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### **PEDAGOGICAL EVALUATION OF THE BRANCH TEACHERS' TEACHING ALL CLASSES IN THE 4<sup>TH</sup> AND 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADES IN PRIMARY EDUCATION\***

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#### **ABSTRACT**


In Turkey, primary school teachers form the largest group among all teachers. Primary school teachers teach the classes from the 1st to 5th grades of primary education. However, since 2003 (until 2012), some branch teachers have been teaching in the 4th and 5th grades in public primary schools as well. As for the other classes that the branch teachers don't teach, primary school teachers continue to teach. This situation has risen some controversy.

In this research, it was aimed to evaluate the branch teachers' teaching all classes in the 4th and 5th grades in primary education pedagogically. For this purpose, the opinions of the teachers, school managers and education inspectors serving in the primary schools were taken. The research data designed by the survey method. The population of the study consists of the teachers, school managers and education inspectors serving in the primary schools in Turkey. The sampling constitutes 2217 people randomly selected from 12 provinces. The research data were collected via Likert-type scale developed by the researcher. In the data analysis, LISREL and SPSS package programs were used.

In the study, it was found that the views of the educational employees about the pedagogical benefits of the branch teachers' teaching all the classes in the 4th and 5th grades instead of primary school teachers caused a significant difference in terms of seniority in the service and the state of duty but no significant difference in terms of educational level, gender, the school they graduated, and the place where the school is located. In the lights of the results obtained, some suggestions were provided to especially the Ministry of Education, the

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universities training teachers, and the individuals and the institutes doing research on this subject.

## **STRUCTURED ABSTRACT**

### **Introduction**

There are many elements of the education, a vast field. That the education is of good quality depends on the qualifications of these elements. All these elements have important tasks to have the system work as planned, yet teachers, one of these elements, are in the centre to determine the quality of the education.

1-5 grades which constitute the first level of primary education in Turkey, all the classes but foreign language class were taught by the class teachers starting from 2003 (until 2012), yet this situation changed when the branch teacher need were met and after 2003, branch teachers started to teach some classes (Education of Religion and Ethics, Physical Education, Art, Music and Foreign Language) at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades of primary education

Until 2012, all the classes at 6–8 grades were taught by the branch teachers and the classes at the first five grades mainly class teachers taught at the primary education in Turkey. Yet, at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades, classes which require special skills (art, music and physical education), foreign language and religion were taught by branch teachers. Even in some private primary schools, branch teachers start teaching at the first grade of the primary education and even at pre-school.

### **Purpose**

In this research, it was aimed to evaluate the branch teachers' teaching all classes in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades in primary education pedagogically. For this purpose, the opinions of the teachers, school managers and education inspectors serving in the primary schools were taken.

### **Method**

This very research aiming to evaluate the fact that all classes in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades in the primary schools are carried out by the branch teachers pedagogically in line with the opinions of the school managers in the primary schools, primary school teachers and instructional inspectors was designed as survey model in the descriptive design.

The population of the study consists of the teachers, school managers and education inspectors serving in the primary schools in Turkey. The sampling constitutes 2217 people randomly selected from 12 provinces. The data obtained were analysed using "LISREL 8.51 for Windows" and "SPSS 15 for Windows" programmes. Besides percengate, frequency, mean, standart deviation analysis, "Levene" test for homegenity, "One-Way ANOVA", "Kruskal Wallis" and "t-test" for significancy of the differences between the responses of the independent variables and "Mann-Whitney U" for the source of the differences were administered. For the interpretation of the data, ".05" significance level

was taken into consideration. Sum of the mean score range of the 5-Likert type scale was calculated between minimum 20 and maximum 100.

The scale was copied and sent to provincial directorate of national education and primary schools in the sample by Turkish Ministry of Education EARGED department and the responses were collected by the same department and given to the researcher, in 2010-2011.

### **Results and Recommendations**

In the study, it was found that the views of the educational employees about the pedagogical benefits of the branch teachers' teaching all the classes in the 4th and 5th grades instead of primary school teachers caused a significant difference in terms of seniority in the service and the state of duty but no significant difference in terms of educational level, gender, the school they graduated, and the place where the school is located. In this research, inspectors, school managers and teachers, with "70,99" mean score, agreed by ticking "totally agree" in the scale on the benefits of the fact that all the classes at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades are taught by the branch teachers pedagogically.

