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The Social Status of the Teaching Profession: Teachers' Views in Turkey and Kazakhstan*

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Article Information	ABSTRACT
Received: 25.12.2020 *Accepted*: 11.01.2022 *Online First*: 11.01.2022 *Published*: 30.04.2022	The purpose of this research is to examine the views of teachers in Turkey and Kazakhstan on the social status of the teaching profession. The universe of the study was comprised of teachers in Ankara and Nur-Sultan, the capital cities of Turkey and Kazakhstan, respectively. In order to collect qualitative data, an interview form titled "Opinions on the Status of the Teaching Profession" was prepared in Turkish and those interview questions were translated into Kazak. Teachers' views on the status of the teaching profession were determined on the basis of the phenomenology pattern. In this context, the interview groups consisted of 14 teachers working in Ankara and 14 teachers working in Nur-Sultan, 28 participants in total. The findings of the study revealed that some of the participants in Turkey believed the status of the teaching profession in the present is lower than in the past. Among the factors affecting social status, participants noted excessive workloads, incompetence of teachers, low salaries, extra workloads, economic dissatisfaction, and difficulties with teacher appointments and training. Teachers working in the province of Nur-Sultan stated that the status of the teaching profession in the country has improved following the approval of the 'Teacher Status Law' and the increasing of the base scores for applicants to teaching departments. A few participants, however, noted that the status is still low. The factors that affect teachers' social status were identified as excessive workload, incompetence, teacher salaries, economic dissatisfaction, and problems in professional development. Turkish and Kazakh participants' suggestions for elevating the status of their profession were presented at the end of the research. **Keywords:** Status of teaching profession, status of teacher, teachers' opinion on status
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1. INTRODUCTION

The teaching profession holds a very important place in Turkish society, as it does in the entire world. Atatürk emphasized how important teachers are for the Turkish nation with the words "Teachers are the most devoted and respectable members of the society across the world" (Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 2006). In a similar vein, Ibıray Altınsarin, a Kazakh pedagogue and teacher, stated that teachers are superior to everyone else because they are the heart of the school, thereby highlighting their importance to society (Abiev, 2006). It is evident in literature that scientists who run current studies say that without teachers, the society would not survive. The advancement of technology, the invention of all kinds of tools to ease human life, even machines and computers that facilitate the teaching process, have not diminished the value of the teachers (Gül, 2004).

Being one of the most important professions in a society and one that requires a high sense of responsibility, teaching is expected to provide its members with the necessary dignity, rewards, and high status. However, many studies (Gül, 2004; Hargreaves, 2009; Hoyle, 2001; Ünsal, 2018) indicate that the status of the teaching profession is low. According to Çelikten et al. (2005), The appointment of non-teaching qualified people, the perception that everyone can become a teacher, and the increasing number of graduates who have university degrees in other fields but are appointed as teachers since they cannot find work in their fields are some of the factors damaging the status and prestige of the teaching profession. According to Gönülaçar (2016), teachers in Turkey are always paid below the minimum living standards, very few young people choose the profession voluntarily, and talented teachers leave at the first opportunity, which all negatively affect the status of the profession.

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Even though teachers' status differed by society, they were almost always highly respected in the past. However, in recent centuries, teachers have been subjected to low status evaluation for various factors (Tezcan, 1992). The factors affecting the status of teachers can be listed as "their gender, the position and age of their students, low pay, their level of education, the subject they teach, their ethnicity, seniority, age and commitment" (Tezcan, 1992, p.297). Alternatively, Gökırmak (2006) classified the factors affecting teachers' social status in two categories; occupational and non-occupational. In regard to occupational factors, the researcher cited the number of teachers, teacher training policies, professional organizations, economic and legal conditions, and the development of teachers; for non-professional factors, the researcher listed the characteristics of teachers, as well as their ethnicity, environment, and political affiliations.

Göker and Gündüz (2017) mentioned some criteria determining the social status of the teaching profession. The prestigious status of teachers in a society is determined by variables such as "teachers' pay compared to other professions, parents' willingness to let their children become teachers, respect students and parents have for educators, and their level of trust in educational systems" (p.177). Additionally, the status of teaching is impacted by the views of society, the local and national media, and the government's view of teachers, according to Hargreaves (2009).

