

Teachers' Opinions on the Philosophical Foundations of the Elementary Teaching Curriculums*

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Abstract. Education is a system that hands down cultural values and accumulated knowledge of societies to the next generations and that grows citizens in line with the structure of the society. In this system, such issues as purpose of education, how to educate individuals, what to teach and why, and upon which values the education system should be built are associated with the philosophy which form the basis of the education. Each society, therefore, designs their teaching curriculums according to their wishes as to “what kind of individuals societies grow”, and these programmes are updated in line with the information and technological developments as well as societal regulations. Further, there have also been several educational reforms in Turkey, and the philosophy of education has been clearly defined. However, the most important role in transmitting the educational philosophy of teaching curriculums to the next generations belongs to teachers who conduct activities through the curriculum with students. In this sense, the core purpose of this paper was to determine elementary school teachers' opinions on the philosophical foundations of the teaching curriculums. Further, this study was to examine if there were statistically differences inb terms of the teachers' socio-demographic characteristics such as gender, age, work experience, workplace, and educational background. A descriptive survey model was used in this study. The data were collected through “the Educational Philosophy Scale”, which includes such educational philosophies as perennialism, essentialism, progressivism, and reconstructionism. A total of 239 teachers from different branches teach in primary and elementary schools affiliated to Ministry of Education in Bayburt Province of Turkey were recruited in this study. The data were analyzed via descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage mean, t-test and ANOVA. The results show that teachers have positive opinions on such educational philosophies as progressivism and reconstructionism. There were also statistically meaningful differences in terms of gender and age variables.

Keywords: Education, philosophy, educational philosophy.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The philosopher Jules Lachelier (1832-1918) directed the question “What is the philosophy?” to his students in the first class?. He answered the question by himself: “I don’t know.” (Gündoğan, 2018). Philosophy has never completely effaced the idea of mystery in its nature. To be able to think is the most significant characteristic of human beings that differ them from other creatures. Since the beginning of existence, humans have always been contemplating themselves, and the outer world, and still going on to do so. The philosophy occurred as a result of this thinking. Philosophy is comprised of the sum total of humans’ beliefs and convictions (Tozlu, 2014). According to Titus, “philosophy is the one’s stance against the life and the universe” (Sönmez, 2008, pp.4-5). Since each individual possesses different perspectives, environments and dispositions, there have been different philosophies, leading to several definitions of philosophy.

The philosophy concept was derived from the words *philos* and *sophia*, which literally means love of wisdom. Most of the definitions on philosophy typically have questioning nature in terms of existence, knowledge and values (Geçici & Yapıcı, 2008). This process, having occurred from the human existence, have started with humans’ questioning their essences. Along with their selves, they attempted to make sense of other creatures by means of reasoning and senses (Turhan, 2019). In other words, the philosophy as a questioning action enables humans to escape from the cage like a bird, providing them with freedom thanks to these questioning actions.

Education is subjected to several definitions like philosophy. Sönmez (2008), for example, defines education as a process by which changing individuals’ behaviours permanently via their self-experiences for some purposes”. Kant (2013), on the other hand, conceptualizes education as a means of enabling individuals to reach moral actions through their reasoning. In this sense, it can be suggested that he highlights the role of education in guiding individuals to perfectionism. He expresses that education prevents people from doing rude behaviours, as well. This can be interpreted as a kind of societal improvement.

From past to present, education has always been an issue that attracts societies, it seems that it is going to be so. All societies have concerns about handing down their cultural values and accumulated knowledge to next generations as well as growing citizens in line with the structure of the society. Education encounters obstacles in terms of what kind of individuals education systems should grow politically and morally as well as what education must include and how it should be conducted. All these issues require us to address education through some kinds of educational philosophies. This has led to the occurrence of the field of educational philosophy.

The philosophy of education typically addresses education phenomenon via several approaches and methods. In other words, it can be considered as the practical field of the education. This field is the one that questions what concepts are included and what defines the educational activities and provides solutions (Cevizci, 2012). The philosophy of education is a process in which several answers are sought for such questions as what

is the purpose of education?, how should individuals be educated?, what and how to teach to educated population, and which values should be focused in education system by means of different philosophical perspectives. These questions form the basic problems of the educational philosophy. This process is the one in which all problems in education are attempted to be provided with solutions through philosophical foundations.

