreign language, have a higher education diploma, and five years' teaching experience. The appointment of these inspectors is done by a commission founded by the principals of faculty of fine arts, museum and library and headed by undersecretary through an oral exam. Previously, presidents of educational inspectors in each city were abolished by the decree law number 67664 in 02/12/2016. Nowadays, only educational inspectors from the ministry and vice-educational inspectors from the ministry exist.

The role of educational inspectors is critical in the system of education. Therefore, the role of educational inspectors, how they contribute to the education system, the reconstruction of the inspection system, and personal rights of the inspectors are evaluated comprehensively (Bozak et al, 2017). But this role was noticed in the early times of the Republic and it was declared that the mission of the inspectors of education is not only to check the activities of their courses, but also they design and control a system in which the education of citizens is to advocate for the ideology of the Republic of Turkey and increase the value of the Turkish society.

In addition to these, they were expected to inspect the followings: finances of schools, time spent on goals pre-decided by ministry, relationships amongst administrators, teaching staff, and students at schools, sports education and scouting activities in nature, educational and health research, students' records and dossiers, physical situation of schools, usage of time by educational commissions, teachers' content knowledge and teaching methods, time spent in laboratory, library, students' workshops, students' preferences of resources such as books, journals, and newspapers and their benefits to students, and out of classroom activities of students. Furthermore, the activities of students in the country, society and economic life and conference and games are in the work area of the inspectors (Appendix 1).

Again in the work area of educational inspectors, the

participation ratio among students to school activities, the perception of safety in schools, the scientific and vocational tendency of students, and the reasons for creating those tendency, the time shared for school-family association and its value are defined. When the related regulations are handled for evaluation during the early ages of Republic, education was a holistic and serious task charged to the inspectors.

Nowadays, according to the ministry of education, presidents of educational inspectors are assigned to do the following: they check the works of inspectors, vice-inspectors and office staff, and check their attendance; they participate in the meetings of provincial and national education directorate. They analyze their monthly work charts, travel allowances, results of previous year's counselling, and works that will be done the following year in the area of counseling. They control research, organise meetings at the beginning, middle and end of the year to state the rules to follow. When necessary, they invite the vice-inspectors to these meetings and appoint inspectors that work with the vice-inspectors. Education inspectors focused on the aims of education during the early times of the Republic, but nowadays it seems that their aim is bureaucratic.

Nowadays, education-focused inspections are being handed over to school administrators for them to be more active in bureaucratic and legal areas. During the Republican era, a branch of the inspectors was functioning and it is understood that the investigators called administrative inspectors are assigned more to do investigation. These inspectors inspect the operations of the education directorates according to the authority of the ministry and supervise schools. They do not adequately report the administrative and financial audit-applied tax reports of the schools of the education directorates or district inspectors. Administrative inspectors also have strong powers, such as the dismissal of officers they find questionable.

The Library, the Faculty of Fine Arts and the museum inspectors were created within the Ministry of Education as a result of the holistic consideration of cultural and educational activities during the first period of the Republic (Appendix 1; Clause 1). Today, however, these areas are run by completely independent ministers. This situation can be seen as a manifestation of the increase in the number of students and schools in Turkey and the reflections of conceptual clarification in the process of the managerial field.

Another striking issue about the inspection system in the early Republic period is that it is done centrally as well as locally as an inspection of the training service. Inspectors who conduct training inspections locally are called area or district inspectors. The Regional Inspectors inspect and supervise the education departments and institutions in their respective regions. District inspectors are not as competent as central inspectors, and they have to work in schools. One of the most striking aspects

assessed on the 1926 directive appears to be the effect of John Dewey's 1924 report (Dewey, 1939). For example, article 5 of the opening chapter of the Dewey report is directly related to the library, which is reflected in the 1926 directive.

From the relevant arrangement it is understood that the appointment of the inspectors varies according to the kind of inspections in early period of the republic. Education and training inspectors are selected among teachers who have received education at higher level and have succeeded in the field, have worked as school administrators, and were appointed by the Board of Education and Training in the Ministry of Education. Administrative inspectors responsible for administrative and financial supervision of schools are appointed from among experienced school principals. In order to be appointed as a central inspector, it is necessary to be at least thirty years old, know a foreign language, be a teacher of Dar'ul Fünun (Faculty of Science) or higher education, and have taught at least five years in secondary school. The appointment of these inspectors is selected by the committee and appointed by the commission consisting of faculty of fine arts, library and museums established under the presidency of the undersecretary.

In order to be appointed as a district inspector, the person must be at least twenty-eight years old, know a foreign language, be a graduate of Dar'ul Fünun or higher education, and must have taught at least in secondary school for three years. The appointment of the regional inspectors is done by the ministry after oral examination. This examination is made by the commission of the directors. . From today's situation, graduates from higher institutions in Turkey or abroad are accepted at least by the Higher Education Council, education, science, literature, law, political knowledge, economic and administrative sciences, economics, business administration, theology; they should be under thirty-five years of age, except those who have eight years' or more teaching experience, and have not got the minimum score indicated in the announcement of the competition examination by the Public Personnel Selection Examination. When we compare the present situation with the early period of the Republic, it is concluded that the condition of being a teacher is still preserved but the condition of knowing a foreign language is not present today.

From the perspective of administrative law proceedings such as investigation, the 1926 Directive seems to emphasize highly detailed methodological and ethical principles. According to this regulation, inspectors of the Ministry cannot notify the relevant officers about the place to go and the institution to be audited and the inspection time. In the course of the investigation, the image of officers and teachers cannot be damaged. They cannot give false information and mislead people. They have to complete the inspection or investigation they have

started. In case of not being able to complete the transaction, they have to inform the Ministry.

Ministry inspectors should prepare a separate report for each audit, write the reports according to the different departments; the opinions of the inspectors must be based on legal grounds and have scientific basis. The inspectors are given the right to defend themselves by reporting the complaint given about the memorandum. If they are obliged to listen to the witness during the investigation, it is obligatory that the witnesses are to be heard separately, that the questions be asked clearly, and that the statements of the witnesses be recorded and signed. Those who are to be consulted in the investigation process will be consulted directly if they are education officers, and the officers related to other ministries will be taken through their posts. The inspectors themselves will invite those who are not government officials. Those who do not respond may be brought in by local law enforcement agents. If the inspectors see an abuse during the construction and other transactions made for educational purposes and they are covered by the educational budget, they will give directions to the Ministry and the governorate. This is one of the most striking auspices in the 1926 regulation. Because of this article, special attention has been paid to the fight against corruption. Looking at the current situation, many ethical and methodological issues seem to be preserved.

Conclusion

The 1926 regulation is a comprehensive legal argument, especially since it envisages not listening to teachers and teachers finding out the problems of the educational process. The fact that the notable reports of the central and regional inspectors are published in the Ministry of Education magazine can also be evaluated in terms of the importance of sharing knowledge and, experience. From all these perspectives, it can be considered that this directive is highly comprehensive and regarded as a holistic education. From the aforementioned discussion it is possible to arrive at the following conclusions:

- (1) Cultural, artistic and educational inspections were established under the same roof as culture and education policies were considered together during the foundation period of the Republic. Today, culture and art-related works are transferred to another ministry. There are only training inspectors within the Ministry of Education.
- (2) Today, the district inspections have been abolished within the Ministry of Education. Education Inspectors are only in the capital.
- (3) The condition of being a university graduate in the selection of the inspectors is still ongoing. The condition of the inspectors' knowledge of the foreign language has been removed.

- (4) There is nothing that changes about of duty and authority.
- (5) Education inspectors do not supervise courses and teachers.
- (6) There is no change in the investigation and audit reports. The same reports are still being written.
- (7) The notebooks and files that the inspectors should keep have changed. That's why internet and electronic media provide opportunities.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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Appendix 1

Law about inspectors of education ministry and their authorization (Ottoman Latin Alphabet Version) Teftiş Heyeti Talimatnamesi Hakkında

Tarih: 26/11/1926

Maarif-i müfettiş-i umumiyeleri hakkında tanzim olunan talimatname 4338 numero ve 17 Teşrin'i evvel 1926 tarihli heyet-i vekile kararıyla kabul olunan ve irade-i milliyeye iktiran etmiştir. Suret-i musaddıkası mefufen takdim olunur. İki yüz elli nüsha olarak tab edilmesi için alâ matbaa müdüriyetine de ayrıca emir verilmiştir efendim.

Alâ Talim ve Terbiye Reisi

Maarif Vekaleti Müfettişlerinin Hukuk ve Selahiyet Vazifelerine Dair Talimatname

1. Teşkilat

Madde 1: Maarif vekaleti teftiş heyeti, terbiye ve tedrisat maarif müesseselerinin idari muamelatına ve Sınayi-i Nefise'ye müteallik bilcümle hususatı teftiş ve murakabe, muallimleri ve idare memurlarını tenvir ve irşad ile mükellef doğrudan doğruya vekalet makamına merbut olmak üzere lüzumu kadar müfettişlikten mürekkeptir.

Madde 2: Vekalet müfettişleri iki kısımdır: Merkez ve Mıntıka müfettişleri. Merkez müfettişleri vazifelerinin nev'-i mahiyetine göre üçe ayrılırlar:

- (1) Terbiye ve tedrisat müfettişleri.
- (2) İdare müfettişleri.
- (3) Kütüphane, Sınayi-i Nefise ve müze müfettişleri.

Madde 3: Terbiye ve tedrisat müfettişleri, münhasıran mekteplerin tedrisi ve terbiyevi hayatlarını teftiş ve murakabe ve bu hususta idare memurlarına ve muallimlere rehberlik etmekle mükellef olup programa dahil muayyen bir ders zümresinden yüksek bir ihtisas salahiyet sahibi olmak üzere tanınan veya terbiye işlerinde muvaffakiyetleri ile taayyüz eden muallim müdürler arasından intihab olunurlar.

Madde 4: İdare müfettişleri mekteplerin idari ve maddi hususatını teftiş ve vekaletçe kendilerine havale edilecek meseleler hakkında tahkikat icra ederler. Bunlar, tecrübeli ve muktedir maarif ve mekteb müdürleri arasından seçilir.

Madde 5: Üçüncü zümreye dahil bulunan müfettişler münhasıran kütüphane, Sınayi-i Nefise ve Asar-ı Atika işleri ile iştiğal ve bu işlere müteallik meselede vekaleti tenvir eden mütehassıslardır.

