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A Critical View To The Primary School Teaching

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to determine the views of academicians, teachers, and pre-service teachers on primary school teachers and to bring a critical perspective to primary school teaching. The case study design, one of the qualitative research designs, was used in this study. The study group of research consists of four academicians, eight class teachers, and four pre-service teachers in the fourth year of the Department of Primary Education in Duzce University in the 2018-2019 academic year. In the research, "interview" and "focus group interview" techniques were used as data collection method. Content analysis method was used in the analysis of the data obtained from the research. At the end of the research, it was concluded that the qualifications the primary school teachers should have are general culture, primary school management, guidance, communication, personal/professional development, personal/moral characteristics, pedagogical knowledge/skill, technological knowledge/skill, and field knowledge/skill. Furthermore, findings revealed that the necessary education is not given in the education faculties, primary school teachers are not successful in all academic courses and inadequate in skill courses, and primary school teachers cannot be successful in all areas. Given these, it is necessary to go into branching in the field (academic and especially skill courses) or class basis.

Key words: Primary School Teacher, Qualification, Branching, Academician, Teacher Candidate

Introduction

In this day and age, when the need for skilled labor is increasing consistently, primary education period, which is in the compulsory education period, is the first and the basic step to bring the individuals the necessary skills required by the community. Primary education underlies a very important and critical period for an individual's education and improvement (Ergun & Ersoy, 2014). Researches carried out on brain development show that the brain develops rapidly in the first years of life, and environmental arousal affects the developing brain positively (Rao & Li, 2009). The primary education of an individual is the key position for the success of the rest of his/her education life. The information and the skills acquired in this period bears background qualification for the information and skills to be acquired in upper secondary education (Jaiyeoba, 2011). Students who do not make a good start for the education life generally cannot make a good progress in the later years (ACT, 2013; Ball, 1994; Dougherty, 2014).

The importance of primary school teachers on the development of students is an undeniable fact. Primary school teachers influence students in primary education, covering a critical educational period in which many skills are laid. They also support the development of future generations and greatly influence the way students live. In this case, primary school teachers, who are important element in primary education, need qualified education (Aydın, Şahin, & Topal, 2008).. Unlike other teachers, primary school teaching includes many disciplines such as first literacy, science, Turkish, and mathematics. Considering this situation, the age groups, and term characteristics of the students addressed by primary school teachers, it is necessary that pre-service primary school teachers gain different competences (Çaycı, 2011).

Teachers play a leading role in order for an individual to become socialized and prepared for his/her social life; the cultural values of the society that an individual learns from his/her teachers can be transferred to him/her (Şahin & Kartal, 2013). One of the most important factors in determining the quality of education a student has is the quality of the teachers who educate the students. The quality of the new generation will doubtlessly be identical to the quality of the teacher who raises them (Watweman, 2010). The success of the education system depends on the quality of the teachers and other education personnel who operate and carry out the system. No education model can serve above the quality of the personnel who uses that model. Hence, it can be said that a school is as good as its teachers (Aydın, Şahin & Topal, 2008). Primary school teachers not only accelerate the

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developments of the children by organizing rich learning environments but also narrow down their developments by presenting learning environments which are not suitable for the children (Senemoğlu, 2003).

Teachers need to have some competences for the students to measure up in education. The teacher competency is a notion adopted by educators in recent years (Kahyaoglu & Yangin, 2007). Guiding the teachers in order for them to be effective in guiding the students is very important for the lives of individuals and for the future of the societies. To effectively perform their duties, teachers need to be equipped with necessary information, skill, and attitude (Kılıç, 2007; Kılıç, 2010).

When the updated primary school undergraduate program in 2018-2019 academic year is examined, it can be seen that the number of compulsory courses decreased and the number of elective courses increased in general. In this context, the program gained flexibility. However, the disadvantages of the program are the abolition of the basic lessons that a classroom teacher will need such as children's literature, Turkish 1 written expression, and Turkish 2 oral expression. In addition, another negative aspect of the program is the abolition of the school experience in which pre-service teachers have acquired prior knowledge by observing the school, teachers, and students before the teaching practice (Yurdakal, 2018).

There are studies in the literature examining the perception of academic self-efficacy of primary school teachers (Arseven et al., 2015; Bahar, 2019), ecological citizenship levels of primary school teachers (Karatekin, Salman & Uysal, 2019), field knowledge of primary school teachers (Dağ & Şahin, 2019; Jaiyeoba, 2011; Karakuş, 2018), opinions about inclusive education (Stemberger & Kiswardy, 2018), characteristics that primary school teachers should have (Gipps, Hargreaves & McCallum, 2015), job stresses, personalities and burnout levels of primary school teachers (Kokkinos, 2007), and opinions about undergraduate programs undergraduate programs. However, there is no study on the phenomenon of primary school teaching, its current situation, and its positive and negative aspects. In this regard, the aim of this study is to determine the views of the academicians, teachers, and pre-service teachers to primary school teaching. This basic purpose searched answers from the following questions in the framework.

1. What are the necessary qualifications for a primary school teacher?
2. What are the fields where the participants feel competent and incompetent?
3. What are the views on the adequacy of undergraduate education?
4. What are the views on being competent on all fields?
5. What are the views on branching out on the basis of the field?

Method

Search Model

The research was carried out within the context of phenomenological design, which is one of the qualitative research designs. Qualitative research was preferred because it allows participants to explore their experiences in depth, to explain how life practices are made meaningful in the cultural context, to explore rather than to test, and perhaps most importantly, to illustrate their perspectives by entering their own world (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). In phenomenology studies, researchers try to uncover the essence of the participants' experiences on certain subjects (Creswell, 2014). The phenomenon examined in the study was determined as primary school teaching.

