

ELRUHA

12. INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH



November 17-19, 2024
Şanlıurfa, Türkiye

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Prof. Dr. Mudhaffar M. Noori
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hasan ÇİFTÇİ

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AUTHORS	UNIVERSITY	PAPER TITLE
Yağmur İPEK Asst. Prof. Dr. Yelda KÖKÇÜ	<i>Fırat University, Türkiye</i>	EVALUATION OF 7TH GRADE STUDENTS' NARRATIVE TEXTS: GROUP WRITING ACTIVITY
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Okan SARIGÖZ	<i>Hatay Mustafa Kemal University, Türkiye</i>	THE EXAMINATION OF TEACHERS' OPINIONS ON REFUGEE STUDENTS
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Okan SARIGÖZ	<i>Hatay Mustafa Kemal University, Türkiye</i>	EXAMINATION OF TEACHERS' OPINIONS ABOUT OUTSIDE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mehmet YAKIŞAN Semiha UÇAR	<i>Ondokuz Mayıs University, Türkiye</i> <i>Harran University, Türkiye</i>	PERCEPTIONS OF SCIENCE TEACHERS AND TEACHER CANDIDATES ON EARTHQUAKE
Sabri DEMİR Prof. Dr. Necmi GÖKYER	<i>Fırat University, Türkiye</i>	ADMINISTRATOR AND TEACHER VIEWS ON THE EFFECTS OF THE KAHRAMANMARAŞ EARTHQUAKES ON EDUCATION
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Arzu FENER Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mustafa ASLAN	<i>Harran University, Türkiye</i>	ANALYSIS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE ABOUT PLANTS

12th INTERNATIONAL EL RUHA CONGRESS SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH -CONTENTS-

EXAMINATION OF SPECTRAL ACCELERATION VALUES OF EXISTING EARTHQUAKE INSULATED HOSPITAL BUILDING AREAS IN MALATYA PROVINCE	1
ALPER BOZTEPE SENEM YILMAZ ÇETİN GÜLTEKİN AKTAŞ	
INCOME DISTRIBUTION AND POVERTY IN CITIES: AN EVALUATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE	9
BÜŞRA KOÇ MİNE MEYDANCI	
PROVINCIAL COUNCIL LAW IN THE IRAQI CONSTITUTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LOCAL REGIONAL DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE	27
MUDHAFFAR M. NOORİ	
GREEN FINANCE AND BANKING SECTOR SUSTAINABILITY ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT	41
MAMMADOVA SAİDA RAHİM MAMMADOVA SHALALA RAHİM	
PROSPECTS OF GREEN ECONOMIC POLICY FOR AZERBAIJAN	44
HİCRAN KOCERLİ	
HOW DOES ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IMPACT ECONOMIES	47
AZAR HUSEYNLİ	
GEOGRAPHICAL AND ECOLOGICAL GLOBALIZATION	48
SADETTİN PAKSOY RAMAZAN ÖZASLAN	
THE EFFECT OF FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT ON FOREIGN TRADE: THE CASE OF TÜRKİYE	55
SADETTİN PAKSOY MEDET İĞDE EMRAH KURTGÖZ	
THE ROLE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN ISLAMIC FINANCE	63
TUĞBA KONUK	
GREEN DIGITAL FINANCE	68
TUĞBA KONUK	
EVALUATION OF 7TH GRADE STUDENTS' NARRATIVE TEXTS: GROUP WRITING ACTIVITY	74
YAĞMUR İPEK YELDA KÖKÇÜ	
THE EXAMINATION OF TEACHERS' OPINIONS ON REFUGEE STUDENTS	76
OKAN SARIGÖZ	
EXAMINATION OF TEACHERS' OPINIONS ABOUT OUTSIDE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES	84

12th INTERNATIONAL EL RUHA CONGRESS SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH -CONTENTS-

