

The Views of Pre-Service Primary School Teachers Regarding the Concept Of “Basic Life Skills” Of Life Science Course¹

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Abstract

The teaching of life skills has an important place in primary school programs which are the first step in gaining basic knowledge and skills about life. Since 2004-2005, life science teaching has been established to provide basic life skills. In this context, it is important that classroom teachers who will gain these skills should be informed about these skills. This study examined what pre-service teachers understood from the concept of “basic life skills”, how they dealt with the concept and what they associated the concept with. For this purpose, an open-ended questionnaire was administered to 132 pre-service primary school teachers studying at A University and B University in the 2017-2018 academic year. The qualitative survey model was used in the study and the data were gathered by descriptive analysis. As a result of the research, it can be said that even if the majority of the class teacher candidates hear "basic life skills", the rates of hearing the concept of “basic life skills” in the life science course are low. In addition, basic life skills are often defined as “maintaining daily life” and “meeting their own needs without needing anyone else”. However, it has been observed that the classroom teacher candidates perceive the concept of “basic life skills” as “self-care skills” in general. In addition, pre-service primary school teachers pointed out that the teaching of life skills could be done by using different methods and techniques that are effective by the student, and they also emphasized the context of family, school and environment.

Key words: Pre-Service Primary School Teachers, Life Science Teaching, Basic Life Skills

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Introduction

Rapid advances in science and technology and globalization have led to radical changes in the political, economic, cultural and social structures of the societies. In order to initiate these changes and adapt to them, important transformations are put into practice in the educational systems of countries in terms of purpose, function and operations. In line with these transformations, new searches are ongoing in the Turkish education system. In this respect, in the 2004-2005 academic year, fundamental changes were made both in philosophical terms and content in educational programs. One of the programs in which such changes were experienced is "life science" program.

Life science course is defined by Sağlam (2015; p.3) as a course which aims to raise a good person and a good citizen in general terms by integrating social and natural sciences; by Tay (2017; p.6) as a course which aims to make children aware of themselves and help them to gain the characteristics related to being a good man, an international citizen and global citizen through the help of social sciences, science, art, ideas and values, which aim to help children to gain the knowledge of life by means of collective education. Based on the definitions, it could be said that life science teaching aims to help children to gain knowledge, skills, and abilities that will enable them to develop multidimensional development both individually and socially.

The life science program implemented in Turkey for the first time in 1926 was renewed in 1936, 1948, 1962, 1968, 1998. However, in 2004-2005, a significant change was experienced in the life science program and the vision of the program was explained by the Ministry of National Education [MoNE] (2009; p. 9) as follows:

Raising individual who enjoys learning; who is in peace with himself/herself, with his/her social environments and with nature; who knows himself/herself, protect and develop himself/herself, his/her nation, homeland and nature; who owns the basic knowledge required in daily life, life skills and equipment required by his/her age; and raising individual who is flexible and happy enough to adapt to changes dynamically

The concept of basic life skills was included in the life science program for the first time in the 2004-2005 academic year, and later programs were organized based on life skills. In the program which was designed as skill-based, 85 outcomes for the 1st grade, 94 outcomes for the second grade and 113 outcomes for the 3rd grade were designed and implemented (Mone, 2005). However, as a result of numerous evaluation studies conducted in 2005 on the life science course program, the number of outcomes of the life science program was regulated as 86 years in 2009 for the first grades, 95 for the 2nd grade, and 111 for the 3rd grades and then implemented (MoNE, 2009). In 2015, the program's outcomes were once again reduced and the program vision was written as "raising individuals who have basic life skills, self-knowledge, live a healthy and safe life, sensitive to nature

and the environment, make research, have high self-confidence, are at peace with themselves and internalize national and spiritual values” (MoNE, 2015). The draft program was published in 2017 without changing the vision of the 2015 program and it aimed to be implemented in the 2018-2019 academic year.