Study Group

While forming the study group of the research, purposeful sampling method was used. In qualitative researches, the aim is to acquire the maximum information by small sampling. Thus, it was suitable to choose the participants who seem to give the most comprehensive information about the research problem by the way of purposeful sampling (Brinkmann, 2013). The study group of the research consists of:

- ✓ 4 academicians –two of them are male while the other two are female- working in the Department of Primary School Teaching in different state universities in different cities. While academicians were determined, those with academic studies in the field of primary school teaching were selected.
- ✓ 8 Primary school teachers – four of them are male while the other four are female – working in state school in Düzce. While teachers were determined, firstly, a teacher known as a successful teacher was interviewed. Afterwards, another successful teacher recommended by that teacher was interviewed. The interviewing process with teachers was completed in this way.
- ✓ 4 pre-service teachers studying in the fourth grade of the Department of Primary School Teaching of a University in West Black Sea region.

Data Collection

The techniques “interview” and “focus group interview” were used in this research. In the interview technique, the aim is to reveal the experiences of people and their meaning and to acquire data that answer the question of the research by searching the life story of the individuals (Kvale, 2006). Focus group interview is a name given to the interview made in group to gather information and detailed views about a certain subject from selected participants. In focus group interview, the aim is not to reveal the answers of the participants one by one but read between the lines with regard to the meaning and standards of the group answers by encouraging discussion and group interaction (Bloor et.al., 2001).

Within the scope of the research, semi-structured interviews were carried out with three academicians through video conferencing. The views of one of the academicians was acquired using interview form on the net. Face-to-face semi-structured interviews were carried out with teachers. A focus group interview was carried out on pre-service teachers.

In the interviews and focus group interview, eight basic questions and some other questions were asked. The questions of the interview were prepared by the researchers, and expert opinions were taken to provide content validity. After revising in accordance with expert opinions, final form of the interview was composed. Seven questions took part in the interview form. Those questions are given below:

- ✓ Which qualifications should a primary school teacher have?
- ✓ What do you think about the fact that all these lessons are/are not deadweight for the teacher (for both learning and teaching)?
- ✓ How do the fields where primary school teachers aren't competent affect the students?
- ✓ What can you say about the competency of education the primary school teacher had in undergraduate education in all these areas?
- ✓ How do you evaluate the fact of entrusting the students to one teacher for all these fields for four years?
- ✓ What do you think about branching out?
- ✓ What kind of system do you want to carry out for primary school teaching if you are given a chance?

Data Analysis

For analyzing the data, content analysis method was used. The content analysis provides the data to be gathered in the frame of certain notions and themes and transforms them into a form readers can understand easily (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000).

Before the analysis, some codes were given to the academicians, teachers, and pre-service teachers in the study group to provide privacy. While the academicians were coded as A1,A2,A3,A4 and teachers as Ö1,Ö2 and Ö8, pre-service teachers were coded as ÖA1, ÖA2, ÖA3 and ÖA4. The content analysis process consists of the following stages: coding, categorizing, and interpreting. In the stage of coding, the data were coded by two researchers separately and classified according to their features. In this process, the data belonged to other categories; new sub-categories were formed and gathered together in top categories. After categorizing the data, researchers linked the categories with each other.

Validity and Reliability

To provide validity and reliability of the research. interview questions were prepared by the researchers after the literature review to acquire in-depth views. The questions were supported with other questions. For the questions of the interview, expert opinion was benefited and necessary corrections were made according to the expert opinion. The data of the research were coded by researchers independently from each other. As a result of the codification, the codes “consensus” and “dissensus” were determined and by using the formulas suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994), the reliability between coders was found as 84% for the data acquired by teachers, 91% for the data acquired by academicians, and 95% for the data acquired by pre-service teachers. The researches, with coefficient of concordance above 70%, were accepted as reliable. By checking the consistency of the categories rising as a result of the content analysis and their consistency with other categories, a reasonable integrity was provided. For data triangulation, the data were gathered from academicians, teachers, and pre-service teachers, and common results were obtained from the data obtained. Researchers tried to avoid subjective judgement and assumption, and they did not count their pre-judgements in the process of the research transparently. The problem of the research was analyzed in its natural environment and scrutinized with multiple perspectives in a circular way. The process of the research and data were described in detail. The expert opinion was benefited to link the data with results of the research. The data of the interview were quoted directly. All the original data of the research were included to be analyzed when needed.

Results and Discussion

In this part, the findings acquired from academicians, teachers, and pre-service teachers were gathered together and presented in three topics as “The Necessary Qualifications for a Primary School Teacher”, “The Evaluation of the Current Situation of the Primary School Teaching”, and “Evaluation of Alternatives to the Current Situation.”

The Necessary Qualifications for a Primary School Teacher

The findings about the necessary qualifications for a primary school teacher were presented on Table 1:

Table 1: Views about the Necessary Qualifications for a Primary School Teacher

Categories/Sub-categories	Codes
Field Knowledge/Skill	Academic They must have knowledge on the field. They must have the literature about the branch. They must have knowledge on verbal and math course. They must have a little knowledge about everything. They must know first-aid. They must realize the wrong information in the book. They must understand what they read. They must have creative reading-writing skills.
	Skill They must play an instrument. They must be interested in music, art, and physical education. They must have a baseline level of knowledge about every branch of sports. They must create a table.
Pedagogical Knowledge/Skill	They must teach according to individual differences. They must educate the students according to the future conditions. They must know child psychology. They must know the growing features of children. They must educate children in accordance with their levels and ages. They must use materials effectively. They must get the students adopt the habits such as sitting down-standing up, having a break, eating, cleaning, potty training, etc. They must know very well the lessons of pedagogical formation lesson. They must put the theory into practice. They must know/adopt the innovative and constructivist philosophy.
Technological Knowledge/Skill	They must benefit and follow the technology.
World Knowledge	They must have world knowledge.
Classroom Management	They must manage the students all at the same time and go around all of them. They must solve the problems in an instant. They must have the skills of classroom management.
Counseling	They must be a good counselor. They must be a role model.
Personal/Moral Characteristics	They must have good moral characteristics. They must have the ability for empathy. They must act their age. They must have positive personal characteristics. They must be patient. They must have high motivation.
Personal/Vocational Development	They must follow the developments about the branch They must attend in-service training. They must improve themselves continuously. They must always read.
Communication	They must talk to children in a constructive way. They must communicate with children positively. They must love children. They must act like mothers/fathers. They must make the children feel special. They must recognize every child.

