

PERSPECTIVES OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS ON OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Volkan Çicek^{1*}, Özcan Palavan², Merve Atabay³

¹Assist. Prof. Dr, Zirve University, TURKEY, volkan.cicek@zirve.edu.tr

²Assist. Prof. Dr, Zirve University, TURKEY, ozcan.palavan@zirve.edu.tr

³BA graduate, Zirve University, TURKEY, merve.atabay@zirve.edu.tr

*Corresponding author

Abstract

Outdoor education stands out as one of the methods to deliver the desired educational outcomes taking the needs of the students, teachers and the curricular objectives into consideration. Outdoor education focuses on experimental, hands-on learning in real-life environments through senses, e.g., through visual, auditory, and tactile means, improving students' learning and retention of knowledge as a result. Appropriate sites outside of the classroom and school environment are chosen as the setting for outdoor education. Students are assessed over their performances related to the experiments and applications via observations and reports. Outdoor education is not common in Turkey in general. In specific, at the elementary level, outdoor education seems to be limited to certain social activities and field trips rendered within the scope of student clubs. As Pedretti et al. (2012) concluded in their study, the efficiency of outdoor education depends on the teachers. Based on the study, teachers should be allowed to collaborate with colleagues to analyze existing outdoor education programs and develop programs of their own. On the other hand, only teachers that are aware of outdoor education ask for such opportunities from the administrative bodies. Therefore, in this study, Turkish classroom teachers' current awareness and perspectives on outdoor education were assessed via descriptive analysis. The specific study group chosen for the study consisted of the classroom teachers working in Şahinbey County of Gaziantep Province. As for collection of the relevant qualitative data, participants were interviewed using a semi-structured interviewing form.

Keywords: Outdoor Education, Classroom Teacher, Elementary School, Primary School.