As a result of this study, inspectors, teachers and the school manager participated in the study can be said to have found the fact that all the classes at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades are taught by the branch teachers pedagogically useful. Yet, although a new model for the school system is on the agenda and there are still arguments in Turkey, it is seen that studies on this topic is insufficient and there is a need for various studies in order to generalize the findings. For this reason, in line with the findings in this study, the following suggestions can be made to especially Ministry of Education, universities which train teachers and institutions and people who are to study on this particular topic: The grades and classes that the class teachers will teach should be revised. Experimental, qualitative and survey type research which focus on the effects of the branch teachers' teaching at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades of primary education on students success should be done.

**Keywords:** 4+4+4 compulsory education, branch teacher, primary school teacher, quality of education, Turkish education system.

## **BRANŞ ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN 4 VE 5. SINIFLARDA TÜM DERSLERE GİRMESİNİN PEDAGOJİK AÇIDAN DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ**

### **ÖZ**

Türkiye'de öğretmenler içinde en büyük grubu sınıf öğretmenleri oluşturmaktadır. Sınıf öğretmenleri ilköğretimin 1-5. sınıflarında derslere girmektedir. Ancak, 2003 yılından itibaren (2012 yılına kadar), devlet okullarında 4 ve 5. sınıflarda bazı derslere branş öğretmenleri de girmeye başlamıştır. Branş öğretmenlerinin girmedikleri derslere ise sınıf öğretmenleri girmeye devam etmiştir. Bu durum bazı tartışmalara neden olmuştur.

Bu araştırmada, ilköğretim 4 ve 5. sınıflarda bütün derslere branş öğretmenlerinin girmesinin pedagojik açıdan değerlendirilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Bu amaçla ilköğretim kurumlarında görev yapmakta olan öğretmen ve okul yöneticileri ile eğitim müfettişlerinin görüşleri alınmıştır. Araştırma, tarama modeli ile desenlenenmiştir. Araştırmanın evrenini Türkiye’de ilköğretim okullarında görev yapmakta olan öğretmen ve okul yöneticileri ile eğitim müfettişleri oluşturmaktadır. Örneklem ise 12 ilden rastgele yöntemle seçilen 2217 kişiden oluşmuştur. Araştırma verileri, araştırmacı tarafından geliştirilen Likert türü ölçekle toplanmıştır. Verilerinin analizinde LISREL ve SPSS programlarından yararlanılmıştır.

Araştırmada, 4 ve 5. sınıflarda tüm derslere sınıf öğretmenleri yerine branş öğretmenlerinin girmesinin pedagojik açıdan yararına ilişkin eğitim iş görenlerinin görüşlerinin görev durumuna ve kıdeme göre anlamlı bir farklılaşmaya neden olduğu, eğitim düzeyi, cinsiyet, mezun olunan okul ve okulun bulunduğu yere göre ise anlamlı bir farklılaşmaya neden olmadığı sonuçlarına ulaşılmıştır. Ortaya çıkan sonuçlar da göz önünde bulundurularak özellikle Bakanlığa, öğretmen yetiştiren kurumlar olan üniversitelere ve bu konuda araştırma yapan kişi ve kurumlara bazı önerilerde bulunulmuştur.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kelime 1, Kelime 2, Kelime 3, Kelime 4, Kelime

## 1. Introduction

The development of the countries is closely related to the quality of their educational system. So, the governments go for radical changes in their education systems in order to enhance the halting sides and to make the system up-to-date. These changes are usually seen to be on the school system, curriculum and teachers.

Many changes about the school, curriculum and teachers have been applied in different times in Turkey as well. One of the changes applied was that the primary education was extended to eight years. From that time, primary education schools which is the main step of the education was made to be continuous and compulsory and was adjusted as 5+3. However, after this change, new problems and various needs were risen in time because in this system, a necessity for the various teachers to teach especially in the first five grades of the primary education came up.

There are many elements of the education, a vast field. That the education is of good quality depends on the qualifications of these elements. All these elements have important tasks to have the system work as planned, yet teachers, one of these elements, are in the centre to determine the quality of the education.

Students are responsible for their own learning. But, various factors have an effect on student success. Teachers can be said to have the most important effect among these factors because the studies done showed that the qualifications of teachers are the most effective external factor on student success (Darling-Hammond, 1997) as teachers take on the most important tasks in all activities related to education at school (Danielson, 2002; Fidan & Erden, 1994). For this reason, it can be uttered that changes related to teachers can affect the education substantially.