Ünsal (2018) states that the status of teaching is directly related to "the socio-cultural and economic conditions of the teacher, job security, their salary and working conditions, opportunities for professional development, professional autonomy and the quality of the education that the teacher received" (p.112). In his meta-analysis study on the status of the teaching profession in Turkey, the researcher examined both professional and non-professional factors that determine the status of the teaching profession. The model, which includes both themes, is presented in Figure 1.
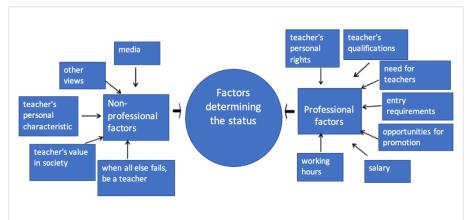

Figure 1. Factors determining the status of the teaching profession (Ünsal, 2018)

Based on this model, the factors that determine the status of the teaching profession are: working hours, salaries, entry requirements, need for teachers, teacher qualifications, and teachers' personal rights. The non-professional factors include the teacher's value in the society, the personal characteristics of a teacher, the understanding of 'when all else fails, become a teacher', as well as other opinions and the media.

Similarly, Akyüz (2012) asserts that both professional and non-professional elements affect the status of teachers. As listed under the title of 'teacher problems', the professional elements include the number and the training of teachers, their legal status, economic and organizational problems of teachers, and professional publications by teachers. Teacher personalities, genders, social origins, and relationships with political circles were among the non-professional factors.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

When the literature and postgraduate studies on the status of teachers and teaching profession in Turkey are reviewed (Bek, 2007, Gökırmak, 2006; Taşkaya, 2007; Torun, 2010; Ulutaş, 2017), certain variables are discussed in regards to the teaching profession in Turkey, compared to other professions, and methodically assessed with different samples in quantitative or qualitative designs. However, no study has been found that compares the views of teachers in other countries regarding the status of teaching. This research is expected to fill the aforementioned gap and contribute to the literature in terms of comparing the status of the teaching profession in the Turkish Republics.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

This research aims to investigate the views of teachers in both Turkey and Kazakhstan regarding the social status of the profession. The following sub-problems were addressed within the framework of this general purpose:
1. What are the teachers' views on the social status of the teaching profession in Turkey?
2. What are the teachers' views on the social status of the teaching profession in Kazakhstan?

2. METHODOLOGY

In order to collect qualitative data for the study, an interview form titled "Opinions on the Status of the Teaching Profession" was created. This form was translated into Kazakh and the measurement tool titled "Мұғалім Кәсібінің Мәртебесіне Қатысты Көзқарастар" was presented to Kazakh teachers. Teachers working in schools were interviewed about the social status of the teaching profession and qualitative data was collected.

In order to examine teachers' views regarding the status of the teaching profession, a single screening model was used. The single screening model is a research approach that aims to describe a current or past situation as it exists. Using this approach, variables are categorized based on type or amount, and the focused variables are separately described. Phenomenology was used as the research design. It is essential to reveal and interpret the individual's experience, perspective, and perception of a phenomenon in phenomenology design, according to Yıldırım and Şimşek (2011). In Patton's (2014) definition of phenomenology, it is the understanding and assimilation of the meaning, structure, and essence of the individual's or group's experience of a phenomenon. Thus, in this study, unstructured interview forms were used to collect teacher viewpoints on the social status of the teaching profession, as well as obtaining more in-depth information.

2.1. Participants

In this study, 14 teachers from different schools in Ankara and 14 teachers from different schools in Nur-Sultan participated in the interview process. The sample group of the study consists of 28 teachers who were determined with a convenience sampling method. Convenience sampling is perhaps the easiest method of sampling, because participants are selected based on availability and willingness to take part (Ben-Shlomo, Brookes & Hickman, 2013).

2.2. Data Collection Tools

In order to collect qualitative data for the purpose of the research, an interview form titled "Teachers' Views on the Status of Teaching Profession" was used. As one of the commonly used data collection techniques in research, "an interview is a purposeful conversation in which the researcher asks questions prepared in advance and the participant provides responses" (Kuş, 2003, p.50). Interviewing is not used primarily for testing hypotheses; on the contrary, it is used to gain a deeper understanding of another person's experience and how they make sense of it. Therefore, "the focus is on how other people describe the stories and how they interpret them" (Türnüklü, 2000, p.544).

Three types of interview technique are generally used in studies conducted in the field of education According to Türnüklü (2000): a) unstructured interview, b) structured interview, and c) semi-structured interview. In this study, unstructured interview technique was used.

