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Exploring Primary Classroom Teachers' Beliefs and Perspectives on Educational Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the beliefs and perceptions of primary school teachers in Northern Cyprus regarding educational philosophical trends. A mixed-method approach was employed, utilizing a concurrent triangulation strategy. The quantitative phase aimed to identify teachers' beliefs regarding educational philosophical trends, while the qualitative phase aimed to explore their more detailed thoughts on these trends. The research utilized the Education Beliefs Scale and a semi structured interview form developed by the researchers as data collection tools. In the quantitative phase, the Education Beliefs Scale was administered to 104 primary school teachers selected randomly. Based on the results of the scale, the most adopted educational trend among teachers was existentialism. No significant relationship was found between teachers' gender, university of graduation, professional tenure, education level, and their educational philosophical beliefs. However, a significant difference was found in educational beliefs concerning the age variable. In the qualitative phase, 9 participant teachers were interviewed. Based on the obtained findings, teachers expressed the necessity of familiarity with educational philosophical fields. More than half of them were able to define their own educational philosophies. A minority of teachers perceived the curriculum as being based on educational philosophy. It was revealed that teachers considered themselves insufficient in terms of knowledge about educational trends and were in favor of organizing in-service training courses. In light of the research findings, it could be recommended that the relevant ministry organize in-service training sessions where teachers can actively participate in discussions on educational trends.

Keywords: Philosophy of education movements, belief, philosophy of education belief, teacher education, curriculum development

INTRODUCTION

Education has numerous definitions and has been described differently by various philosophers, scientists, thinkers, and educators throughout history. It is one of the most crucial processes in human life and can be uniquely defined for each individual. One definition of education is a systematic set of planned influences aimed at achieving predetermined objectives by bringing about certain improvements in human behavior (Çelikkaya, 1991). According to Spencer, education is preparation for complete living (as cited in Solmaz, 2019). Jean-Jacques Rousseau defines education as preparing an individual for all possibilities in life (Yılmaz, 2019). Kant views education as the elevation of a person to a "moral species" (Çilingir and Küçükali, 2004). Ertürk (1988) defines education as the intentional process of inducing desired changes in an individual's behavior through personal experiences. Despite the various perspectives from many philosophers and educators, new definitions of education continue to emerge today. This is because education is a lifelong process and humans are constantly evolving. As education and humans continue to develop each other, the definition of education expands.

Education, as a process, can be divided into formal and informal education (Erden, 2017). Informal education involves unplanned, spontaneous teaching and learning activities. Formal education, on the other hand, involves professionally planned and executed educational activities. Individuals acquire knowledge through this educational process. These learnings are possible by putting everyone through a common educational process to provide the knowledge, skills, and values required for citizenship duties. This situation has led to the institutionalization of education as "school" (Fidan, 2012). Learning and teaching within schools are interconnected. Learning represents the student aspect, and teaching represents the teacher aspect. From this perspective, education can also be described as the "interaction between teacher and student" (Çelikkaya, 1991).

A teacher is a person who teaches. The teacher organizes planned educational activities within a specific program framework, and the student brings about desired behavior changes accordingly (Erden, 2017). These specific programs are called educational curricula. The term "curriculum" means "the path to be followed" and has also been adopted in education (Oliva, 1988). Caswell and Campbell (1935) view the curriculum not as a list of subjects but rather as the entirety of experiences students gain under the guidance of teachers.

Educators largely benefit from philosophy in planning and implementing the educational process. It is particularly emphasized that almost every element of curriculum development is based on philosophy (Demirel, 2020). Each teacher's mentality, views, and approach to planned education may vary depending on the educational system they are in and the country in which they teach. This is because the philosophical perspectives of states, societies, and individuals can differ. Educators, educational institutions, and teachers may gravitate towards various educational philosophy movements within the educational process they are part of. Educational programs are organized according to the adopted philosophical movement. While implementing these programs, teachers might lean towards different educational philosophies due to their individual perspectives and may adopt an eclectic approach. In the classroom environment, educators can apply the educational philosophy they are inclined towards and have expectations from students in line with the adopted philosophy within the framework of ethical values.

Philosophy, like education, has many definitions. According to Socrates, philosophy is knowing what you do not know. Plato defines it as understanding the true nature of reality. A human being is an entity that tries to answer fundamental philosophical questions about their place in the universe, the meaning of life, the best way to live socially, the difference between soul and body, and the meaning of existence (Koç, 2009). Philosophy is a discipline that helps humans understand the world and their behaviors through reasoning. Philosophy can be discussed wherever humans exist because humans try to understand events around them through questioning and reasoning (Akdeniz and Küçük, 2017). Since humans are questioning beings, philosophy is part of human life. Therefore, philosophy does not settle for the assumptions of other disciplines or sciences; it attempts to delve deeper into the depths where sciences do not venture (Işıldak, 2006).

In addition to these definitions, philosophy is also interconnected with other disciplines. Since philosophy exists wherever humans are, it influences societies, which, in turn, form states. These states generally guide their institutions and societies based on their close philosophical foundations. Consequently, education, one of whose objectives is to prepare individuals for society, is also related to philosophy.

Placing a person in the world, giving them an identity, and providing them with a worldview are common goals of both education and philosophy (Büyükdüvenci and Taşdelen, 2019). The life philosophies of countries are reflected in the general aims of education, and it is considered essential to raise individuals in line with these aims (Kısayürek, 1982).

Philosophy searches for factors, contents, and methods to realize the aim of imparting certain behaviors to individuals by questioning "What is education?" and "How should education be?" (Aydoğdu, 2020). The relationship between education and philosophy begins with philosophy questioning education and education trying to benefit from philosophy. Especially in Ancient Greece, education and philosophy appear intertwined. Since the existence of philosophy, new movements have emerged, some of which have influenced education. Education shapes itself according to the adopted philosophical school, guiding society into the future through planned activities (Hotaman, 2017). The effects of philosophy and philosophical movements on education can be seen first in the essential element of formal education: planning. Educational curricula form the foundations of schools. In educational programs prepared according to the needs and philosophies of society, the general goals of the school and necessary subject areas are included (Erden, 2017). Therefore, the most important consideration when organizing educational programs is the philosophy of society. The criteria for desired behaviors, determined while setting goals, are based on the adopted philosophical movement. According to Sönmez (2005), desired behaviors vary according to philosophical views. Content is also created within the framework of the philosophical view. Teaching to be conducted in educational situations varies according to the roles of students and teachers with different philosophical perspectives (Akdeniz and Küçük, 2017). Testing situations are also organized according to the philosophy of society.

This relationship between philosophy and education has led to the need for a new scientific field. Philosophy, in connection with this, includes answers about the reason for the existence of schools, what subjects should be taught, how learners can learn, and which methods and techniques should be used in teaching (Çiydem and Akdağ, 2021). The field where philosophy and education intersect, aiming to emphasize the importance of philosophical views on how education should be, its methods, the significance of philosophical views on teacher and student roles, and proposing new ideas for use in education by regulating and questioning educational policies and practices, is called the philosophy of education.