OKAN SARIGÖZ	
PERCEPTIONS OF SCIENCE TEACHERS AND TEACHER CANDIDATES ON EARTHQUAKE	93
MEHMET YAKIŞAN SEMİHA UÇAR	
ADMINISTRATOR AND TEACHER VIEWS ON THE EFFECTS OF THE KAHRAMANMARAŞ EARTHQUAKES ON EDUCATION	103
SABRİ DEMİR NECMİ GÖKYER	
A PERSPECTIVE ON TURKISH-ISLAMIC ART EDUCATION	105
SİBEL KARAKAŞ	
INVESTIGATION OF THE MENTAL STRUCTURES OF 8TH GRADE SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS ON THE SOCIO-SCIENTIFIC ISSUE OF CONSANGUINEOUS MARRIAGE	107
MEHMET YAKIŞAN NİLÜFER BAYTUZ	
ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATORS WHO HAVE RECEIVED PEDAGOGICAL FORMATION IN TEACHING	116
MUSA ALAN FARUK KARDAŞ	
ANALYSIS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE ABOUT PLANTS	118
ARZU FENER MUSTAFA ASLAN	
EXAMINING THE URBANIZATION PHENOMENON IN THE CONTEXT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	124
ÖZLEM CANDAN HERGÜL İBRAHİM BATUHAN DOĞAN	
THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS IN SYRIAN INTEGRATION POLICIES: ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES	131
ÇİĞDEM AKMAN GÜLSEREN ERGÜN	
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE-ENABLED MIGRATION GOVERNANCE IN TURKEY: CURRENT SITUATION, OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES	138
GÜLSEREN ERGÜN ÇİĞDEM AKMAN	
LEGAL STATUS OF UNACCOMPANIED MINORS: INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL LEGAL FRAMEWORKS	145
MELİKE AKPINAR HAKAN CANDAN	
REFUGEE LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS: ANALYSIS OF CONFLICTS BETWEEN TURKEY AND INTERNATIONAL LAW	152

12th INTERNATIONAL EL RUHA CONGRESS SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

EXAMINATION OF TEACHERS' OPINIONS ABOUT OUTSIDE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Okan SARIGÖZ

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Abstract

Extracurricular activities are activities that students participate in outside of class and are usually organized by the school. These activities contribute to the academic, social and personal development of students. Extracurricular activities not only increase students' academic success, but also allow them to develop their social skills, gain self-confidence and discover different areas of interest. Among these activities, activities such as science fairs, math competitions and language clubs aim to increase students' academic success. Artistic activities such as theater, music and painting help students develop their creativity and artistic talents. Sports activities such as football, basketball and swimming contribute to students' physical health and development of teamwork skills. In addition, community service projects, cultural trips and social clubs carried out by schools increase students' social skills and cultural awareness. In this way, students develop themselves both in terms of skills and socio-culturally. Changes in educational approaches and curriculum in recent years show that it is not enough to take classes only in the classroom environment and that activities should be held outside of school. It is thought that schools should teach students to learn by doing and experiencing, therefore, teachers organizing out-of-school activities with students will increase students' interest in lessons and make abstract concepts more fun and educational. The aim of this research is to determine teachers' views on out-of-school activities. The study group of the research consists of teachers who are doing a non-thesis master's degree in Hatay Mustafa Kemal University Curriculum and Instruction Department in the 2023-2024 academic year. In the research, a semi-structured interview form consisting of 4 questions developed by the researcher was used as a data collection tool in order to determine teachers' views on out-of-school activities. The phenomenological model was used as the method in the qualitative research. At the end of the research, based on teachers' views, it was concluded that out-of-school activities increased students' comprehension skills, increased their motivation, understood the subjects better, and that what was learned was more permanent since they appealed to more sense organs.