Madde 6: Mıntıka müfettişleri teftiş ve murakabe hususatinde maarif eminlerine muavenette bulunmak üzere vekaletçe tevkik edilen müfettişlerden bunların adedleri mıntıkların vüsatine ve müessesatın kesafetine göre tayin edilir.

Merkez Müfettişlerinin Evsafı

Madde 7: Terbiye ve tedrisat müfettişlerinin tayinlerinde aranacak evsaf bervech-i atidir.

- (1) Yaşı otuzdan aşağı olmamak.
- (2) Kendi ihtisası dahilinde bir eser tercüme edecek derecede garb lisanslardan birine vakıf bulunmak.
- (3) Dar'u'l-Fünun şubelerin birinden veya mekteb-i Ali'den mezun olmak.
- (4) La-akal beş sene müddetle orta tedrisat müesseselerinden daimi muallimlikte bulunmuş olmak.

Madde 8: İdare müfettişi tayin edileceklerin 7. Maddenin ilk üç fıkrasındaki evsafa haiz olmaları bundan maada orta tedrisat müesseselerinde veya maarif müdürlüklerinde mıntıka müfettişliklerinde la-akal beş sene hizmet etmiş bulunmaları lazımdır.

Mıntıka Müfettişlerinin Evsafı

Madde 9: Mıntıka müfettişlerinin haiz olmaları icab eden evsaf bervech-i atidir.

- (1) Yaşları yirmisekizden aşağı bulunmamak,
- (2) Bir garb lisansı, bu lisanda yazılmış eserlerden istifade edecek kadar vakıf bulunmak,
- (3) Daru'l-fünun şubelerinde birinden veya bir mekteb-i aliden mezun olmak,

(4) En az üç sene orta tedarisat müesseselerinden birinde muallimlikte bulunmak.

Müfettişlerin Suret-i İntihab ve Tayinleri

Madde 10: Terbiye ve tedarisat müfettişleri talim ve terbiye heyeti idare ve mıntika müfettişleri ise müdürler encümeni tarafından gösterilen namzetler yanından vekaletçe tefrik ve tayin olunurlar.

Madde 11: Sınayi-i nefise, müze ve kütüphaneler müfettişleri müsteşarın riyaseti altında ictimai' edecek olan sınayi-i nefise kütüphane ve müze müdürlerinden mürekkeb bir encümenin gözeteceği namzedler arasından vekaletçe intihab ve tayin olunurlar.

Madde 12: Vekalet müfettişlerinin memuriyetleri tasdik-i aliye arz edilir.

Madde 13: Teftiş heyetine aid evrakı tanzim etmek defterleri ve hesabı tutmak üzere bir kalem heyeti mevcuttur. Kalem muamelatına merkez müfettişleri münavebe ile nezaret ederler.

Vazife ve Selahiyet

Terbiye ve Tedrisat Müfettişleri

Madde 14: Terbiye ve tedarisat müfettişleri yalnız mütehasıs buldukları derslerin teftişatıyla iktifa etmeyip mekteplerinde mukarrat layık ve milliyetperver Türk Cumhuriyetinin mefkurelerini imanla müdafaa edecek ve Türk cemiyetinin medeni kıymet ve seviyesini yükseltecek vatandaşlar yetiştirecek feyizli birer terbiye muhiti evvela bilmeleri için ithali lazim gelen tedbirler ve kararlara esas teşkil edecek tedkikatı da icra ederler.

Madde 15: Terbiye ve tedarisat müfettişlerinin tedkikatına mihver olacak başlıca mevzular şunlardır.

- (1) Terbiye ve tedarisat nokta-i nazarından mektebin maddi cephesi
- (2) Mekteplerin vekaletçe tayin edilen gayelere vusul emrindeki mesaisi.
- (3) İdare ve talim unsurlarının yek diğerleri ve talebe ile münasebetleri.
- (4) Bedeni terbiye ve izcilik faaliyetleri.
- (5) Mektebin saha ve saati ve talebe arasında yapılan sıhhi ve terbiyevi tedkikler ve elde edilen neticeleri,
- (6) Talebe için tutulan pedagojik fişler ve yaşları veya sicil defterleri.
- (7) Terbiye meclislerinin mesaisi ile mukarraratın terbiyevi kıymeti.
- (8) Mütehasıs buldukları dersleri tedaris eden muallimlerin ilmi kabiliyet ve kudretleri takip ettikleri tedaris usullerinin terbiyevi kıymeti.
- (9) Laboratuvar ve atölye mesaisi ve hasıl olan neticeleri.
- (8) Talebe kütüphaneleri ve bunlardan edilen istifadenin derecesi, talebenin en çok okuduğu kitaplar gazete ve mecmuaları.
- (9) Talebenin sınıf harici meşguliyetleri ve bu meşguliyetlerin sureti tanzim ve idaresi.
- (10) Talebenin vatani, ictimai ve iktisadi faaliyeti: Müsamereler ve konferanslar: Talebeyi, ictimai ve iktisadi hayata hazırlayacak teşkilatı talebe arasından teavün ve tesanüd duygularının inkişafını istihdaf eden tedbirler: adab-ı muaşeret nokta-i nazarından talebenin vaziyeti Milli duyguların temine ve takviyesine matuf faaliyetler: Aileye merbutiyet hisleri, Kız mekteplerinde kızlarımızın aile hayatında deruhde edecekleri vazifelere suret ihzarları ilh...
1. Talebenin mekteb faaliyetlerine derecei iştirakleri.
2. Mektebin inzibat telakkisi
3. Talebenin ilmi ve mesleki temayülleri ve bu temayülleri doğuran ve besleyen esbab.
4. Mektebin ve aile muhitlerinin terbiye işinde teşrik mesailerine atfedilen ehemmiyetin derecesi ve bu hususta sarfedilen mesainin kıymeti.
- 5.

Madde 16: Vekalet ihtisas ve selahiyetlerini itimad ettiği daveti de ayrıca veya müfettişler refakatinde olarak teftiş memur edebilir.

Madde 17: Terbiye ve tedarisat müfettişleri her sene ders senesi başında talim ve terbiye heyeti azalarının iştirakiyle akd edecekleri içtimada teftiş programlarını ihzar ederler. Vekaletçe tasdik edilen programlar dairesinde faaliyete geçerler. Ancak tedarisat dairesi veya talim ve terbiye heyeti tarafından lazim gösterildiği takdirde program haricinde de teftişat icrasına mecburdurlar.

Madde 18: Tedrisat teftişatı şu şekilde icra edilecektir:

- (1) Müfettiş evvela muallimin ilmi kudreti ve tedris usulü hakkında esaslı bir fikir ve kanaat edinebilmek için muhtelif sınıflarda ve verdiği derslerde hazır bulunup ve nazarı dikkati celb eden ehemmiyetli noktaları tespit eder.
- (2) Sınıfların derste umumi seviyesini anlamak maksadıyla talebeyi teftiş tarihine kadar gösterilen mübahase müteallik sualler iradıyla seri' ve şifahi bir yoklama icra edebildiği gibi arzu ettiği zaman evvelden hazırladığı bazı suallerin tahriri cevaplarını da talebeden isteyebilir.
- (3) Müfettiş tedkikatın neticesinde not ettiği noktalar üzerinden muallimi müdavelei efkar eder. Kendisine hatalarını işaret eder.
- (4) Müfettiş lüzum görürse muhtelif sınıflarda muallimin huzuruyla numune dersleri verir. Muallimlere tedris usulleri ve müterakimi terbiye cereyanları hakkında konferanslar tertib eder.

Madde 19: Müfettiş birkaç gün müesseselerde kalır. Talebinin gece ve gündüz hayatına karışır. Mektebin hayatını ders mütalaa ve teftiş saatlerinde müşahade eder ve 15. maddede zikr edilen mevzuları vesair hakkında doğru ve esaslı malumat toplamaya çalışır. Bu tedkikatı müteakip idare ve talim heyetlerini toplayarak onlara müşahadelerini kanaat ve mütalaalarını söyler.

İdare Müfettişleri

Madde 20: İdare müfettişleri vekaletçe lüzum his edildiği takdirde teftişat ve tahkikata gönderilir.

Madde 21: İdare müfettişlerinin vazifeleri bervech-i atidir:

- (1) Vekaletten alacağı talimat dairesinde maarif emniğine ait muamelatı teftiş etmek.
- (2) Eminler ve mıntika müfettişleri tarafından mekteblerin idari ve hesabi muamelatı hakkında verilecek raporları vekaletçe kafi görülmediği takdirde bu cihetleri teftiş etmek.
- (3) Vekalet tarafından kendilerine havale edilecek muhtelif meseleleri tedkik ve bu hususta beyan mütalaa eylemek.

Madde 22: İdare müfettişleri devam memuriyetinde mahzur gördükleri memurları işinden el çektirmek selahiyetine haizdirler. Bu takdirde keyfiyeti yirmi dört saat zarfında vekaletle bildirmek ve emine bildirmek mecburiyetindedirler.

Madde 23: Vekaletçe görülen lüzum üzerine bu mıntıkada hin bu meselenin tahkikatında vekalet merkez müfettişleri memur edilirse emin mıntika müfettişleri ve maarif müdürleri teftişleri neticelerinden kendilerine malumat i'ta ve evrak tahkikiyesi tevdi ederler.

Asarı Atika, Müze ve Kütüphane Müfettişleri

Madde 24: Asar-ı Atika ve Sına-i Nefise ve kütüphane müfettişlerinin ve vazifeleri şunlardır.

- (1) Vekaletçe tasdik edilecek program dahilinde her şey tedkikatta bulunan ve tetkikatlarının neticeleri raporla devaire aidesine bildirmek bu hususta eserleri, risaleleri telif etmek, konferansları vermek mahalli etnoğrafya müzelerinin tesisinde vilayetleri belediye dairelerine ve müessesata muavenette bulunmak.
- (2) Asar-ı Atika ve Sına-i Nefise'nin ve kütüphanelerin **muhafazasında alakadar** makam ve memurların gösterdikleri gayret veya tekasül hakkında mütalaalarını bildirmek Asar-ı Atika hafriyatına.
- (3) Vekalet namına nezaret ve memleketin muhtelif mıntıklarının tarihlerine esas teşkil edecek malumatı cem' etmek. Vesaik-i menabi göstermek biyografiler neşr etmek. Mahalli Asar-ı Atika müzelerinin..... tesisinde vilayetlere ve belediye dairelerine rehberlik etmek.
- (4) Kütüphaneleri teftiş ve bunların intizam dairesinde idaresini kütüphanelerde mevcut kıymetli el yazılarını matbu kitapların hüsnü muhafazasını temin hafız kitapları tenvir ve irşad etmek.