The philosophy of education is a discipline, a systematic collection of thoughts and concepts, that guides, forms the objectives of, and provides direction to educational practices (Altınkurt et al., 2011). According to Ertürk (1988), achieving an educational philosophy should not be considered successful by merely copying the practices of advanced countries. It is essential to understand our needs, seek support, and organize by drawing on different sciences and conducting research rather than repeating what has already been done and developed by great figures since Atatürk. Achieving an educational philosophy is a process involving the continuous critical examination of values and assumptions to reach a comprehensive understanding (Ertürk, 1988). Among educational movements, essentialism, progressivism, reconstructionism, and existentialism can be counted.

According to many educators and philosophers, the philosophy of education has laid its foundations with Perennialism. Perennialism is the oldest and most conservative educational philosophy rooted in realism and idealism (Erden, 2017). The fundamental educational view of Perennialism is based on the idea that the principles of knowledge are entirely permanent. This educational philosophy emphasizes the importance of human rationality along with faith, shaped primarily by the works of Thomas Aquinas. It adapts the beliefs and values of ancient and medieval cultures, mainly drawing from the philosophies of Plato, Aristotle, and Thomas Aquinas, to contemporary times. For Perennialists, reality is a world of reason (Tuncel, 2004). In Perennialist philosophy, ideal rather than real-life aspects are presented in the classroom.

The primary goal is to develop rationality (Erden, 2017).

Essentialism is the most widespread and practiced educational philosophy today. It draws its roots from Realism and Idealism. Its goals are both cognitive and intellectual (Oliva, 1988). Ornstein and Hunkins (1988) argue that an education based on Essentialism mandates the study of arithmetic, native language, science, history, and foreign language as five core subjects. Additionally, subjects like art and physical education are accepted provided they do not interfere with core subjects.

The Progressivist view is rooted in pragmatism. Pragmatism, by nature, is "humanistic," adopting the ancient Greek philosophy of "man is the measure of all things." According to Tozlu (1997), schools should use real-life situations rather than being tied to formal academic work. Dewey (1899) posits that with progressivist education, students will be able to express themselves more comfortably in a democratic environment. By actively participating in the lesson and through their activities and work, they will achieve more lasting learning by doing and experiencing, which they can then adapt to daily life for practical benefits (as cited in Aşmaz, 2019). In progressivist philosophy, the teacher acts as a guide.

Reconstructionism posits that the foundation of global educational structuring will be laid through public education. It advocates that the essence of education is experiential. This philosophy, which appears to be a continuation of progressivism, differs by emphasizing the restructuring and education of society rather than focusing on the individual and their education. In Reconstructionism, the educational environment must be democratic, and there are no absolute truths (Özen et al., 2019).

According to existentialist philosophy, the essence of a person's existence lies in their acceptance of 'choice' as a determining factor. Being able to choose the way and principles of existence is more important than mere existence (Büyükdüvenci, 1994). Existentialist education involves an approach that includes different alternatives in education, taking into account the individual interests and needs of all individuals, acknowledging that individuals are different from each other, and forming small groups within the framework of 'I/You' dialogue for education (Turhan, 2019).

Philosophical movements play a fundamental role in shaping educational philosophy. They offer diverse perspectives and methods on key aspects such as the quality of education, the kind of individuals to be nurtured, the roles of students and teachers, and the knowledge and values to be imparted. Each movement has approached the purpose and implementation of education based on its own philosophical foundations (Çoban, 2022).

The philosophy of education continues to evolve due to various historical, cultural, social, and other factors. These factors can be analyzed within the contexts of nation, culture, and philosophy. According to Günay, every civilization is tied to a nation, every nation to a culture, and every culture to a philosophy. Likewise, each philosophy has its own educational philosophy. Educational philosophy can be shaped by individuals within a society and its culture, as the thinkers of that culture exert the deepest influence on its intellectual and educational framework (Günay, 2019). Therefore, teachers, as products of their society and culture, are among the key contributors to this philosophical design process.

If an educational philosophy is to be developed or designed, one of the first steps is to examine the beliefs of society's teachers. This examination of existing beliefs helps identify core issues, question them, and open the way for developing arguments for potential solutions (Tuncel, 2010). In turn, this leads to a more systematic process of shaping

educational philosophy. Therefore, examining teachers' beliefs is foundational in developing a society's educational philosophy. As Winch suggests, educational philosophy helps teachers navigate frequently debated views in the field of education. For teachers to make informed decisions about their classroom practices, they must understand the rationale behind their actions (Winch, 2012). At this point, it is essential that teachers within a society are aware of their own educational philosophical beliefs.

Primary Classroom School Education Philosophy of Northern Cyprus

In 1878, when Cyprus came under British administration, there were 65 primary schools (İptidai), 1 secondary school (Rüştiye), and 7 Madrasas that Turkish Cypriots could attend. The Turkish and Greek Cypriots on the island continued their education in their own schools, both financially and administratively. With the 1895 Education Law, each community began managing their own schools (Nesim, 1987). The education of Turkish Cypriots was primarily religious. Their educational philosophy was shaped based on the educational philosophy of the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey. Teachers were trained at the Idadi in Nicosia or came from Turkey (Nesim, 1987). Consequently, the educational philosophy of teachers, a foundational aspect of education, also reflected the Ottoman educational philosophy. Until the 1920 Education Law, teachers were selected from among religious figures. In 1937, the Omorfo Teachers College was established. At Omorfo Teachers College, Turkish and Greek male students studied as boarders. Students were admitted through an entrance exam and an "Ordinary" English exam. The teachers were a mix of Turkish Cypriots, Greek Cypriots, and English. The language of instruction was English. With the Republic of Turkey's principle of secularism separating religion and education, and modernizing its educational philosophy, reflections of this modernization began to be seen in the education of Turkish Cypriots as well. By the 1960s, even though Turkish Cypriot teachers were being trained at the Teachers College, teachers from the Republic of Turkey were still requested to be sent (Feridun, 2011).

According to Article 22 (1) of the TRNC National Education Law, "The curricula applied in the national education institutions of Cyprus shall be harmonized with the curricula applied in the identical education institutions in Turkey, taking into account the needs of the Turkish Cypriot community and subject to the provisions of paragraph 22 (b)" (TRNC National Education Law, 1986). Thus, until 2005, Turkish Cypriots received education reflecting both British and Turkish Republic educational philosophies, and Turkish

Cypriot teachers taught according to these philosophies. The curricula were also shaped by these educational philosophies. During the Ottoman and British periods, Turkish Cypriots mostly attended primary schools (sıbyan mektepleri), madrasas, and secondary schools (rüştiyes). To become a teacher at these schools, it was sufficient to be the son of a deceased teacher, an imam in a mosque, a muezzin in a mosque, literate, a hafiz, or an educated woman (Demirtaş, 2007). Thus, the teacher training and educational philosophy were far from pedagogical foundations, rooted in religious principles, and unsystematic. The educational philosophy was based on religious foundations, with the programs bearing traces of perennialist and essentialist philosophies (Topuzkanamış, 2018). In short, until the 1920 Education Law, there were no defined qualifications required for teachers. Villagers benefited from teachers as both educators and religious figures, such as imams and preachers. Therefore, many teachers were graduates of madrasas reflecting Ottoman educational philosophy rather than high schools. There was no system for teacher training. Consequently, the educational philosophies of Turkish Cypriot teachers bore traces of Ottoman educational philosophy. After 1937, teacher education became mandatory at the Teachers College. In 1948-1949, the Education Directorate requested that teachers be sent from Turkey. In 1950-1951, again, teachers from Turkey came to educate the Turkish Cypriot community. Thus, the educational philosophies and teachers of Turkish Cypriots continued to progress with the educational philosophy that the Republic of Turkey was newly beginning to change (Nesim, 1987).