Communication	Communication with the Family	They must communicate with the family. They must cooperate with the family.
	Linguistic Performance	They must speak clearly and must have a good diction. They must have the ability to express themselves.

As seen on Table 1, the necessary qualifications of a primary school teacher were gathered in the categories as “Field Knowledge/Skill”, “Pedagogical Knowledge/Skill”, “Technological Knowledge/Skill”, “World Knowledge”, “Classroom Management”, “Counseling”, “Personal/Vocational Development”, “Personal/Moral Characteristics”, and “Communication”.

The teacher is thought to have the knowledge of all the academic lessons, to have knowledge about art, physical education, and music, to play an instrument, to have a baseline level of knowledge about every branch of sports, and to know how to create a table. The teacher is expected to know the individual differences and growing features of the students and educate them in accordance with their situations, to benefit from the technology, to have world knowledge, to manage the students, to solve the problems in an instant, and to be a good counselor and a role model. A1 expressed his views about the subject by saying “I think what is expected from the teacher formally is qualified as world knowledge, knowledge of formation, and field knowledge, but it is also important to have personal characteristics as well.” Teacher is expected to talk to children in a constructive way, to love the children, to make them feel special, to have the skills of speaking clearly, and to know how to express himself/herself. Ö8 expressed his views about the subject as “As you take care of early-age group, you must be in cooperation with their family. The teacher must know which growing features of that early-age group need to have. The teacher is also expected to follow the developments about the branch, to attend in-service training, to have good moral characteristics, to have the ability to empathize, to have high motivation, and to be patient. ÖA1 expressed his views about the subject as, “The teacher must be patient and must love the children”.

Other competencies, except field knowledge and skills, are not different from the qualifications that all branch teachers should have. However, under the field knowledge/skill category, there are qualifications in math, verbal, and skill fields. It can be said that having the necessary qualifications for many different academic courses as well as skill courses is quite a burden for a single person.

Negative Views on the Current Situation of Primary School Teaching

Negative views of the participants about the current situation of primary school teaching are presented below under the four headings; “Participants Feel Incompetent in Some Areas”, “Undergraduate Education is Inadequate”, “Teachers Cannot Be Successful in All Areas”, and “Branching is Required”.

Participants Feel Incompetent in Some Areas

The fields where the participants feel incompetent are presented in Table 2:

Table 2: The fields where the participants feel competent and incompetent

Codes	
Ö1	feels super in every field including lessons requiring skill
Ö2	is generally good at all lessons, baseline level of Science and Social Science, good at math and Turkish
Ö3	is good at math, Turkish, science and social science but bad at art and music
Ö4	is good at math, science, and social science
Ö5	is good at math, Turkish, and social science; has difficulties in science, art, and music
Ö6	is good at verbal and math course but has difficulties in art, music, and organizing activities
Ö7	is good at physical education, math, Turkish, and social studies but bad at art
Ö8	is good at all of them but bad at music and art
ÖA1	is good at Turkish and social studies but has difficulties in science, physics, biology, and chemistry
ÖA2	has difficulties in science
ÖA3	has difficulties in math and science; hopeless about physics for public personnel selection examination
ÖA4	has difficulties in math course (can learn it by heart but doesn't know the general philosophy of math; he forgets it easily)

As seen in Table 2, the teacher was coded with Ö5 and all the teacher candidates do not feel competent in all of the academic courses; furthermore, they have difficulty in some academic courses. In talent classes, it is seen that there are no teachers and teacher candidates who feel competent except for teachers coded Ö1 and Ö2. This shows that it is difficult or even impossible for a person to feel good and be successful in all areas.

Incompetent Undergraduate Education

The views about the adequacy of undergraduate education are presented in Table 3:

Table 3: The views about the adequacy of undergraduate education

Categories	Codes
Competent	They are given a good education about field knowledge/methods and techniques.
	The lessons are given at high order level.
	The required education is given in the department of education.
	The education is given at the level of bachelor's degree.
Incompetent	They are given a good education of verbal and math course
	The lecturers are not competent
	They don't give high order education for academic lessons.
	The physical education lessons are not enough and effective.
	The lecturers aren't specialized for the ones between 7 and 12.
	For the music lesson, the lecturer is generally teacher of music and performing arts.
	The lecturers are not competent.
	The number of lecturers being specialized in primary school teaching is little.
	Skill lessons are not cared and taught enough.
	Programs are not enough
There is a big difference between the lessons learned and taught.	
The number of lessons is little while it must be more.	
Everything is too theoretical - hands on training, training period; lectures are lacking.	
There is no English lesson in undergraduate degree but there is in primary school.	
There is no lesson for special training.	

As seen in Table 3, views about the adequacy of undergraduate education are categorized under "Competent" and "Incompetent".

The participants generally mentioned the fact that the programs are lacking; they cannot educate a good primary school teacher; there is a big difference between the lessons learned and taught; the lessons are theoretical and hands-on training lessons are lacking. Ö5 mentioned about the lack of undergraduate education by saying, "*The programs are not enough and efficient. We need more lessons, hands-on training lessons, and a good education.*" On the other hand, A4 indicates that the skill lessons are not cared enough, the pre-service teachers are not qualified enough, and the competency of the lecturers is not at a good level by saying, "*Pre-service teachers are educated in lessons requiring special ability as it was the same in our time. There is a big problem about that situation. The lessons of plays and physical activities are lacking in this university. The lecturers do not know how to educate students between the ages 7 and 12.*" Also, there are some participants thinking the necessary education is given efficiently at the universities. Ö3 indicates that the education he is having is enough and efficient but everybody doesn't have the same education. He said, "*I believe that I have enough education. Everybody doesn't have the same education. There are teachers who do not know the methods and techniques that I use.*"

All these findings show that the education given in the undergraduate education is inadequate for various reasons and therefore the pre-service teachers cannot gain the necessary competencies for effective teaching in the future.