Mıntika Müfettişleri

Madde 25: Mıntika müfettişi kendi mıntıkası dahilinde bulunan maarif daire ve müesseselerinin bilcümle hususatını murakabe ve teftiş ederler.

Madde 26: Eminlerle mıntika müfettişleri arasında ihtilaf zühur ettiği takdirde bu ihtilafın tedkikine vekalet müfettişlerinden bir zat memur edilir.

Madde 27: Her sene vekaletçe tayin edilecek bir mahalde merkez müfettişlerinden birisinin riyaseti altında mıntika müfettişleri ictima ederek talim ve terbiye heyetinin tensib edeceği maddeler hakkında mukararat teftişlerinin memleket mesarifi için daha müessir ve müfid olması çarelerini taharri ve tesbit ederler.

Madde 28. Mıntika müfettişleri maarif eminleri tarafından gösterilen lüzüm üzerine dahi teftişat yaparlar.

Teftişat ve Tahkikata Dair Müteferrik Maddeler

Madde 29: Vekalet müfettişleri zamanlarını ne suretle isti'mal ettikleri mesai cetvellerini derç ederek her ay nihayetinde vekaletе gönderirler.

Madde 30: Vekalet müfettişleri aşağıdaki ahvalden mücanebet etmeleri lazımdır.

A-Gidilecek mahalli ve teftiş icra edilecek daireyi ve teftişin vaktini alakadar memurlara haber vermek. Bu muallimler ve maarif memurları nezdinde misafir kalmak.

B-Tahkikat esnasında memur ve muallimlerin haysiyetini ve izzeti nefsinı ihlal etmek.

C-İsticvab edilen veyahut al'el usul malumatına müracaat olunan kimseleri itiraf hakikati mecbur etmek için onlara hilaf-ı vaki ahval vukuatından bahs etmek.

D-Memur ve muallimlerle ahz ve i'ta veya herhangi bir ikraz ve istikraz muamelesinde bulunmak.

E-Herhangi bir memuriyet veya muallimi re'sen namzed irae etmek.

Madde 31: Vekalet müfettişleri başladıkları teftişat ve tahkikatı ikmale mecbur olup esbabı mania hasebiyle terk mecburiyeti gördükleri takdirde keyfiyeti yaşadıkları derhal vekaletе ihbar ederler. Başlamış olan teftişat ve tahkikatın terk ve te'hirini yalnız maarif vekaleti mezuniyet verebilir.

Madde 32: Vekalet müfettişleri her teftiş için ayrı rapor tanzim etmek mecburiyetindedir. Raporlar her daireye tevdi nabil olabilecek surette ayrı ayrı kısımlardan mürekkebe olacaktır. Raporlarda ahval ve muamelatın vazih ve kati şekilleriyle tespit ve kafi derecede tamik edilmiş olması ve beyan edilen mutalaatın kanuni sebeplere mukarrarata ilmi müsbet fikirlere istinad etmesi lazımdır.

Madde 33: Vekalet müfettişleri bu mesele hakkında yapacakları ibtidai tahkikattan sonra lüzum his ederlerse tahkikata devam ve bu takdirde hakkında şikayet vaki olan memur şikayetlerini bildirerek her biri için sarih ve kati cevaplarla kendisini müdafaaya davet ederler.

Madde 34: Vekalet müfettişleri tahkikat esnasında şahit istimaina lüzum görülürse her şahit ayrı ayrı dinlemek ve hakkında tahkikat icra edilen memuru itham eden esbabı her şahit hakiki izhara vesile olacak şekilde sormak ve müşahadelerin ifadelerini aynen zapt edip kendilerine imza veya tahtim ettirmek mecburiyetindedirler.

Madde 35: Tahkikat esnasında isticvabına lüzum görülen zevati maarif memurlarından iseler doğrudan doğruya davet ve isticvab edileceklerdir. Vilayet diğer vekaletlere merbut memurların ifadelerine müracaat olunmak icab ederse ifadeleri amirleri vasıtasıyla alınacaktır. Devlet hizmetinde bulunmayanların ifadelerini almak icab ederse müfettiş kendileri yeni davet eyler. Ve bu davete eylemeyenler mahalli zabıt marifetiyle celb olunurlar.

Madde 36: Vekalet müfettişleri tahkikatın hitamında evrak-ı tahkikiyesi vekaletе göndermekle iktifa etmeyerek muzih bir fezleke tanzim etmek mecburiyetindedirler.

Madde 37: Vekalet müfettişleri maarife müteallik inşaat ve levazım ihzaratına memur zevatın ve komisyonların muamelatı ve hesabatında suiistimal vukuuna muttali olunca inşaat ve ihzarat maarif bütçesinden ve maarif memuru marifetiyle icra olunduğu takdirde maarif müfettişleri tahkikat olaylarını icra ve evrakını vekalet veya vilayete tevdi ederler. İnşaat ve ihzaratı idare-i hususiye bütçesinden ve encümeni daimi vilayet kararı ve ve marifetiyle icra olunduğu takdirde müfettiş, vekaleti ve vilayeti haberdar eder. Vekaletin Dahiliye vekaletine vaki olacak işarı üzerine mülkiye müfettişi tahkikatı vaziyet eder. O tahkikatın fezlekesi sureti maarif vekaletine tevdi olunur.

Madde 38: Talim ve terbiye dairesi lüzum gördüğü takdirde mıntikalarda mekteblerin terbiye ve tedrisatını teftiş için müfettiş Vekaletinden isteyebilir.

Raporlar Üzerine Cereyan Edecek Muamelat

Madde 39: İdare müfettişlerinin raporları teftiş kalemince kayd edildikten sonra dairelere havale edilir. Terbiye ve tedrisat müfettişlerinin verdiği raporlar talim ve terbiye heyetince tedkik ve oraca bunların muallimlere aid olan kısımlarının suretleri çıkarılarak tedrisat dairelerine tevdi edilir. Ve asılları talim ve terbiye dairesinde hıfz olunur. Sına-i Nefiseye ve kütüphanelere müteallik raporlar aid oldukları dairelere gönderilir.

Madde 40: Mıntika müfettişleri raporlarını emirlere verirler. Eminler bu rapor üzerine cereyan eden muameleden müfettişleri haberdar etmek mecburiyetindedir.

Madde 41: Emin, mıntika müfettişinin raporu kafi derecede müdellil ve kanaatbahş bulmazsa madde tasrih ederek noksanların ikmalini teftişat ve tahkikat ve tamikını talep edebilirler.

Madde 42: Mıntika müfettişi raporu emin tarafından mevki-i muameleye konmadığı ve neticesiz kaldığı takdirde vekalet müracaat keyfiyeti ihbar etmek selahiyetine maliktir.

Malik 43: Mıntika müfettişleri her ders senesi nihayetinde bu senelik teftiş netayicine nazaran mıntikalarının irfan hayatına müteallik fikir ve mütalaalarını maarif eminliklerine tevdi edecekleri layihalarla vekalet bildirimler. Bu layihalar talim ve terbiye dairesine havale olunur.

Madde 44: Merkez ve mıntika müfettişlerinin ehemmiyetli ve şayana dikkat raporu ve layihaları maarif vekaleti mecmuasında ilave edilecek kısım mahsusda neşredilir.

Defterler ve Dosyalar

Madde 45: Vekalet müfettişlerinin tutmağa mecbur oldukları defterler ve dosyalar şunlardır:

- A-Kendilerine gönderilen bilcümle mahruratin asılları.
- B- Yazdıkları mahruratin müsveddeleri.
- C- Maarife müteallik kevanun nizam ve talimatnameler.
- D- Zamanın ne suretle istimal olunduğunu gösteren mesai cetvellerinin suretleri.
- E- Her ay nihayetinde vekalet gönderilecek maaş, harcırah ve yevmiye tahkikat cetvellerinin suretleri.

