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Opinions of primary and secondary school teachers on occupational matters and their effects on performance

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to put forward occupational problems of primary and secondary school teachers along with their opinions concerning effects of those problems to their performance. The data gained in the study was reached in qualitative and quantitative ways. Among samples, 903 quantitative ones were obtained by teachers at the state and private primary and secondary schools in Denizli city center, and 109 qualitative ones samples were made up of in random sampling. According to findings, the most critical problem concerning the attendance to occupational matters of primary and secondary school teachers along with effects of those matters to the performance, in the likert type scale, is making teachers out of the drawing teaching – programmed process. One other critical problem, in the open-ended written inquiry scale, attendance of primary and secondary school teachers to occupational matters and effects of those problems to performance is “insufficiency in teaching materials”.

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Keywords: Primary and secondary school teachers; occupational matters; performance; view.

1. Introduction

Teaching is a special discipline taking over administrative duties of education & training service by the state itself, as well as stipulating endless patience. The most prominent duty of today’s teachers, in modern sense, training individuals, compatible with their requirements, who are for solution to problems, aware of national and universal values, and capable of churning out compatible behaviors with related course programmes of the Ministry of Education. Teachers, in natural course, guide teaching (METK, 1973; Aydın, 2007; MEB, 2007). Teachers are responsible for performing the profession in coherent with the basic goals and principles of Turkish National Education.

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Occupational problems of primary and secondary schools teachers

Primary and secondary school teachers have traditionally face a number of occupational problems which would basically prevent the realization of general and private aims of national education policy as well as performing teaching duty. While dealing with their occupations, primary and secondary school teachers would naturally face many problems such as books, or the number of students in the classroom and etc. According to the study by Oral (2000), only 17 % of the ones, who have graduated from out of teaching branch and have been appointed as primary school teachers, express that they would like to go on as a primary school teacher. On the other hand, 44 % of the them state that they actually prefer working as a branch teacher or working somewhere related to their own branch, yet they can also go on as a primary school teacher, which means they are not capable of making a proper choice. The rest 40 % show no intention of staying in teaching profession by claiming that they certainly wish to work as a branch teacher or something related to their own branches. According to a survey by Seferoğlu (2001), primary school teachers regard “lack of vocational course activities” as the most leading fourth problem with 13 %, while they hail “problems in reaching occupational publishing’s” as the most leading fifth matter with 12 %. According to a study by Baytekin & Kıyıcı & Horzum (2002), teachers working at a primary school teachers are unavailable 51% to benefit from vocational activities. According to a study by Yapıcı & Yapıcı (2003), the most important problem in the classroom is “insufficient in course materials (39 %)", is considered the second one leading “too crowded classroom (33%)”, both of which would certainly affect in a negative way the performance of the teacher, due to which neither pre-determined targets nor occupational satisfaction could be reached out.

Problem sentence

What are the opinions of primary and secondary school teachers regarding the professional problems and their effects to occupational performance (as in Denizli sample). Here are the sub-headlines studied under the main problem:

1. What are their opinions an (a) agreement with occupational problems (b) facing up occupational problems (c) their effects to occupational performance?
2. What are their opinions on (a) agreement with occupational problems (b) facing up occupational problems (c) their effects to occupational performance and to those points show a meaningful difference based on (1) gender (2) duty (3) teaching status (4) school type (5) educational status (6) reason for choosing a career in teaching (7) attendance to vocational training courses (8) self-development.

2. The Method

This study is a descriptive work aiming to put forward ideas of primary and secondary school teachers concerning occupational problems and effects of those problems to their performance. The sample of the study, on the other hand, was made up by the primary and secondary school teachers working at the state’s and private primary and secondary schools in Denizli city center. The study includes totally 4498 teachers, 2768 among whom are working at state primary schools, 276 of whom are at private ones (totally 2988); 1410 whom are at the state’s secondary schools, and 100 of whom at private secondary schools (totally 1510). The sample case was also determined based on a meaningful level of 0.5 sounds, 903 quantitative samples was chosen among states and private primary and secondary school teachers in Denizli city center while 109 qualitative samples was randomly chosen with piling up.