1-5 grades which constitute the first level of primary education in Turkey, all the classes but foreign language class were taught by the class teachers until 2003, yet this situation changed when the branch teacher need were met and after 2003, branch teachers started to teach some classes (Education

of Religion and Ethics, Physical Education, Art, Music and Foreign Language) at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades of primary education

It is stated in The Turkish Ministry of Education Primary Schools Regulations that class teachers teach nearly all the classes at the first level of primary education (Resmi Gazete, 2003). In the same regulation, it is also stated that the classes which require special knowledge, skills and abilities are to be taught by the branch teachers. For this reason, especially at the primary schools where there are enough teachers, class teachers teach only five classes (Traffic and First Aid, Science and Technology, Social Studies, Maths and Turkish). However, at the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> National Education Meetings, it was decided that class teachers would only teach the first three grades; branch teachers, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades (TTKB, 2007; TTKB, 2010). Similar suggestions were seen in various studies (Çepni, Küçük & Ayvaci, 2003; Doğan, 2004; Gömleksiz, Kan & Biçer, 2010; Töremen, 2011). With the 4+4+4 regulation enacted in 2012, that the 5<sup>th</sup> grade was included under the secondary school raised new arguments.

When other countries were investigated about the grades where branch teachers would teach at the primary schools, different applications were seen. For example, in many European Countries, it was found that class teachers work in different levels and the grades the branch teachers start to teach vary (Demirel, 2000; Arı, 2006; Şahinkaya, 2008; EURYDICE, 2010-a, EURYDICE, 2010-b; Ekinci & Öter, 2010). A good illustration for this is that primary education in Austria is nine years. In the first two years (except religion class), all the classes are taught by the class teacher. Starting from the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, branch teachers start to teach classes, still class teachers teaching most of the classes (Küçüktepe, 2005). As for Russia, while class teachers teach at the first level of the primary education, named as elementary school (1-4), at the second level of the primary education named as main school is five years and classes are taught by the branch teachers (Büyükduman, 2005).

Until 2012, all the classes at 6–8 grades were taught by the branch teachers and the classes at the first five grades mainly class teachers taught at the primary education in Turkey. Yet, at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades, classes which require special skills (art, music and physical education), foreign language and religion were taught by branch teachers. Even in some private primary schools, branch teachers start teaching at the first grade of the primary education and even at pre-school.

## **2. Purpose of the Research**

In Turkey, until 2003, that the branch teachers start to teach some classes at the 1–5<sup>th</sup> grades while the class teachers taught all the classes, that the branch teachers partially teach at the private primary schools and that the branch teachers teach at various grades at primary education in other countries and the arguments on intermittent and compulsory 12-years schooling system brought up the following question: “How is the fact that all the classes at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades are taught by the branch teachers pedagogically?” Within the scope of this question, that the opinions of the school managers in the primary schools, primary school teachers and instructional inspectors about the very subject are obtained can help to find the answer to this question. Within the scope of this question, responses to the following sub-questions were sought:

Are the opinions of the school managers in the primary schools, primary school teachers and instructional inspectors as to whether all classes in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades in the primary schools are carried out by the branch teachers pedagogically (quality of student, teacher and education) differentiated according to:

1. Length of service,
2. Graduation,
3. The place of the school,
4. Level of education,
5. Task state.

### 3. Method

#### 3.1. Research Design

This very research aiming to evaluate the fact that all classes in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades in the primary schools are carried out by the branch teachers pedagogically in line with the opinions of the school managers in the primary schools, primary school teachers and instructional inspectors was designed as survey model in the descriptive design.

#### 3.2. Population and Sampling

The population of the study is the school managers in the primary schools, primary school teachers and instructional inspectors. In order to define the sampling, various sampling methods can be used together (Yamane, 2010). Because the population is vast in this study, when defining the sampling, multi-staged random sampling, quota sampling and grouping sampling are together used.

“Statistical Regional Units Clustering” was taken into consideration when sampling. One county in the centre and one outside the centre of the cities were sampled randomly. The cities and counties where the study was conducted are listed in Table 1.

**Table 1: The Cities and Counties of the Schools in the Study**

City	County	n
İstanbul	Güngören	222
	Küçükçekmece	
Tekirdağ	Center	170
	Malkara	
Aydın	Center	260
	Çine	
Bilecik	Center	187
	Bozüyük	
Ankara	Center (Mamak)	195
	Nallıhan	
Adana	Center (Yüreğir)	146
	Saimbeyli	
Yozgat	Center	189
	Çekerek	
Amasya	Center	142
	Taşova	
Giresun	Center	200
	Bulancak	
Ağrı	Center	169
	Doğubayazıt	
Elazığ	Center	196
	Karakoçan	
Gaziantep	Center (Oğuzeli)	141
	Karkamış	
TOTAL		2217

The scale was sent to 40 instructional inspectors in the 12 cities taken as sample. In order to sample the school managers in the primary schools, primary school teachers, grouping sampling was used.