Life skills which are intended to help students to gain in 2004-2005 life science program were also included in the life science program developed later. However, there was a discrepancy between the life skills stated in 2004-2005 and the life skills stated in the 2015 and 2017 programs. While 22 skills were included in the 2015 program, 23 skills were included in the 2017 draft program by adding the skill of “developing career awareness”. The concept of life skills was first used by psychologists in the field of clinical psychology in 1960 for psycho-social skills (UNESCO, 2004). Life skills are defined as the skills that help people to cope with difficult situations in their daily lives, to gain interpersonal skills and abilities based on the fulfilment of their duties and responsibilities (Curtis and Warren, 1974, as cited in Stacy 1981). The World Health Organization [WHO] (1997) defines life skills as the ones which aim to encourage individuals against the problems encountered in life and to develop individuals’ relevant skills accordingly, and these skills support all areas of development, and help them to lead independent lives, gain personal cleaning and basic business skills. According to the definitions, it is possible to say that life skills are the skills that enable individuals to cope with every problem encountered in daily life and to support individuals to live independently.

Life Science Program

The first reform movement in the history of the Republic of Turkey is Tevhid-i Tedrisat Law, which was the law on the unification of the education put into effect on March 3, 1924. Although the needs and requirements of a newly founded republic were thought in the first school program in 1924 (Gozutok, 2013; p. 18), John Dewey who participated in the Congress of Turkiye Muallimler Birliđi (Turkish Teachers' Union) held on August 22, 1924 and expressed a collective teaching approach in the new program (Bektas, 2009; p.20). As a result of the Congress and reports, on March 22, 1926, the courses of Tabiat Tetkiki (Nature Inspection), Ziraat ve Hıfzısıhha (Agriculture and Hygiene), Cođrafya ve Tarih Mebadisi (Geography and History), Musabihat-ı Ahlakiye ve Malumat-ı Vataniye were gathered under the name of “life Science” in 1926 as suggested in Dewey's relevant report.

As a result of the revolutions in 1936, there were changes in education and the life science program was changed in order to help the principles of the newly established state to settle. In 1938, following the death of Atatürk in 1938 and the political, economic and social events in the world, it was revised again in 1948. The aim of the life science program in 1948 was to help students to adopt

the love of nature and to raise individuals with the awareness of history and cultural values as in previous programs (Baymur, 1954; p. 10-11).

The developments experienced in Turkey in 1961 led new changes in the program and the program was revised following the 6-year piloting in 1968. Moreover, in the 1968 program, 10 skills were given place under the title of “Skills and Skill Types” which were not mentioned in the previous programs. In addition to reading, writing and calculating skills that should be acquired as basic skills by children, some other skills related to accessing to information, presenting and using information technologies were also included in the new program (Ulubey and Koçer, 2013; p.151). Although the program had been in effect for a long time, there were almost no radical revisions along the years. Due to the changes in the economic situation in Turkey, it was changed in 1998. New unit topics such as participation in classroom activities and task sharing, conscious consumerism and productivity, communication, collective life, earth and space, and movement and force were added into the program (Özdemir, 1998; p.9). The 1998 program was not long-termed and in the 2004-2005 academic year, a new constructivism based program was generated. The new program was prepared based on basic life skills. Basic life skills were defined as critical thinking, creative thinking, research, communication, use of information technologies, entrepreneurship, problem-solving, effective use of Turkish language, decision-making, effective use of resources, self-management, security and protection, and basic terms regarding science (MoNE, 2009). In 2009, the program was revised. In 2015, the number of program outcomes was reduced and a unit-based program was developed. However, basic life skills were put in the centre of the program. In 2017 program, the draft program was released and the program was revised again. The program, which was put into effect in 2018, was organized according to a unit-based and basic life skills approach.