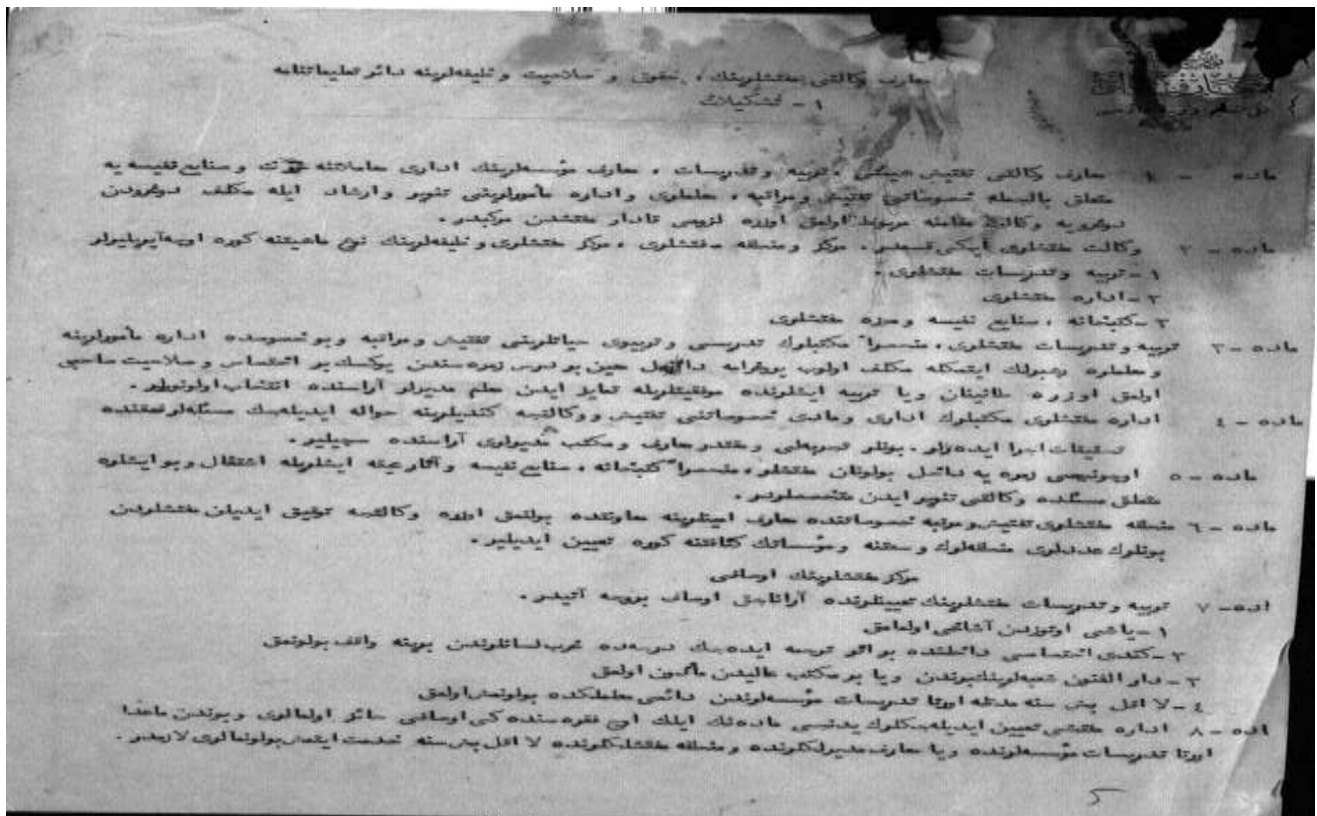
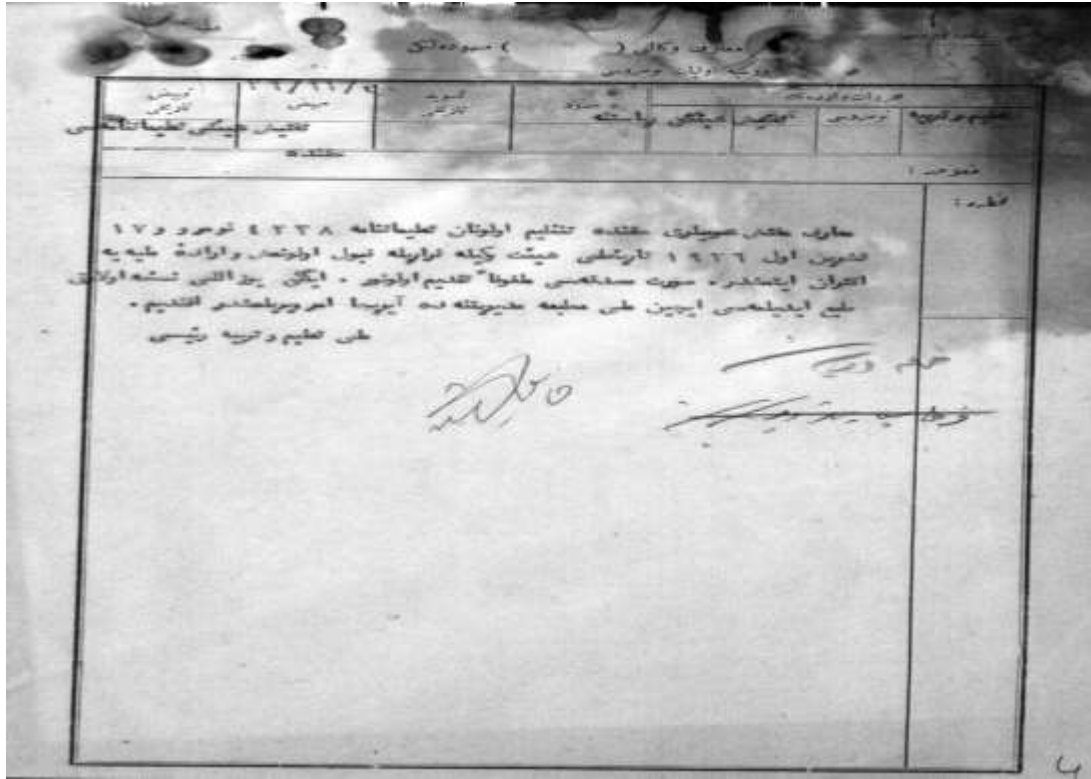
Madde 46: İşbu talimatnamenin neşrinden evvel mevcut talimatname ahkamı mensuttur.

Madde 47: İşbu talimatname neşri tarihinden muteberdir.

Madde 48: İşbu talimatnamenin ahkâmının icrasına maarif vekaleti memurdur.

Appendix 2

Law about Inspectors of education ministry and their authorisation (Ottoman Arabic Alphabet Version).



Full Length Research Paper

Relationship between teachers' perceptions of mobbing and their problem solving skills

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The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between classroom teachers' perception of mobbing phenomenon and their problem solving skills. The sample of the study is composed of 208 classroom teachers working in the primary schools in the Osmangazi district of Bursa during the 2013-2014 educational year. The data required for the study was collected using a data collection tool, with the first section, the "Personal Information Form"; the second section, the "Negative Acts Questionnaire (NAQ)"; and the third section, the "Problem Solving Inventory". According to the findings obtained, the teachers' perceptions of mobbing phenomenon were at "Never" level; no significant differences were found according to the variables of gender, marital status and educational status; however, a significant difference was found according to the variable of age. The teachers' problem solving skills were at low level. It was determined that the teachers' problem solving skills did not differ according to the variables: gender, marital status, age and educational status. It was also determined that there was a low level of significant relationship between the teachers' perceptions of mobbing phenomenon and their problem solving skills.

Key words: Mobbing, problem solving skills, classroom teacher.

INTRODUCTION

Mobbing covers such behaviors systematically exhibited towards employees by their superiors, subordinates or equal-rank colleagues as ill treatment, threatening, violence, intimidation and insulting (Tınaz, 2006). In order to describe negative behaviors such as mobbing, those behaviors need to be repeated systematically for at least six months and once a week (Leyman, 1996). That is to say, the phenomenon of mobbing is not a stable but a

continuously changing process. It was determined that the shortest mobbing duration is 6 months; the average exhibition duration is 15 months; the main period during which the permanent and heavy marks of the process become evident is 29 to 46 months (Tınaz, 2006). Leymann takes this process in five stages, namely conflict, aggressiveness, involvement of administration, being declared as difficulty-mind fault and compulsory

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resignation and being dismissed (Davenport et al., 2003). Leymann (1996) stated in a study that the risk for a person to be subjected to mobbing during a working life of 30 years is 25%.

Leymann (1990) identified 45 separate mobbing behaviors and gathered these under five different groups according to the characteristics of behaviors. These affect one's show of him/herself and the establishment of communication, attacks on social relationships, attacks on reputation, attacks on a person's life quality and professional status and direct attacks on a person's health. The continuous and systematic exhibition of these behaviors is intentional harassment.

When mobbing is not taken seriously, it might load great costs both on organizations and individuals. It may not only create physical and psychological problems in victims but it may also cause big losses in organizations by leading to loss of workforce (Kirel, 2008).

Problem solving is defined as "a process requiring a series of efforts aiming to eliminate difficulties encountered in order to reach a certain goal" (Izgar et al., 2004). Being knowledgeable of the concept of problem solving is not sufficient to solve a problem. A person with developed problem solving skills can effectively use knowledge in problems which she/he encounters. However, a person with underdeveloped problem solving skills does not use knowledge functionally but instead he/she just carries it (Altun, 2013). The problem solving process is composed of the steps of recognition and identification of the problem, determination of the goal, formation and evaluation of solution alternatives, making decision and evaluation (Kösterelioglu, 2007). In order to solve a problem, a careful and meticulous work should be done. It is necessary that an individual should gather information, adapt and use this information within a framework of a strategic plan, make predictions and evaluate them for a solution. And for these to take place, an important period of time is needed. However, since a teacher as a victim of mobbing undergoes a stressful working life in a negative interaction environment, he/she does not generally find the sufficient time needed to solve a problem. Even if he/she finds the necessary time, he/she may have difficulty finding a solution due to the systematic character of the problem solving process and the stress under which he/she lives (Çetin, 2011).

Solving a problem depends on many variables. A problem's suitability to an individual's age, degree of having fore knowledge or previous training for a solution, ability, health, attitude, benefits of a solution for the individual, personality characteristics, are the variables which may have an effect on problem solving (Ulupınar, 1997).

Problem solving may differ from individual to individual and from problem to problem. Coping with problems depends on a person's problem solving ability, cognitive self-evaluation and ability to use his/her problem solving skills by focusing on the problem (Heppner et al., 1985).

Heppner and Baker (1997) stated problem solving and

the aspect of coping as follows:

1. The aspect of coping ability in general: Coping focuses on the problem and emotion.
2. Some competencies related to the definition of the problem: For example, creating alternatives and the ability to make decisions.
3. Cognitive processes: For example, consequential thinking.
4. Self-appreciation as a problem-solver: The individual feels self-sufficient and self-confident about the matter of problem solving.

In the solution of personal problems, individuals take part in the problem solving process according to their own personality characteristics and differences. In previous studies, it was found that problem solving is related to physical health (Elliot, 1992), opportunity to advance career (Heppner and Krieshok, 1983) and academic performance (Elliot et al., 1990).

According to a study carried out in Scandinavia, the phenomenon of mobbing, which can be encountered in every workplace, is observed more commonly in non-profit educational institutions and the health sector when compared with bigger enterprises due to fewer protection mechanisms (Davenport et al., 2003). Mobbing is performed and legitimized in workplaces where management weakness and organization disorder are higher with the aim of achieving discipline and increasing productivity (Atman, 2012). For this reason, for teachers to perform their duties well, necessary conditions should be created and factors hindering their duties should be determined.

Teachers managing to solve problems which they encounter in daily life may fall into the focal point of mobbing behaviors exhibited by their colleagues in institutions where they work. As stated by Davenport et al. (2003), teachers working in educational institutions have more sensitive personality structure. The teachers having problem solving skills and aiming to provide their students with guidance in this direction are perceived by people around them as those who are promising in their professions and have the potential to build a successful career. Attackers exhibiting mobbing behaviors toward these successful teachers are the people who are hungry for interest, need praises, have an inflated self-perception and, according to Leymann, are weak, insecure and coward and resort to intimidation for the compensation of their own insufficiencies (Kök, 2006).