Keywords: Out-of-school activities, learning by doing, efficiency, activity

ÖĞRETMENLERİN OKUL DIŞI ETKİNLİKLERLE İLGİLİ GÖRÜŞLERİNİN İNCELENMESİ

Özet

Okul dışı etkinlikler, öğrencilerin sınıf dışında katıldıkları ve genellikle okul tarafından organize edilen faaliyetleri kapsayan etkinliklerdir. Bu etkinlikler, öğrencilerin akademik, sosyal ve kişisel gelişimlerine katkıda bulunmaktadır. Okul dışı etkinlikler, öğrencilerin akademik başarılarını artırmanın yanı sıra, sosyal becerilerini geliştirmelerine, özgüven kazanmalarına ve farklı ilgi alanlarını keşfetmelerine de olanak tanımaktadır. Bu etkinliklerden

12th INTERNATIONAL EL RUHA CONGRESS SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

bilim fuarları, matematik yarışmaları, dil kulüpleri gibi etkinlikler, öğrencilerin akademik başarılarını artırmayı hedeflemektedir. Tiyatro, müzik, resim gibi sanatsal faaliyetler ise öğrencilerin yaratıcılıklarını ve sanatsal yeteneklerini geliştirmelerine yardımcı olmaktadır. Futbol, basketbol, yüzme gibi spor faaliyetleri ise öğrencilerin fiziksel sağlıklarını korumalarına ve takım çalışması becerilerini geliştirmelerine katkıda bulunmaktadır. Ayrıca okullar tarafından gerçekleştirilen toplum hizmeti projeleri, kültürel geziler ve sosyal kulüpler, öğrencilerin sosyal becerilerini ve kültürel farkındalıklarını artırır. Böylelikle öğrenciler hem beceri anlamında hem de sosyo kültürel anlamda kendilerini geliştirirler. Son yıllarda eğitim anlayışlarında ve öğretim programlarında yaşanan değişiklikler, derslerin sadece sınıf ortamında yapılmasının yeterli olmadığını okul dışında da etkinliklerin yapılması gerektiğini göstermektedir. Okulun öğrencilere yaparak yaşayarak öğrenmeyi öğretmesi gerektiği bu nedenle öğretmenlerin öğrencilerle okul dışı etkinlikler düzenlemelerinin öğrencilerin derslere olan ilgilerini artıracak ve soyut kavramları daha eğlenceli ve öğretici bir hale getireceği düşünülmektedir. Bu araştırmanın amacı, öğretmenlerin okul dışı etkinlikler hakkındaki görüşlerini belirleyebilmektir. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu, 2023-2024 öğretim yılı Hatay Mustafa Kemal Üniversitesi Eğitim Programları ve Öğretim Anabilim dalında tezsiz yüksek lisans yapan öğretmenler oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmada öğretmenlerin okul dışı etkinlikler hakkındaki görüşlerini belirleyebilmek amacıyla araştırmacı tarafından geliştirilmiş 4 sorudan oluşan yarı yapılandırılmış bir görüşme formu veri toplama aracı olarak kullanılmıştır. Nitel olarak yürütülen araştırmada yöntem olarak olgubilim modeli kullanılmıştır. Araştırma sonunda, öğretmen görüşlerinden hareketle okul dışı etkinliklerle ilgili olarak öğrencilerin anlama kabiliyetlerini yükselttiğini, motivasyonlarını arttırdığını, konuları daha iyi anladıklarını ve daha fazla duyu organına hitap ettiğinden öğrenilenlerin daha kalıcı olduğu gibi sonuçlara ulaşılmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Okul dışı etkinlikler, yaparak yaşayarak öğrenme, etkinlik, faaliyet

INTRODUCTION

In today's educational system, learning is not limited to in-class activities; students' access to information and learning processes are enriched through out-of-school activities. Extracurricular activities not only enhance students' academic achievements but also help in developing their social skills, boosting self-confidence, and exploring different areas of interest. These activities can take place in various settings, such as museums, science centers, nature excursions, and sports events (Çiçek & Saraç, 2017). The positive effects of extracurricular activities on education have been supported by numerous studies. For instance, a study by Ergün and Aslan (2023) found that social clubs positively impact students' social skills and academic success. Similarly, Bayburtlu (2020) examined the contributions of out-of-school learning environments to Turkish language courses and found that these environments improved students' language skills.