The foundations of reforms in education involves changing and developing curriculums. The ideas put forward by philosophy on human, knowledge and society determine the general framework of curriculums. In this sense, philosophy frames the skeleton of educational programs. The main philosophies that make up the educational programs are: Idealism, Realism, Pragmatism and Existentialism. Extensions of these basic philosophies in the field of education constitute educational philosophies. Educational philosophies that the educational programs refer to can be listed as Permanentism, Essentialism, Progressivism, and Reconstruction (Akpınar, 2017).

Primary education, forming the starting point of educational activities, is the cornerstone of education. Utmost attention has been paid to primary education programs since the declaration of the Republic of Turkey and many regulations have been made regarding these curriculums. Individuals are made to gain basic knowledge and skills during this period. Enhancing the quality and achieving the desired level in primary education levels depends on the harmony of the philosophy of education, which is the source of education programs and teaching curriculums. This situation should be suitable for the social, cultural, economic and technological developments of the society (Acar, 2011). Hence, philosophical views of teachers working in primary and elementary education levels are significant.

Today, education programs have been built upon the basis of Progressivism. However, it is mostly practised via a fundamentalist and permanent approach in the field. One of the biggest factors in the occurrence of this difference is the teacher. The teachers continue the course process in line with the philosophical approach they embrace. How the teacher plays a role in the classroom takes shape in line with the principles of educational philosophy the teacher adopts. Therefore, the education philosophy of the curriculums and the education philosophy adopted by teachers should be in harmony. Only through this way can the determined goals of the program be achieved and the differences between theory and practice can be eliminated. At this precise point, this study was to delve into the primary and elementary school teachers' opinions on the philosophical foundations of the teaching curriculums in terms of four philosophical approaches such as Permanentism, Essentialism, Progressivism and Reconstructivism. Further, this study was to examine if there were statistically differences in terms of the teachers' socio-demographic characteristics such as gender, age, work experience, workplace, and educational background.

2. METHOD

This study adopted a descriptive survey design from non-experimental quantitative research models due to the nature of the research problem. Non-experimental descriptive research design is employed to define the current and past status of a phenomenon and to explain its nature. Instead of building cause-effect relations, it aims at explaining the situation. In this model, in which there is no intervention to the phenomenon or the environment, the situation or the phenomenon is examined as it is (Schreiber & Asner-Self, 2011; Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun 2012).

It is of great importance to be able to observe and depict a situation without interventions in descriptive research designs. Therefore, it encompasses descriptions on the answers of such questions as “what, where, when, how, at which level, in which frequency” (Karasar, 2020). The success attitudes, behaviours or other characteristics of the sample on the situation or the phenomenon are clearly and simply explained. The current and past characteristics of the situation or the phenomenon are simply addressed. The data on the variables are described. A researcher typically focuses on how the data set is distributed rather than why it is distributed as it is. Descriptive survey models are particularly used to determine a situation or a phenomenon for the first time (Creswell, 2016; Özmen & Karamustafaoğlu, 2019).

Descriptive survey model is widely used in educational research. The universe on which researchers focus is rarely addressed. Instead, the study is conducted on a sample from the universe. Providing advantages in terms of sampling techniques and generalizability, the descriptive research model allows researchers to depict the data collection tools and the results as if they were pictures by means of tables, figures, graphs etc. The individuals or groups depicted are attempted to describe in quantitative means, then some conclusions are drawn from the current situation (Büyüköztürk, et al., 2016; Creswell, 2016; Christensen, Johnson & Turner, 2015; Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

Universe and Sampling

The target population of the study was teachers working in primary and elementary schools in Bayburt province of Turkey during 2019-2020 education year. There were a total of 561 teachers in the universe. A total of 239 teachers from this universe were recruited in this research. The disproportional stratified sampling method from probability sampling techniques was used in this study. If the distribution of the participants in the universe shows no homogeneity, the individuals with similar qualifications are stratified like simple random sampling, and these subgroups are called as stratum. During sampling process, the random selection of the participants without paying attention to the equal numbers enables each subgroups to be included in the sampling (Aziz, 2015). In order for the disproportional stratified sampling to be effective, each stratum must show homogeneity, whereas the stratum themselves must be different, showing heterogeneous features. While sampling, teachers' working

areas were classified into three categories; province, district and village. Teachers were randomly recruited in this study.