Teachers Cannot Succeed in All Fields

The views that teachers cannot be successful in all fields are presented in Table 4:

Table 4: The views that teachers cannot be competent in all fields

Categories	Codes
It is not for human nature	Some people are good at verbal lessons while some of them are good at math course.
	As they graduated from the Department of Equal Weight (math, Turkish, and social lessons), they have difficulty in physics, chemistry, and biology.
	Each one has some fields he/she has difficulty or competency with.
	It is impossible for every teacher to adept at skill lessons.
	The teachers should have both the competency and interest for that field.
It cannot be efficient enough	They cannot be as successful and efficient as an expert/branch teacher.
	Knowing the alphabet, everybody cannot teach how to read and write.
	They cannot be good at every field equally.

	They cannot know the learning outcomes as efficiently as a teacher of art and music. They have to make contact with the teachers of art, physical education, and music.
It cramps the students	If the lessons are given by the branch teachers, the children can be more successful and their abilities can be realized. There can be misconception and it cannot be a good start. They can be competent in educating an average student. The student is educated inefficiently and productivity can be insufficient. The future of the student is affected negatively. The potential of the student cannot be discovered, realized, and developed. The better the teacher is at one field, the better the student is at that field. The teacher cannot appeal to the student who is good at a field where the teacher is bad at. The teacher cannot rock the students' world but he/she can cramp and affect their destiny negatively. The students good at fields where the teacher is good at will be more successful and will be at the forefront. The teacher cannot discover gifted students. The teacher cannot develop students as he/she doesn't believe in the necessity of skill lessons. Learning will occur shallowly, so full learning won't exist.
It is tiring	It is a big burden to the teacher. The teacher gets tired and bored. They learned skill lessons theoretically, but it is difficult to put them into practice. It is difficult to organize skill lessons as they require extra time.
Education is insufficient.	It cannot be, because of the policy of educating teachers. It cannot be, because of the fact that the teacher cannot develop himself/herself. A qualitative teacher cannot be educated in a wide field with one standard selection. To be very good at all fields, education given is not enough. It is difficult to get a handle on every field with little lesson time in the current program.
It requires professional development	The teacher of a certain age cannot do it. Poorly-trained teachers cannot be efficient.
Not everyone can	There are some who make them do experiments, while there are some who do not. One or two teachers can be enough in every school. It varies from teacher to teacher.

As seen on Table 4, the views about primary teacher's not being successful in all fields are gathered under seven categories as "It is not for human nature", "It cannot be efficient enough", "It cramps the students", "It is tiring", "Education is insufficient", "It requires professional development", and "Not everyone can".

It is thought that being qualified at all academic and skillful fields is not for human nature; some of them are good at verbal lessons, while some of them are good at math course. It is impossible for teachers to be skilled at art, physical education, and music without having interests in them. Ö7 indicated his views about the subject by saying, "*The same person can't have all competencies. We realize this situation when we talk about the parents. They can say frankly that our primary school teacher is good at math, so is our child.*" It is also thought that a primary school teacher is successful in all fields at a certain level; he cannot know the learning outcomes as efficiently as a branch teacher. A teacher not having all competencies educates students ineffectively; he/she cannot realize the potential of the student and he/she cannot appeal to the student who is good at a field where he/she himself/herself is bad at. ÖA2 indicated his views by saying, "*The learning will not be efficient, it will be shallow. We cannot see full learning.*" On the other hand, it is thought that it is a big burden for the teachers even if they are successful at all fields at a certain level in their own right, and it is impossible for the ones who are not well-trained. It is impossible to educate a primary school teacher who has full knowledge about all fields with these standard selections and current programs. A3 expressed his opinion on this with these words: "*In fact, it is a question mark if it is possible to educate a fully-qualified primary school teacher. It is too difficult to educate a primary school teacher being competent on all fields.*"

All these findings show that primary school teachers cannot be successful in all fields; it is difficult or even impossible to have these competencies for a single person. It is a burden for the teacher, and this situation will affect the student negatively.

Branching is Required

The views about branching are presented as two separate tables: “Branching out on the basis of the field” and “Branching out on the basis of class”.

The views about the essence of branching out on the basis of the field are presented in Table 5:

Table 5: *The views about the essence of branching out on the basis of the field*

Categories	Codes
Success	The ones knowing the branch teach better. By means of the branch, the permanence of the thing learned can be provided better. The branch teacher gives the academic education better, thus increasing the academic success. The branch teacher does more experiments. There is an effective education by means of branching out.
Discovering	Branch teacher can discover the abilities better. The student can find the chance of developing his skill or interest about a branch. With one teacher, some abilities or skills can be overlooked or missed.
Burden	The preparation for the lesson is tiring; it is too difficult to prepare a daily plan every week or teacher’s planning can get easy. Teacher’s course load decreases. The easier the teacher’s work gets, the better it is for his/her job. It is impossible for one teacher to hold all the lessons. The burden decreases as the teacher is like a caretaker.
Skill lessons	The branch teacher must teach it; primary school teacher does not care about it. Teaching the lesson skids into the basic lessons. Branching out on skill lessons is necessary. As there are exams for 3rd and 4th grades, other basic lessons are taught in skill lessons. It is more beneficial to have branch teachers for the students between 7 and 12.
Specialization	The teacher focuses on his own branch. The teacher can specialize.
Teacher’s having the goods	It is necessary to branch out with a teacher syncing into the students’ level. It is necessary to branch out with a well-educated teacher. If the teacher is not qualified, the student gets lost with one teacher.
Variety	It is difficult to stand the same teacher if the student does not like the teacher. The teacher must be all-around and not only one model, so the choice is the students’. Lessons with different teachers are entertaining and not boring. The student chooses good features of every teacher. The student chooses the teacher or teachers whom he/she likes as a role model. The student learns different techniques from different teachers. A new voice means new interaction area.
Adaptation / Attachment	The students can adapt to the branching; they are not affected in a bad way. There would not be an adaptation problem; the students can latch on everybody or interns. It is a bad thing to latch on one teacher.
Guidance	The student is not left unconfined; if he/she sees many teachers, he/she has a family. There may be coaching system. The student is not left unconfined; every class has its own counselor. The primary school teacher can focus on the behaviors.
Being a role model	There is no need to have one model; everybody must be authentic. Every primary school teacher must not be taken as a role model; it is risky. The teacher has the job of being a counselor and not a role model. Every individual is different; it is not good idea to raise a monotype person.
The level of the class	Branching must start at 1st grade. By branching from the 2nd grade, it can continue. At the 3rd and 4th grades, different teachers can attend the class. At the 4th and 5th grade, branch teachers can attend the class.