Extracurricular activities are events organized by the school that students participate in outside of the classroom. These activities contribute to students' academic, social, and personal development (Yavaş & Çelik, 2020). Extracurricular activities provide opportunities for students to discover their interests, acquire new skills, and further develop their existing abilities (Kulalıgil, 2016). Activities such as science fairs, math competitions, and language clubs aim to enhance students' academic achievements. Artistic activities like theater, music, and painting help develop students' creativity (Cengiz et al., 2015) and artistic talents. Sports activities like

12th INTERNATIONAL EL RUHA CONGRESS SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

football, basketball, and swimming contribute to maintaining students' physical health and enhancing teamwork skills. Community service projects, cultural trips, and social clubs help increase students' social skills and cultural awareness (Çavuş et al., 2013; Ertaş et al., 2011; Sarıgöz, 2023b).

Recent changes in educational approaches and curricula show that it is not sufficient to conduct lessons solely in the classroom environment (Sarıgöz, 2017). Particularly in subjects closely related to daily life, the importance of hands-on, experimental, and out-of-school activities is significant (Karademir, 2013; Kulalıgil, 2016; Sarıgöz, 2014). Therefore, organizing out-of-school activities by teachers will increase students' interest in lessons and help them understand abstract concepts in a fun and educational way (Yavaş, 2022a). The aim of out-of-school learning environments is to encourage the diversification of learning environments, increase students' interest in science subjects, and help them achieve greater success in these areas (Dori & Tall, 2000). The majority of education focuses on formal learning (Sarıgöz & Özkartal, 2016), with the primary goal of raising awareness of learning among students. Formal education includes various aspects, from teacher-centered instruction in a structured classroom setting to student-centered learning (Yavaş, 2022b). While formal education fulfills the school curriculum, it places little emphasis on experiences outside the classroom or students' prior knowledge. However, students use their out-of-school experiences daily to explore the outside world and understand phenomena (Gerber & Marek, 2001; Melber, 2006).

Researchers have defined out-of-school activities in different ways. For instance, Rillo (1985) describes out-of-school education as learning that can be implemented at all grade levels, covering all subject areas, and is best conducted outside the classroom. According to this definition, out-of-school education is not separate from general education; it also encompasses various topics within the curriculum. Nichols (1982) lists the key characteristics of out-of-school learning activities as follows: they take place outdoors, participants engage directly in activities, involve original objects, describe the relationships in these environments rather than explaining classroom realities, stimulate as many senses as possible, and encourage participation because activities are considered engaging and enjoyable. In this context, out-of-school activities provide students with opportunities for exploration, research, and learning by doing.

METHOD

This section provides information about the research model, the study group, the data collection tool, data collection, and data analysis.

Research Model

This research is a qualitative study aimed at identifying teachers' opinions on out-of-school activities. The qualitative research process includes the development of questions and procedures, data collection from participants in their natural settings, inductive data analysis to reach general themes from specific cases, and the interpretation of the meaning of the data by the researcher (Creswell, 2017). The study was designed according to the case study pattern, which is one of the qualitative research methods. According to Yıldırım and Şimşek (2021), the most fundamental feature of a qualitative case study is the in-depth examination of one or several cases. In other words, factors related to a situation are explored in a holistic manner.

12th INTERNATIONAL EL RUHA CONGRESS SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

Study Group

The study group consists of a total of 10 teachers enrolled in the non-thesis master's program at the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Hatay Mustafa Kemal University, during the 2023-2024 academic year. Maximum variation sampling, one of the purposeful sampling methods, was used to determine the study group. For ethical reasons, personal information of the candidate teachers in the study group was not disclosed; instead, codes such as Ö1, Ö2, ... Ö10 were used.