The data gained in the study was collected with pool method in likert type, which included 22 terms, private knowledge was obtained with open-ended questions. The pool, apart from the general knowledge consists of there sections called (a) agreement with occupational problems (b) facing up occupational problems (c) effects of occupational problems to performance. Answers choices of each section differ from each other. Multiple choices regarding “attendance to occupational problems” are as following (1) I don’t agree at all (2) I intend not to agree (3) I intend to agree (4) I agree at all. However, choices concerning “facing up occupational problems” are (1) never (2) sometimes (3) frequently (4) always. On the other hand, choices as to “effects of occupational problems to performance” are (1) none (2) little (3) a lot. An “open ended –written pool” was made up to get creative answers of the participants as a qualitative data collection. For scale, they were asked to answer the following questions: “What are your occupational problems, as a teacher?” and “What are the most frequent occupational problem of yours, as a teacher?” and “What are your occupational problems mostly effecting your performance, as a teacher?”.

The validity of the pool in likert type for the sample case group was tested with Cronbach Alpha and Guttman Split-half methods. The sensitivity rate of Alpha inner is 0.96.

To analyze the data gained through the likert type pool, a number of “descriptive statistic” techniques were applied (frequency, per cent, arithmetic variance, t-test, and variance analyze). Answer choices in non-continual scale was turned out to be a “continual one” with the scale developed for the analyze of the results gained by statistical values. The three intervals in the section of “attendance to occupational problems” were divided into four choices (3:4=0.75); and by adding number choices to the minimal value. It was valued as 1.00-1.75 “I don’t agree at all”, 1.76-2.50 “I intend not to agree”, 2.51-3.25 “I intend to agree”, 3.26-4.00 “I agree at all”. The three intervals in the section of “facing up occupational problems” were divided into four choices (3:4=0.75); and by adding number choices to the minimal value. It was valued as 1.00-1.75 “never”, 1.76-2.50 “sometimes”, 2.51-3.25 “frequently”, 3.26-4.00 “always”. The two intervals in the section of “effects of occupational problems to performance” were divided into three choices (2:3=0.66); and by adding number choices to the minimal value. It was valued as 1.00-1.66 “none”, 1.67-2.33 “a little”, 2.34-3.00 “a lot”. The data gained through “the open ended written pool” was subject to the thematic content analyze procedure. The themes were also made up of certain categories of codes, notably by taking a meticulous inter-coherence into consideration.

3. Findings

Here are the leading reached through the research findings.

Finding concerning the primary sub-problem

- a) The first three leading occupational problems, according to the likert type scale, of primary and secondary school teachers concerning agreement of the occupational problems are: “Leaving teachers out of the preparation of teaching programmes”, “not organizing certain scientific symposiums and conferences in charming level” and “Lack of fiscal support to attend scientific symposiums and conferences”. According to the open-ended pools over the opinions the agreement of primary and secondary school teachers concerning about occupational problems, the first three leading obstacles are: “Lack of classroom materials”, “Physical conditions in undesired level” and “Lack of utilizing from education & training technologies & frequently changing course schedules and over-crowded classrooms.”
- b) According to opinions, in likert type scale, of primary and secondary school teachers concerning the facing up occupational problems are respectively given as follows: “Leaving teachers out of the preparation of teaching programmes”, “Unclear standards of teaching discipline” and “Lack of fiscal support to attend scientific symposiums and conferences”. According to the open –ended pools over the opinions of primary and secondary school teachers concerning the agreement about occupational problems, the first three leading obstacles are as following: “lack of classroom materials”, “Frequently changing course schedules” and “No self-renovation” as well as “undesired physical conditions”
- c) According to opinions, based on to likert scale, of primary and secondary school teachers concerning the effects of occupational problems to their performance, the first three leading problems are as following: “leaving teachers our during the preparation of teaching programmes”, “obstacles in training process caused by improper materials”, and “unclear standards in teaching profession”. The first leading three occupational problems, according to the open-ended pool, which affect the performance at most, are as following: “lack of course materials”, improper physical conditions” and “too many paperwork’s”.