	For skill lessons, branch teachers can attend class from the 1st Grade.
	In nursery class, different teachers attend the class for lessons of English and religion.
Others	At private schools, branch teachers attend the class, and students and their parents are pleased with this situation. With one teacher, everything cuts corners.

As seen on Table 5, the views about the essence of branching out are gathered in 12 topics as “Success”, “Burden”, “Skill Lessons”, “Specialization”, “Teacher’s Having the Goods”, “Diversity”, “Adaptation/ Attachment”, “Guidance”, “Being a Role Model”, “The Level of the Class”, and “Others”.

It is thought that it is essential to branch out with teachers who are well-educated and who can sync to the children’s level; academic success will increase; education will be more effective and permanent with the help of branching; branch teacher can discover the abilities of the students and make the area of their skills appealing to them. A3 expressed his opinions about the subject with these words: “*There are private schools that prefer branching out. For some certain lessons, branch teachers attend the class. The students and their parents are pleased with this situation.*” Meanwhile, Ö1 expressed his opinion with these words: “*It will be more effective to be educated with the branch teachers. The advantage is that specialization occurs in every field and the students decide what to do for their future in primary school and incline to the field they like.*” It is also indicated that the teachers can focus on their own field, the work load will decrease, their job will get easy, and planning will be easier if branching out occurs. It is indicated that it is important to branch out especially in skill lessons; primary school teachers do not have the adequate competencies for skill lessons, so they teach the basic lessons instead of skill lessons. It is expressed that students learn different techniques from different teachers and the lessons with different teachers satisfy the students by means of branching out. It is thought that more than one model will be presented to the students with different teachers; students choose the good characteristics of each teacher, so this will prevent raising monotype individuals. Furthermore, branching out will not affect students’ adaptation negatively; on the contrary, it will prevent the attachment of one teacher. It is indicated that the students will not be confined in such case, and so the primary school teachers can deal with the students personally.

When the findings are examined, it is seen that branching out on the basis of the field will be beneficial for both the teacher and the student. By reducing the burden of teachers by branching on the basis of field, teacher specialization and students will be able to grow better.

The views about the essence of branching out on the basis of class are presented in Table 6:

Table 6: *The views about the essence of branching out on the basis of class*

Categories	Codes
Specialization	The teacher specializes as the learning outcomes do not change every year. To read and write is a profession in itself. Professionalization/Specialization comes true.
Success	If the teacher is not successful, the same teacher for 4 years can be a trouble.
Dependency	Addiction to the teacher decreases.
Burden	The teacher has difficulty and he/she gets tired when he/she returns to the 1st grade from the 4th grade. It simplifies the teacher’s job. The material of the teacher increases, so the teacher does not need to go back to square one.
Level of the class	The 1st grade teacher needs to be in a separate field. The 1st, 2 nd , 3 rd , and 4th grade can be branched out separately.
Others	It is worth to try; we would not know the result without trying. Branching out is essential on the basis of both field and class.

The views about the essence of branching out on the basis of class are gathered in six categories as “Specialization”, “Success”, “Addiction”, “Burden”, “The Level of the Class”, and “Others”.

It is indicated that the teacher can specialize and use again the materials he/she prepared before as the curriculum does not change every year in case of branching out on the basis of class. A3 expressed his opinions with these words: “*The teachers can branch out in themselves or they can branch out on the basis of class. Teaching how to read and write is a profession in itself.*” It is thought the students will not have to see the same teacher whom they do not like for four years and addiction to one teacher will decrease. Ö5 expressed his opinions about this subject by saying: “*Addiction to one teacher decreases if there is a specialization on the basis of class and a different teacher attends the class every year.*”

It is seen from the above findings that branching on the basis of class will benefit the teacher in particular, reduce the burden of the teacher, and enable him/her to specialize. In this context, it can be considered as an alternative to branching out on the basis of the field.

Positive Views on the Current Situation of Primary School Teaching

Positive views of the participants about the current situation of primary school teaching are presented as two headings: "Teachers Can Be Successful in All Areas" and "There Must Be No Branching".

Teachers Can Be Successful in All Areas

The views about teachers capable of being competent on all fields are given on Table 7:

Table 7: *The views about teachers capable of being competent on all fields*

Categories	Codes
They can be competent	<p>Teacher can be competent on every field; he/she can do all of them very well. He/she can discover all the abilities and expand the student's horizon. He/she can teach all fields effectively. By having a certain level of intelligence, everybody can achieve this. Every teacher can carry out the things written in the curriculum. Graduating from equal-weight (Turkish, science, and social lessons) department of the school, the teacher is good at both verbal and math course. The teacher took the education he/she needs. A well-educated primary school teacher can teach all competencies and skills. He/she can build skills as competently as a teacher of art, music, and physical education. The primary school teacher does not care about skill lessons; if he/she cares about it, then he/she can achieve.</p>
No need to be competent	<p>It is not necessary to load information; everybody can perform the practice. Every teacher can make the students practice the course book; there is no need to break the routine. Learning outcomes are at a simple level; there is no need for high-level information Anyone can apply the program High school graduate people can do it too. By studying or getting prepared for that field, the teacher can teach it. While the teacher gives more than needed in the fields he/she is good at, he/she gives information needed in other fields. Even if the teacher is not competent in that field, he/she can teach the learning outcomes of the curriculum as the curriculum for primary school is at a simple level.</p>
	<p>The aim must not to train a good athlete or an artist but to train a good person. Primary school teaching is a scanning/preparation period, so there is no need to realize the potential of the student. There is no need to give high-level education; it is enough to know the notes. The number of gifted children in a class is generally 1, so it is not a problem.</p>
	<p>Guidance is enough The teacher can teach playing an instrument even if he/she does not play an instrument; it is sufficient to guide the students. Even if the teacher does not write stories, he/she can teach the language to be used. The plays are enough in fields where the teacher is not competent. The teacher can make contact with people or foundations related to the fields where the student is competent. It is important to have not the ability but the knowledge in teaching something.</p>
They can be competent at a certain level	<p>The teacher can be competent at all fields at a certain level. While the teacher is competent at some skills generally, he/she is better at some of them. The teacher can be competent enough to fulfill the students' needs. The teacher can educate what he/she knows or what he/she is familiar with. On the bases of outcomes of the lessons, he/she can be successful.</p>