In order to lead a healthy and happy life, people should be able to solve problems which they encounter effectively. A successful and healthy life depends on people's ability to solve problems. With solutions created as a result of encountered problems, people try to protect their psychological, social and behavioral integrities. For problems which people encounter do not only decrease their productivity, attachment, life satisfaction, but they may also affect their emotional relationships with their

close environment and physiological health negatively (Basmacı, 1998). It is likely that teachers who are unable to solve problems which they face may be subjected to mobbing by their administrators, colleagues, students' parents and students in institutions where they work. In clinical psychological studies, it is reported that it is a higher probability that people who abstain from claiming their rights and defending themselves strongly avoid conflicts, are honest and well-intentioned and chosen as mobbing victims (Kök, 2006).

Relationships between mobbing and different variables were examined. Cemaloğlu (2007) examined the relationships between the leadership styles and mobbing; Demirdağ (2017) examined the relationships between mobbing and organizational justice and organizational confidence; Mutlu (2013) and Karahan and Yılmaz (2014) examined the relationship between mobbing and organizational commitment; Gün (2016) examined the relationship between mobbing and job satisfaction. Konaklıoğlu and Özışık Yapıcı (2016) examined the usability of the conflict resolution methods in terms of the solution of psychological violence. Starting from these studies that obtain significant relationships between mobbing and different variables, it can be stated that developing communication ways, increasing organizational commitment, organizational confidence, organizational justice, developing leadership styles and problem solving skills, and increasing conflict resolution methods will help decrease mobbing.

One of the most strategic parts of the education system, primary school teachers' falling victim to mobbing by the school administration, their colleagues, students' parents and students is an important factor decreasing organizational commitment, productivity and deadening problem solving skills. Today, this situation is more frequently encountered. In such a situation causing negative social, psychological, physical consequences, individuals should firstly be aware of this situation and then help to find the necessary strength in themselves to struggle with it. Teachers should be able to use their problem solving skills while struggling with the phenomenon of mobbing of which they are aware is of importance, in order to overcome their problems. This study aimed to determine the level of relationship between the classroom teachers' perception of the phenomenon of mobbing and their problem solving skills. To achieve this aim, answers were sought for the following questions:

- 1) At which level are the classroom teachers' perceptions of the phenomenon of mobbing? Is there a significant difference between the classroom teachers' perceptions of mobbing according to the variables: gender, age, marital status and educational status?
- 2) At which level is the classroom teachers' problem solving skills? Do the classroom teachers' problem

solving skills differ significantly according to the variables: gender, age, marital status and educational status?

3) Is there a significant relationship between the classroom teachers' perceptions of the phenomenon of mobbing and their problem solving skills?

METHODOLOGY

The research model

This research employed the relational scanning model, a research model aiming to determine the degree or existence of simultaneous change among two or more variables (Karasar, 2011).

Population and sample of the study

The population of the study was composed of the classroom teachers in the Osmangazi District of Bursa during the 2013-2014 educational year. The sample of the study was composed of 208 classroom teachers at the primary schools in the Osmangazi District of Bursa. The descriptive statistics of the teachers in the sample is given in Table 1.

It is shown in Table 1 that 67.8% (141) of the participant (classroom teachers) were female and 32.2% (67) were male; 51.9% (108) of them were aged between 23 and 31 years, 32.7% (68) of them were aged between 32 and 40 years, 11.5% (24) of them were aged between 41 and 49 years and 3.8% (8) of them were aged over 50 years; 62.5% (130) of them were married and 37.5% (78) were single; 3.3% (7) had an associate degree, 88.5% (184) had an undergraduate degree and 8.2% (17) had a post-graduate degree.

Data collection tool

In order to collect data, a measurement tool composed of 3 sections was used. In this section, there are determining questions aiming to determine the teachers' personal characteristics (gender, age, marital status, educational status, satisfaction from the school of service and the frequency of having problems). In the second section, the 'Negative Acts Questionnaire (NAQ)' developed by Einarsen and Raknes (1997) and adapted by Cemaloğlu (2007) into Turkish' was used. The NAQ is a five-point Likert type scale composed of 21 questions aiming to research into the phenomenon of psychological intimidation. The levels of participation in the opinions included in this scale were scored as 1 (Never), 2 (Sometimes), 3 (Once a Month), 4 (Once a Week) and 5 (Every Day). Moreover, in the third section, the Problem Solving Inventory developed by Heppner and Peterson (1982) and adapted by Şahin et al. (1993) into Turkish was used. The inventory is a 6-point Likert type scale composed of 35 questions. The inventory was scored as 1 (I never behave in this way), 2 (I rarely behave in this way), 3 (I sometimes behave in this way), 4 (I often behave in this way), 5 (I mostly behave in this way) and 6 (I always behave in this way). In the scoring procedure, the items numbered 9, 22 and 29 were not scored. The items numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17, 21, 25, 26, 30 and 34 were inversely scored. It was assumed that these items represented sufficient problem solving skills. The total score which could be taken from the scale varied between 32 and 192; the scores varying between 32 and 80 indicated a high level of problem solving skill and the ones varying between 81 and 192 indicated a low level of problem solving skill (Şavaşır and Şahin, 1997; Üstündağ and Beşoluk, 2012). A high score (the highest score was 192) was interpreted as the absence of the ability to find

Table 1. Descriptive statistics belonging to the sample group according to the variables.

Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Female	141	67.8
	Male	67	32.2
Age	23-31	108	51.9
	32-40	68	32.7
	41-49	24	11.5
	Over 50	8	3.8
Marital status	Married	130	62.5
	Single	78	37.5
Graduation	Associate degree	7	3.3
	Undergraduate degree	184	88.5
	Post-graduate degree	17	8.2
Total	-	208	100

effective solutions to problems. A low score (the lowest score was 32) was interpreted as the effectiveness in problem solving and behaviors and attitudes related to successful problem solving and the individual's trusting his/her problem solving ability (Şahin et al., 1993; Ünüvar, 2003; Erdoğan, 2004).

Data analysis

The answers given to the data collection tools were coded and loaded into the SPSS 20.0 statistical package program. In analysis of the data, the arithmetic mean, frequency, standard deviation, variance analysis was used and, in all the statistical analyses, the significance level of 0.05 was taken as a basis. The teachers' perceptions of mobbing and problem solving skill levels were described by using the arithmetic means. In order to examine if the answers showed normal distribution, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used. The test results are given in Table 2.

As shown in Table 2 ($p= 0.000$; $p< 0.05$), it was determined that the answers given to the NAQ did not show a normal distribution. As stated by Baştürk (2010), it was considered appropriate to use the Mann-Whitney U test, one of the non-parametric statistical methods and the equivalence of the t-test with two independent samples (independent samples t-test) used in the parametric tests and the Kruskal-Wallis H test, one of the non-parametric tests and the equivalence of the between-groups one-way analysis of variance used in the parametric tests in the analysis of the data. The problem solving inventory ($p= 0.505$; $p> 0.05$) showed a normal distribution and as a result of the t-test with two independent samples (Independent Samples t test) and the ANOVA analysis used in parametric tests, findings were reached. For classification of the answers given by the teachers to the scale items, the formula,

$$\text{Distribution Interval} = \frac{\text{The highest value} - \text{The lowest value}}{\text{Number of degrees}} = 0.80$$

was used and, according to this formula, the distribution interval of the participation level section was found to be 0.80. By adding this

value to the degree coefficients, the following expectation level intervals were determined. For the NAQ, the participation level was graded as follows:

Levels of participation

- 1.00 - 1.81 Never
- 1.82 - 2.61 Sometimes
- 2.62 - 3.41 Once a month
- 3.42 - 4.21 Once a week
- 4.22 - 5.00 Every day

RESULTS

Teachers' perceptions of mobbing phenomenon

The results indicating the classroom teachers' perceptions of mobbing phenomenon are presented in Table 3. As shown in Table 3, it was determined that the teachers' perceptions related to the phenomenon of mobbing were at 'never' level ($\bar{X} = 1.48$). Teachers not subjected to mobbing in environments at their schools of service firstly feel being in a more comfortable environment. The existence of secure, peaceful and healthy environments provided to teachers so as to perform their duties of training next generations of the country at the top level and their not being subjected to mobbing is a pleasing situation.

The teachers' perceptions of mobbing according to the variables: Gender and marital status

The results of the Mann-Whitney U test applied to determine the classroom teachers' perceptions of mobbing according to their gender and marital status are

Table 2. Distributions of the Negative Acts Questionnaire and the Problem Solving Inventory

Kolmogorov-Smirnov	N	\bar{X}	Ss	K-Smirnov Z	p
Mobbing (NAQ)	208	28.55	10.44	3.384	0.000*
Problem Solving	208	82.07	19.57	0.825	0.505

Table 3. The teachers' perceptions of mobbing phenomenon.

Parameter	N	\bar{X}	SD	Level
Teachers' perceptions of mobbing	208	1.48	14.10	Never

Table 4. The teachers' perceptions of mobbing according to the variables of gender and marital status (Mann-Whitney U test)

Mobbing		N	Sum of ranks	Mean of ranks	U	Z	p
Gender	Female	141	14664.00	104.00	4653,000	-0.175	0.861
	Male	67	7072.00	105.55			
Marital status	Married	130	13334.00	102.57	4819.000	-0.600	0.548
	Single	78	8402.00	107.72			

presented in Table 4. As shown in Table 4, it was observed that the classroom teachers' perceptions of mobbing did not differ significantly according to the variables: gender ($p= 0.861$; $p> 0.05$) and marital status ($p= 0.548$; $p> 0.05$).

The teachers' perceptions of mobbing according to the variables: Age and educational status

In order to determine the classroom teachers' perceptions of mobbing according to the variables: age and educational status, the Kruskal Wallis H test was applied. The test results are presented in Table 5.

As shown in Table 5, it was observed that while the classroom teachers' perceptions of mobbing did not differ significantly according to their educational status ($p= 0.481$; $p> 0.05$), they differed significantly according to the variable of age ($p= 0.003$; $p<0.05$). In the groups where a difference was found, in order to determine which group differences were found, the paired-comparison Mann-Whitney U test was applied. When it was examined according to the variable, age, it was determined that the mobbing perceptions of the teachers aged between 23 and 31 were higher than those of the teachers aged between 32 and 40 and the ones aged between 41 and 49.