Theoretical Sampling Table was used when sampling. In this table prepared by Anderson (1990: 202), it is stated that according to 95% reliability level, when the population is 50.000; 381 sample; when the population is 1.000.000; 384 sample should be taken (in Balcı, 2010: 102).

As these numbers were taken into consideration, it was found that the number of the sampling should be 1914. Considering the fact that there are two schools manages in schools, it was designated

that 192 schools should be chosen for the sampling. 2217 returned responses to the scale without error or missing value were found suitable for the analysis.

### **3.3. Collection of the Data**

The scale was copied and sent to provincial directorate of national education and primary schools in the sample by Turkish Ministry of Education EARGED department and the responses were collected by the same department and given to the researcher, in 2010-2011.

To collect the data, 5-Likert type scale developed by the researcher was used. There were 35 items in the draft scale. The opinions of the authorities in the field for the content validity and of the authorities in the assessment and evaluation field and Turkish language for the construct validity were taken. The scale was given to the school managers in the primary schools, primary school teachers and instructional inspectors as pre-application of the scale.

### **3.4. Analysis of the Pre-Application Data**

According to Cohen, Maninon ve Morrison'a (2003), the reliability co-efficient is expected to be as closely as possible to "1". 326 responses to the scale without error or missing value in this study were analysed via "SPSS 15 for Windows". Cronbach Alpha reliability co-efficient of the scale was found to be ".84". The factors' reliability co-efficient was found ".94" and ".91" after the factor analysis.

In order to see if the scale was suitable for the factor analysis, the results of KMO Barlet and sphericity tests was found as ".95" and ".00" ( $p < .05$ ) respectively. These results were considered to be the indicators of the fact that the factor analysis can be applied for the scale. The item-total correlation, internal validity and factor loads of the items of the scale were viewed in the analysis. In order to define how many factors the scale had, scree plot, item-total correlation, eigen values and extraction sums of squared loadings were examined.

Principle components and promax rotation was employed in the factor analysis. The items which had ".15" or more factor loads were taken into consideration. After the item omission, the un-rotated and rotated results were given in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Item-Total Correlation and Factor Loads of the Scale**

Item Old Number	New Num ber	Item- total correla tion	Unrotated		Rotated		
			F1	F2	Item- total correlatio n	F1	F2
M28	S10	,709	,769	-,332	,7915	,873	
M32	S17	,694	,747	-,330	,7731	,855	
M29	S14	,779	,828	-,268	,8360	,856	
M18	S3	,651	,706	-,350	,7363	,846	
M30	S15	,781	,826	-,253	,8288	,837	
M34	S18	,773	,820	-,217	,8084	,797	
M27	S12	,68	,743	-,250	,7362	,775	
M1	S20	,574	,631	-,321	,6477	,763	
M20	S7	,655	,704	-,264	,7058	,759	
M21	S1	,732	,778	-,203	,7601	,754	
M31	S9	,732	,779	-,179	,7512	,731	
M17	S5	,607	,660	-,239	,6519	,704	
M23	S16	,630	,621	,575	,7734		,905
M25	S11	,605	,684	,519	,8025		,866
M22	S13	,669	,646	,530	,7659		,864
M33	S18	,603	,622	,477	,7116		,793
M11	S8	,555	,575	,490	,6756		,789
M12	S4	,640	,662	,440	,7227		,767
M26	S6	,592	,616	,425	,6687		,732
M2	S2	,583	,611	,328	,6099		,620
Eigen values			9,960	2,721			7.405
Extraction sums of squared loadings			49,799	13,603	9.146	49,799	13,603
Reliability			,95			,95	,91