Data collection instruments

The ethics committee approval for this study was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the Rectorate of Ondokuz Mayıs University, dated 24/11/2019 and numbered 2019/364. The data in this study were collected through a "Personal Information Form" prepared by the researcher and "the Educational Philosophy Scale" designed and validated by Ekiz (2005). The personal information form includes questions on information about gender, age, work experience, workplace, school type (primary or elementary), educational background, and teaching branch. The Educational Philosophy Scale was developed by Ekiz (2005) to measure the opinions of the pre-service classroom teachers on the educational philosophies. The scale consists of four subscales such as perennialism, essentialism, progressivism, and reconstructionism. Each subscale includes 10 items, leading a total of 40 items in the scale. All items are distributed in the scale, and don't follow an order based on the subscales. The distributions of the items according to the subscales are as follows:

- Perennialism: 7,11,13,15,25,26,31,32,37,40
- Essentialism: 3,4,9,17,18,19,22,27,29,35
- Progressivism: 2,6,10,12,14,16,20,33,38,39
- Reconstructionism: 1,5,8,21,23,24,28,30,34,36

The scale has a five-level Likert type structure and the response can be given the scale are as follows: Completely agree (5), Agree (4), Neither agree nor disagree (3), Disagree (2) and Completely disagree. The participants were surveyed face-to-face environments and were asked to choose the best answer that reflects their educational philosophy tendencies.

Data Analysis

In order for testing if variables are normally distributed, the Kolmogorov Smirnov Test (K-S) and the Shapiro-Wilks (W) test were conducted. The skewness and the kurtosis values were found to be between $\pm 1,96$. In this sense, this means that the data set shows normal distribution. The data were analyzed through SPSS for Windows 21 program. The characteristics and the responses given to the questions in the scale were subjected to such descriptive analyses as arithmetic means, frequencies, and percentages. The independent groups t-test and one-way variance analysis (ANOVA-LSG from Post Hoc tests were used for statistically significance) were conducted to compare the data on personal characteristics of the teachers. In the analysis of the scale items, the five-level Likert midranges were equally calculated as follows: 0.80 ($5-1=4 \Rightarrow 4/5=0.80$). The arithmetic means of each subscale was calculated based on the division of the maximum scores that can be obtained from the scale into the number of the questions (e.g. Perennialism philosophy= A.M. /10). While interpreting the findings, the likert-type scale was taken into consideration, and it was concluded that the highest score of a

subscale represents the tendencies of the participants. The calculated coefficient Cronhach Alpha was .740.

3. FINDINGS

This section includes analyses of the data from the participants and findings on their personal characteristics and the scale itself.

Findings on Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Table 1 summarizes the information on the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants.

Table 1

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Variables		f	%
Gender	Female	135	56,5
	Male	104	43,5
Age	20-29 years	88	36,8
	30-39 years	97	40,6
	40-49 years	42	17,6
	50 and above years	12	5,0
Work Experience	1-5 years	69	28,9
	6-10 years	90	37,7
	11-15 years	32	13,4
	16-20 years	24	10,0
	21+ years	24	10,0
Working Area	Province	209	87,4
	District	22	9,2
	Village	8	3,3
School Type	Primary	132	55,2
	Elementary	107	44,8
Educational Background	Undergraduate	226	94,6
	Graduate	13	5,4
Teaching Branch	Pyhsical Education	5	2,09
	ICT	6	2,51

Religious education	21	8,79
Science	12	5,02
English	20	8,37
Math	17	7,11
Music	7	2,93
Counseling	6	2,51
Technology and art	4	1,67
Classroom education	114	47,70
Social sciences	11	4,60
Turkish	16	6,69

As shown in Table 1, teachers' gender distribution is as follows: 56,5% female ($n = 135$) and 43,5% male ($n = 104$). The age ranges of the participants can be listed as: 36,8% ($n = 88$) 20-29 years, 40,6% ($n = 97$) 30-39 years, 17,6% ($n = 42$) 40-49 years, and 5,0% (12) 50 and above. When it comes to work experience, it can be listed as: %8,9% ($n = 69$) 1-5 years, 37,7% ($n = 90$) 6-10 years, 13,4% ($n = 32$) 11-5 years, 10,0% ($n = 24$) 16-20 years, 10,0% ($n = 24$) 21 years and above. The working locations of the participants were 87,4% ($n = 209$) province, 9,2% ($n = 22$) district, and 3,3% ($n = 8$) village. More than half of the participants work in the primary school types (55,2% ($n = 132$)). Almost ninety-five per cent of them hold undergraduate degrees. Regarding the teaching branches of the participants, it can be noted that almost half of them are classroom teachers, while the rest are distributed in different branches.