Data Collection Tool and Data Collection

Data were collected using a semi-structured interview form developed by the researcher in accordance with qualitative research methods. In preparing the interview questions, a literature review was first conducted, followed by interviews with teachers, and draft questions related to the topic were prepared. Before the questions were presented to the teachers, a pilot study was conducted with three teachers to confirm that the questions were clear and understandable. The interviews lasted approximately 8-10 minutes on average. After the interviews, the participants' responses were transcribed for analysis.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed in-depth using content analysis techniques. Yıldırım and Şimşek (2021) describe content analysis as a process of identifying previously unspecified themes, categories, and codes, organizing the obtained data within the framework of these themes and codes, and presenting it in a way that the reader can understand. In the study, codes were first derived, and then themes were created based on the identified codes.

FINDINGS

In this section, the findings obtained based on teachers' opinions are presented under themes and codes.

In Table 1, the views of teachers regarding what out-of-school activities might include are presented.

Table 1: *Teachers' views on the out-of-school activities*

Theme	Code	Participant	f
Sports activities	Football, Volleyball, Basketball	Ö1,Ö2,Ö3,Ö4,Ö5,Ö6,Ö7,Ö10	8
	Swimming, Tennis, Athletics	Ö1,Ö2,Ö3,Ö5,Ö8,Ö9,Ö10	7
	Nature Sports	Ö1,Ö2,Ö4,Ö5,Ö9	5
Artistic and Cultural Activities	Painting, Sculpture	Ö1,Ö2,Ö3,Ö5,Ö7,Ö9,Ö10	7
	Photography	Ö1,Ö2,Ö3,Ö5,Ö8,Ö10	6
	Theater	Ö3,Ö4,Ö5,Ö7,Ö9	5
	Music	Ö2,Ö5,Ö8,Ö9	4
Social and Community Activities	Seminar, Conference	Ö2,Ö3,Ö4,Ö5,Ö6,Ö8,Ö10	7
	Library	Ö1,Ö2,Ö4,Ö5,Ö7,Ö9	6
	Tree Planting	Ö3,Ö4,Ö5,Ö7,Ö9	5
	Blood Donation	Ö2,Ö4,Ö6,Ö7	4
Educational activities	Trips, Observations	Ö1,Ö2,Ö3,Ö4,Ö5,Ö6,Ö7,Ö8,Ö9,Ö10	10
	Exhibitions	Ö1,Ö2,Ö3,Ö4,Ö5,Ö7,Ö9,Ö10	8
	Homework	Ö2,Ö3,Ö5,Ö7,Ö8,Ö9,Ö10	7

12th INTERNATIONAL EL RUHA CONGRESS SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

The data in Table 1 represent the teachers' views on what out-of-school activities entail. Teachers defined out-of-school activities under four themes: sports activities, artistic and cultural activities, social and community activities, and educational activities, categorized into 14 identified codes.

In Table 2, the opinions of teachers regarding the positive aspects of out-of-school activities are presented.

Table 2: *Positive aspects of out-of-school activities*

Theme	Code	Participant	f
Social	Cooperation, sharing	Ö1,Ö2,Ö3,Ö4,Ö5,Ö7,Ö8,Ö9	8
	Effective communication	Ö2,Ö3,Ö5,Ö6,Ö7,Ö9	6
	Responsibility	Ö1,Ö3,Ö4,Ö5,Ö8	5
	Leadership, management	Ö1,Ö4,Ö7	3
Physical	Sports participation	Ö1,Ö3,Ö4,Ö6,Ö8,Ö9,Ö10	7
	Health, diet	Ö2,Ö3,Ö5,Ö6	4
Personal	Self-confidence	Ö1,Ö2,Ö3,Ö4,Ö5,Ö7,Ö8,Ö9	8
	Time management	Ö2,Ö3,Ö5,Ö6,Ö7,Ö8,Ö9	7
	Responsibility, sensitivity	Ö1,Ö3,Ö6,Ö8,Ö9	5
	Motivation, adaptation	Ö2,Ö4,Ö7,Ö8	4
Educational	Academic success	Ö1,Ö2,Ö3,Ö4,Ö5,Ö7,Ö9,Ö10	8
	Analytical thinking	Ö1,Ö2,Ö3,Ö5,Ö7,Ö9,Ö10	7
	Hobby	Ö1,Ö3,Ö5,Ö6,Ö7,Ö9	6
	Motivation	Ö3,Ö4,Ö7,Ö8,Ö9	5
	Socialization	Ö1,Ö3,Ö4,Ö5,Ö8	5
	Sensitivity	Ö2,Ö3,Ö5,Ö7	4
	Environmental awareness, consciousness	Ö1,Ö3,Ö8	3
	Participation in Activities	Ö5,Ö8	2