The scale's item pool was developed on the basis of the conceptual framework during the development phase for the qualitative data collection tool. The interview questions were specific to the research purpose and fit well with the theoretical structure. Prior research on the topic was also reviewed when creating candidate questions. Furthermore, the data collection tool developed by Ulutaş (2017) was taken as an example and some of the questions of the created interview form were asked in a similar manner. Each question was prepared to gather the teachers' views on the current status of their profession. Interview questions were developed in relation to one another. Considering the research topic and the factors affecting it are very broad and comprehensive, the draft interview form was designed with 9 questions.

In order to determine its content validity and obtain expert opinions, the draft interview form with 9 questions was sent to the 13 experts who were experienced in the field of Educational Sciences and were specifically acquainted with the scope of the research. Experts reviewed the interview questions to determine whether they were appropriate for the research purpose and target audience, they were scientifically correct, and there were grammatical and spelling errors. The Lawshe technique was used in this evaluation. Using the Lawshe technique, an expert opinion form is created to identify the purpose of the interview and the degree to which this purpose is relevant to each interview question, such as "The question is suitable for the target", "The question is unsuitable for the target", or "The question should be corrected". The experts were asked to evaluate the interview questions based on these criteria and to suggest how the questions could be improved. After evaluating each question, the experts provided their own suggestions for how the question may be corrected or improved. On the basis of the experts' feedback, the final version of the interview form was created and was ready for application. The interview form was translated into Kazakh as well.

The traditional approach was used when translating the Turkish interview form into Kazakh. Translation was carried out in five stages including first translation, evaluation of the first translation, back translation, evaluation of the back translation and the expert opinion. Translation of the interview form was performed by 13 Kazakh students who studied in Turkey for their doctorate, and expert opinions were collected from three research assistants, including the researcher, who studied in Turkey and worked in Kazakhstan. The translators' Turkish language proficiency was C1 / B2, which enabled the evaluation process to pay particular attention to the questions' clarity and cultural appropriateness. Interviews were conducted with 14 teachers

working in Ankara and 14 teachers working in Nur-Sultan, using this interview form - created to gather teacher opinions about the status of the teaching profession.

2.3. Validity and Reliability

The reliability of content analysis techniques is primarily determined by the coding process. The most important step is to identify the categories and define them clearly. The reliability and objectivity of analysis increases once this step has been completed. This means that "the interpretations of the categories do not differ from researcher to researcher or when they are compared at two different times, thereby ensuring reliability, which is a condition of objectivity" (Tavşancıl & Aslan, 2001, p.80). For reliability testing, the formula suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) (Reliability = number of agreements / number of agreements + number of disagreements) was used. Three experts coded the data, and the aim was to determine whether the coders were compatible by using the relevant formula. Based on the calculation, the reliability coefficient for Turkey data was 0.86; for Kazakhstan data, it was 0.92. These results indicate that the encodings are reliable since a consensus of at least 80% is expected among coders, based on Miles and Huberman (1994).

2.4. Data Analysis

The data obtained through the qualitative data tool was analyzed using descriptive analysis and content analysis to interpret the sub-problem questions. Yıldırım and Şimşek (2011) distinguish between two methods of analyzing data: "Descriptive analysis is used to process data without in-depth analysis, while content analysis is used to assess data at a closer level and to discover the concepts and themes that underlie them" (p.89). Similarly, Tavşancıl and Arslan (2001) define content analysis as the objective and systematic identification of meaning contained in verbal, written and other data, converting them into numbers and making inferences. Based on the questions in the qualitative data collection tool and the conceptual framework, a general framework for data analysis was developed. In order to do this, as a first step, the researcher converted the video and audio recordings into text, thus preparing them for content analysis. During content analysis, a Code - Category - Theme System is created (Gökçe, 2006; Tavşancıl & Arslan, 2001; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). Each of the participating teachers was identified by the symbol "T" and given a number respectively. Content analysis results were converted into tables and interpreted based on codes, categories, and themes.

2.5. Application and Data Collection Processes

The researcher applied to the Ethics Committee of Gazi University in order to receive permission and approval to use the measurement tool and collect data for this research. Gazi University Assessment and Evaluation Ethics Sub-Working Group granted ethical permission dated 27.04.2020 and numbered E.51135. To implement the tool, whose ethical application permission was obtained, an application was made to the Governor's Office of National Education in Ankara. As a result of the review of institutions, the application permit number E.11002 dated 06.03.2020 was obtained from the Ankara Directorate of National Education and it was determined that the tools could be applied in schools. Due to the COVID 19 global epidemic period and the closure of the schools during the implementation process, the measurement tool was arranged in an electronic format. In the 2020-2021 academic year, the measurement tool was applied to teachers at schools in different districts in Ankara and Nur-Sultan provinces through the ZOOM platform.