Basic Life Skills

Considering that the developments in the world and education are closely related to each other, a very different structure in the world was formed in the late 1800s and individualistic views came to the forefront. In addition, a liberal economic policy began to prevail in the field of economics. The changes in this context also affected education. With the 7 Cardinal Principles in Secondary Education in the USA, the importance of taking leisure times, being good citizens, occupation, being a family member, managing basic functions, health and viewing individuals as a whole were pointed out more. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) was found to have given importance to individual development as well as obtaining information by identifying basic skills in 7 fields; conscious consumerism, healthy living, interpersonal relations, citizenship, family relationships, social skills and professional and career development skills (Gazda et al., 2005; p.1). In this context, it is seen that life skills were important for the schools and life skills gained significance in coping with the problems encountered in life.

Life skills emerged in the literature in the late 1960s and many skills related to the definition and content of life skills in the international field were noted. Flanagan (1978), who emphasizes the quality of life and explains the skills that individuals should have in order to improve the quality of life, explained 5 life skills as physical and material well-being, relations with other people, social and citizenship-related activities, individual development and recreation, and explained these skills under 15 categories. WHO (1997) explained these skills as decision-making, problem-solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, communication, interpersonal skills, self-awareness, empathy, controlling emotions and coping with stress. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) organisation explained these skills as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, communication and decision-making (Singh and Menon, 2016, 4). Gazda et al. (2005; p. 3) explained life skills as interpersonal communication/human relations, physical health/health protection/identity development/purpose of life and problem solving / decision-making. As seen, many skills are mentioned about what life skills are. In the 1990s; however, UNICEF, WHO, UNESCO and many other organisations drew attention to the concept of life skills. Discussions on the necessity of helping generations to gain these skills in the international arena started and programs were organized.

Organizing life skills training programs in the United States to prevent smoking (United States Department of Health and Human Services [USDHHS], 1979; cited in Botvin, 1985; Botvin and Griffin, 2001), GOAL program rewarded with the prevention reward from National Mental Health Association 1996 (Danish, 1996), Implementation of a sports-based program that aims to teach cognitive, behavioural and emotional programs to individuals aged 10-24 in the life science program prepared in Ethiopia (Kibret, 2016), the programs like “Pay It Smart” all aim to teach life skills in a positive and goal-oriented environment.

The teaching of life skills has an important place in primary school programs which are the first step in gaining basic knowledge and skills about life. The qualifications of the primary school teachers who will help generations to gain this basic knowledge and skills are of great importance for the future academic and social achievements of children. Although life skills are not clearly defined in the life science program, it is a term frequently emphasized. Without understanding a concept sufficiently, it becomes difficult to acquire the knowledge and skills related to that concept. Based on this concern, the general aim of this study is to examine what the pre-service primary school teachers understand about the concept of “life skills”, how they deal with the concept and what they associate them with.

Method

This study, which examined the views of the pre-service primary school teachers about the concept of basic life skills, was conducted with the use of a qualitative survey model. A survey model aims to describe and present a situation, a phenomenon or an event that existed in the past or still exist today without interfering it (Karasar, 2011; p. 77). Survey research is a preferred method for determining the attitudes, actions, ideas, or beliefs of individuals, thus helping to make estimates regarding the relationships between variables and also how the sub-groups change (Christen, Johnson and Turner 2015; p.371). In this study, the perceptions of the pre-service primary school teachers regarding the concept of basic life skills are described as they exist without any influence on the students.