Findings on the teachers' opinions on the educational philosophies

Table 2 summarizes the mean scores and standart deviations of the participants regarding the teaching curriculums.

Table 2

The mean scores and standart deviations of the participants regarding the teaching curriculums

Variable	n	\bar{x}	ss
Perennialism	239	2,74	,43772
Essentialism	239	2,59	,47956
Progressivism	239	3,93	,45468
Reconstructionism	239	3,60	,41923

As shown in Table 2, the arithmetic mean scores of the participants on their opinions on the teaching curriculums were found as follows: Perennialism $\bar{x}=2,74$; Essentialism $\bar{x}=2,59$; Progressivism $\bar{x}=3,93$ and Reconstructionism $\bar{x}=3,60$. In this sense, it can be noted that the tendencies of the participants are in “Agree” range in terms of Progressivism and Reconstructionism, whereas they are in “Neither agree nor disagree” range in terms of Perennialism and Essentialism. It can be concluded that teachers show tendencies in favor of “Progressivism” and “Reconstructionism” educational philosophies.

Findings on the Gender Variable

Do teachers’ opinion on the educational philosophies of teaching curriculums show statistically significant meaningful difference in terms of gender? Table 3 summarizes t-test results based on the gender variable.

Table 3

T-test results based on the gender variable

Subscales	Gender	N	\bar{x}	ss	sd	t	p																																
Perennialism	Female	135	2,6956	,43070	237	-1,855	.065																																
	Male	104	2,8010	,44164				Essentialism	Female	135	2,5126	,43682	237	-2,804*	.005	Male	104	2,6856	,51585	Progressivism	Female	135	3,9548	,41837	237	,875	.382	Male	104	3,9029	,49844	Reconstructionism	Female	135	3,6141	,37519	237	,522	.602
Essentialism	Female	135	2,5126	,43682	237	-2,804*	.005																																
	Male	104	2,6856	,51585				Progressivism	Female	135	3,9548	,41837	237	,875	.382	Male	104	3,9029	,49844	Reconstructionism	Female	135	3,6141	,37519	237	,522	.602	Male	104	3,5846	,47168								
Progressivism	Female	135	3,9548	,41837	237	,875	.382																																
	Male	104	3,9029	,49844				Reconstructionism	Female	135	3,6141	,37519	237	,522	.602	Male	104	3,5846	,47168																				
Reconstructionism	Female	135	3,6141	,37519	237	,522	.602																																
	Male	104	3,5846	,47168																																			

* $p<.05$ significance level

As shown in Table 3, there is no statistically meaningful difference on the teachers’ opinions of the Perennialism, Essentialism, Progressivism, and Reconstructionism educational philosophies in terms of gender. On the other hand, when it comes to subscales, there is statistically meaningful significance in the Essentialism subscale in favor of males at $p<.05$ level ($t=-2.804$). The total score of the males in the Essentialism subscale was $\bar{x}=2.68$ while the females had $\bar{x}=2.51$ mean scores. In this sense, the

mean scores of the male teachers on the philosophical foundations of the teaching curriculums in the Essentialism subscale are “in “Neither agree nor disagree” range, while female teachers mostly responded as “Disagree”. Further, female and male teachers had negative opinions on the Perennialism and the Essentialism subscales (3.40 and above positive), they had positive opinions on the Progressivism and the Reconstructionism subscales.

Findings on the Age Variable

Do teachers' opinion on the educational philosophies of teaching curriculums show statistically significant meaningful difference in terms of age? Table 4 summarizes variance analysis results based on the gender variable.

Table 4.