3. FINDINGS

Teachers in Ankara and Nur-Sultan were asked the questions intended to determine their opinions about the social status of the teaching profession in Turkey and Kazakhstan. Below is an analysis of the results of the sub-problem questions.

3.1. What are the teachers' views on the social status of the teaching profession in Turkey?

Demographic information about participating teachers in Turkey is given in Table 1.

Table 1.
Demographics of the Turkish Teachers Interviewed about the Teaching Profession

Participant	Gender	Experience	Branch	School Type
T1	Female	26	History teacher	Social Sciences High School
T2	Female	6	Biology teacher	Social Sciences H.S.
T3	Male	8	Turkish teacher	Social Sciences H.S.
T4	Female	13	Philosophy teacher	Social Sciences H.S.
T5	Female	21	Geography teacher	Vocational and technical Anatolian H.S.
T6	Female	2	Turkish teacher	State School

T7	Female	8	Technology design teacher	Vocational and technical Anatolian H.S.
T8	Female	7	Turkish teacher	State school
T9	Male	30	History teacher	Vocational and technical Anatolian H.S.
T10	Female	10	Philosophy teacher	Vocational and technical Anatolian H.S.
T11	Female	30	Geography teacher	Vocational and technical Anatolian H.S.
T12	Female	18	Technology design teacher	Social Sciences H.S.
T13	Male	6	Philosophy teacher	Social Sciences H.S.
T14	Female	2	Classroom teacher	Private school

Both newly hired (2 years) and experienced (30 years) teachers were interviewed, as shown in Table 1. The participants are from different branches and teach at different levels in various school types.

Within the scope of the study, the first interview question addressed to teachers is, "What are the effective reasons for choosing the teaching profession?". Table 2 lists the codes, number of codes, categories, and themes obtained from the content analysis.

Table 2.
Views of Turkish Teachers Regarding Effective Reasons for Choosing the Teaching Profession

Theme	Question	Category	Code	Number of code(n)	Participant
Effective Reasons for Choosing the Teaching Profession (n=14)	What are the effective reasons for choosing the teaching profession?	Internal reasons (n=4)	It was not my ideal job	4	T1, T 9, T 10, T 13
		External reasons (n=10)	It was my ideal job	2	T 3, T 6
			Family effects	5	T 2, T 5, T 7, T 11, T 12
			My exam scores only qualified me for this job	2	T 8, T 14
			"When all else fails, be a teacher"	1	T 4

As seen in Table 2, the answers were collected in two categories as internal causes (n=4) and external causes (n=10) for the question of "What are the effective reasons for choosing the teaching profession?". In general, it was evident that participants attributed their decision to the teaching profession more to external reasons than internal reasons. While it was seen that the participant teachers used the expression "I loved the profession while teaching" as an internal reason, the most prominent external reason was seen as the family effect (n = 5).

The second question addressed to the participants was "What are the important professional problems of the teaching profession?". The codes, category and theme obtained by content analysis are given in Table 3.

Table 3.
Views of Teachers in Turkey on the Problems of the Teaching Profession

Theme	Question	Category	Code	Number of code(n)	Participant
Problems	What are the significant problems of the teaching profession?	Problems of the teaching profession (n=18)	Systemic problems	3	T8, T9, T12
			Economic problems	4	T4, T6, T12, T13
			Rights	3	T7, T8, T13
			Teacher training	2	T5, T8
			A lack of respect for profession	6	T1, T2, T10, T11, T13, T14

In Table 3, the participants' answers for the question "What are the important professional problems of the teaching profession?" were analyzed. The views about the problems of the teaching profession were collected under five codes: systemic problems (f=3), financial problems (f=4), rights (f=3), teacher training (f=2) and lack of respect for profession (f=6).

As the third question, the participants were asked "What do you think about the social status of the teaching profession?". The codes, number of codes, categories and themes obtained through content analysis are listed in Table 4.

Table 4.
Views of Teachers in Turkey on the Status of the Teaching Profession

Theme	Question	Category	Code	Number of code(n)	Participant
Status of the Teaching Profession	What do you think about the status of the teaching profession?	Views regarding the status (n=14)	In good level	1	T9
			In low level	11	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T8, T10, T6, T7, T11, T12
			Status varies by region	2	T13, T14

The opinions of participants were divided into three groups when asked about the social status of the teaching profession, as shown in Table 4; status varies by region (f=2), the status is at a good level (f=1) and the status is at a low level (f=11).
As the fourth question, participants were asked "What do you think should be done to improve the status of the teaching profession?". The codes, category and theme obtained by content analysis are given in Table 5.