Participants

In this study which examined the views of pre-service primary school teachers about the basic life skills, participants from two public universities in Ankara, which were taken as the target population of the study, were reached in the 2017-2018 academic year. In the 2017-2018 academic year, a total of 132 pre-service teachers out of 120 students from A University and 90 from B University, who were in the 4th grade of the Department of Primary School Teacher Training, participated in the study. Participation was on a volunteer basis. In this context, information about the participants is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Information about the Participants

University	Female	Male	Total
	N	n	n
A University	43	7	50
B University	69	13	82
Total	112	20	132

Data Collection Tool and Data Collection Procedure

In this study, the data were collected through the personal information form and life skills open ended questionnaire developed and administered by the researcher. In the personal information form, gender and education related information was demanded from the pre-service teachers. An open-ended questionnaire consisting of 7 items was used to examine their views regarding basic life skills. In order to examine the pre-service teachers' opinions about basic life skills, a form consisting of 7 questions about whether they have heard their life skills before, how they defined them, what life skills can be and how they can be taught. Before administering the questionnaire, the opinions of 2 experts teaching life science course were taken. In addition, the piloting of the questionnaire was done on 20 pre-service primary school teachers at A University who were not included in the main participant

group. The data obtained from the piloting were analysed and the questionnaire was finalized. The questionnaire included open-ended questions about whether or not the pre-service teachers had previously heard the concept of basic life skills, how they defined it, the importance they gave to life skills, how they should be gained and how they are exemplified. The questionnaire was administered by the researcher in the classrooms of the faculties, receiving the necessary permissions from the instructors of the courses. It took about 15 minutes for the participants to fill in the questionnaires. In the questionnaires, necessary instruction was given first and the questionnaire was administered on a volunteer basis.

Data Analysis

Content analysis method was used to analyse the data of the study. Content analysis is a technique that tries to identify the data and reveal the truth hidden in the data (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2014; p. 259). In other words, content analysis is an inductive approach based on the examination of topics and themes and inferences derived from them (Zhang and Wildemuth, 2009; p.308). The main purpose of content analysis is to bring together similar data within the framework of certain concepts and themes, and to interpret them in a way that the reader can understand (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2014; p. 259). In order to reveal content data, frequency analysis was performed in the study. Frequency analysis aims to reveal the frequency of units or items in numerical, percentage and proportional form (Bilgin, 2014; p. 18). Following the collection of the survey data, the responses of the participants to the open-ended questions were examined. After analysing the responses of the participants for each item, the frequency of the responses which are the same and which have the same meaning was taken. The frequency values were evaluated differently for each item when there were more than one response or when no response was given to any item.

Findings and Discussion

This section presents the findings of the open-ended questionnaire administered to the pre-service primary school teachers. In this research, which examined the opinions of the pre-service primary school teachers about the concept of basic life skills, the question of "have you ever heard the concept of basic life skills?" was asked to the pre-service teachers, and the responses received from the participants are given in Table 2.

Table 2. The Status of Having Heard the Concept of "Basic Life Skills"

Status of Having Heard	A	B	Total
	f	f	f
Yes	26	66	92
No	24	11	35
Total	50	77	127

According to Table 2, which shows the pre-service teachers' status of having heard of the concept of basic life skills before, the majority of the pre-service teachers (92) were found to have heard the concept before and the 35 pre-service teachers were found not to have heard the concept of basic life skills before. It was observed that the students who are studying at B University have heard about the concept of basic life skills more. However, some students were found to have left this item blank. In Table 3, the source of where / how the concept of basic life skills was heard by the pre-service primary school teachers was examined.

Table 3. The Environment Where the Concept of Basic Life Skills was Encountered

Environment	f
Social Sciences Program	31
Life Science Program	22
Educational Sciences Courses	7
School	5
Primary School Program	4
Special Education Course	4
Television and News	2
Turkish Course Program	1
First reading-writing program	1
Total	77

According to Table 3, in which the environments where pre-service teachers heard about the concept of basic life skills are given, 33 pre-service teachers stated that they encountered the term in the social sciences program and 22 pre-service teachers heard in the life science program. 92 participants stated that they heard about basic life skills; however, only 77 of them gave information about where they heard about the concept. In addition, although the pre-service teachers said that they had heard the concept in different environments, it could be said that they took the life skills course and that the course was not based on these skills.