Variance analysis results based on the gender variable

	Source	sd	Sum of squares	Mean of squares	f	p
Perennialism	Intergroup	3	1,150	,383		
	Intragroup	235	44,450	,189	2,026	,111
	Total	238	45,600			
Essentialism	Intergroup	3	2,797	,932		
	Intragroup	235	51,938	,221	4,218	,006*
	Total	238	54,735			
Progressivism	Intergroup	3	1,008	,336		
	Intragroup	235	48,194	,205	1,638	,181
	Total	238	49,202			
Reconstructionism	Intergroup	3	,079	,026		
	Intragroup	235	41,750	,178	,149	,930
	Total	238	41,830			

* p<.05 signifacance level

Following the variance analysis on the teachers' opinions on the educational philosophies of teaching curriculums in terms of gender, there is statistically meaningful significance in the Essentialism subscale at p<.05 level (F=4.218). There is no statistically meaningful difference in other subscales. In order to reveal the difference

between groups, the Tukey HSD test was conducted and the results are displayed in Table 5.

Table 5.

The Tukey HSD Test results on the differences in the Essentialism subscale based on the age variable

	\bar{x}	n	Groups	Groups			
				20-29 age	30-39 age	40-49 age	51 and above
Essentialism	2,4932	88	20-29 age range			*	
	2,5753	97	30-39 age range			*	
	2,8048	42	40-49 age range	*	*		
	2,6250	12	50 and above				

As shown in Table 5, the arithmetic mean scores of the participants on their opinions on the teaching curriculums based on the age ranges were found as follows: the age range 20-29 $\bar{x}=2.49$; 30-39 $\bar{x}=2.57$ and 40-49 $\bar{x}=2,80$. In this sense, it can be noted that the participants between 40-49 age range have more positive opinions when compared to 20-29 and 30-39 in the Essentialism subscale. However, the total mean scores of the teachers in the Essentialism subscale are negative (below 3.40).

Findings on the Work Experience Variable

Do teachers' opinion on the educational philosophies of teaching curriculums show statistically significant meaningful difference in terms of work experience? Table 6 summarizes variance analysis results based on the work experience variable.

Tablo 6

Variance analysis results based on the work experience variable

	Source	sd	Sum of squares	Mean of squares	f	p
Perennialism	Intergroup	4	,724	,181	,944	,439
	Intragroup	234	44,876	,192		
	Total	238	45,600			
Essentialism	Intergroup	4	1,990	,497	2,207	,069
	Intragroup	234	52,745	,225		
	Total	238	54,735			

	Intergroup	4	1,736	,434	2,140	,077
Progressivism	Intragroup	234	47,466	,203		
	Total	238	49,202			
	Intergroup	4	,456	,114	,645	,631
Reconstructionism	Intragroup	234	41,374	,177		
	Total	238	41,830			

Following the variance analysis on the teachers' opinions on the educational philosophies of teaching curriculums in terms of work experience, there is no statistically meaningful difference among the variables.

Findings on the Working Area Variable

Do teachers' opinion on the educational philosophies of teaching curriculums show statistically significant meaningful difference in terms of working area? Table 7 summarizes variance analysis results based on the working area variable.

Table 7

Variance analysis results based on the working area variable

	Source	sd	Sum of squares	Mean of squares	f	p
	Intergroup	2	,243	,121	,631	,533
Perennialism	Intragroup	236	45,357	,192		
	Total	238	45,600			
	Intergroup	2	,273	,136	,591	,555
Essentialism	Intragroup	236	54,462	,231		
	Total	238	54,735			
	Intergroup	2	,398	,199	,963	,383
Progressivism	Intragroup	236	48,803	,207		
	Total	238	49,202			
	Intergroup	2	,191	,096	,542	,582
Reconstructionism	Intragroup	236	41,638	,176		
	Total	238	41,830			

Following the variance analysis on the teachers' opinions on the educational philosophies of teaching curriculums in terms of the working area, there is no statistically meaningful difference among the variables. However, those working in the village, district and province areas have negative opinions on the Perennialism and the Essentialism subscales, while they had positive opinions on the Progressivism and the Reconstructionism subscales.

Findings on the School Type Variable

Do teachers' opinion on the educational philosophies of teaching curriculums show statistically significant meaningful difference in terms of school type? Table 8 summarizes t-test results based on the school type variable.