Table 5.
Suggestions of Teachers in Turkey to Improve the Status of Teaching

Theme	Questions	Category	Code	Number of code(n)	Participant
Suggestions	What should be done to improve the status of teaching?	Suggestions to improve the status of teaching (n=16)	Teachers should be valued by the state	6	T3, T8, T9, T13, T6, T8
			Economic support	4	T1, T4, T5, T6, T14
			Teacher training	5	T5, T4, T7, T12, T14
			Enacting laws	1	T13

As shown in Table 5, the participants made suggestions regarding four issues: teachers should be valued by the state (n=6), financial support (n=4), teacher training (n=5), and enacting laws (n=1).

The participants were also asked some further questions: "How do you think the working conditions of teachers affect their social status?", "What do you think about the role of teachers in determining their working conditions and social status?", "What do you think about the role of teachers' economic situation in determining their social status?", "How do you think training and entry conditions affect the social status of the teaching profession?". The codes, categories and themes obtained through content analysis are listed in Table 6.

Table 6.
Views of Teachers in Turkey on Factors Affecting the Social Status

Theme	Question	Category	Code	Number of code(n)	Participant
Factors Affecting the Social Status	How do you think the working conditions of teachers affect their social status?	Effects of working conditions on social status n=14	Failure to meet the required conditions	6	T1, T2, T5, T7, T12, T14
			Excessive workload	6	T3, T4, T8, T9, T10, T11,
			Teacher shortage	2	T6, T13
	What do you think about the role of teachers'	Effects of economic	Salary	6	T4, T6, T7, T2, T11, T12,
	teachers'		Side job	4	T5, T2, T13, T3

economic situation in determining their social status?	conditions on social status n=13	Economic dissatisfaction	3	T1, T13, T9,
How do you think training and entry conditions affect the social status of the teaching profession?	Effects of training and entry conditions on social status n=10	Teacher training	6	T1, T2, T6, T7, Ö10, Ö13
		Teacher appointments	4	T5, T8, T11, T12

When the views of the participants about the factors that affect the social status of the teaching profession are examined in Table 6, the opinions of the participants were grouped under three codes: that the working conditions affect the social status (n=14), the economic situation affects the social status (n=13), the teacher training and the conditions for entering the profession affect the social status (n=10).

As the eighth question, the participants were asked, "How do you think there is a relationship between the benefits of the teaching profession to society and its status today?". The codes, number of codes, categories and themes obtained through content analysis are listed in Table 7.

Table 7.
Views of Teachers in Turkey on the Benefits of the Teaching Profession to the Society

Theme	Question	Code	Number of code(n)	Participant
Benefit of the Teaching Profession to the Society, n=8	How do you think there is a relationship between the benefits of the teaching profession to society and its status today?	The benefit of profession is indisputable	4	T5, T7, T3, T6
		The profession has become valueless	4	T2, T4, T8, T9

In Table 7, when the answers of the participants about the relationship between the benefits of the teaching profession to society and its status were examined, it can be clearly seen that the opinions of the participants about the question are grouped under two codes: the benefit of the profession is indisputable (n=4) and the profession has become valueless (n=4).

The ninth question was "Are you satisfied with your current position as a teacher?". The opinions of the participants on this subject are presented in Table 8 according to the codes and theme.

Table 8.
Views of Teachers in Turkey on Satisfaction with Their Current Position as a Teacher

Theme	Question	Code	Number of code(n)	Participant
Satisfaction with their current position(n=14)	Are you satisfied with your current position as a teacher?	Satisfied	10	T1, T4, T5, T6, T14, T7, T9, T11, T12, T13
		Dissatisfied	4	T2, T3, T8, T10

As it is displayed in Table 8, the answers obtained from the participants are grouped under two codes as satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

The frequency analysis of the themes related to the social status of the teaching profession in Turkey is given in Table 9.

Table 9.
The Frequency Analysis of the Themes Related to the Social Status of the Teaching Profession in Turkey

Themes	Frequency (f)
Reasons for choosing the teaching profession	14
Problems	18
Status of the teaching profession	14
Suggestions	16
Factors affecting the social status	34
Benefits of the profession to the society	8
Satisfaction with the current position as a teacher	14

According to the frequency analysis seen in Table 9; reasons for choosing the teaching profession are f=14, problems f=18, status of the teaching profession f=14, suggestions f=16, factors affecting social status f=34, benefit of the profession to society f=8, and satisfaction with the current position as a teacher f=14. It is obvious that the theme that teachers expressed most frequently was the factors affecting the teaching profession. The benefits of the profession to society is the least frequently mentioned theme.