It is not a burden for teachers	It is their job to teach all fields. It is not a burden to teach all fields.
They can be competent with a good education	A well-trained qualitative primary school teacher can teach all fields. A well-trained qualitative primary school teacher can discover gifted students. If the programs of the undergraduate education change, the teacher can be competent on everything. At high school, teachers used to teach these skills. The fact that there is no success about this subject does not mean there will not be any success in teaching it.
It depends on the conditions	If the conditions at schools are recovered, the teacher can do these things. If the conditions are satisfied, a student can be educated for four or five years.
The teacher can develop himself/herself	Deficiency of information can be made up. The teacher can conscientiously develop himself/herself to be competent. He/she can teach with personal effort by developing himself/herself. He/she can do it as he/she gains experience.
There are some teachers who achieve this	There are some countries that have achieved this. There are some teachers who are competent on all fields.

As seen in Table 7, the views about teachers capable of being successful at all fields are gathered in categories as “They can be competent”, “They can be competent at a certain level”, “It is not a burden for the teacher”, “No need to be competent”, “They can be competent with a good education”, “It depends on conditions”, “The teacher can develop himself”, and “There are some teachers who achieve this”.

It is thought that the teacher can be competent on every field; he/she can discover all the abilities, build skills as competently as a teacher of art, music, and physical education, and carry out the curriculum. It is thought that a primary school teacher having all these competencies at a certain level can teach the curriculum as the learning outcomes of the field are simple. There is no need for high level education; every teacher can carry out the things written in curriculum. There are some views that by studying or getting prepared and guiding for that field, the teacher can teach it; even a high school graduate is competent enough to do it. ÖA3 expressed his opinions about the subject by saying, “*Even if we don't know the subject completely, there will be many things that we generally know, as the subjects are shallow. We know how to explain. After being a teacher, there is a preparation time for that subject to be taught.*” It is also indicated that it is possible to have all these competencies if the undergraduate programs change and the teacher has a good education. The teacher can be competent on all fields by developing himself/herself conscientiously, making up all deficiencies, gaining more experiences even if he/she has not yet taken an education required; in fact, there are many teachers who are competent on all fields in other countries. Ö6 expressed his opinions about the subject with these words: “*Till noon, teacher can give basic lessons such as Turkish, math and social science easily by developing himself. He can give this education with the education he had before.*” It is also thought that it is not a burden for a teacher to have all these competencies but he/she sees it as a part of his/her job. A2 has expressed his opinions about this subject with these words: “*Teaching all lessons is not a big burden for a teacher. It is as a part of the job of a teacher.*”

When the findings are examined, it is seen that the idea that the primary school teacher can be successful in all areas is based on the idea that it is sufficient for the primary school teacher to have these qualifications at a certain level and no other requirement is needed; the needs of the students can be met with basic level knowledge.

There Must Be No Branching

The views about no branching are presented as two separate tables: “There Must Be No Branching Out on the Basis of the Field” and “There Must Be No Branching Out on the Basis of Class”.

The views about no branching out on the basis of field are presented on Table 8:

Table 8: *The views about there must be no branching out on the basis of field*

Categories	Codes
Syncing to level	The branch teacher cant sync to the level of the students. Branch teachers cannot make contact with the students. Branch teachers are not educated enough to help the children at that age. Branch teachers do not know the characteristics of the children between seven and 12.
Interest/Adaptation	Branch teachers do not care if the students have learned or not

	<p>Branch teachers do not stake students' claim.</p> <p>Branch teachers' job is to give the lessons; they do not care about other things.</p> <p>Branch teachers do not visit the parents; they say it is not part of their job.</p>
Integrity/ Recognition	<p>Branch teacher cannot recognize the student in a multidimensional or totalitarian way.</p> <p>It is difficult for branch teachers to observe the students.</p> <p>Disciplines must not be taught independently from one another.</p> <p>Primary school teacher can discover and guide children's abilities.</p> <p>It is necessary to have the support of the primary school teacher by knowing students' strengths and blind sizes.</p> <p>The primary school teacher can evaluate individual differences.</p> <p>The primary school teacher observes the development of the students, recognizes the students, and knows their blind sides.</p> <p>The primary school teacher deals with the students entirely and educates them.</p>
Success	<p>Branch teacher does not know how to teach reading and writing.</p> <p>When a different teacher attends the class, basis of the education is not provided.</p>
Adaptation/ Attachment	<p>Branch teacher is not important in the eyes of the students; they are not remembered.</p> <p>Different teachers cause crisis and mental problem for the students.</p> <p>The students do not obey nor recognize the branch teacher.</p> <p>The primary school teacher is like a mother/father, but the branch teacher is not.</p> <p>Having ever-changing teachers brings troubles to the students and the students cannot get used to the teachers.</p> <p>When one teacher attends the class, he/she is the hero of the class in the students' eyes.</p> <p>With one teacher, an emotional bond is involved.</p>
Guidance/ Student's behavior	<p>The branch teacher does not deal with the student behavior.</p> <p>There is behavior disorder with branching out.</p> <p>When many teachers attend the class, the behaviors of the students change.</p> <p>With different teachers, there is trouble about guidance.</p> <p>The reactions of the students to the primary school teachers and branch teachers become different.</p> <p>The primary school teacher follows the problems.</p>
Being a role model	<p>With branching out, a good citizen cannot be educated.</p> <p>The students cant analyze and choose the behavior of different teachers.</p> <p>One primary school teacher can teach human values.</p> <p>The students imitate the teacher; the teacher must be the only role model.</p> <p>The teacher has the duty of preparing the students for life.</p> <p>For that age, the primary school teacher's effect on the student is very big.</p> <p>The characteristics of the primary school teacher are more important than others.</p>
The success of branch teachers	<p>Branch teachers cannot discover the students, thus forming a wrong basis.</p> <p>Branch teachers become a robot as they give the same lessons.</p> <p>The problem with branch teachers is that some of them are good while some of them are bad.</p> <p>It makes no difference if a professor attends the class.</p> <p>It is not a guarantee that all of them will be good even if different teachers attend the class.</p> <p>Every physical education teacher cannot educate a good athlete; every science teacher gives the skill of science.</p> <p>There is no difference between a primary school teacher and a branch teacher.</p> <p>At secondary school, branch teachers give lessons and there is no success too.</p>
Necessity	<p>The primary school teacher wants support when he/she needs it.</p> <p>Having a teacher is not an obligation but a necessity.</p> <p>Branch teacher is not necessary as it is only primary education.</p> <p>There will be an assistant primary school teacher.</p>
Economy	<p>With branching out, the work gets longer and the cost increases.</p> <p>It is not economical.</p> <p>Different branches are extra expense for the government.</p>
Others	<p>There is no work left for a primary school teacher.</p> <p>It can be given a chance.</p> <p>It can be beneficial but not a priority.</p>