Table 8

T-test results based on the school type variable

Subscales	School type	N	\bar{x}	ss	sd	t	p																																
Perennialism	primary	132	2,7326	,42579	237	-,346	.729																																
	elementary	107	2,7523	,45378				Essentialism	primary	132	2,5712	,45053	237	-,595	.552	elementary	107	2,6084	,51453	Progressivism	primary	132	3,8894	,49675	237	1,623	.106	elementary	107	3,9850	,39257	Reconstructionism	primary	132	3,5606	,44751	237	-1,671	.096
Essentialism	primary	132	2,5712	,45053	237	-,595	.552																																
	elementary	107	2,6084	,51453				Progressivism	primary	132	3,8894	,49675	237	1,623	.106	elementary	107	3,9850	,39257	Reconstructionism	primary	132	3,5606	,44751	237	-1,671	.096	elementary	107	3,6514	,37752								
Progressivism	primary	132	3,8894	,49675	237	1,623	.106																																
	elementary	107	3,9850	,39257				Reconstructionism	primary	132	3,5606	,44751	237	-1,671	.096	elementary	107	3,6514	,37752																				
Reconstructionism	primary	132	3,5606	,44751	237	-1,671	.096																																
	elementary	107	3,6514	,37752																																			

* p<.05 significance level

As shown in Table 8, there is no statistically meaningful difference on the teachers' opinions on the perennialism, essentialism, progressivism and reconstructionism educational philosophies in terms of school type. Further, the teachers had negative opinions on the Perennialism and the Essentialism subscales (3.40 and above positive), they had positive opinions on the Progressivism and the Reconstructionism subscales.

Findings on the Educational Background Variable

Do teachers' opinion on the educational philosophies of teaching curriculums show statistically significant meaningful difference in terms of their educational backgrounds? Table 9 summarizes t-test results based on the educational background variable.

Tablo 9

T-test results based on the educational background variable

Subscales	Educational Background	N	\bar{x}	ss	sd	t	p
Perennialism	undergraduate	226	2,7372	,44326	237	-,626	,532
	graduate	13	2,8154	,33128			
Essentialism	undergraduate	226	2,5841	,47741	237	-,509	,611
	graduate	13	2,6538	,53169			
Progressivism	undergraduate	226	3,9261	,45770	237	-,866	,387
	graduate	13	4,0385	,39904			
Reconstructionism	undergraduate	226	3,5894	,42403	237	-1,835	,068
	graduate	13	3,8077	,25646			

* p<.05 significance level

As shown in Table 9, there is no statistically meaningful difference on the teachers' opinions on the perennialism, essentialism, progressivism and reconstructionism educational philosophies in terms of school type. Further, the teachers had negative opinions on the Perennialism and the Essentialism subscales (3.40 and above positive), they had positive opinions on the Progressivism and the Reconstructionism subscales.

Findings on the Teaching Branches Variable

Do teachers' opinion on the educational philosophies of teaching curriculums show statistically significant meaningful difference in terms of their teaching branches? Table 10 summarizes variance analysis results based on the teaching branches variable.

Tablo 10

Variance analysis results based on the teaching branch variable

	Source	sd	Sum of squares	Mean of squares	f	p
Perennialism	Intergroup	12	2,464	,205	1,076	,382
	Intragroup	226	43,136	,191		
	Total	238	45,600			
Essentialism	Intergroup	12	4,442	,370	1,663	,076
	Intragroup	226	50,293	,223		
	Total	238	54,735			
Progressivism	Intergroup	12	2,049	,171	,818	,631
	Intragroup	226	47,153	,209		
	Total	238	49,202			
Reconstructionism	Intergroup	12	1,709	,142	,802	,648
	Intragroup	226	40,120	,178		
	Total	238	41,830			

Following the variance analysis on the teachers' opinions on the educational philosophies of teaching curriculums in terms of their teaching branches, there is no statistically meaningful difference among the variables. However, those working in the village, district and province areas have negative opinions on the Perennialism and the Essentialism subscales, while they had positive opinions on the Progressivism and the Reconstructionism subscales.