Although the educational programs implemented in Northern Cyprus were similar to those of the Republic of Turkey, in 2005, steps were taken to prepare educational programs organized within the framework of Northern Cyprus's educational philosophy for the first time. A parallel was established between the educational programs of the two countries. Additionally, considering the needs of the Turkish Cypriot community was seen as a fundamental principle of the state. Therefore, programs entirely taken from Turkey could not be fully implemented in schools, and a mostly book-based, unstructured educational approach continued to this day (Kömleksiz & Akkoyun, 2018).

In 2005, Northern Cyprus adopted a constructivist educational system (Cyprus Turkish Education System, 2005). The curricula and books were organized according to a studentcentered, cooperative learning, constructivist educational approach. Emphasis was placed on the importance of individual differences. Teachers were defined not as knowledge providers but as facilitators of learning. The teacher's role was described as guiding students to develop

their own learning structures and new meanings on issues, concepts, and problems (Cyprus Turkish Education System, 2005). With changes in the programs and books in the Republic of Turkey, the primary school curriculum and books in the TRNC also entered a restructuring process (Babayiğit & Konedralı, 2009). In 2005, the programs were reorganized according to a student-centered educational approach and the duration of basic education. The TRNC education system adopted progressivism as its main educational philosophy in 2005, and the curricula and textbooks were written based on a constructivist understanding aligned with progressivism (Cyprus Turkish Education System, 2005).

The programs organized in 2005 were rewritten with the 2012 Basic Education Program Study. From 2013 to 2018, 122 people, including 34 academicians from TRNC and Republic of Turkey universities, 77 teachers, and 7 graphic designers, worked on the TRNC Basic Education Curriculum development Project. Within the scope of the project, which lasted approximately four years, 103 books were produced, including 13 subject curricula, 72 textbooks, and 18 teacher handbooks. The eclectic approach emerged with the program developed within this project (Pehlivan & Kömleksiz, 2023).

Although constructivism was adopted in the Basic Education Program in 2005, an eclectic approach was adopted in primary schools according to the newly developed program (Kömleksiz & Akkoyun, 2018). The country is constantly undergoing restructuring. Therefore, one of the most important qualities in the individuals it aims to cultivate is the ability to contribute to solving social problems and develop suggestions for their resolution. This suggests the need for a reconstructivist educational philosophy. We are in a period where collaboration, human rights, and democracy have gained significant importance, so citizens should be raised as individuals who adopt a democratic lifestyle and work collaboratively. From this perspective, it can be said that programs should also be structured according to the principles of progressivist educational philosophy. The Turkish Cypriot community has its own traditions, customs, and values passed down from the past to the present. Considering the need to pass these values on to younger generations, perennialist and essentialist educational philosophies come to the forefront (Kömleksiz & Akkoyun, 2018).

As stated in the TRNC Basic Education Program, our education program incorporates multiple educational philosophies. It has been suggested that an eclectic program approach would be beneficial for achieving the goals of a program with numerous educational objectives like the TRNC education program (Uluçınar, 2022). An eclectic program has the logic of selecting and blending various traditional and contemporary approaches, methods, and various learning materials and products according to student needs (Gagne, 1985).

Considering the reasons mentioned above, it appears that progressivist and reconstructivist educational philosophies, focusing on the student, can be taken into account in the development of educational programs, but other educational philosophies should also be considered. An eclectic approach seems appropriate in the development of the TRNC Basic Education Program. The TRNC Constitution, National Education Law, European Union education standards, National Education Council Basic Education Commission decisions, teacher unions' views on structuring education, and results from the Basic Education Development Project workshop support this approach (Kömleksiz & Akkoyun, 2018).

As stated in the Basic Education Program, programs in Northern Cyprus have been organized with an eclectic approach. Accordingly, it has been noted that educational programs cannot be determined by a single philosophy. This research examines how much primary school teachers in the TRNC adopt the eclectic approach as indicated by the program, how they reflect their personal worldviews on educational philosophies, and to which of the five educational philosophy streams they are inclined. This study investigates whether primary school teachers in the TRNC need in-service training to inform them about educational philosophy and to try new practices, their views on this matter, and their approaches to educational philosophy.

Statement of the Problem

The problem statement of the research was determined as **'What are the Educational Beliefs and Views of Primary School Teachers?'**

Sub Problems

1. What are the educational philosophies that primary school teachers adopt the most?
2. Is there a significant difference in the educational beliefs of primary school teachers based on certain variables (age, seniority, education level, school graduated from, gender)?
3. What are the views of primary school teachers regarding educational philosophy?
4. What are the views of primary school teachers on the educational philosophy of the primary school curriculum?

The Purpose and Importance of the Research

This research aimed to investigate to what extent primary school teachers in Northern Cyprus embrace the eclectic

approach of the basic education program, which educational philosophies they believe in more strongly, and how well they understand educational philosophy based on certain variables. The importance of the research is defined by the potential contributions to the educational philosophy dimension of the Northern Cyprus education system, through suggestions such as in-service training, in case the findings show that teachers want to learn more about educational philosophy and try new practices.

The Assumptions of the Study

1. The 9 teachers who were the participants of the research gave sincere and accurate answers to the questions asked,
2. It was assumed that the answers given to the Educational Beliefs Scale by the 104 teachers in the sample of the quantitative part of the research reflected their real views.

The Limitations of the Study

This research is limited to:

1. The responses given by 9 classroom teachers working in public primary schools in Northern Cyprus during the 2022-2023 academic year to interview questions.
2. The answers provided by 104 classroom teachers, who were included in the sample for the quantitative part of the research, to the Educational Beliefs Scale.

Relevant Research Conducted in the Field

This section includes previous studies related to teachers' educational philosophy. In Northern Cyprus, only Soyer's (2020) study on educational trends has been found. According to the findings obtained in Soyer's (2020) study titled "Opinions of School Administrators and Teachers on the Educational Philosophy of Northern Cyprus," there is no specific educational philosophy within the framework of the national education of Northern Cyprus. It was found that idealism and experimentalism are widely accepted educational trends, while existentialism is less accepted. Interviews conducted in the research revealed that there is no educational philosophy in the Northern Cyprus education program. In the study, 66.6% of the eight school administrators and seven teacher participants stated that there is no fundamental educational philosophy influencing the Northern Cyprus education system and policies. The other participants (33.3%) did not express a clear opinion in this direction (Soyer, 2020).

In the study by Berkant and Özaslan (2019) titled "Examination of Teacher Candidates' Educational Beliefs in Terms of Various Variables," it was found that the most adopted educational belief by teacher candidates is existentialism, while the least adopted is essentialism. There

was no significant difference in the educational belief scores of teacher candidates based on gender, the program they were studying in, or the attitudes of their parents. However, a significant difference was found in the progressive educational belief scores in favor of those who adopted a student-centered approach. Significant differences were also found in the essentialist educational belief scores in favor of those who adopted a teacher-centered approach.