Finding concerning the secondary sub-problem

1. The opinions of primary and secondary school teachers concerning attendance to occupational problems and facing up with occupational problems do not meaningfully differ from each other. However, there has been reached a considerable variation as to the affects of occupational problems to performance. Moreover, as for occupational problems, male teachers are certain to be more considerably affected in performance than female teachers.
2. There has been a remarkable duty difference in opinions of primary and secondary school teachers about the agreement with attendance to occupational problems. In comply with the attendance to occupational problems, the most sensitive group among primary and secondary school teachers is secondary school branch teachers,

while the most indifferent ones are kinder garden teachers. on the other hand, there has been found no meaningful missional gap as to primary school and secondary school teachers facing up with occupational problems and effects of such problems to performance.

3. There is a considerable difference opinion of primary and secondary school teachers regarding attendance to occupational problems, based on the teaching status. Moreover, secondary school teachers are more sensitive than primary school teachers concerning agreement with the attendance to occupational problems, while there is no meaningful gap among the opinions of primary and secondary school teachers regarding facing up with occupational problems and effects of such problems to performance, based on the teaching status.
4. There is a remarkable distance depending on the school type, between opinions of the primary and secondary school teacher concerning “the agreement on occupational problems”. The most sensitive group to the agreement about occupational problems, among primary and secondary school teachers, based on the school type, is the ones working at state’s secondary schools, while most indifferent group is primary school teachers at private schools. There has also been found a meaningful variation in opinions of primary and secondary school teachers, based on the school type, concerning the facing up with occupational problems. According to the school type, among the primary and secondary school teachers, the most prominent group face up with occupational problems is state’s secondary school teachers, while the ones at private secondary school consist of the least prominent group. On the other hand, there is no a remarkable variation in opinions of primary and secondary school teachers, based on on the school type, concerning effects of certain occupational problems to their performance.
5. There is also considerable variation in opinions of primary and secondary school teachers concerning the agreement about occupational problems, mainly based upon their educational status. On the other hand, the most sensitive group in agreement about occupational problems based upon educational status is made up of the graduates of education faculties while the least indifferent ones are the graduates of science & literature faculties. There is also no a meaningful variation in opinions of primary and secondary school teachers concerning the facing up with occupational matters. There is also no meaningful variation in opinions of primary and secondary school teachers, based on educational status, concerning effects of occupational problems to performance. Depending on educational status of primary and secondary school teachers, by most affected group is made up of graduates of education faculties while the least effected ones are graduates of science & literature faculties.
6. There is also no remarkable variation in opinions of primary and secondary school teachers in facing up with occupational problems, agreement about such problems and effects of those problems to their performance.
7. There is also no remarkable variation in opinions of primary and secondary school teachers, based on attending in-training vocational courses, in facing up occupational problems and their effects to performance.
8. The views of primary and secondary school teachers on meeting with the given occupational matters show meaningful varieties considering their self-developments. The most common group, in respect of primary and secondary school teachers’ meeting with the given occupational matters considering their self –developments, is the teachers who are not aware of scientific / professional activities and the least common is the teachers who are saying that the administration does not inform them about the scientific / professional activities. The views of primary and secondary school teachers on how the given occupational matters affect their performance show meaningful varieties considering their self-developments. The most affected group, in respect of how the declared occupational matters affect primary and secondary school teachers’ performance considering their self-developments, is the teachers who are not aware of scientific /professional activities, while the least affected one is the teachers who are saying that the school administration does not inform them about the scientific / professional activities.

4. Discussion

According to the findings of the research, the point of discussion could be like the ones above.

1. **Curriculum.** As of 2005-2006 academic year, the renewed curriculums of the classes from 1 to 5 were put into practice country-wide in primary schools. The views of 2133 teachers were taken into consideration during the preparation of some phases of the renewed curriculums which were put into practice country-wide in the academic year of 2005-2006 (MEB, 2005). Secondary education was raised to 4 years in the academic year of 2005-2006. In this context, within the context of “secondary education project” which is going to be performed between 2005 -2010, the curriculums of the lessons taught in public, vocational and technical secondary schools

are developed in the leadership of academicians with the contemporary approach and the developed curriculums are practiced in public and vocational secondary schools (MEB, 2007). According to views of the primary and secondary school teachers in the likert type scale on agreeing the given occupational matters, meeting with them and their affects on their performance, the most significant problem is “the omission of teachers in the process of preparing new education curriculums.” The fact that the primary and secondary school teachers stating this occupational problem as the foremost one in the fields of agreeing the problem, meeting with the problem and the affects of the problem on performance is quite important as it points out “in what extent they could adopt and protect education curriculums, during the preparation process of which is they are omitted.”