4. RESULTS, DISCUSSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings, it was concluded that teachers have high level tendencies towards Progressivism and Reconstructionism. In this sense, it can be noted that teachers embrace the educational philosophies that are open to changes, learner centered, in favor of real-life practices, and innovative. The statistical analyses have revealed that the mean scores of teachers in terms of the educational philosophies are listed in the order as follows: Progressivism, Reconstructionism, Perennialism, and Essentialism. This finding, high mean scores in favor of Progressivism educational philosophy, corroborated to previous research conducted by Doğanay and Sarı (2003); Ekiz (2005a); Ekiz (2007b); Kaya (2007); Duman and Ulubey (2008); Doğanay (2011); Bülbül, Çuhadar and Ilgaz (2013); Yapıcı (2013); Çalışkan (2013); İnceç and Görmez (2014);

Görmez (2015); Kumral (2015); Yokuş (2016). On the other hand, in a study by Çetin, İlhan and Arslan (2012), it was concluded that the participants showed lower level tendencies towards Progressivism and Reconstructionism but moderate level tendencies towards Perennialism and Essentialism. Therefore, this finding contradicts with the results of this study. In another one focusing on the educational beliefs of elementary and secondary teachers by Altinkurt, Yılmaz and Oğuz (2012), the authors employed "the Educational Belief Scale" developed by Yılmaz, Altinkurt and Çokluk (2011). It was concluded that the participants showed tendencies the educational philosophies are as follows: Existentialism, Progressivism, Perennialism, Reconstructionism, and Essentialism. In this sense, they noted that the teachers showed higher level tendencies towards all educational philosophies but Essentialism. İleğiz (2019) conducted a study on the educational philosophy beliefs of social science teachers and concluded that the participants' tendencies were listed as Existentialism, Progressivism, Reconstructionism, Perennialism, and Essentialism. The fact that Essentialism had the lowest mean score lend support to the findings of this present study.

There is statistically meaningful difference on the teachers' opinions on the educational philosophies of the teaching curriculums in terms of gender variable. On the other hand, there is no statistically meaningful difference on the teachers' opinions on Perennialism, Progressivism and Reconstructionism subscales in terms of gender variable. However, there is statistically meaningful difference in the Essentialism subscale in favor of male participants. There was no statistically meaningful difference in terms of gender in the previous research by Kaya (2007); Karadağ, Baloğlu and Kaya (2009); Doğanay (2011); Altinkurt, Yılmaz and Oğuz (2012); Bingöl and Kinay (2018). On the other hand, in the studies Kumral (2015) and Yılmaz and Tosun (2013), it was concluded that male participants showed higher level tendencies towards Perennialism and Essentialism when compared to females. The fact that male participants showed higher level tendencies towards Essentialism lend support to the findings of this present study.

Another finding in this study is related to the age variable. The statistics showed that there is no statistically meaningful difference on the teachers' opinions on the educational philosophies of the teaching curriculums in terms of the subscales such as Perennialism, Progressivism and Reconstructionism. However, those in the 40-49 age range showed higher level tendencies towards Essentialism when compared to the age ranges 20-29 and 30-39. This finding may be attributed to the traditional educational system in the teachers' educational background in the age range 40-49. Kaya (2007) found no statistically significant difference in the study on the school administrators' opinions on the educational philosophies. There have been no statistically meaningful difference on the teachers' opinions on the educational philosophies in terms of such variables as work experience, working area, school type, educational backgrounds and teaching branch.

Based on the results of this study, these recommendations can be made:

- The educational philosophies mentioned in the 2023 Education Vision by the Ministry of National Education are Perennialism and Essentialism. Based on the findings in this present study, the education process is going on through Progressivism and Reconstructionism. In this sense, comprehensive in-service trainings can be provided to teachers so that there will not occur contradictions between the educational philosophies in the 2023 Education Vision and the practices of teachers. In this sense, teachers can be enabled to teach based on the dominant educational philosophies in the curriculum. Further, pre-service teachers must be educated in line with the current educational philosophies in practices and those in the 2023 Education Vision. To achieve this, Ministry of National Education and Council of Higher Education must collaborate and work in coordination in the teacher trainings in faculty of educations.
- This present study delved into teachers' opinions on the philosophical foundations of the compulsory elementary teaching curriculum. Future researchers are advised to conduct similar studies in all kinds of courses, including the elective ones so that they can obtain more comprehensive data.
- Through sampling larger populations across the country, teachers' opinions on the general educational philosophy can be examined.

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