In Aslan's (2017) study titled "Examination of Classroom Teachers' Educational Beliefs in Terms of Various Variables," the sub-dimensions with the highest participation regarding educational beliefs of classroom teachers were existentialism and progressivism, while the sub-dimension with the least participation was essentialism. It was found that there was a significant difference in favor of female teachers in the progressive and existential educational sub-dimensions, indicating that female teachers more often adopt progressive and existential educational philosophies. In this study, a significant difference was found in the essentialist educational philosophy in favor of teachers with seniority between 6-10 years, 1115 years, and 16 years and above compared to teachers with 0-5 years of seniority.

In the study by Tunca et al. (2015) titled "The Relationship Between Teachers' Educational Beliefs and Professional Values," the sub-dimensions with the highest participation of teachers regarding educational beliefs were "Existentialism," "Progressivism," "Perennialism," "Reconstructionism," and "Essentialism," respectively. When teachers' educational beliefs were examined based on their education level, it was found that associate degree graduates adopted the "Perennialism" educational philosophy at a higher level compared to bachelor's and master's degree graduates.

In the study by Oğuz et al. (2014) titled "The Relationship Between Teachers' Educational Beliefs and Their Behaviors Supporting Learner Autonomy," it was found that teachers' educational beliefs significantly differ in the existentialism dimension based on gender. Male teachers' belief in existentialist educational philosophy was lower than that of female teachers. Regarding seniority, teachers with less than 10 years of seniority had higher beliefs in perennialism and existentialist educational philosophies compared to those with 20 years or more of seniority. Similarly, teachers with less than 10 years and 10-19 years of seniority believed more in the progressive educational philosophy compared to more senior teachers.

In the United States, the quantitative study by Fries (2012) titled "Teaching Style Preferences and Educational Philosophy of Teacher Education Faculty at a State University" aimed to determine the educational philosophy and teaching style of faculty members at a state university and compare

it with the preferred educational philosophy and teaching style of students in the education faculty of this university. "Newton State University" is a fictional name used to protect the identity of the university where the study was conducted. Educational philosophy was measured using the Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory (PAEI), and teaching style was measured using the Principles of Adult Learning Scale (PALS). The educational philosophy and teaching style variables were examined in relation to demographics such as gender, age, academic rank, faculty assignment at NSU, years of work in higher education, years of teaching at NSU, teaching experience, and administrative experience. The stated educational philosophy of the education faculty was progressivism, and the preferred teaching style was student-centered education. It was found that slightly more than half of the education faculty students (53%) had a progressive educational philosophy. A small percentage (13%) of the students did not have a single dominant philosophy but had two or more philosophical views. Considering the raw scores of all philosophies instead of the most dominant philosophy of each participant, it was clearly seen that faculty members agreed on all philosophies except essentialism. Three philosophies, humanistic philosophy (71%), behaviorist philosophy (77.5%), and progressive philosophy (86.6%), had raw scores in the higher range of PAEI. It was determined that the majority of faculty members, both individually and as a group, were inclined towards the progressive philosophy (Fries, 2012).

METHODOLOGY

The present study used a mixed method. Mixed-method research includes philosophical assumptions that guide the management of data collection and analysis processes by combining qualitative and quantitative approaches at many stages of the research process (Creswell & Clark, 2018). The mixed method, which constitutes a relatively newer research design compared to quantitative and qualitative research approaches, primarily aims to bring together the strengths of these two approaches while minimizing their disadvantages (Tuğan, 2022). The mixed method research is an approach in which qualitative and quantitative data sets are integrated, and conclusions are drawn using the advantages of integrating the two data sets (Creswell, 2017). In this study, the concurrent triangulation strategy was used. In the concurrent triangulation strategy, the researcher collects qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously but analyzes them separately and compares the findings to determine whether they confirm each other (Creswell, 2017). In this study, the quantitative phase was applied to determine the educational

beliefs of primary school teachers and the qualitative phase was applied in parallel to determine their more detailed thoughts on philosophical trends (Creswell, 2009; Creswell, 2017). At the end of the study, quantitative and qualitative data were presented, and the data obtained were discussed by combining them in the discussion and conclusion sections.

The Quantitative Phase

The aim of the quantitative phase was to determine whether there was a significant difference in the educational beliefs of primary school teachers according to certain variables. Objective approaches and statistical procedures were used in quantitative research. It is possible to classify quantitative research designs into experimental and non-experimental designs (Creswell, 2017). Büyüköztürk (2010) categorized quantitative research designs as survey research, correlational research, causal-comparative research, experimental research, design and development research, and meta-analysis research. In the quantitative part of this study, the 'survey' method was used. The survey method aimed to describe the current situation as it was. In other words, it is based on reviewing all current or past data related to the object and generally remains at the descriptive level. There was no intervention by the researchers in the sampling, and they only report the existing characteristics as they were (Şimşek & Yıldırım, 2013). Neuman (2013) defines the survey method as the process of "obtaining responses from a large number of participants, measuring multiple variables, testing many hypotheses, and making sequential inferences from past experiences." In this study, the educational beliefs of teachers were presented as they were. In the quantitative part of the research, the Educational Beliefs Scale was prepared as a questionnaire form in Microsoft Word and printed out. Questionnaires were administered to the 104 primary school teachers who constituted the sample.

The Population and Sampling of the Research

The population of the study consisted of primary school teachers serving in state primary schools in Northern Cyprus. The sample comprised 104 primary school teachers who were randomly selected from those serving in Northern Cyprus state primary schools during the 2022-2023 academic year.

Educational Beliefs Scale

Quantitative data regarding teachers' educational beliefs were collected using the "Educational Beliefs Scale" (EBS) developed by Yılmaz, Altınkurt, and Çokluk (2011). To obtain consent on a voluntary basis, an "Informed Consent Form" was provided along with a "Personal Information Form" designed

Table 1: In-service teachers' personal demographic information

Gender	Frequency	%
Female	73	70,19
Male	31	29,81
Age	*Frequency*	*%*
22-25	17	16,35
26-35	36	34,62
36-45	24	23,07
46-55	27	25,96
Seniority	Frequency	%
0-5	26	24,99
5-10	12	11,53
10-15	16	15,38
15-20	14	13,46
20-25	16	15,38
25+	20	19,23
Graduated School	Frequency	%
ATTA	75	72,11
Other	29	27,88
Education Status	Frequency	%
Bachelor Degree	78	75
Masters Degree	23	22,12
Ph.D	3	2,88

to determine specific variables, alongside the EBS. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were conducted to establish the construct validity of the EBS. The exploratory factor analysis revealed that the scale consists of five sub-dimensions encompassing Perennialism, Essentialism, Progressivism, Reconstructionism, and Existentialism, comprising a total of 40 items rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "1-Strongly Disagree" to "5-Strongly Agree." Factor loadings ranged from 0.42 to 0.74, item-total correlations from 0.22 to 0.90, and reliability coefficients varied between 0.70 and 0.91. Furthermore, the five-factor structure of the scale was confirmed through confirmatory factor analysis (Yılmaz et al., 2011). Participants were not assigned a total score from the scale; rather, the extent to which they endorsed each educational philosophy was assessed individually. Higher scores on a sub-scale indicate stronger belief and adherence to that educational philosophy, whereas lower scores indicate weaker belief in that philosophy. The EBS was administered

to primary school teachers under voluntary participation, with permission obtained from the Primary Education Department of the relevant schools in Northern Cyprus.