The responses that pre-service primary school teachers gave to the question "According to you, what are the life skills?", "how do you define them?" are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Definitions Presented by Pre-service Primary School Teachers Regarding Basic Life Skills

Definition	f
Maintaining daily life	66
Meeting own needs without any help from others	12
Meeting physiological and biological needs	9
The skills gained for life	8
Struggling to survive	8
The skills facilitating life	6
The skills for survival purpose	5
The skills to be gained after birth	2
Attitudes towards the problems encountered in life	1
The way of sense-making for life	1
The responsibilities are undertaken to exist in life	1
The skills gained for self-fulfilment	1
Succeeding in life and adjustment to life	1
The skills making us human	1

In Table 4 in which definitions of pre-service primary school teachers regarding the basic life skills are presented, the majority of pre-service teachers defined the skills as the ones gained in order to maintain daily life (66). For example, one participant's view is as follows; “They are the psychomotor/cognitive/ social and emotional skills of the individuals needed for social life”. One of the pre-service teachers, who explained them as physiological-biological needs (9), went on to suggest that “there is a need to gain some basic life skills to lead a quality life in a certain standard. According to Maslow's theory, they are the first skills needed in life”. 6. grade pre-service teachers defined them as the skills that make life easier. For example, the definition of a participant is as follows; “they are the skills that must be possessed for individuals for self-fulfilment. They are the skills making life easier” The primary school teachers who defined them as the skills gained to be successful in life and adapt to life, went on to suggest “they are the skills that children encounter in his daily life needed to continue his life in an easier and more comfortable way”. The views of pre-service primary school teachers regarding what basic life skills are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Life Skills According to Pre-service Primary School Teachers

Skill	f	Skills	f
Healthy and Balanced Nourishment	58	Self-fulfilment	3
Communication	28	Thinking	3
Accommodation	26	Self-management	3
Cleaning	19	To be able to say “no”	2
Self-care	15	Learning	2
Basic language skills	15	Psycho-Social Skill	2
Acting independently	14	Environmental literacy	2
Problem solving	14	Entrepreneurship	2
Decision-making	12	Knowing	2
Security	11	Getting to know National and Moral Values	2
Self-expression	11	To be able to produce	2
Critical thinking	10	Planning	2
Social adaptation skills	9	Cooperation	2
Dressing	9	Solving conflicts	2
Personal care	8	Cultural interaction	1
Social participation	8	Handling personal good with care	1
Responsibility	7	Self-regulation	1
Love	7	Managing Anger	1
Respect	6	Coping with stress	1
Empathy	6	Imitation	1
Cooperation	6	Making research	1
Money making	6	Using gesture coordination	1
Going to the toilet	6	Tolerance	1
Self-knowledge	5	Smiling/ Crying	1
Cooking	5	Succeeding at work	1
Observation	4	Sense of space	1
Creative thinking	4	Helping each other	1
Conducting basic arithmetical operations	3	Knowing right and liability	1
Psychomotor	3	Grasping	1
Self-reliance	3	Giving value	1

According to Table 5, which shows the life skills indicated by the pre-service teachers, many skills are suggested. In the 2004-2005 life science program, the skills of critical thinking, creative thinking, making research, communication, problem solving, using information technologies, entrepreneurship, using Turkish language effectively, making decisions, using resources effectively, providing security and protection, self-management, recognition of basic concepts of science skills were given place (MoNE, 2009). In the 2015 life science program, the skills given place are using research, information and communication technologies, perception and continuity of perception, balanced nutrition, conservation of nature, entrepreneurship, observation, communication, cooperation, decision-making, using the resources, self-protection, self-knowledge, personal care, obeying rules, sense of space, recognition of national and cultural values, self-management, health protection, problem solving, social participation, time management (MoNE, 2015). In 2017 life science program, besides the skills given place in the 2015 program, the skills of development of career awareness was added into the program. Some of the life skills suggested by the pre-service teachers were included in the life science program, while others were not included. In this case, it could be said that pre-service primary school teachers had incomplete knowledge about the basic life skills mentioned in the program.