When examining Table 2, teachers identified the positive aspects of out-of-school activities in 4 main themes and 18 codes. Regarding teachers' views on the positive aspects of out-of-school activities:

"I have participated in out-of-school activities with my students several times. These activities help students develop self-confidence, engage in sports, collaborate, gain responsibility, enhance analytical thinking, sensitivity, environmental awareness, and socialization. They even highlight leadership qualities in students, which in turn boosts their academic performance." (Ö1).

"I believe that out-of-school activities primarily help students socialize. Especially after trips organized outside the school, I have noticed that students place greater importance on

12th INTERNATIONAL EL RUHA CONGRESS SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

teamwork, assist each other, increase their environmental sensitivity, improve their academic achievements, socialize more, think more analytically, even increase their self-confidence, and enhance their public speaking skills.” (Ö3).

“In my opinion, students should be involved in out-of-school activities starting from preschool. This is because such activities teach responsibility, help students develop a hobby, boost their self-confidence, and enable them to manage their time more effectively. I also believe that these activities increase students’ motivation. Sometimes I think that every student should experience scouting and definitely spend time in nature with friends.” (Ö9).

In Table 3, the views of teachers on the negative aspects of out-of-school activities are presented.

Table 3: Negative aspects of out-of-school activities

Theme	Code	Participant	f
General	Fatigue, Exhaustion	Ö1,Ö2,Ö3,Ö4,Ö5,Ö6,Ö7,Ö8,Ö9	9
	Injuries, Accidents	Ö1,Ö2,Ö3,Ö5,Ö6,Ö8,Ö9	7
	Stress, Anxiety	Ö2,Ö3,Ö4,Ö5,Ö8,Ö9	6
	Safety Issues	Ö1,Ö2,Ö5,Ö6,Ö7,Ö9	6
	Failure	Ö1,Ö2,Ö6,Ö8,Ö9	5
	Time Loss	Ö2,Ö4,Ö5,Ö7,Ö10	5
	Financial Issues	Ö2,Ö3,Ö5,Ö6,Ö9	5
	Harmful Habits	Ö3,Ö4,Ö5,Ö7	4
	Excessive Competition, Ambition	Ö1,Ö2,Ö5,Ö7	4
	Social Pressures	Ö3,Ö5	3

When examining Table 3, teachers identified the negative aspects of out-of-school activities under one main theme with a total of 10 sub-codes. Regarding teachers’ views on the negative aspects of out-of-school activities:

“In my opinion, the most negative aspect of out-of-school activities is that they are exhausting. While visiting historical sites, students may sometimes get injured due to falls. It’s a stressful situation. Schools do not assign security personnel for these kinds of activities. Sometimes, students become overly ambitious during trips while discussing or presenting a topic in order to learn better. It is a time-consuming activity. Trips can also be costly, which may create financial burdens for students.” (Ö2).

“In my view, the most critical issue with out-of-school activities is the school’s failure to assign a staff member or security personnel to accompany the students. The activity takes up my entire day, thus disrupting my work. During activities, students sometimes become overly ambitious in trying to achieve something and engage in competition with their peers, which can lead to problems during the event.” (Ö7).

“Since out-of-school activities take place outside of the school, students tend to behave differently during these activities. However, economic difficulties faced by parents can

12th INTERNATIONAL EL RUHA CONGRESS SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

sometimes cause stress for the student. Out-of-school activities are a time-consuming and tiring task for teachers. Due to the lack of security personnel, injuries can occur during activities. This situation can sometimes lead to a decline in students' performance.” (Ö9).

RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

The study was conducted with 10 teachers employed in public schools. Teachers expressed their opinions about what out-of-school activities are, their positive aspects and negative aspects.

According to the opinions of the teachers who participated in the study, out-of-school activities help reinforce theoretical knowledge gained in the classroom through practical applications. Educational competitions and project-based activities carried out during out-of-school events enhance students' analytical thinking and problem-solving skills. These activities also encourage students to pursue their personal interests and provide opportunities for team-based experiences. By assigning responsibilities, they help develop leadership skills. Communication and interaction with peers foster empathy and enhance effective communication skills.

Out-of-school activities contribute significantly to personal development. Achievements in arts, sports, and stage performances boost students' self-confidence. These activities teach students to manage their time effectively and strengthen their ability to take on responsibilities. They support the maintenance of physical health and encourage regular exercise habits. Activities such as arts and nature-based events help reduce stress levels and promote mental relaxation.

Creative activities, including music, painting, drama, and creative writing, enable students to develop their artistic and aesthetic sensibilities. Activities that stimulate creative thinking help students generate unique and innovative solutions (Sarıgöz, 2023a). Through various activities, students can explore their interests and talents, providing valuable guidance for career choices. Participation in community service projects enhances students' awareness of social issues. Activities like nature walks and environmental cleanup campaigns raise environmental awareness. Cultural exchange programs and international projects help students develop understanding and respect towards different cultures.

Participation in out-of-school activities assists students in identifying their strengths in specific fields or careers. It also offers practical experiences in leadership, communication, and technical skills that are beneficial for their future professional life. Building professional relationships with individuals they meet during these activities can provide career advantages. Involvement in such activities increases students' sense of belonging to their school. Engaging and motivating events positively influence students' participation in classes and overall motivation. Success achieved outside of school enhances students' perception of their own overall success.

From the negative perspectives shared by teachers, it was highlighted that excessive time spent on out-of-school activities might limit students' study time, potentially leading to a decrease in academic performance. An intensive activity schedule can cause both physical and mental fatigue among students. The costs associated with sports, arts, or other extracurricular activities, including equipment, clothing, and participation fees, can impose a substantial financial burden on some families. Children from low-income families might be excluded from such events, exacerbating social inequalities.

12th INTERNATIONAL EL RUHA CONGRESS SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

In group activities, some students may experience exclusion, teasing, or difficulty in adapting. Intense competition in sports or academic events can lead to stress and self-confidence issues. In particular, unsupervised or poorly monitored activities might expose students to risky groups or bad habits. The physical safety risks can increase during activities conducted in natural environments or on field trips.

An excessively busy activity schedule may reduce family communication and weaken family ties. Parents' lack of awareness or disapproval of their children's participation in activities can lead to family conflicts. Focusing on a single type of activity may prevent students from exploring diverse interests. Feelings of failure or inadequacy may harm students' self-esteem. Some students might prioritize extracurricular activities too much, overlooking long-term academic or career objectives. Forcing a student into an activity they do not enjoy or have no talent for can result in poor career choices.

Certain activities may conflict with the values of the student's family or community. Participation in events characterized by inappropriate behavior can disrupt the student's social adaptation. Injuries or accidents, especially in sports activities, can occur. A heavy extracurricular schedule can negatively affect mental health. Continuous involvement in extracurricular activities might reduce students' interest and engagement in school. Some individual activities might isolate students from their social circle.

Recommendations

Out-of-school activities are vital for student success. However, to prevent potential issues, school administration should ensure that a security officer accompanies the group throughout the event.

Injuries or accidents may occur during out-of-school activities. Therefore, students should be warned in advance, and an experienced staff member should be assigned to accompany them.

Financial support should be provided by the school administration for students who cannot participate due to financial constraints.

Any negative attitudes or behaviors observed during or after the activities should be promptly addressed with the assistance of specialists.

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12th INTERNATIONAL EL RUHA CONGRESS SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

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