3.2. What are the teachers' views on the social status of the teaching profession in Kazakhstan?

Demographic information about participating teachers for Kazakhstan is given in Table 10.

Table 10.
Demographics of the Kazakh Teachers Interviewed about the Teaching Profession

Participant	Gender	Experience	Branch	School type
T1	Female	10	Classroom teacher	State elementary school
T2	Female	6	English teacher	State elementary school
T3	Female	20	School counselor	State elementary school
T4	Female	7	School counselor	State elementary school
T5	Female	29	Classroom teacher	State elementary school
T6	Female	8	Geography teacher	State elementary school
T7	Female	5	Kazakh language and literature	Private elementary school
T8	Female	16	History teacher	State elementary school
T9	Female	15	Music teacher	State elementary school
T10	Female	15	History teacher	State elementary school
T11	Female	5	Computer education	State elementary school
T12	Female	7	Kazakh language and literature	State elementary school
T13	Female	4	Social pedagogue	State elementary school
T14	Female	35	English teacher	State elementary school

As can be seen in Table 10, both young (4 years) and experienced (35 years) teachers in the profession were interviewed. Participants are teachers of different branches. One of the participants teaches at a private school, while the other teaches at a public school.

The first interview question within the scope of the research was "What are the effective reasons for choosing the teaching profession?". The codes, number of codes, categories and themes obtained through content analysis are listed in Table 11.

Table 11.
Views of Teachers in Kazakhstan Regarding Effective Reasons for Choosing the Teaching Profession

Theme	Question	Category	Code	Number of code(n)	Participant
Effective Reasons for Choosing the Profession, (n=14)	What are the effective reasons for choosing the teaching profession?	Internal reasons (n=4)	Love for children	4	T6, T8, T11, T12
		External reasons (n=10)	It was my ideal	3	T10, T7, T5, T2
			Family effect	7	T1, T2, T3, T4, T9, T13, T14

As it is obvious in Table 11, the views on the effective reasons for choosing the teaching profession were collected in two categories as internal causes (n=4) and external causes (n=10). The teachers mentioned three factors that were effective in choosing the teaching profession. They are respectively; love for children (n=4), family effect (n=7) and it was my ideal (n=3).

The second question to the participants was "What are the important professional problems of the teaching profession?". The codes, category and theme obtained by content analysis are given in Table 12.

Table 12.
Views of Teachers in Kazakhstan on the Problems of the Teaching Profession

Theme	Question	Category	Code	Number of code(n)	Participant
Problems	What are the important professional problems of the teaching profession?	Problems of the teaching profession (n=24)	Excessive workload	6	T1, T2, T9, T10, T11, T12
			Grading system	3	T2, T6, T10
			Lack of respect	4	T1, T2, T4, T9
			Failure to meet the required conditions	2	T8, T14
			Teacher training	5	T3, T6, T10, T7, T13
			Economic problems	4	T1, T5, T6, T14

In Table 12, the participants' answers to the question regarding the problems of the teaching profession were examined, the opinions of the participants about the problems of the teaching profession are excessive workload (f=6), grading system (f=3), lack of respect (f=4), failure to meet the conditions (f=2), teacher training (f=6) and economic problem (f=5).

As the third question, the participants were asked "What do you think about the social status of the teaching profession?". The codes, number of codes, categories and themes obtained through content analysis are listed in Table 13.

Table 13.
Views of Teachers in Kazakhstan on the Status of the Teaching Profession

Theme	Question	Category	Code	Number of code(n)	Participant
Status of the Teaching Profession	What do you think about the social status of the teaching profession?	Views about the social status of the teaching profession (n=14)	In good level	6	T1, T3, T4, T6, T5, T9
			In low level	8	T2, T7, T8, T12, T10, T11, T13 T14

When the theme of thoughts about the social status of the teaching profession was examined in Table 13, the opinions of the participants about the status of the teaching profession can be gathered under two codes as good (f=5) and low status (f=6). The participants were asked "What do you think should be done to improve the status of the teaching profession?" as the fourth question. The codes, category and theme obtained by content analysis are displayed in Table 14.