The teachers' problem solving skills

The result related to the classroom teachers' problem solving skills according to the problem solving inventory

mean scores is presented in Table 6. As shown in Table 6, it was observed that the classroom teachers' problem solving skill levels were low with a mean score of 82.07.

The teachers' problem solving skills according to the variables: Gender and marital status

The results of the independent samples t test applied in order to determine the teachers' problem solving skills according to the variables of gender and marital status are presented in Table 7.

As shown in Table 7, it was observed that the classroom teachers' problem solving skills did not differ significantly according to the variables: gender ($p= 0.446$; $p> 0.05$) and marital status ($p= 0.629$; $p> 0.05$).

The teachers' problem solving skills according to the variables: Age and educational status

In order to determine the classroom teachers' problem solving skills according to the variables: age and educational status, One-Way ANOVA was applied. The analysis results are presented in Table 8. As shown in Table 8, the classroom teachers' problem solving skills did not differ significantly according to the variables, age ($p= 0.972$; $p> 0.05$) and educational status ($p= 0.287$; $p> 0.05$).

Relationship between the teachers' perceptions of mobbing and their problem solving skills

The third sub-problem of the study was stated as "Is

Table 5. The teachers' perceptions of mobbing according to the variables of age and educational status (Kruskal Wallis H test).

Mobbing		n	Mean rank	SD	χ^2	p	Difference
Age	a) 23-31	108	118.54	3	14.194	0.003*	a-b a-c
	b) 32-40	68	87.45				
	c) 41-49	24	85.52				
	d) 50+	8	116.88				
Educational status	Associate degree	7	84.86	2	1.463	0.481	-
	Undergraduate degree	184	104.12				
	Post-graduate degree	17	116.68				

Table 6. The teachers' problem solving skill levels

Problem solving inventory	n	X	SD
Total	208	82.07	19.57

Table 7. The teachers' problem solving skills according to their gender and marital status (Independent Samples T Test).

Problem solving		n	X	SD	t	p
Gender	Female	141	81.33	19.00	-0.764	0.446
	Male	67	83.62	20.77		
Marital Status	Married	130	81.57	20.38	-0.483	0.629
	Single	78	82.89	18.24		

Table 8. The teachers' problem solving skills according to the variables of age and educational status (One-Way ANOVA)

Problem solving		N	X	SD	Sum of squares	Mean of squares	F	p
Age	23-31	108	82.22	18.75	90.55; 79199.36	30.18; 388.23	0.078	0.972
	32-40	68	81.54	20.46				
	41-49	24	83.45	20.84				
	50+	8	80.37	22.31				
Educational status	Associate degree	7	86.00	14.15	960.105; 78.329.813	480.053; 382.097	1.256	0.287
	Undergraduate degree	184	82.55	19.71				
	Post-graduate degree	17	75.17	19.31				

there a significant relationship between the classroom teachers' perceptions of mobbing and their problem solving skills?" The analysis results are presented in Table 9.

As indicated in Table 9, in order to determine the relationship between the classroom teachers' perceptions of mobbing and their problem solving skills, Pearson correlation was used. As a result of the analysis, it was observed that there was a low level of significant

relationship between the teachers' perceptions of mobbing and their problem solving skills ($r=0.180$, $p < 0.05$).

DISCUSSION

It is understood that the teachers' perceptions of mobbing were at 'Never' level ($\bar{X} = 1.48$). Teachers' not being

Table 9. The Pearson's correlation test results indicating the relationship between the teachers' perceptions of mobbing and their problem solving skills.

Mobbing and problem solving total scores		Mobbing total score	Problem solving total score
	r	1	0.180
Mobbing total score	p	-	0.009
	n	208	208
	r	0.180	1
Problem solving total score	p	0.009	-
	n	208	208

subjected to mobbing in environments at their schools of service firstly makes them feel being in a more comfortable environment. The existence of secure, peaceful and healthy environments provided to teachers so as to perform their duties of training next generations of the country at the top level and their not being subjected to mobbing is a pleasing situation. Similar results were also reached in the study carried out by Yavuz (2007) with the employees of the Medicine Faculty Hospital of the Suleyman Demirel University. According to the study results, the psychological intimidation perceptions of the hospital employees were at 'Never' level. The employees stated not been subjected to negative intimidating behaviors. Similar results were also reached in the study carried out by Mutlu (2013).

It was observed that the classroom teachers' perceptions of mobbing did not differ significantly according to the variables of gender and marital status, and this result obtained in relation to the variable of gender is also in line with the ones reached in the studies done by Yavuz (2007), Demirgil (2008), Palaz et al. (2008), Günel (2010), Yeşiltaş and Demirçivi (2010), Gün (2016) and Demirdağ (2017). However, in the studies done by Leymann (1996), Björkquist et al. (1994), Salin (2001), Pryor et al. (1995), Atalay (2010), Ergun et al. (2008), Solakoğlu (2007), it was found that women were subjected to intimidating behaviors more frequently than men due to their vulnerable structure resulting from their physical characteristics, looking weak and people's opinions of intimidating them more easily. However, in the studies carried out by Cemaloğlu and Ertürk (2007) and Pekdemir (2010), it was found contrary to the general judgment in the literature that the male teachers were subjected to higher intimidation as compared to their female counterparts. According to the findings obtained from different studies, different results may arise from different countries, cities, sectors, working environments or selected sample groups. In a study on teachers, Çetin (2011) determined that there was no difference according to gender. This result overlaps the result of this study. Yeşiltaş and Demirçivi (2010) found that the unmarried staff were subjected to mobbing more than the married staff; Atalay (2010) reached a significant result which

supports this opinion. Although, no results were observed which are consistent with these two studies, Günel (2010), Palaz et al. (2008), Yavuz (2007), Demirgil (2008) and Pekdemir (2010) could not find significant difference and the results found by these studies support each other.

It was observed that while there was no significant difference between the classroom teachers' perceptions of mobbing according to the variable of educational status, there was a significant difference according to the variable of age. When it was examined according to the variable, age, it was determined that the mobbing perceptions of the teachers aged between 23 and 31 years were higher than those of the teachers aged between 32 and 40 years and the ones aged between 41 and 49. According to this, it can be considered that the reason why young teachers are subjected to mobbing in the first years of their profession might be that they have not acquired necessary experience since they are new graduates or that they are more knowledgeable of the phenomenon of mobbing, that is, they have a more developed awareness. Palaz et al. (2008) found that the people aged over 35 years were more subjected to mobbing; Günel (2010) found that the workers aged between 31 and 40 years were subjected to mobbing more than the ones who were aged below 30 years; Yeşiltaş and Demirçivi (2010) found that the young workers aged between 18 and 24 years and between 25 and 29 years were subjected to mobbing more frequently due to their being inexperienced. According to the significant difference found by Yavuz (2007), the workers aged between 18 and 26 years are subjected to mobbing more frequently. Çelik and Peker (2010) reached the conclusion that the teachers aged between 31 and 40 years were subjected to mobbing more frequently than the teachers aged between 21 and 30 years. Atalay (2010), Einarsen and Skogstad (1996) and Leymann and Gustavsson (1996) obtained a result supporting these findings. In this respect, the significant finding in the literature in relation to different age groups' being victims to psychological mobbing is in line with this study. The absence of a significant difference in the studies carried out by Demirgil (2008), Pekdemir (2010), Çetin (2011)

and Gün (2016) is not similar to this study. While the rigid structure of the organization, many hierarchical steps, closed communication channels and the stressful working environment are among the organizational reasons of mobbing, the victim's being able to create new ideas and interpret the world from different perspectives, being a brilliant element or a newly-employed, inexperienced young person in terms of education, appearance and intellectual accumulation, might be a reason for competitive and selfish people to apply mobbing (Arpacioğlu, 2003).

The classroom teachers' problem solving skill levels were low. Çetin (2011) determined that the problem solving skills of the primary school teachers were at 'mostly' level. Üstün and Bozkurt (2003) showed in a study on primary school administrators that the administrators had low level problem solving skills. Güleç and Mutlu (2016) showed that classroom teachers' problem solving skills were low level. It overlaps this situation.

It was observed that the problem solving skills of the classroom teachers did not differ significantly according to the variables, gender and marital status. Biber and Kutluca (2013) showed that the female students had higher problem solving skills than the male students. It does not overlap this situation. Nazlı (2013) showed in a study on nurses that problem solving skills did not differ according to gender. Moreover, Çetin (2011) and Güleç and Mutlu (2016) also showed that the problem solving skills of the teachers did not differ according to gender. This study is in line with this situation.

The problem solving skills of the classroom teachers did not differ significantly according to age and educational status. Çetin (2011) determined that the problem solving skills of the teachers differed significantly according to the length of service. This finding is not in line with this study. Kösterelioğlu (2007) determined a significant difference. This finding is in line with this study. Çetin (2011) and Acar and Dündar (2008) did not find a significant difference according to the variable of educational status, which supports this study.

There was a low level significant relationship between the classroom teachers' perceptions of mobbing and their problem solving skills. Çetin (2011) found a positive significant low level of relationship between the primary school teachers' problem solving skills and the levels of their being subjected to intimidation. This finding corresponds to that of the current study.

SUGGESTIONS

It is observed that as the age and the service length of classroom teachers decrease and as the frequency of having problems increases, their mobbing perceptions increase. In this case, seminars can be given to teachers to increase their awareness in relation to the phenomenon of mobbing and teach them ways on getting

rid of this situation.

As teachers' problem solving skills increase, their perceptions of mobbing decrease. The phenomenon of mobbing being tried to be hidden and affecting individuals' lives negatively can be overcome by increasing problem solving skills. In addition to giving problem solving skills training and theoretical education, activities including practices can be organized for teachers to have them participate actively.