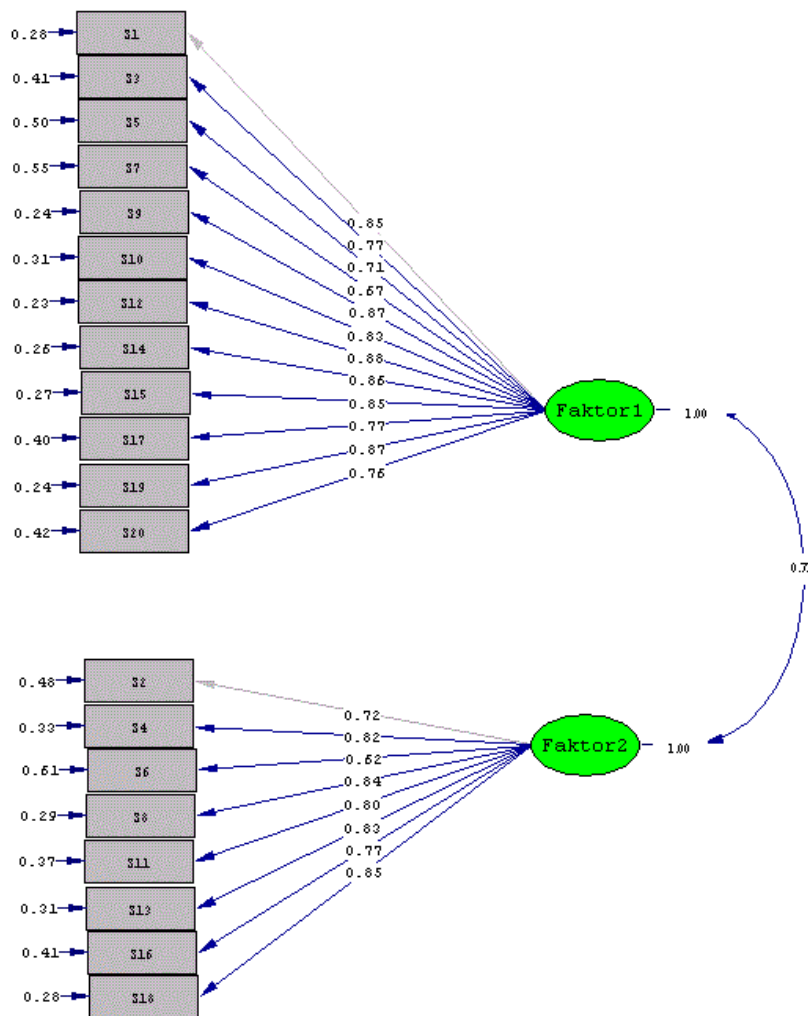
When the results of the analysis were viewed, it was seen that all the items had the tendency to form one factor. First factor could explain the 49,8% of the variance alone and its eigen value was quite higher than that of the second factor. When all the items were analysed all together, item-total correlation changes between “0.575” and “0.828”. Accordingly, internal validity was found to be “0.95”, which was quite high. Depending on these results, it can be stated that the scale had one factor and homogenous items. So as to see the factor loads clearly, when the Promax rotation (Kappa=7) was applied, it was found that a two-component structure which had a positive and high relationship came up. The correlation between the components was found to be “0.559”. So, it can be said that the scale had one factor, yet comprised of two components with a positive and high relationship. Just as separate scores can be obtained for each component, so a total score can also be obtained by summing all the items in the scale. As a result, after the pre-application and item analysis process, a 20-item scale was obtained.



### 3.5. Factor Analysis for the Main Application

Confirmatory factor analysis using LISREL 8.51 was done in the main application to see whether the results obtained from the exploratory factor analysis in the pre-application. The exploratory factor analysis results were used to define the components of the items. The item covariance matrix created by using the raw data obtained from 2217 persons was analysed.

In the graph below, the structural model which was obtained from the confirmatory factor analysis done in "LISREL 8.51" was given. The structure in this model was similar to the factors obtained from the factor analysis done in SPSS.



**Graph 1:** Confirmatory Factor Analysis Structure Model of The Items

Fit Indexes obtained from confirmatory factor analysis in Graph 1 were given in Table 3.

**Table 3:** Fit Indexes Obtained from Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Fit Index	Acceptable Value	Observed value
GFI	≥0.90	0.89
AGFI	≥0.80	0.87
NNFI	≥0.90	0.93
CFI	≥0.90	0.94
RMSEA	≤0.06 or ≤0.08	0.08

GFI = goodness-of-fit index; AGFI = adjusted goodness-of-fit index;

NNFI = non-normed fit index; CFI = comparative fit index;

RMSR = root mean square residual;

RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation.

When the fit indexes of the values obtained were viewed, the observed values were seen to be within the acceptable values. Therefore, it can be said that the structure obtained from the pre-application was confirmed. High and positive relationship between the components was found as was the case in pre-application.

### 3.6. Data Analysis

The data obtained were analysed using “LISREL 8.51 for Windows” and “SPSS 15 for Windows” programmes. Besides percentage, frequency, mean, standard deviation analysis, “Levene” test for homogeneity, “One-Way ANOVA”, “Kruskal Wallis” and “t-test” for significance of the differences between the responses of the independent variables and “Mann-Whitney U” for the source of the differences were administered. For the interpretation of the data, “.05” significance level was taken into consideration. Sum of the mean score range of the 5-Likert type scale was calculated between minimum 20 and maximum 100.

## 4. Findings

### 4.1. Findings about Whether the Opinions Differ According to Length of Service

The results of the findings whether the opinions about the fact that all classes at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades should be taught by the branch teachers differ according to length of service were given in Table 4 below.