2. **Lesson materials.** Both the professional success of the primary and secondary school teachers and the success of the education curriculum depend on using a rich variety of equipments and materials in the classroom. In the ninth BYKP equipping primary and secondary schools with materials appropriate to contemporary needs is aimed (DPT, 2006). According to the research of Yapıcı & Yapıcı in 2003, primary school teachers stated that the leading problem emerged in classroom was “the insufficiency of the materials (39%).” According to the views of the primary and secondary school teachers in open-ended written inquiry on agreeing the occupational matters, meeting with them and their affects on their performance, the most significant matters is “the insufficiency of lesson materials.” The results of the research support the results of other researches. According to this, especially, in order to increase the occupational performance of the primary and secondary school teachers, appropriate school materials must be provided by creating additional sources by school and top management.
3. **Teaching professional standards.** According to the Fundamental Law of National Education numbered 1739, profession of teaching is described as “a particular profession requiring specialization which takes charge of government’s duties related to education, teaching and the administrative duties concerning them.” However, this definition is not sufficient to accept teaching as a profession solely. In order to accept teaching as a profession, “competences”, which stands first on the list, required academic education prior to the profession, on-the-job-training, in-service training, specialization, authorization and criteria of wage must be clearly defined. MEB keeps working on “general competences of teaching profession” as a part of teaching professional standards. So far, “general competences of teaching profession” contains 6 major competences, 31 sub-competences and 233 performance indexes enclosing the knowledge, ability and attitudes a teacher must obtain have been completed. Having been prepared “the guide of professional development based on school” in order to develop teacher’s competence, the first phase of “professional development practice” related to education and information was completed by the city tats teams in selected pilot schools in the pilot cities (MEB; 2006). According to the results of the research in likert type scale, the primary and secondary school teachers ranked “the problem of teaching profession standards being indefinite” in the fourth place in agreeing the problems, in the third place in the affects of the problem on the performance. Forming “the profession standards” of teaching will clarify the place of the teaching profession more among other profession.
4. **Taking part in scientific activities.** By Teachers attendance in “scientific symposiums and conferences” is of a great importance for them to be aware of to innovations in the scope of education. Moreover, if the teacher takes part in this “scientific symposiums and conferences” by presenting his own presentation, then this will be evaluated as a “score” in becoming specialist / head teacher process under the topic of “scientific activities” (ÖKBYY, 2005). According to the result of the study, primary and secondary school teachers, in likert type scale, regard “no encouragement to attend scientific symposiums and conferences” as the second problems, “facing up with problems” as the third problem. Moreover, they regard “insufficient support to attend scientific symposiums and conferences” as the fourth problem in agreement about occupational problems while effect of such a problem to their performance is considered the eleventh problem. On the other hand, the problem of “no pre-information about scientific symposiums and conferences” are ranked in the fifth in the agreement about occupational problems, yet is regarded as the sixth one in facing with problems, and as the ninth one in the list of effect of such problems to performance. According to the results, it is essential that primary and secondary school teachers, for professional satisfaction, “be encouraged to attend scientific activities” as well as “supported financially” and “declaration – on-time about such activities.”
5. **The number of students.** In the 9th BYKP, it is notably aimed that the number of students in classrooms must be lessened (DPT; 2006). In the performed by Yapıcı &Yapıcı (2003) the second most prominent problem in classrooms, according to primary school teachers, is too many crowded classrooms (with 33 %). Because a classrooms over 30 students in the first stage of primary schools will essentially cause the time allocated by the teacher to lessen, this will result in low performance at work. According to the results of the study, in their

opinions with likert type scale, the problem of the obstacle in performance caused by “too crowded classrooms” was ranked in the sixteenth one in agreement with occupational problems, and the fifteenth one in “facing with problems” while it was considered the fourth one in “effect of the problem to performance”. According to the open-ended written pools, primary and secondary school teachers ranked the problem of “to crowded classrooms” in the third, based on agreement with occupational problem, while it was considered the fourth one based on both facing with problem and effect of the problem to performance. Consequently, it is highly clear that results gained by the study also support those of others. Accordingly, “performance in notably primary-school teaching discipline” must essentially be brought up by organizing classrooms of maximum 30 students.

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