Quantitative Data Analysis

The aim of the quantitative part of the study was to establish a complete and accurate dataset from the participants. A total of 104 scales were administered, transferred to MS Excel, and subsequently imported into SPSS. The quantitative data were analyzed using MANOVA to determine if there were significant differences among variables.

The Qualitative Phase

In the qualitative part of the study, a case study strategy was employed. A case study allows for the analysis of a wide range of subjects, from individuals to large institutions, and even events that shape the world. It provides an opportunity to examine a simple or complex phenomenon, requiring various actions in the process of data collection, and contributing to theory by applying and enriching it (Berg & Lune, 2019). Qualitative research typically integrates a holistic perspective that deeply investigates perceptions and events related to humans in their social reality and natural environment, using techniques such as observation, interviews, document analysis, and discourse analysis (Hatch, 2002). In this study, the qualitative research technique of 'interview' was used. The interview technique is effective in understanding individuals' feelings and thoughts about a subject or situation included in the research (Karataş, 2017). In case studies, interviews focus on highly specific subjects, and individuals are selected for their unique connections to the case (Berg and Lune, 2019). In this study, interviews were conducted to explore teachers' educational beliefs.

The Participants

In the qualitative part of the study, 9 primary school teachers serving in state primary schools in Northern Cyprus during the 2022-2023 academic year were selected as participants. Convenience sampling technique was used to select participants from those who participated in the quantitative part (Creswell, 2009, p.155). Regarding gender, 70.19% (n=73) were female and 29.81% (n=31) were male. In terms of age, 16.35% (n=17) were in the 22-25 age range, 34.62% (n=36) were in the 26-35 age range, 23.07% (n=24) were in the 36-45 age range, and 25.96% (n=27) were in the 46-55 age range. Regarding seniority, 25% (n=26) had 0-5 years of experience, 11.54% (n=12) had 5-10 years, 15.38% (n=16) had 10-15 years, 13.46% (n=14) had 15-20 years, 15.38% (n=16) had 20-25 years, and 19.23% (n=20) had over 25 years of experience. Additionally, 72.11% (n=75) of the participating teachers

graduated from Atatürk Teacher Training Academy (ATTA), while 27.88% (n=29) graduated from other universities. Regarding educational qualifications, 75% (n=78) had a bachelor's degree, 22.12% (n=23) had a master's degree, and 2.88% (n=3) had a doctoral degree.

Interview Form

To address the research questions, researchers structured an interview protocol. During the formulation of the form, a literature review was conducted by the researchers (Yılmaz et al., 2011; Altınkurt et al., 2012; Yılmaz & Tosun, 2013; Oğuz et al., 2014; İnce & Yıkmış, 2021; Koç, 2019; Doğanay & Sarı, 2003; Ugurlu & Çalmaşur, 2017). Subsequently, interviews were conducted with teachers to create a 7-question interview form aligned with the study's sub-problems and research questions. Expert opinions from two specialists (1 Associate Professor in Educational Technology and 1 Assistant Professor in Counseling Psychology) were sought to finalize the form. Based on expert feedback, a final interview form consisting of five questions was prepared. The interviews were conducted individually with each participating teacher in a private setting, ensuring confidentiality. The average duration of each interview was approximately 30 minutes. The researcher engaged in detailed discussions with 9 participating teachers, recording the conversations for transcription purposes.

Qualitative Data Collection Process

The researchers conducted face-to-face, one-on-one interviews with 9 participants. During the interviews, with the participants' permission, audio recordings were made and notes were taken. Participants were not asked for their names for the interview form, and they were informed that the data obtained would be used for a scientific study. The interviews were conducted individually with each participant teacher in a private setting, ensuring confidentiality. The average duration of each interview was 30 minutes.

Qualitative Data Analysis

The data obtained from the interviews were documented and recorded in a file on a computer. The data were analyzed using the 'content analysis' method, which involves the processes of 'identifying patterns', 'coding', and 'categorizing'. Content analysis is defined as the careful, detailed, and systematic examination and interpretation of certain material to identify patterns, themes, biases, and meanings (Berg & Lune, 2019).

Content analysis aims to determine what the data means and to uncover statements that are not explicitly stated in the data. It is used to bring together and evaluate similar data so that it can be understood by the reader, in light of the identified concepts, themes, and codes (Şimşek & Yıldırım, 2008). The credibility of the results is considered one of the most important criteria in scientific research. To ensure the credibility of qualitative data, participant confirmation was performed. Participant confirmation, also known as member checking, involves asking participants if the study findings accurately reflect their own views (Şimşek & Yıldırım, 2013). Participant confirmation requires interviewing each participant twice: once to collect data and a second time to check the accuracy and completeness of the results (Şimşek & Yıldırım, 2013). In this study, the researchers asked the participants whether the findings reflected their own views or not. All participants pointed out that the results accurately reflected their views.

Assumptions

1. It is assumed that the sample selected for the research represents the universe within the determined limits.

RESULTS

1. Findings and Interpretations Related to Sub-Problems

To address the first sub-problem of the study, which aims to determine the educational philosophies most embraced by teachers, the averages of the teachers' responses to the Educational Beliefs Inventory (EBI) were examined. The descriptive statistics of the responses to the EBI are presented in Table 2.

Based on the descriptive statistics displayed in Table 2, it is observed that teachers' most embraced educational belief is existentialism (M=4.61, SD=0.42). Following existentialism, teachers' beliefs were in the order of progressivism (M=4.42, SD=0.386), reconstructivism (M=4.28, SD=0.582), and

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Teachers' EIO Scores

Dimension	F	Min.	Maks.	X	Sd
Progressivism	104	44.00	65.00	4.42	.386
Existentialism	104	21.00	35.00	4.61	.42
Reconstructivism	104	21.00	35.00	4.28	.582
Perennialism	104	21.00	40.00	4.16	.577
Essentialism	104	5.00	25.00	2.63	1.03

perennialism (M=4.16, SD=0.577). The least embraced educational belief among teachers is essentialism (M=2.63, SD=1.03).

2. Findings and Interpretations Related to the Sub-problem

To address the second sub-problem of the study, participants' educational philosophy beliefs were examined concerning variables such as gender, age, years of professional experience, level of education, and the institution from which they graduated. The normality of participants' educational philosophy scale scores concerning these variables was assessed using Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests. Since values outside the range of -1.96 to 1.96 were found in all variables, it was determined that the data did not follow a normal distribution (Can, 2014). Therefore, non-parametric tests were employed for data analysis.

The potential significance of participants' educational philosophy scores based on gender was tested using the Manova test. The results are presented in Table 3.

Participants' scores on the dimensions of the Teachers' Educational Beliefs Scale were analyzed using single-factor MANOVA to determine the influence of gender. When checking the assumptions of MANOVA, it was found that the spread matrix homogeneity condition was not met based on the obtained Box's M statistic value (F(15, 14026.35) = 2.24, p = .00). The Levene's Test also confirmed that variance equality was satisfied for all variables (Progressivism p = .58; Existentialism p = .13; Reconstructionism p = .37; Perennialism p = .61; Essentialism p = .69).

In the multivariate analysis, interpreting the Pillai's Trace value is recommended when the conditions required by the test are not met (Akbulut, 2010). The Pillai's Trace value was .08, F(5, 98) = 1.76, p > .05, indicating no significant difference. However, according to Pallant (2001), examining the Test of Between-Subjects Effects table suggests dividing the standard alpha level by the number of analyses for a stricter alpha level (as cited in Akbulut, 2010). Thus, a new alpha value (.05/5) of .01 was used.