Keyword is a good teacher not a branch.
 The teacher is not a problem but a physical condition.
 The problem is not solved with the attendance of branch teachers in class.
 The primary school teaching must not be removed.
 It is nice theoretically but bad in practice; it is utopic.
 The primary school teaching system cannot be given up, that it is so harmful.

As seen on Table 8, the views about no branching out on the basis of field are gathered in categories as “Sinking to level”, “Interest/Adaptation”, “Integrity/Recognition”, ”Success”, “Adaptation/Attachment”, “Guidance/Student Behavior”, “Being a Role Model”, The Success of the Branch Teachers”, “Necessity”, “Economy”, and “Others”.

It is thought that the branch teacher cannot know the characteristics of the students at that age, sync to their level, make contact with the students, and embrace the students. Furthermore, they do not care if the students are learning or not, so the basic education of the students will not be strong. Ö2 expressed his opinions about the subject with these words: “Branching out at primary school can be a trouble because the branch teachers do not behave according to the level of the students. It is thought that primary school teacher recognizes the students better, evaluates the individual differences better, discovers their abilities, guide them, and raise them as a whole. It is indicated that students have mental problems and they cannot form an emotional bond between amongst one another when different teachers attend the lessons. Meanwhile, A2 says, “*I think a primary school teacher has the competency of educating a student for four or five years in a good light. I think the students at a young age have difficulty in obeying the teachers; they do not recognize them nor do the homeworks they give.*” Meanwhile, ÖA3 says, “*Students enshrine the primary school teachers in their heart. The same teacher from the 1st grade is good to see. The student recognizes the teacher and knows how he/she gives the lesson. When different teachers attend the class, there will be some time to get used to the teacher.*” It is thought that the branch teachers do not care about the students’ behaviors and they do not guide them, thus there will be behavior disorders. However, only one teacher can be a role model, can teach human values, can raise a good citizen, and can prepare the students for life. A1 expressed his opinions about this subject with these words: “*I do not find branching as a new reorganization acceptable. It can be carried out to support the school education but it seems hard to play the role of the primary school teacher.*” It is indicated that there is no difference between a primary school teacher and a branch teacher in terms of success; the primary school teacher cannot teach all competencies and branch teachers cannot discover the abilities of the students and teach the necessary skills. Branching out is not economical and it is an extra expense for the government. It is thought that the problem cannot be solved by branching out; the physical conditions need to be recovered and branching out is nice theoretically, but it cannot be carried out in practice.

The views that there must be no branching out on the basis of class are presented in Table 9:

Table 9: *The views that there must be no branching out on the basis of class*

Categories	Codes
Student’s adaptation	The student latches on teacher emotionally. The student cannot adapt to different teacher every year. Every teacher has a different style and personal characteristics, so the adaptation is difficult.
Teacher’s adaptation	The teacher cannot develop himself/herself. It is boring for the teacher. It is tiring for the teacher.
Integrity	The teacher cannot transfer the information about the student to the new teacher. A student is raised in the only discipline systematically for 4 years. The student learns the culture of the school with the same teacher for 4 years. The teacher recognizes the students and their parent on all hands.
Other	It is not necessary if the teacher is good.

As seen in Table 9, the views about no branching out on the basis of class are gathered in categories as “Student’s Adaptation”, “Teacher’s Adaptation”, “Integrity”, and “Other”.

It is indicated that branching out on the basis of class is tiring and boring for the teacher; the teacher cannot develop himself/herself. The students cannot adapt to a new teacher every year and get used to the different characteristics of the new teacher. It is emphasized that it is important for the students to gain the school culture with one teacher for four years and be raised by one teacher systematically; one teacher can recognize the students and their parents better, and there is no need to branch out if the teacher is good enough. A2 expressed his opinion about the subject with these words: “*Branching out on the basis of class can be tiring and boring for*

the teacher.” Ö8 said, “Branching out on the basis of class is impossible. Only branching out on the basis of one field may be possible.” ÖA2 says, “Not branching out on the basis of class but rather on the basis of lesson may be possible. Branching out on the basis of class will be boring.”

Conclusion and Recommendations

It is seen that the qualifications the primary school teacher should have are world knowledge, class management, guidance, communication, personal/vocational development, personal/moral features, pedagogical information/skill, technological information/skill, and field information/skill.

The job of teaching is a Professional job that has its own principles, methods, and techniques; it requires both personal features, including social, economic, cultural, technological, scientific and modern worldview, and vocational features, including vocational formation, academic study, and specialized knowledge and skill of one’s own field (Erden, 2001; High Education Board, 1998). In the study carried out in the scope of the “Education of the Teacher” of Support to Primary Education Project by General Directorate of Teacher Training and Education, general competencies and specific field competencies were determined. In the scope of this project, the competencies a teacher should have are determined in six categories: “Personal and Vocational Values”, “Vocational Development”, “Recognition of the Student”, “The Process of Learning and Teaching”, “Observation and Evaluation of Learning and Development”, “School-Family and Community Relations”, “Program”, and “Content Information” (MEB, 2006). It is seen that the competencies determined adjusted to the ones determined in this study.