**Table 4:** Analysis of the Opinions According to Length of Service

Length of service	N	$\bar{X}$	S	df	F	p	Difference
1.1-5	573	72,88	19,44				
2.6-10	392	73,91	17,87				
3.11-15	436	69,55	20,44	2212	6,969	,00	1-3,1-5,
4.16-20	216	70,77	20,11				2-3,2-5,
5.21+	600	68,40	18,75				
TOTAL	2217	70,99	19,36				

As can be seen in Table 4, the highest participation with “ $\bar{X}=73,91$ ” was the group whose length of service was between 6 and 10; the lowest participation with “ $\bar{X}=68,40$ ”, 21-year or more length of service. The analysis as to whether the difference seen among the groups was significant showed that there was a significant difference among the groups ( $F_{(2212)}=6.696$ ,  $p<.05$ ). In other words, the length of service of the participants creates significant difference about the opinions of the participants.

The multiple regression analysis about which groups caused this significant difference showed that the difference occurred between the participants with 1-5 year length of service and those with 11-15 year length of service, between the participants with 1-5 year length of service and those with 21 + year length of service, between the participants with 6 - 10 year length of service and those with 11 - 15 year length of service, and between the participants with 6 - 10 year length of service and those with 21 + year length of service. That the difference is significant resulted from the fact that the mean score of the participants with 1-5 year length of service and the participants with 6-10 year length of service was higher than those with 11 - 15 year length of service and 21 + year length of service. That is, the length of service and opinions were inversely correlated.

#### 4.2. Findings about Whether The Opinions Differ According to Graduation

The results of the opinions analysed according to graduation were given in Table 5 below.

**Table 5.** Analysis of the opinions according to graduation

Graduation	N	$\bar{X}$	S	df	t	p
Faculty of Edu.	1430	70,55	19,72	2215	-1,453	,15
Others	787	71,78	18,67			

As can be seen in Table 5, participation level of the participants graduated from “other” schools and faculty “ $\bar{X} = 71,78$ ” was higher than that of the participants graduated from “Faculty of Education” “ $\bar{X} = 70,55$ ”. But, this difference was not significant ( $t_{(2215)} = -1.453$ ,  $p > .05$ ). That is, graduation did not cause a significant difference among the opinions of the participants.

#### 4.3. Findings about Whether The Opinions Differ According to The Place of The School

The results of the opinions analysed according to the place of the school were given in Table 6 below.

**Table 6:** Analysis of the opinions according to the place of the school

Place of the school	N	$\bar{X}$	S	df	F	p
Village-Town	486	72,71	19,97			
County	666	70,84	18,95	2214	2,639	,07
Province	1065	70,29	19,30			
TOTAL	2217	70,99	19,36			

As can be seen in Table 6, participation level of the participants who work in the village or town “ $\bar{X} = 70,29$ ” was higher than that of the participants who work in the city center “ $\bar{X} = 70,29$ ”. But, the analysis on whether this difference among the groups was significant, it was found that the difference was not significant ( $F_{(2214)} = 2.639$ ,  $p > .05$ ). That is, the place of school that the participants work did not cause a significant difference among the opinions of the participants.

#### 4.4. Findings about Whether the Opinions Differ According to Task State

The results of the opinions analysed according to task state were given in Table 7 below.

**Table 7:** Analysis of the Opinions According to Task State

Task State	N	$\bar{X}$	S	df	F	p	Difference
1.Class Teacher	685	64,90	20,96				
2.Branch Teacher currently teaching at primary school	369	76,71	16,14	2212	57,11	,00	1-2,1-3, 1-5, 2-3,
3.Branch Teacher not teaching at primary school	513	78,42	16,70				2-4,2-5, 3-4,3-5, 4-5
4.Inspector	335	65,05	17,71				
5.School Manager	315	71,75	18,63				
TOTAL	2217	70,99	19,36				

As can be seen in Table 7, participation level of the participants who did not teach at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades “ $\bar{X}$  =78,42” was higher that that of the participants who work as class teachers “ $\bar{X}$  =64,90”. But, the analysis on whether this difference among the groups was significant, it was found that the difference was significant ( $F_{(2212)}=57.113$ ,  $p<.05$ ). That is, task state caused a significant difference among the opinions of the participants.