Single-factor ANOVA results for the subscales of the Teachers' Educational Beliefs Scale are presented in Table 3. In Table 3, it was determined that there were no significant differences between gender and the subscales of teachers' progressivism (F(1, 102) = .00, p > .05), existentialism (F(1, 102) = 1.08, p > .05), reconstructionism (F(1, 102) = 1.45, p > .05), perennialism (F(1, 102) = .91, p > .05), and essentialism (F(1, 102) = .48, p > .05).

Whether there was a significant difference in participants' educational belief scores based on the university they graduated from was tested using MANOVA. The results are presented in Table 4..

ted to determine the effect of the university where classroom teachers graduated from on the scores they obtained from the Educational Philosophy Beliefs Scale (EPBS) dimensions. MANOVA assumptions were checked, and based on the obtained Box's M statistic results, homogeneity of covariance matrices was confirmed (F(15, 11773.94) = 1.04, p = .41). Levene's Test also indicated that the assumption of variance equality was met for all variables (Progressivism p = .45; Existentialism p = .07; Reconstructionism p = .82; Perennialism p = .02; Essentialism p = .20). When the conditions required by the multivariate analysis were met, interpreting Wilk's Lambda value is recommended (Akbulut, 2010).

The Wilk's Lambda value (^) was .960, F(5, 98) = .81, p > .05, indicating no significant difference was found. However, when examining the Test of Between-Subjects Effects table by Pallant (2001), it is recommended to set a stricter alpha level by dividing the standard alpha level by the number of analyses conducted (Akbulut, 2010). In this case, the new alpha value (.05/5) was set to .01.

Table 3: MANOVA results for the scores of teachers on the subscales of EIB by gender

Dimension	Gender	n	X	Ss	sd	F	P	η2
Progressivism	Female	73	57.49	4.93	1-102	.00	.99	.00
	Male	31	57.48	5.32				
Existentialism	Female	73	32.49	2.88	1-102	1.08	.30	.01
	Male	31	31.84	3.08				
Reconstructionism	Female	73	29.66	4.443	1-102	1.45	.23	.01
	Male	31	30.71	3.67				
Perennialism	Female	73	32.27	4.53	1-102	.01	.91	.00
	Male	31	33.16	4.89				
Essentialism	Female	73	12.95	5.19	1-102	.48	.49	.00
	Male	31	13.71	5.12				

Table 4 : Single-factor MANOVA results obtained on the scores of teachers' Educational Philosophy Beliefs Scale (EPBS) subscales based on the university they graduated from

Dimension	University graduated from	n	X	ss	Sd	F	p	η^2
Progressivism	ATTA	75	57.03	5.16	1-102	2.32	.13	.02
	Other	29	58.69	4.51				
Existentialism	ATTA	75	31.98	3.07	1-102	3.08	.08 .	03
	Other	29	33.10	2.43				
Reconstructionism	ATTA	75	29.87	4.07	1-102	.18	.68	.00
	Other	29	30.24	4.16				
Perennialism	ATTA	75	33.16	4.34	1-102	.08	.78	.00
	Other	29	33.45	5.35				
Essentialism	ATTA	75	13.41	4.94	1-102	.58	.45	.01
	Other	29	12.55	5.70				

Tablo 5: One-way manova results regarding teachers' scores in the educational philosophy beliefs scale sub-dimensions by professional seniority

Dependent variables	Professional Seniority (Years)	N	X	S	Sd	F	P	η^2
Progressivism	0-5	26	58.81	4.96				
	5-10	12	58.58	6.31				
	10-15	16	56.37	5.36	5-98	.86	.51	.04
	15-20	14	56.14	5.05				
	20-25	16	57.37	4.66				
	25+	20	57.05	4.26				
Existentialism	0-5	26	32.96	2.62				
	5-10	12	32.67	2.99				
	10-15	16	31.56	3.48	5-98	.81	.54	.04
	15-20	14	31.56	3.48				
	20-25	16	32.75	2.35				
	25+	20	31.60	3.62				
Reconstructionism	0-5	26	29.38	4.53				
	5-10	12	31.25	3.33				

Dependent variables	Professional Seniority (Years)	N	X	S	Sd	F	P	η^2
	10-15	16	29.56	4.19	5-98	.57	.72	.03
	15-20	14	30.50	3.63				
	20-25	16	30.62	3.65				
	25+	20	29.40	4.56				
Perennialism	0-5	26	32.42	4.95				
	5-10	12	33.50	4.93				
	10-15	16	33.19	3.67	5-98	.89	.47	.04
	15-20	14	35.00	3.37				
	20-25	16	32.00	5.35				
	25+	20	33.95	4.81				
Essentialism	0-5	26	11.92	5.27				
	5-10	12	10.92	4.85				
	10-15	16	13.50	3.95	5-98	2.58	.03	.11
	15-20	14	11.43	3.67				
	20-25	16	15.38	5.95				
	25+	20	15.35	5.24				

p<.05

Single-factor ANOVA results for the dimensions of teachers' Educational Philosophy Beliefs Scale are presented in Table 4. In Table 4, no significant differences were found between the dimensions of progressivism (F(1, 102) = 2.32, p > .05), existentialism (F(1, 102) = 3.08, p > .05), reconstructionism (F(1, 102) = .18, p > .05), perennialism (F(1, 102) = .78, p > .05), essentialism (F(1, 102) = .45, p > .05) and the variable of university where teachers graduated from.

Single-factor MANOVA results were conducted on the scores obtained from the dimensions of teachers' Educational Philosophy Beliefs Scale based on their professional seniority, as shown in Table 5.

Single-factor MANOVA was conducted to determine the effect of seniority on the scores obtained from the dimensions of classroom teachers' Educational Philosophy Beliefs Scale (EPBS). According to the assumptions of MANOVA, it was found that homogeneity of covariance matrices was achieved

based on the Box's M statistic scores (F(75, 1139.75) = .91, p = .686). Levene's Test also confirmed that the assumption of variance equality was met for all variables (Progressivism p = .84; Existentialism p = .36; Reconstructionism p = .60; Perennialism p = .096; Essentialism p = .62). When the conditions required by the multivariate analysis were met, interpreting Wilk's Lambda value is recommended (Akbulut, 2010).

The Wilk's Lambda value ( ) was .659, F(25, 350.69) = 1.67, p < .05, indicating a significant difference was found. However, when examining the Test of Between-Subjects Effects table by Pallant (2001), it is recommended to set a stricter alpha level by dividing the standard alpha level by the number of analyses conducted (Akbulut, 2010). In this case, the new alpha value (.05/5) was set to .01.