The results of the research show that the necessary education cannot be given in terms of training effective primary school teachers in the faculties of education in general.

Akdemir (2013) states that the number of faculties of education has increased in recent years, but quality concerns have been ignored. Özoğlu (2010) states that faculties of education are insufficient both in terms of human resources and physical and technological infrastructure. In addition to the inadequacy of faculty members, their qualifications are also subject to criticism; the shortage of teaching staff is generally being covered by academicians who specialize in different fields. Aydın, Şahin, and Topal (2008) state that the target level of quality cannot be reached in the requirement of the lecturer of the institutions that train primary school teachers for primary school. In the study where pre-service teachers’ evaluation about training program of primary school teaching was revealed, Şahin and Kartal (2013) expressed that pre-service teachers find undergraduate education inadequate; some lessons are given in wrong periods and training lessons are inadequate, apart from the competencies of lecturers being inadequate. In her study, Gökçe (2013) expresses that primary school teaching graduate teachers have difficulties in planning, organizing teaching techniques, and relating to students. Baştürk (2015) states that pre-service primary school teachers do not find the physical and environmental facilities provided by the university sufficient; they find the instructors insufficient in terms of numbers. The results of the said research are consistent with the results of this research.

Although there is an opinion that the primary school teachers can be successful in all fields, the results of the research show that primary school teachers and pre-service teachers do not feel successful in all academic courses and that they are inadequate in skill courses.

The view that success can be achieved in all areas may be due to self-perceptions of teachers over their qualifications. There are studies in the literature that teachers’ and pre-service teachers’ self-perceptions in various subjects are quite high in almost every subject. In the study conducted by Yeşilyurt (2013) to determine the pre-service teachers’ self-efficacy perception, it was seen that pre-service teachers’ self-efficacy perception levels were “quite sufficient”. Kacaroglu (2008) saw that the teachers feel competent in the fields of vocational information, self-development, field information, and national and international values. The results of Oğuz’s research (2009) about self-sufficiency of preservice primary school teachers are high, while Eker’s research (2014) about primary school teachers’ self-insufficiency is high as well; both studies support the results of this research. However, in the study conducted by Taşdemir (2007), primary school teachers stated that they found themselves high enough in terms of both professional competence and professional excitement and dynamism, while they found that other primary school teachers in their schools were partially sufficient. In this case, it can be said that there is no harmony between self-perceptions of primary school teachers and perceptions of their colleagues’ competencies.

Although it is seen that some of them think that they can be successful in every field due to their high self-perception, it is seen that primary school teachers do not feel successful in every field in general. There are many studies supporting this situation in the literature. In their study, Taşkaya and Muştâ (2008) found that one quarter of primary school teachers consider themselves inadequate in teaching Turkish. In the study of Kutlu and Gökdere (2012), it was observed that the mean of science teaching attitude scores of pre-service primary school teachers was moderate and that they did not consider themselves willing and sufficient while teaching

science subjects. Ültay and Uludüz (2018) concluded that pre-service primary school teachers' self-efficacy levels in science teaching were low. The results of Arseven and Tephan's (2015) research show that pre-service primary school teachers' self-efficacy perceptions about mathematics teaching are not good. In the study of Hacıömeroğlu (2013), it shows that the pre-service teachers' self-efficacy beliefs regarding mathematics teaching are undecided in terms of personal competence. İlhan (2003) states that the art education in primary schools could not be carried out successfully, and one of the main reasons for this was the lack of qualified teachers. In the study carried out by Kılıç (2009), it is indicated that primary school teachers have difficulty in music education because the music education they had is not adequate; they have problems about developing themselves, they cannot give education to the students at early age, and the educational environment is inadequate. In the study where Pehlivan, Dönmez, and Yaşat (2005) analyzed the views of primary school teachers about Physical Education lesson, 48% of primary school teachers find physical education lesson inadequate and 58.2% of them cannot instruct physical education lessons effectively at will. In the study carried out by Yılmaz and Orhan (2020), it is indicated that experienced primary school teachers were more inadequate in terms of teaching and practicing music than the pre-service teachers

Within the scope of the research, it was concluded that there should be branching out on the basis of field (academic courses and especially skill courses) or class basis.

In the research conducted by Boyacı, Kılıç and Şahin (2016), it was concluded that the students whose math abilities were supported in the primary school period turned to math fields and the students whose verbal abilities were supported turned to verbal fields in the choice of profession. Primary school teachers did not direct the students in the field of skill and did not give importance to the lesson; therefore, they had a negative effect on students' achievement in the field of skill. In his study, Kalyoncu (2013) showed that in our country, the level of primary and secondary education art education is much lower than necessary quality of art courses. Parsad and Spiegelman (2012) state that branch teachers entered 91% of music classes, 84% of art classes, 57% of dance classes, and 42% of drum classes in the state-owned primary schools in the United States in 2009-2010. All the said results support the results of this research on branching. It should not be forgotten that teacher is the basic part of education and the quality and competency of the teacher are the most important factors for the activity of education to be successful (Büyükkaragöz, Mustafa, Yılmaz & Pilten, 1998). It is thought that entrusting children in all fields to a primary school teacher, who cannot get the necessary education in the undergraduate education, who does not feel sufficient in some areas especially in the fields of skill, and who does not have the necessary competences in all fields, is quite problematic in terms of revealing their development and potential. For this reason, branching out on the basis of field (academic courses and especially skill courses) or class basis can be a solution.

According to the results of the research, the following suggestions were developed.

1. Areas where current primary school teachers feel better can be identified and branched out.
2. Experimental studies can be carried out to determine whether to branch out on the basis of field or class basis.
3. As a result of experimental studies, primary school teacher training program/system in education faculties can be rearranged.
4. In terms of research results, different studies can be performed by using quantitative measurement tools.
5. The same research can be tested in different schools (private or state), with different participants, and by different researchers.

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