The questions of “Is it important to have basic life skills?” “why” were asked to the participants to learn about the beliefs of pre-service primary school teachers about the necessity of helping to gain life skills, and the responses were presented in Table 6.

Table 6. The importance of helping to gain life skills according to top re-service teachers

Importance	f
To sustain life	50
To live independently	12
Necessary to a regular and healthy life	8
Adapting to life	7
To solve problems	6
For self-fulfilment	5
Helps us feel happier	3
For a more comfortable life	4
Making life meaningful	4
To make life ideal	2
Gaining self-confidence	2
For self-expression	2
Preparing for life	2
The skills needed for development and for the rest of life	2
For human relations	1
Helps self-knowledge	1
For effective communication	1
Helps to enjoy life	1
To know about how each student learns	1

According to Table 6 in which pre-service primary school teachers' views regarding the importance of helping to gain life skills are presented, the majority of the pre-service teachers were found to consider life skills necessary for the sustainability of life. The view in the literature that life skills are necessary for a healthy life (f:8) is in line with the view of WHO (1999); the view that they are necessary for adaptation to society (f:7) is in line with the view suggested by Campbell and Williams (1998) and with the view of Gilchrist and Schinke (1985) that suggests they are necessary for solving problems (f:6). In addition, the view suggesting that life skills are necessary for happiness (f:3) is in line with the views of Wurdinger (2011), Bickham (1993), Galagali (29010), Schinke and Gilchrist (1984; p.13); the view that they are necessary to support development (f:2) is in line with the views of Roodbari, Sahdipoor and Ghale (2013), WHO (1997); the view that they are necessary for human relations (f:1) is in line with the view of Gazda (1989); the view that they are necessary for effective communication (f:1) is in line with the view of UNICEF (2006). In this context, it could be said that the opinions of the participants who think that it is important to help pre-service primary school teachers to gain basic life skills are in line with the opinions in the literature.

The expressions of pre-service teachers about the importance of life skills are as follows: "they are important to raise students as self-confident individuals and to raise children as cooperative individuals", "they are important for us to be individuals because we live in a community and social setting". "Thinking about something, investigating and communicating about it is a part of our lives". "They are necessary to adapt to life and live a happy and effective life and to meet other people at a common ground". In addition to the importance of life skills, pre-service primary school teachers were asked about their views regarding where and how these skills should be taught and the responses are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. The environment in which life skills are taught according to the pre-service teachers

The environments where life skills are gained	f
School	45
Lifelong	45
Family	33
Primarily in a family then in school	26
Social environment	9
Life skills and social sciences courses	9
Peers	8
Interaction between school-family-peer	8
Cooperation between teacher and parent	7
Not gained at school	6
It is innate but improves lifelong	4
Changes depending on age groups	1
When needed	1
Of one's own volition	1
Public education centres	1
Workplace	1
Some by themselves and some through education	1

According to Table 7, in which the pre-service primary school teachers' opinions about the environments where life skills are gained are presented, the majority of the pre-service teachers think that they are gained at school (f: 45). A primary school teacher, for example, describes this situation as follows; “They are gained at schools, especially at primary schools. Keeping hands clean, cutting your nails, etc. are basic things. They could be taught with the course of life skills; they could be gained at the pre-school stage”. The other opinion is that “Some skills such as hygiene are gained at school”. A pre-service primary school teacher suggested regarding the view that they are gained at every corner of life (f:45) as follows: " they are earned out of school and at school. You can't learn everything at school. Daily life is quite effective in helping to gain these skills”.

Indeed, according to the life skills model suggested by Gazda et al. (2005; p. 3), life skills are gained at home, school, work and in society. James (2010) and Mccollum (2014) based the acquisition of life skills on the ecological development theory of Bronfenbrenner, who stated that the acquisition of life skills had an indirect effect on children, including the family, caregivers, the environment, teachers, schools, and the macro system. In this context, it could be said that life skills are developed lifelong beginning from individuals to the environment where individuals live. The views of primary school teachers are in line with the relevant literature.