Single-factor ANOVA results for the dimensions of teachers' Educational Philosophy Beliefs Scale are presented in Table 5. In Table 5, no significant differences were found

Table 6: One-way MANOVA results regarding teachers' philosophy of education belief scale sub-dimension scores by age p<.05

Dependent variables	Age	N	X	S	Sd	F	P	$\eta2$
Progressivism	22-25	17	59.00	4.97				
	26-35	36	57.94	5.78				
	36-45	24	56.04	4.38	3-100	1.31	.27	.04
	46-55	27	57.22	4.36				
	22-25	17	32.76	2.86				
	26-35	36	32.67	2.75				
	36-45	24	32.00	2.78	3-100	.69	.56	.02
	46-55	27	31.78	3.78				
Existentialism	22-25	17	28.76	4.62				
	26-35	36	30.86	3.71				
	36-45	24	29.88	4.06	3-100	1.14	.34	.03
	46-55	27	29.63	4.19				
Reconstructionism	22-25	17	31.11	4.53				
	26-35	36	34.28	4.30				
	36-45	24	32.92	4.52	3-100	1.92	.13	.05
	46-55	27	33.48	4.93				
	22-25	17	31.12	4.53				
	26-35	36	34.28	4.30				
	36-45	24	32.92	4.52	3-100	4.88	.003	.12
	46-55	27	33.48	4.93				

Table 7: One-factor MANOVA results applied to the scores teachers received from the educational beliefs scale sub-dimensions by their education levels

Dependent variables	Education Status	N	X	S	S d	F	P	η2
	Bachelor Degree	78	57.18	5.08				
	Master's Degree	23	58.57	4.80	2-101	.67	.51	.013
Progressivism	Ph.D	3	57.33	5.86				
	Bachelor Degree	78	32.32	2.84				
	Master's Degree	23	32.26	3.37	2-101	.02	.98	.000
Existentialism	Ph.D	3	32.00	3.00				
	Bachelor Degree	78	29.85	4.22				
	Master's Degree	23	30.35	3.72	2-101	.14	.87	.003
Reconstructionism	Ph.D	3	30.33	4.16				
	Bachelor Degree	78	33.06	4.82				
	Master's Degree	23	33.57	4.18	2-101	.42	.66	.008
Perennialism	Ph.D	3	35.33	1.53				
	Bachelor Degree	78	13.10	5.03				
	Master's Degree	23	13.30	5.95	2-101	.05	.95	.001
Essentialism	Ph.D	3	14.00	1.73				

between the dimensions of progressivism ($F(5, 98) = .86$, $p > .05$), existentialism ($F(5, 98) = .81$, $p > .05$), reconstructionism ($F(5, 98) = .57$, $p > .05$), perennialism ($F(5, 98) = .89$, $p > .05$), and essentialism ($F(5, 98) = 2.58$, $p > .05$) and the variable of professional seniority.

Single-factor MANOVA results were conducted on the scores obtained from the dimensions of teachers' Educational Philosophy Beliefs Scale based on the age variable, as presented in Table 6.

The results of the one-way ANOVA conducted for the sub-dimensions of the Educational Philosophy Beliefs Scale are presented in Table 6. As can be seen, it was determined that there was no significant difference between the age variable and the sub-dimensions of Progressivism (F(3,

100)=1.31, p>.05), Existentialism (F(3, 100)=.69, p>.05), Reconstructionism (F(3, 100)=1.14, p>.05), and Perennialism (F(3, 100)=1.92, p>.05). However, a significant difference was obtained between the age variable and the subdimension of Essentialism (F(3, 100)=4.58, p<.05).

In order to determine the source of the significant difference, a Post Hoc analysis with Tukey's test was conducted. According to Tukey's test results, in the Essentialism subdimension, teachers aged 46-55 differed significantly from teachers aged 22-25 (mean differences 5.309, sig.=.004) and from teachers aged 26-35 (mean differences 3.490, sig.=.03). Thus, it was determined that teachers aged 46-55 had significantly higher essentialist educational beliefs than teachers aged 22-25 and 26-35.

The results of the one-way MANOVA conducted for the scores that teachers obtained in the sub-dimensions of the Educational Philosophy Beliefs Scale based on the education level variable are presented in Table 7.

A one-way MANOVA was conducted to determine the effect of the education level variable on the scores that classroom teachers obtained in the sub-dimensions of the Educational Philosophy Beliefs Scale. When the assumptions of the MANOVA analysis were checked, it was determined based on the Box's M statistic that the homogeneity assumption of the dispersion matrix was met (F(15, 6621.60)=.50, p=.94). The Levene Test also indicated that the condition of equal variance was met for all variables (Progressivism p=.98; Existentialism p=.86; Reconstructionism p=.44; Perennialism p=.05; Essentialism p=.10).

On the other hand, when the required conditions for multivariate variance analysis are met, it is recommended to interpret the Wilk's Lambda value (Akbulut, 2010). The Wilk's Lambda value (^)=.96, F(10, 194)=.41, p<.05 indicated a significant difference. However, Pallant (2001) suggests setting a stricter alpha level by dividing the standard alpha level by the number of analyses conducted when examining the Test of Between-Subjects Effects table (as cited in Akbulut, 2010). Therefore, the new alpha value (.05/5) was taken as .01.

The obtained values of the one-way ANOVA conducted for the sub-dimensions of the Educational Philosophy Beliefs Scale are presented in Table 7. It was determined that there was no significant difference between the education level variable and the sub-dimensions of Progressivism (F(2, 101)=.67, p>.05), Existentialism (F(2, 101)=.02, p>.05), Reconstructionism (F(2, 101)=.14, p>.05), Perennialism (F(2, 101)=.42, p>.05), and Essentialism (F(2, 101)=.05, p>.05).

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS ON THE SUB-PROBLEM

In the third sub-problem of the research, the question "What are the views of elementary school teachers regarding educational philosophy?" wa s investigated. For this purpose, the findings related to the interview form are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. In-teachers' views on educational philosophy

Themes	Codes	f
Should teachers have knowledge about educational philosophy?	*Necessary*	9
Do teachers have sufficient knowledge about educational philosophy?	*Insufficient*	7
	Sufficient	1
	Partially	1
Can they define their own educational philosophy?	*Can define*	5
	Cannot define	4
Should in-service training be organized about educational philosophy?	Yes	9

As seen in Table 8, all participating teachers (f=9) believe that teachers should know educational philosophy. The majority of teachers (f=7) think that they do not have sufficient knowledge about educational philosophy. Slightly more than half of the teachers (f=5) can define their own educational philosophy, while nearly half (f=4) cannot. All teachers agree that in-service training courses on educational philosophy should be organized. This is consistent with the majority of teachers stating that their knowledge of educational philosophy is insufficient.

The following opinions of the teachers on this topic are noteworthy:

(P1) Everything fundamentally has a philosophy, so teachers need to be knowledgeable about it.

(P3) Knowledge comes from philosophy. If we are to conduct education scientifically, there must definitely be an educational philosophy.

(P9) No, I don't think so. Even if I try to learn and implement things on my own, it is certainly not enough.

(P8) I don't have a specific philosophy; I use different approaches for each lesson in the classroom.

(P5) School should be life itself. As I said, we are already in a complex environment, so I don't have a specific philosophy.

(P2) My philosophy in both education and life is to ensure students receive an education, not just instruction.

(P7) If in-service training suits me and has good content, I would attend. I need to develop, and these topics need to be discussed.

(P4) Since it's my first year, I don't have much knowledge, but there should definitely be inservice training, and I would definitely attend. We need to spread this at the application level.

As a result, it has been determined in the study that participant primary school teachers should be knowledgeable about educational philosophy. Another finding of the research was that teachers did not have sufficient knowledge about educational philosophy. Furthermore, it was revealed that more than half of the teachers in the study were at a level where they were able to define their own educational philosophies. However, nearly half of the teachers were not at a level where they could define their own educational philosophies. Teachers were in favor of organizing in-service training on educational philosophy. This finding is consistent with the fact that nearly half of the teachers were not able to define their own educational philosophies.

