

Views of Social Studies Teacher Candidates' About School Experience Course

Sibel OĞUZ¹, Emine AVCI²

Summary

INTRODUCTION

The School Experience course aims at providing pre-service teachers with experiences via observations and meetings for them to know the schools where they will perform an application, the students attending such schools, the curricula implemented there, and the teachers working there in general. Thus, it is important to determine the views of pre-service teachers regarding the School Experience course. In this regard, the present study made an attempt to answer the below-mentioned questions:

1. What do you think about the School Experience course?
2. What problems do you experience during your internship within the scope of the School Experience course? Explain them.
3. Are application hours of the School Experience course adequate?
4. What are your solution suggestions for the School Experience course?

Planned observations and activities aimed at introducing the teaching profession are called School Experience. The School Experience course should achieve its goal fully so that qualified teachers are cultivated. This course enables pre-service teachers to be acquainted with the teaching profession as well as the school environment and the classroom environment before going into profession. At this point, the investigation of the problems experienced by pre-service teachers in the School Experience course is important for overcoming relevant deficiencies.

METHOD

The present study, which was conducted to evaluate the views of pre-service social sciences teachers regarding the School Experience course, was a descriptive one employing the survey model. The semi-structured interview form, a qualitative research method, was used for data collection.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

It was determined that a great majority of the pre-service teachers regarded the School Experience course as an "experience-bringing and beneficial course". Some pre-service teachers, on the other hand, considered it "time-consuming, unnecessary, and irregular". Most of the problems encountered by the pre-service teachers in the School Experience course were about "communication" and "respect in treatment". While a great majority of the pre-service teachers (both females and males) stated that they did not have any problem with the application teacher, some pre-service teachers told that the problems they had with the application teacher caused "alienation from the profession". Most of the pre-service teachers said, "no problem" to the questions about the physical structure of the schools. The least frequently experienced problem was "no space assigned to interns". Additionally, the pre-service teachers said, "no problem" to the questions about problems with the school administration. The issue focused on by the pre-service teachers least in this

¹ Assist., Prof., Kastamonu University, Faculty of Education, soguz@kastamonu.edu.tr

² Res. Assist., Kastamonu University, Faculty of Education, eavci@kastamonu.edu.tr

matter was “non-appreciation by the school administration”. The pre-service teachers generally found the application hours of the School Experience course adequate. Most of the solution suggestions of the pre-service teachers concerning the School Experience course involved “change of course hours”. The issues focused on by the pre-service teachers least in this matter involved “lack of necessity for the course”, “interference in dressing”, and “better communication”.

IMPLICATIONS

The research results demonstrate that important responsibilities fall to application instructors and application coordinators. Seminars, social events, and in-class activities whereby pre-service teachers, application teachers, and students can communicate may be organized. Spaces which pre-service teachers can use for spending their out-of-class time may be provided to make them part of the school. The School Experience course activities may be re-arranged. More comprehensive research with larger samples may be conducted in regard to the School Experience course. The School Experience course application loses its efficiency because of examinations like KPSS (Public Personnel Selection Examination). Thus, an attempt may be made to provide this course in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grades rather than the final year. The status held by pre-service teachers during the School Experience application should be determined definitely. Are they students, or pre-service teachers, or teachers during such application? This confusion may be eliminated. Necessary information should be given to school administrations and teachers to be included in the School Experience application. Necessary measures may be taken so that the School Experience course does not leave a bad impression in pre-service teachers. Pre-service teachers may be made to act in concert with faculties and application schools for their problems to be solved.