The multiple regression analysis about which groups caused this significant difference showed that the difference occurred between “class teachers” and “branch teachers who currently teach at primary school”, between “branch teachers not teaching at a primary school” and “school managers”, between “branch teachers who currently teach at primary school” and “branch teachers not teaching at a primary school”, “Inspectors” and “school managers”, between “branch teachers not teaching at a primary school” and “Inspectors” and “school managers”, between “Inspectors” and “school managers”

#### 4.5. Findings about Whether the Opinions Differ According to Level of Education

The results of the opinions analysed according to level of education were given in Table 8 below.

**Table 8:** Analysis of the opinions according to level of education

Level of Education	N	$\bar{X}$	S	df	F	p
Associate Degree	290	69,93	18,45			
Undergraduate Degree	1816	71,21	19,47	2214	,680	,50
Graduate Degree	111	70,07	19,99			
TOTAL	2217	70,99	19,36			

As can be seen in Table 8, participation level of the participants with undergraduate degree “ $\bar{X}$  =71,21” was higher that that of the participants with associate degree “ $\bar{X}$  =69,93”. But, the analysis on whether this difference among the groups was significant, it was found that the difference was not significant ( $F_{(2214)}=.680$ ,  $p>.05$ ). That is, level of education did not cause a significant difference among the opinions of the participants.

#### 5. Discussion and Conclusion

After the schools were revised for 8-year compulsory education in Turkey, there happened important changes in primary education. One of these changes was the regulation that at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades, besides the class teachers, branch teachers started to teach some classes. After 2003, the grades and the classes the class teachers and branch teachers teach changed. One of the arguments brought up the following question: “How is the fact that all the classes at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades are taught by the branch teachers pedagogically?”

The foregoing question in this discussion was the question whether branch teachers instead of class teachers teach all the classes at 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades are more beneficial (Çepni, Küçük & Ayvaci, 2003). In fact, this discussion was brought not only in Turkey but in other countries as well and it is still on the agenda in some countries. To illustrate, while Lunn ve Bishop (2002) states that the class teachers should perform in the classes as qualified as the branch teachers, Huersch (1993) stated that class teachers are very important for the students and that despite some drawbacks, class teachers can teach the classes for eight years, yet added that being expert in the field is the most appropriate for teaching. For this reason, it is observed that it is an important way to train the class teachers-to-be well in these classes while they are still students.

In this research, inspectors, school managers and teachers, with “70,99” mean score, agreed by ticking “totally agree” in the scale on the benefits of the fact that all the classes at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades are taught by the branch teachers pedagogically. This result can be evaluated as to the fact that teachers, inspectors and school managers support the idea that all the classes at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades are taught by the branch teachers.

During the literature review, it was found that not many studies directly related to this topic was not conducted in Turkey. Nonetheless, the studies comparing the class and branch teachers and the studies trying to find out the self-efficacy beliefs and attitudes of the class and branch teachers were thought to shed light on this study because, according to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy beliefs affect the behaviors substantially. It was found in the studies scanned that there are various results related to the attitudes and self-efficacy beliefs of the class and branch teachers. For example, in the studies conducted, self-efficacy beliefs of the class teachers were found to be low or inadequate for Turkish, Science and Technology, Maths, and Social Studies (Akpınar, Turan & Tekataş, 2004; Ercan, 2007; Gömleksiz, Öner & Bozpolat, 2011; Taşkaya & Muştalı, 2008). In a study done by Yalar (2010), different results were obtained about the class teachers related to branch classes at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades of the primary education because while it was found in some studies that class teachers had positive attitude towards these classes, in some studies it was seen that class teachers had negative attitude towards these classes (Güven & Ersoy, 2007; Karasakaloğlu & Saracaloğlu, 2009; Kıyıcı Balkan, Aydoğdu, Doğru, Aslan & Özkaya, 2005; Öztürk & Ünal, 1999; Şimşek, 2005; Yürekli, 2008). Similarly, different results were obtained from the studies conducted with the pre-service teachers (Altunçekiç, Yaman & Koray, 2005; Başer & Yavuz, 2003; Çakar, 2008; Duran, Mıhladı & Kayacan 2011; Emrahoğlu & Karaduman, 2007; Evran Acar, 2010; Huyugüzel Çavaş & Kesercioğlu, 2008; Kahyaoğlu & Yangın, 2007; Özbay & Meriç, 2008; Sarıkaya, 2004; Şimşek, 2010; Umay, Duatepe & Akkuş Çıkla, 2005). To illustrate, in the study by Caymaz (2008), the self-efficacy beliefs of the pre-service teachers for the Science and Technology literacy were found to be high, yet mean score of the Science Class teachers were found to be higher than that of the class teachers. As in some studies, it was emphasized that the self-efficacy beliefs of the class teachers and pre-service teachers toward this class are quite high (Baysal, Arkan & Yıldırım, 2010; Çubukçu & Girmen, 2005; Gömleksiz, Kan & Biçer, 2010; Gömleksiz, Öner & Bozpolat, 2011; Güven & Ersoy, 2007; Hamurcu, 2006; Küçükylmaz & Duban, 2006; Meriç & Ersoy, 2007; Öztürk & Ünal, 1999; Tekbıyık & Pırasa, 2009). For example, the results of the study done by Avcı (2008) showed that the self-efficacy beliefs of the pre-service teachers towards Science teaching were high. When these studies are analysed overall, it can be stated that it is difficult to reach a general decision about the attitudes and self-efficacy beliefs of not only the class teachers but also the branch teachers towards Turkish, Science and Technology Maths and Social Studies classes.