Findings and Interpretations on the Sub-Problem

In the fourth sub-problem of the research, an answer was sought to the question 'What are the views of primary school teachers on the educational philosophy of the primary school curriculum?' In line with this purpose, the findings regarding the interview form are presented in Table 9.

Table 9: Teachers' Views on the Educational Philosophy of the Primary Education Curriculum

Themes	Codes	f
Does the education program have a philosophy?	Yes	5
	No	2
	Partially	2
What kind of educational philosophy should the education program have?	More than one	7
	Only one	2

As seen in Table 9, slightly more than half of the teachers (f=5) indicated that the primary school education program has an educational philosophy. A very small number of teachers (f=2) stated that the primary school education program does not have any educational philosophy, while another small group (f=2) expressed the view that it partially has an educational philosophy. Nearly all teachers (f=7) expressed the opinion that the primary school education program should incorporate multiple educational philosophies (eclectic). There are very few teachers who believe that the primary school education program should have a single educational philosophy (f=2). The views of teachers on this matter are noteworthy:

(P5): Generally, I wouldn't want there to be imposition or coercion in the program, which we don't have anyway.

So, the program doesn't dictate anything to us. Having a general philosophy of education feels like coercion.

(P6): If some teachers have a philosophy and others don't, then I don't think the program has a philosophy.

(P2): It shouldn't be just one aim, especially nowadays, and due to the multicultural environment, there should be quite a few philosophies. I think we should approach each student with different perspectives; there shouldn't be just one right answer.

(P5): A single philosophy based on definite judgments shouldn't be adopted. We should take a bit from everything.

(P7): Our program should take something from every philosophy and adapt it to our country because our school environment is like that. For example, I can approach a student with special needs in an student-centered way, while I might approach the rest of the class in a teacher-centered way. So, I think implementing a single view is meaningless and impossible.

In conclusion, the research found that slightly more than half of the participating teachers believed that the primary school education program should have some form of educational philosophy. About half of the teachers believed that the program either lacked an educational philosophy or only partially had one. According to teachers, the primary school education program should incorporate multiple educational philosophies (eclectic).

Discussion and Conclusion

In this section, the results of the research sub-problems are presented in order. The study revealed that the educational belief most adopted by teachers was existentialism. This finding is consistent with the results of studies by Ateş (2023), Yılmaz and Tosun (2013), Tunca et al. (2015), Aslan (2017), Kozikoğlu and Erden (2019), Berkant and Özaslan (2019), Ektem (2019), Taneri and Coşkun (2021), and Eğmir et al. (2021). It was also determined that progressivism was the second most adopted belief by teachers. The least adopted educational belief by teachers was essentialism. This finding is in line with the results of studies by Hamurcu and Altuncu (2023), Yılmaz and Tosun (2013), Tunca et al. (2015), Eğmir et al. (2021), Kozikoğlu and Erden (2019), Berkant and Özaslan (2019), Ektem (2019), and Taneri and Coşkun (2021). They found that essentialism was the least adopted educational belief among teacher candidates. It was found that there were no significant differences in the subdimensions of the Educational Philosophy Beliefs Scale (EPBS) between gender, university graduated from, professional seniority, and educational level variables. A significant difference was

found between the essentialism educational philosophy sub-dimension and the age variable. It was determined that teachers in the 46-55 age range adopted the essentialism educational philosophy significantly more than teachers in the 22-25 and 26-35 age ranges. Essentialism and perennialism are known as traditional and teacher-centered educational trends. It can be said that older teachers tend to prefer more traditional educational trends. This finding of the study is consistent with the findings of Soyer (2020), who also found that teachers in the 46-55 age range adopted essentialism.

In the qualitative part of the study, it was generally determined from the views of primary school teachers that knowing educational philosophy is necessary. It was found that teachers do not have sufficient knowledge about educational philosophy, and more than half of them are at a level where they can define their own educational philosophy. However, it was also found that nearly half of the teachers are not at a level where they can define their own educational philosophy. Based on this finding, it can be said that half of the teachers have limited knowledge of educational philosophy. Teachers expressed the view that in-service training should be organized on educational philosophy. This is consistent with the finding that nearly half of the teachers cannot define their own educational philosophy.

The study found that slightly more than half of the teachers believe that the primary education program has an underlying educational philosophy. Nearly half of the teachers believe that the program either does not have an underlying educational philosophy or only partially does. This finding is not consistent with Soyer (2020), who found that the majority of school administrators and teachers in his study believed that there is no fundamental educational philosophy influencing the TRNC education system and policies.

It was determined that, according to teachers, the primary education program should have more than one educational philosophy (eclectic). This finding is also consistent with the literature on eclectic approaches in education. As stated in the problem statement, the educational trend underlying the TRNC primary education program is eclectic. The fact that teachers also prefer the eclectic trend suggests that it is consistent with the educational trend underlying the TRNC primary education program.

Based on the research findings, the TRNC Ministry of National Education could collaborate with universities to organize in-service training courses on educational philosophy and educational trends. Additionally, given that teachers still believe that the primary education program does not have a fundamental philosophy, courses or seminars could be organized to introduce the TRNC Primary Education Program and the underlying educational trends. These courses could be more effective if organized as workshops. Measures could be taken to teach educational trends in the training program of the only state university in the TRNC that trains primary school teachers, Atatürk Teacher Academy. For this purpose, courses where teacher candidates can define their own philosophies could be added. Additionally, to promote the development of educational philosophy in the TRNC and to update current data, it is suggested to encourage more research in this area.

In addition to the primary findings, it is crucial to contextualize the educational beliefs of primary school teachers within the broader landscape of educational philosophy in the TRNC. The preference for existentialism among teachers reflects a contemporary shift towards learner-centered approaches, emphasizing individual growth and self-discovery in education. This aligns with global trends advocating for personalized learning experiences tailored to students' unique needs and backgrounds (Dewey, 1938; Rogers, 1969). Conversely, the lower adoption of essentialism underscores a gradual departure from traditional, teacher-centered methods in favor of more dynamic and inclusive educational practices (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2013). These insights suggest a progressive orientation among educators in adapting pedagogical approaches to meet the diverse demands of today's classrooms. Furthermore, the call for an eclectic approach to the primary education program highlights educators' recognition of the need for flexibility and adaptability in curriculum design. By advocating for multiple educational philosophies, teachers aim to create inclusive learning environments that accommodate various learning styles and cultural contexts. This finding resonates with the argument by multiple scholars that educational programs benefit from incorporating diverse philosophical perspectives to enrich educational experiences (Eisner, 1994; Noddings, 2007). Therefore, promoting awareness and understanding of educational philosophies through targeted training programs and ongoing research initiatives can foster a more nuanced approach to pedagogy and curriculum development in the TRNC (Schiro, 2012). Additionally, the works of Biesta (2010) and Darling-Hammond (2017) further support the integration of eclectic approaches in educational settings, emphasizing the benefits of such methods in creating adaptable and responsive learning environments. By fostering a comprehensive understanding of educational philosophies, educators can better navigate the complexities of modern teaching and curriculum development, ultimately enhancing the educational experience for all students.

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