Some of the pre-service teachers claim that life skills cannot be gained at schools (f: 6). For example, one of the pre-service teachers said; "it is difficult. Schools exist for providing literacy and teaching children to read and write. Individuals should learn basic life skills in families, and then they should start school education”. It is thought that this is due to the fact that pre-service primary school teachers lack enough knowledge about basic life skills. The opinions of the pre-service primary school teachers regarding the methods that teachers should use in helping students to gain life skills are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Methods that can be used to help students to gain life skills according to pre-service teachers

Method	f
Through personal experience	19
Relating to the courses	14
Role modelling	16
Implementing and guiding	8
Through drama	8
Through teacher’s attitudes and behaviours	7
Giving examples from real life	7
Organising activities	7
Through effective educational techniques	5
Making feel	5
Through activities requiring active students participation	4
Organizing the classroom setting	3
Getting videos watched	3
Implicitly	3

Narration	6
Observation	3
Through individual education programs	5
Conferring responsibilities	2
Through classroom activities and games	2
Group works	2
Visual techniques	2
Coping with problems single-handedly	1
Chatting	1
Through demonstration	2
Entertaining narration	1
Through positive feedbacks	1
Through observation and imitation within family	1
Seeing as a separate course and supporting with an outcome	1

According to Table 8, in which the methods which can be used in gaining life skills are presented as suggested by the pre-service teachers, the methods in which students are active generally come to the fore. Health and Family Life Education (HFLE) (UNICEF, 2009) recommends that class discussions in which students are active, brainstorming, role-playing, group work, play and simulation, situation analysis or case study, storytelling should be used. Ministry of Education of New Guyana (2013) recommends methods such as script writing, inviting field experts, panel discussions, interviews, conducting field researches, writing magazine/newspaper, keeping diary, project development, dance/drama/art/music as well as the ones in Health and Family Life Education program. In addition, WHO (1999) proposes classroom environments that are based on experience and supportive learning by providing active methods in gaining life skills. This is also stated in the UNESCO (2004) report. As can be seen, in order to gain life skills, pre-service teachers also emphasize active teaching methods. Some opinions relevant to this subject are as follows; “In theory, what these skills are and why they are necessary can be explained”. “Partly yes partially no because these skills cannot be achieved through a planned teaching program like the one at school. However, students will gain these skills through experience with teachers and students in the school.

Conclusion

In this study, which examined the opinions of pre-service primary school teachers about basic life skills, a large number of pre-service teachers were found to have heard of basic life skills before. However, in the life science course, the rate of having heard of basic life skills is low. Although the concept of basic life skills has different definitions in the literature, they are close to the definitions of pre-service teachers. However, there are different definitions for the basic life skills in the relevant literature, and pre-service teachers’ definitions are similar to them. The concept of life skills was found not to have been defined in the life sciences course. Pre-service primary school teachers emphasize the skills that are not included in the life science program as well as the skills which are not included in the life science program, especially self-care skills. In this situation, it could

be said that the pre-service teachers had incomplete and inadequate knowledge about the life skills that are a common ground for the life science program. However, pre-service teachers claim that life skills can be taught in different environments and can be explained using different techniques. However, there are also some pre-service teachers who think that life skills cannot be taught in the school environment. In summary, most of the pre-service teachers define basic life skills and have incomplete information about the skills and the teaching of the skills.

Based on these results, the following recommendations could be made

- The teaching of “basic life skills”, which is the basis of life science course, should be given more importance. This concept may be emphasized more in the training given to the pre-service teachers.
- The teaching environment can be enriched in such a way by giving basic information to the pre-service teachers that they can use basic life skills.
- The opinions of pre-service teachers and life skills experts regarding the definition of basic life skills can be taken.

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