It is important that teachers undertaking the duty of training the building stones of the future properly, healthily and wisely, should have high level of problem solving skills and share these skills with their students. In this case, environments, which are free from a dangerous phenomenon like mobbing and in which they can exhibit their problem solving skills at top level, should be organized for teachers to continue their educational duties healthily, effectively and permanently.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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Full Length Research Paper

The difficulties experienced by teacher candidates in their own process of elementary reading and writing education, and their current solution

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The purpose of the current research is to identify the difficulties which teacher candidates studying elementary school teaching experienced in their past elementary reading and writing education and which cannot be forgotten, and to find out their solution for eliminating these difficulties. The study group of the research is composed of 118 teacher candidates selected by criterion sampling as a type of purposive sampling. Qualitative method was used for the research. Semi-structured interviews were made with the teacher candidates which involved three questions about the difficulties they experienced in the process of elementary reading and writing, and the solution they offered for eliminating these difficulties. The data obtained from these interviews were analyzed by the content analysis method. The research revealed that out of the 118 teacher candidates, 91 were happy and 27 were unhappy; the difficulties they experienced in the process included fear of failure, teacher related problems, inadequacies in the physical environment, learning process being boring, comparisons with other students, lack of family support, and too much homework; and their solution offered for eliminating these difficulties included making the education process effective, positive approach by teacher, fairness of teacher, cooperation with parents, and avoiding too much homework.

Key words: Teacher candidate, process of elementary reading and writing education, difficulties, solution offered.

INTRODUCTION

Today, when information and communication technologies rapidly advance and information changes quickly, the importance of reading and writing skills in the lives of individuals steadily increases day by day. Effectiveness of the reading and writing skills of individuals provides an opportunity for social development and improvement. It is necessary to realize

an effective literacy teaching for the development of individuals who think, understand, inquire, learn, use knowledge and solve problems (Yangın, 2013). The organized process for individuals to learn reading and writing begins with the first grade of elementary school. The knowledge, skills and habits acquired through the first reading and writing education directly affect the

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academic achievement of the students in the progressive stages of education, especially primary school (Sağırılı, 2015). According to Erikson (1968), in this period when inferiority complex develops against studiousness, children will learn through their school experiences the skills they would need for their future roles as adults. However, they come to the classroom environment with a certain accumulation of numerous experiences and information that they have been collecting from their environment since their birth. Therefore, the duty falls primarily on teachers for planning the educational activity by taking past experiences of children into consideration. First grade teachers should possess the necessary knowledge and skills so that they can realize the importance of elementary reading and writing education and implement the process aptly by considering the characteristics of students in this specific period. Those children who intensely feel incompetent in school become shy, dependent on their family, and suffer great difficulties in adapting to their environment (Erikson, 1968). The manner of approach to children and reactions shown to them lay the foundation of their future experiences. Especially in the current times, majority of children are unconsciously exposed to an extreme use of technological products. As children now use technological products recklessly and more actively than their parents and even than their teachers, it becomes gradually more difficult for teachers to identify children's level of readiness and get to know them better, taking their individual differences into account. Students are expected to be mentally and physically active in the process of learning. Activities such as asking questions, arousing interest and curiosity, questioning, reflection, problem-solving, explanations of concepts, etc. are carried out with students for their active learning. Their prior knowledge is triggered and their mind is activated to ensure learning.

In the process of learning-teaching within the context of those curricula that embrace the philosophy of constructivist approach, an individual makes sense of, and integrates, new knowledge that they will gain by using their existing knowledge, and after these steps, they restructure their knowledge in their minds (Güneş, 2013). Those teachers who follow up the developments in the technologies of information and communication, who are open to novelties, and who have developed themselves in terms of their profession will take the developmental characteristics and individual differences of their students into consideration, plan the environment of learning-teaching based on their interests, wants and needs, and thus play their part as guide who facilitates the learning of each student. It is very important to examine, evaluate and enhance the first-grade elementary reading and writing education processes as the basis of the period when making contributions to the emotional and social development of individuals and gaining them reading-writing skills and scholastic knowledge. Acquisition of reading and writing skills is

among the primary objectives of basic education (Şahin, 2012). The teachers who are to guide students in this process must be qualified and well-equipped. Since classroom teachers have great responsibility to help the students gain these skills, training competent prospective classroom teachers is very important (Gömleksiz, 2013). There have been many studies about teaching literacy and teacher candidates (Gömleksiz, 2013; Karadağ ve Akkaya, 2013; Kızılaslan Tunçer, 2013; Üst, 2015; Aytan, 2017; Özdemir ve Erdoğan, 2017). The part that form teachers and teacher candidates play in social development and change should therefore be realized and contributory efforts should be supported.

Objectives of study

The purpose of the research is to identify those difficulties which the teacher candidates studying elementary school teaching experienced in the elementary reading and writing process and which cannot be forgotten, and to reveal their solution offered for eliminating these difficulties. For this purpose, answers were sought for the following questions:

1. Were you happy in the process of reading and writing education? Please explain your reason for being or not being happy.
2. What were the problems that you experienced in the process of elementary 1st grade reading and writing education?
3. What solutions did you offer relating to the problems that you experienced in the process of elementary 1st grade reading and writing education?

METHODOLOGY

This section includes information on research design, participant characteristics, data collection, and analysis.

Research design

The qualitative research design was used for this study as it elaborates on the difficulties which teacher candidates experience in the process of elementary reading and writing education that lays the foundation of basic reading and writing skills, and their opinions about how those difficulties can be eliminated.

Study group

The study group of the research is composed of 118 teacher candidates studying elementary school teaching. The criterion sampling method as a type of purposive sampling was utilized in the selection of participants (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011). Demographic characteristics of the study group are given in Table 1. Table 1 shows that 91 (77.12%) teacher candidates are female and 27 (22.88%) are male.

Data collection and analysis

Research data were collected by a "semi-structured interview form"

Table 1. Demographics of the Participant Teachers.

Gender	f	%
Female	91	77.12
Male	27	22.88

that was developed by the researcher. The most important facility that the semi-structured interview technique provides is that interviews can be maintained according to a pre-built protocol. More systematic and comparable data can thus be obtained (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011). The participants were requested to complete a form consisting of three open-ended questions in writing. The content validity of the question form was analyzed and determined by two academicians who completed their doctorates and also professorship on elementary school teaching. The pilot experiment of the questions used in the interview was made with 30 teacher candidates. In the end of the pilot experiment, the questions were deemed to be suitable for the research. Participant privacy rights and that these rights would be respected were stated to teacher candidates, and then voluntary teacher candidates were included in the study. The participants answered the questions in about 10 min. The qualitative data obtained were subjected to content analysis. In this technique, similar data are brought together within the frame of certain concepts and themes, and they are arranged so as to be comprehensible by readers, and interpreted. The content analysis technique consists of the stages of data coding, identification of themes, arrangement of codes and themes, and definition and interpretation of findings (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011). In the content analysis of qualitative data, firstly, the codes were identified and categories suitable to those codes were created. In the "Findings" section, the percentage-frequency values of the data were tabularized, and some selected statements of the participants were provided in tables.

RESULTS

This section presents the findings obtained by analyzing the data from participant answers. The research findings are presented in tables. For some questions, participant answers can fall into more than one category. Opinions of the participants were brought together under common categories, and percentages, frequency values and relevant statements were provided.

Question 1: *"Were you happy in the process of reading and writing education? Please explain your reason for being or not being happy."* The answers given by the participants to Question 1 are provided in Table 2.

Table 2 shows that 91 (77.12%) out of the 118 teacher candidates answered, "Yes, I was happy", while 27 (22.88%) said, "No, I wasn't happy." The participants described their reason for being happy as including sense of achievement, love of teacher, learning process being fun, eagerness for learning, desire for appreciation by family and teacher, and emergence of skills, while others explained their reasons for not being happy as including dislike of teacher, sense of failure, learning

process being boring, too much homework, and oppression by family and teacher. As for those participants who attributed their past happiness to sense of achievement, some of their opinions about this include:

"I'd learned how to read and write before attending the school. As I was the first reader in the classroom, I was the first to be rewarded by a red ribbon. This made me very happy."

"I'd been reading and writing before I went to the elementary school. It was making me happy to become successful compared with others in the class."

"I was happy as I'd been able to read before attending the school. I also didn't have much difficulty when learning how to write."

"I learned reading earlier than others in the class. Our teacher was attaching a red ribbon to those who managed to read and write, and I was one of those who got the red ribbon."

"I was a prominent student in the class because I'd rapidly learned reading and writing."

Some of the opinions of those participants who attributed their past happiness to love of teacher include:

"I was happy because my teacher was so kind and understanding."

"My teacher was very caring, and used to love me much. I was very happy for that."

"I was happy because my elementary teacher was caring for me well when I was learning how to read and write. My teacher was always supporting me."

"I was happy because my teacher was very good and understanding."

Some of the opinions of those participants who attributed their past happiness to learning process being fun:

"I used to take pleasure in going to school because the activities in the classroom were so beautiful and made me happy."

"My teacher used to bring various storybooks to improve our reading skills. We used to read those books by turns. This made me so glad."

"There was a free learning area. It was so joyful. Our teacher was performing many different activities."

Some of the opinions of the participants who ascribed their happiness in the past to willingness for learning include:

"My desire of learning was making me delighted."

"I was being happy by learning new things."

"I was happy because I was desirous of reading storybooks and various writings around me, and also learning new things."

"Learning new things was exciting me, I was feeling like a grown-up."

Some of the opinions of those participants who believed

Table 2. The happiness status of teacher candidates in the process of reading and writing education, and their reasons.

Happiness Status	Reasons	f	%
Yes, I was happy	Sense of achievement	30	25.42
	Love of teacher	24	20.34
	Learning process being fun	23	19.49
	Eagerness for learning	19	16.10
	Desire for appreciation by family and teacher	3	2.54
No, I wasn't happy	Teacher misbehaviour	8	6.78
	Sense of failure	7	5.93
	Learning process being boring	7	5.93
	Too much homework	3	2.54
	Oppression by family and teacher	3	2.54

their past happiness was caused by their desire for being appreciated by their family and teacher include:

"I was happy for filling my parents with pride and gaining the favour of my teacher."

"I was blissful as my teacher and my family appreciated me."

"As I'd learned reading before starting the school, I was always appreciated by my teacher and my family."

Some of the opinions of those participants who attributed their reason for their past unhappiness to teacher misbehavior:

"As my handwriting was poor, my teacher used to hit me on the head. I was very unhappy."

"My teacher was very nervous. I remember him being angry all the time in the classroom."

"I had great difficulty in reading and writing because my teacher used to shout a lot and I was scared."

"Our teacher used to care more for students of higher economic status while misbehaving and pushing us aside. I think I was one of the last 10 students to learn reading. It was a painful process for me."