According to Huersch (1993), there is of course a difference, favouring the branch teachers, between the branch teachers who are trained and expertised in a field and class teachers who are trained to be able to teach all the classes, yet that the class teacher should know the students' learning capacities and special occasions better than the branch teachers is a very important aspect. That the class teachers are kept within the system is very important for the child's development because “ class teacher is the

person who feeds the cognitive development of the future generations by affecting the children in an era which is vital for the person's cognitive and psycho-social development; who draws the frame of the person's attitudes toward himself, society and outside world and begins to shape it; and who enhances the development of communication, research, analytical thinking, problem solving, creative and eastatic skills which affect greatly the lifestyle of the future generation (Senemoğlu, 2003: 156). On the other hand, it is a fact that branch teachers have great contributions to the students in terms of field knowledge (Allington, 2002; ETUCE, 2008).

In the studies conducted by Gömleksiz, Öner and Bozpolat, (2011), it was concluded that class teachers had difficulty in teaching some classes at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades of the primary school in Turkey. In the studies conducted by Akgül (2006), Gömleksiz, Kan and Biçer (2010), Çepni, Küçük and Ayvacı (2003), Doğan (2004) and Gömleksiz, Öner and Bozpolat (2011), the researchers and the class teachers participated in the study emphasized that branch teachers were required to teach some classes at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades of the primary education and it would be useful if the class teachers teach only the first three grades of the primary education. On the other hand, Kırtay (2007) stated that there was no need for the branch teachers for the social studies class at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades of the primary education and class teachers could teach that class. Unlike this, one third of class teachers participated in the study claimed that branch teachers teach the social studies class at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades of the primary education. In another study done by Gömleksiz, Kan and Biçer (2010), class teachers took part in the study underlined that branch teachers teach all the classes at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades of the primary education. However, Kırtay (2007) stated that there was no need for the branch teachers for the social studies class at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades of the primary education and class teachers could teach that class.

In the results obtained in this study, it was found that opinions of the teacher did not change according to graduation, level of education and the place of the school. However, it was also found that task state and length of service of the teachers caused their opinions to be significantly different. The mean score of the participants whose length of service was between 6-10 years was higher than those having 11-15 year length of service and 21 years or more length of service. It can be stated that as the length of service of the teachers increased, the participation of the teachers decreased moderately.

When the source of the significant difference at task state is considered, the participation mean score of the class teachers was significantly lower than that of the branch teachers who teach at primary school and who don't, and school manager. Besides, it was noticed that the participation mean score of the branch teachers who teach at primary school was significantly lower than that of the branch teachers who don't. Another point is that the participation means score of the branch teachers who don't teach at primary school was significantly higher than that of the inspectors and school managers. So, it can be interpreted that the inspectors and school managers who observe teachers in and outside the class participated significantly lower than the branch teachers.

As a result of this study, inspectors, teachers and the school manager participated in the study can be said to have found the fact that all the classes at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades are taught by the branch teachers pedagogically usefull. Yet, although a new model for the school system is on the agenda and there are still arguments in Turkey, it is seen that studies on this topic is insufficient and there is a need for various studies in order to generalize the findings. For this reason, in line with the findings in this study, the following suggestions can be made to especially Ministry of Education, universities which train teachers and institutions and people who are to study on this particular topic:

- Experimental, qualitative and survey type research which focus on the effects of the brach teachers' teaching at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades of primary education on students success should be done. The grades and classes that the class and branch teachers are to teach should be rearranged in line with these studies findings. But, before such revisions are put into practice by the Ministry of Education, pilot studies should be conducted.

- Researches aiming to find out the opinions of the parents whose children attain primary school or not should be initiated.
- The private schools where the brach teachers teach all the classes at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades should be investigated.
- The grades and classes that the class teachers will teact should be revised.
- Undergraduate programs which train pre-service class and branch teachers should be revised.

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