Some of the opinions of those participants who attributed their reason for their past unhappiness to sense of failure:

"Most importantly, when there was a contest, I was getting anxious and fail. And this was making me unhappy."

"I was very unhappy as I learned reading very belatedly."

"I was unhappy because my handwriting was bad and I was unable to comprehend what I read."

Some of the opinions of those participants who described their reason for their past unhappiness as the process of learning being boring:

"It was not an enjoyable period. I wasn't having fun and I

wasn't happy because there was no activity."

"I wasn't happy because it was so boring to stop playing games and come to school."

Some of the opinions of those participants who described their reason for their past unhappiness as too much homework:

"It was so difficult for me to write down the same word for pages at home."

"Homework assignments were so weary to me. The teacher used to give pages and pages of homework."

Some of the opinions of those participants who attributed their reason for their past unhappiness to over-pressures by family and teacher:

"I was feeling under oppression. My family was forcing me too much for reading."

"The teacher was pressurizing me for reading each day."

Question 2: "What were the problems that you experienced in the process of elementary 1st grade reading and writing education?" The answers given by the participants to Question 2 are provided in Table 3.

Table 3 indicates that the difficulties experienced by the teacher candidates in the process of elementary reading and writing education included the fear of failure, teacher related problems, inadequacies in the physical environment, education process being boring, comparisons with other students, lack of family support, and too much homework. Some opinions stated by those participants who believe that the problems experienced in the elementary reading and writing education are mainly caused by fear of failure:

"Some of my friends learned reading earlier. I got worried about catching up with them. I was feeling like a loser as they were ahead of me, and this was very depressing."

"I had a great difficulty in reading. I was unable to write

Table 3. The difficulties experienced by teacher candidates in the process of elementary reading and writing education.

Problems	f	%
Fear of failure	50	42.37
Teacher related problems	20	16.95
Inadequacies in the physical environment	10	8.47
Education process being boring	9	7.63
Lack of family support	7	5.93
Too much homework	3	2.54

properly as I was confused about the direction of some letters."

"As my handwriting was not intelligible, my teacher and friends were having difficulty reading it, and this was disturbing me."

"Reading and writing was very hard for me. I was feeling bad for that."

"When I didn't repeat at home what I learned in school, I was forgetting the directions of some letters."

"As the others in the class didn't listen to me when I was reading out too slowly, I was unwilling to read out, and I didn't like reading."

"There was a contest in the class. A red ribbon used to be put on those who achieved reading and writing. This was causing anxiety in me. I was very afraid of not being able to read and write and get the ribbon."

Some opinions stated by those participants who believe that the problems experienced in the elementary reading and writing education are mainly teacher related:

"It was so depressing to be offended by the teacher when I couldn't read and write properly."

"I was being upset so much by the fact that our teacher considered those who could read fast to be smart, and taught lessons at their pace. I was feeling sad due to this discrimination among students."

"As my teacher was elderly, he didn't understand us and was angry all the times. He was very nervous and I was scared. He used to tear off the page of my notebook to force me to correct my handwriting. But it didn't become any better."

Some opinions expressed by those participants who believe that the problems experienced in the elementary reading and writing education are mainly resulted by inadequacies in the physical environment:

"I didn't have those colour beans and sticks that students were supposed to have when learning reading and writing, and I was very upset for this. I got demotivated."

"Due to the class size, we didn't have sufficient books for reading."

Some opinions expressed by those participants who think

that the reason for the problems experienced in the elementary reading and writing education is the boringness of learning process:

"As I'd learned reading and writing before I started school, my teacher used to want me to help my friends all the times and I was getting bored to death due to this."

"I think that our teacher treated the reading and writing education too fast."

"We had learned about such concepts as suffixes, bases, plurals, etc. before reading a book. I didn't understand these and got seriously bored."

"I hadn't attended kindergarten and as it was my first school experience, I was comparatively slower at learning some things. But my teacher was moving along subjects too fast."

Some opinions expressed by those participants who believe that the problems experienced in the elementary reading and writing education are mainly caused by a lack of family support:

"I was very upset because my family didn't show much interest in me and my lessons in the process."

"I had difficulty in learning how to read and write because I didn't get much help from my family."

"As my mom and dad didn't have an interest in education, they couldn't help me much. I suffered a significant lack of interest in the elementary school."

Some opinions stated by those participants who believe that the problems experienced in the elementary reading and writing education are mainly caused by too much homework:

"We had too many homework assignments. I used to be tired by doing all of them or worried by not being able to do so."

"Our teacher used to give us too much homework and we used to write down many pages each day. I didn't want to attend school."

Question 3: "What are your solution offers relating to the problems that you experienced in the process of elementary 1st grade reading and writing education?"

Table 4. The solutions offered by the teacher candidates for the problems they experienced in the first-grade elementary reading and writing education process.

Solution Offers	f	%
Making the education process effective	61	51.69
Positive approach by teacher	32	27.12
Fairness of teacher	16	13.56
Cooperation with parents	9	7.63
Avoiding too much homework	3	2.54

The answers given by the participants to Question 3 are presented in Table 4.

Table 4 lists the solutions offered by the teacher candidates against the problems they experienced in the elementary reading and writing education process as: making the education process effective, positive approach by teacher, fairness of teacher, cooperation with parents, and avoiding too much homework. Some opinions expressed by the participants who offer making the education process effective as a solution for the problems experienced in the elementary reading and writing education process:

"In the learning process, each student in a class should be cared for separately. None of them should be omitted thinking they can't read anyway."

"Instead of demanding each child to learn in the same way and pace, attention can be shown to the different developmental characteristics of each child. Personal interviews can be made with them for discussing any skills not possessed."

"Calming down any student who experiences a problem by talking to them. Having them realize that they can succeed by doing again."

"Students should be guided to head towards their targets without giving up and to cope with the difficulties they come across. Teachers should find ways to make lessons enjoyable and comprehensible within the bounds of possibility."

"It is so important for a teacher to have a warm and sincere attitude. Different activities should be performed to help students that experience problems and also to ensure that others are not bored."

"Different activities can be organized to make reading and writing more enjoyable and entertaining for children."

"In this period, a teacher shouldn't cause children to compete. The learning process should be designed by taking the prior knowledge of each child into consideration."

Some opinions stated by the participants who believe that a positive approach by teachers can be a solution for the problems experienced in the elementary reading and writing education process:

"I think that a teacher should be patient and understanding. They should be aware that behaving students according to their family's economic status would be inappropriate for a teacher."

"Instead of tearing off a page in a notebook, teachers should try to guide students properly without disheartening them. They should encourage them without offending them."

"A teacher should care for their students, believe that they can succeed, and also make them believe in this."

Some opinions expressed by those participants who believe that fairness of teacher can be a solution for the problems experienced in the elementary reading and writing education process:

"Each student should be provided with an opportunity, and they should be supported. Teachers should not immediately label students based on their learning how to read earlier or later."

"I think that those students who learn reading and writing belatedly should be prioritized and encouraged in the process of reading and writing education, and they shouldn't be compared with others."

Some opinions expressed by those participants who bring the offer of corporation with parents as a solution against the problems experienced in the process of elementary reading and writing education:

"Teachers should raise the awareness of parents about this process and keep in touch with them."

"Privately contacting the family of a student experiencing problems and informing them about what can be done at home without worrying them are the best solution offers."

Some opinions expressed by the participants who assert that avoiding too much homework can be a solution for the problems experienced in the elementary reading and writing education process:

"Students shouldn't be given homework that will tire them too much but just to help them learn."

"Best learning can occur in the classroom environment under teacher supervision. Therefore, pages-long homework assignments should be avoided."

DISCUSSION

In the first grade elementary, in which basic reading and writing skills are gained, the importance of the elementary reading and writing process should be known, this process should be implemented properly, the difficulties encountered should be identified, and detailed solution offered should be explored in order to eliminate those difficulties. The current research showed that out of the 118 teacher candidates, 91 were happy and 27 were unhappy in the process of primary reading and writing education. With the answers provided, they described their reasons for being happy as sense of achievement, love of teacher, learning process being fun, eagerness for learning, desire for appreciation by family and teacher, and emergence of skills, while the reasons for not being happy included dislike of teacher, sense of failure, learning process being boring, too much homework, and oppression by family and teacher. Those children who had already learned reading and writing before starting school and thus were able to read first in the class and got the red ribbon award became very happy while those who were afraid of, and oppressed by, their teachers because their handwriting was poor, those who panicked and failed in contests, and those who belatedly learned reading became very unhappy. The awards given by a teacher in the classroom environment strengthen students' sense of competence and achievement (Erikson, 1968). In the elementary school period, the manner of communication with an adult outside one's family plays a significant part in the formation of social competencies (Hamre and Pianta, 2001). The reason for those children who fail in contests to be unhappy is that they compare themselves with their friends and question their own competency (Bacanlı, 2010).

It was found out that the difficulties that the teachers experienced in future in elementary school were caused by teacher related problems, inadequacies in the physical environment, education process being boring, comparisons with other students, lack of family support, and too much homework; and their solution offered for eliminating the difficulties included making the education process effective, positive approach by teacher, fairness of teacher, cooperation with parents, and avoiding too much homework. The fact that, with their different methods of learning, students learn at different paces is due to their individual differences. Therefore, an effective learning-teaching process should be planned according to the developmental levels. As knowing how children learn influences how teachers will teach, a teacher should, to the extent possible, design their reading and writing syllabus according to how their students learn (Akyol, 2005). First grade elementary teachers who will guide and lead their students should obtain information about the past experiences and prior knowledge of students. As the attitude of individuals towards working is formed in this period, awarding and appreciation will

promote studiousness in children. When they are blocked or made to feel unsuccessful, on the other hand, this will feed their sense of incompetence (Erikson, 1968). Elementary school children are influenced by teacher-child and adult-child relationships in the process of social adaptation (Pianta, 1999). It is therefore necessary to ensure parent-teacher interest and support. The teacher-child relationship, that is, a teacher's closeness to children is also important for children to adapt to the school environment. Thus, children's relationships with form teachers should be taken into account in scholastic arrangements (Birch and Ladd, 1997).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

It is suggested consequently that uniqueness and self-confidence of students, who are the minors of today and the majors of tomorrow, should be supported, their individual differences in developments should be regarded, and it should be ensured that they experience the joy of achievement by endeavor.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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