Table 14.
Suggestions of Teachers in Kazakhstan to Improve the Status of Teaching

Theme	Question	Category	Code	Number of code(n)	Participant
Suggestions, (n=18)	What do you think should be done to improve the status of the teaching profession?	Suggestions to improve the status of the teaching profession	Teachers should be valued by the state	3	T2, T4, T11
			Economic support	4	T5, T6, T8, T10
			Social support	6	T8, T10 T4, T2, T5, T6
			Teacher training	5	T1, T7, T9, T10, T12

The participants were asked to give some suggestions to improve the status of the teaching profession and when the answers were analyzed, in Table 14 they were grouped under four codes, teachers should be valued by the state (n=3), financial support (n=4), social support (n=6), and teacher training (n=5). Some of the key questions are given below.

The participants were asked "How do you think the working conditions of teachers affect their social status?", "What do you think about the role of teachers in determining their working conditions and social status?", "What do you think about the role of teachers' economic situation in determining their social status?", "How do you think training and entry conditions affect the social status of the teaching profession?". The codes, categories and themes obtained through content analysis are listed in Table 15.

Table 15.
Views of Teachers in Kazakhstan on Factors Affecting the Social Status

Theme	Question	Category	Code	Number of code(n)	Participant
Factors Affecting the Social Status (n=34)	How do you think the working conditions of teachers affect their social status?	Effects of working conditions on social status (n=14)	Failure to meet the required conditions	7	T1, T2, T4, T5, T7, T12, T14
			Excessive workload	6	T1, T8, T9, T10, T11, T12
			Shortage of teachers	1	T6
	What do you think about the role of teachers' economic situation in determining their social status?	Effects of economic situation on social status (n=12)	Salary	6	T4, T12, T8, T9, T11, T13
			Side work	2	T8, T9
			Economic dissatisfaction	4	T1, T2, T9, T10
	How do you think training and entry conditions affect the social status of the teaching profession?	Effects of training and entry conditions on social status (n=8)	Teacher training	4	T2, T5, T7, T9
			Teacher appointments	4	T1, T2, T4, T12

When the views of the participants about the factors affecting the social status of the teaching profession were analyzed, they were displayed in Table 15, the opinions of the participants were grouped under three categories that working condition affects social status (n=14), economic situation affects social status (n=12), teacher training and professional entry conditions affect social status (n=8).

As the eighth question, the participants were asked "How do you think there is a relationship between the benefits of the teaching profession to society and its status today?". The codes, number of codes, categories and themes obtained through content analysis are listed in Table 16.

Table 16.
Views of Teachers in Kazakhstan on the Benefits of the Teaching Profession to the Society

Theme	Question	Code	Number of code(n)	Participant
Benefits of the Teaching Profession to the Society, n=14	How do you think there is a relationship between the benefits of the teaching profession to society and its status today?	Teachers are responsible for the profession and the society	10	T3, T5, T6, T8, T9, T10, T11, T12, T13, T14
		Teachers should be valued by society	2	T1, T4

Based on the participants' responses to the question of what kind of relationship the teaching profession provides to society and its status, in Table 16 two codes were displayed; teachers are responsible for the teaching profession and the society (n=10), and teachers should be valued by society (n=2).

The ninth question to the participants was "Are you satisfied with your current position as a teacher?". The opinions of the participants on this subject are presented in Table 17 according to the codes and theme.

Table 17.
Views of Teachers in Kazakhstan on Satisfaction with Their Current Position as a Teacher

Theme	Question	Code	Number of code(n)	Participant
Satisfaction with their current position as a teacher (n=14)	"Are you satisfied with your current position as a teacher?"	Satisfied	12	T1, T2, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8, T9, T10, T12, T13, T14
		Dissatisfied	2	T3, T11

As seen in Table 17, the answers obtained are grouped under two codes as satisfied and dissatisfied.

Frequency analysis of the themes related to the social status of the teaching profession in Kazakhstan is given in Table 18.

Table 18.
The Frequency Analysis of the Themes Related to the Social Status of the Teaching Profession in Kazakhstan

Themes	Frequency (f)
Reasons for choosing the teaching profession	14
Problems	24
Status of the teaching profession	14
Suggestions	18
Factors affecting the social status	34
Benefits of the profession to the society	12
Satisfaction with the current position as a teacher	14

Frequency distributions seen in Table 18 are; Reasons affecting choosing the teaching profession f=14, Problems f=19, Suggestions f=16, Factors affecting social status f=37, Benefits of the profession to society f=8, and Satisfaction with the current position as a teacher f=8. In this context, it was seen that the theme that teachers expressed most frequently was the factors affecting the teaching profession. the least frequently mentioned theme is the benefits of the profession to the society.

4. RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results obtained according to the subproblems of the study, as well as the views of the teachers regarding the social status of the teaching profession in Turkey and Kazakhstan, are presented in this section.

Upon analyzing the interview data collected in order to determine the views of teachers on the social status of the teaching profession in Turkey, seven themes emerged: the reasons for choosing the teaching profession, the problems of the teaching profession, the status of the teaching profession, the factors affecting the social status, suggestions to improve the status, the benefits of the profession to the society, and the satisfaction with the current position as a teacher.

The theme of the reasons that are effective in choosing the teaching profession involve codes such as; it was not my ideal job, it was my ideal job, family effect, my exam scores only qualified me for this job, and the perception of "When all else fails, be a teacher". Under the code I liked teaching by doing it, some participants admitted they chose the profession reluctantly but they loved it while teaching and expressed positive opinions about their profession. According to my ideal and the family effect codes, someone's favorite teachers and their families had an impact on their decision to become teachers or to have someone in the family as a teacher. This shows that the status of someone employed as a teacher in the family, as well as the example a teacher provides in the school can lead to a positive view of teaching. Some teachers also admitted they were affected by the perception of "When all else fails, be a teacher" and they only chose the profession because their exam scores only qualified for this job.

The theme of problems consisted of five codes; systemic problems, economic problems, rights, teacher training and lack of respect for profession. The problem most frequently expressed by the participants was the problem of lack of respect. According to most participants, the biggest problem in the teaching profession is lack of respect. Lack of respect was defined by words such as worthless and devalued. Teachers also stated the systemic errors in the field of education as a problem. Making changes with practices or making new decisions without taking teachers' ideas into account is one of the biggest problems, according to the participants. According to teachers, teachers' ideas and suggestions should be at the center when decisions about education

and students are made. In terms of economic problems, the participants said that teachers' salaries were low and insufficient, so they had financial difficulties. Participants also stated that teachers' legal and personal rights are not sufficient and that to have a teaching profession law would be beneficial. The participants also expressed that the teacher training education and applications were inadequate and insufficient. According to one of the participants (T8) the KPSS exam is inadequate for teacher selection and inventories such as personality tests and attitude scales should be used for teacher selection in order to address the aforementioned problem.

The status of the teaching profession theme consisted of the codes of good status, low status, status varies by region. In general, it is noteworthy that some of the participants compared the status of the teaching profession in the present to the past. According to the teachers, the status of the profession was higher and teachers were respected more in the past. They expressed the status today by using words such as "very bad", "very incomplete", "it has no value". The participants associated the reason for the low status and the feeling of worthlessness of teachers today, with the fact that money and the rich are regarded as more valuable in the society. Some participants also stated that the low status of the teaching profession in the society is due to the teachers; their professional inadequacy, personal and communicative incompetency, and limited professional knowledge. Teachers believed that the teaching profession is sacred despite not being respected and valued enough by the society. Furthermore, since the lessons were held at home during the pandemic period, negative opinions towards teachers by the society have increased. The common false perceptions such as "they do not deserve the pay" had a contributing effect without a doubt.

The theme of suggestions consisted of government valuation, financial support, teacher training, and enactment of laws. In general, the participants suggested that the state should value and support teachers in order to improve the status of the teaching profession in society. They all agreed upon the significance of the 'professional law'. When all views were examined, the participants had a common suggestion that the economic situation of the teachers should be improved and their salaries should be increased. They also suggested that teachers should be given chances to improve themselves professionally.

The theme of factors affecting social status consisted of excessive workload, teacher shortage, salary, additional work, economic dissatisfaction, teacher training and teacher appointment codes. Participants said the working environment in the school environment was not ideal, particularly in the rural schools where conditions were difficult. They discussed ways to improve working conditions and the importance of improving this situation. The suggestions provided included improving the physical environment of schools, increasing employment opportunities for teachers, and providing more in-service training. Teachers' perceptions of excessive workloads revealed that all of them complain about extra duties, such as lessons, projects and activities outside of the classroom, and paperwork. It was noted that those kinds of workload distracted teachers from the essence of educational activities, and they negatively affected the motivation of teachers since these types of workloads had no economic return. They suggested reducing the workload of teachers, especially paperwork and other extra tasks, or paying additional salaries to motivate them. The general view was that the level of experience and qualifications affect the social status of the teaching profession. Therefore, teachers are primarily responsible for their professional development and the low status of the teaching profession.

The teacher's salary was one of the codes under the theme of factors affecting social status, so the participants agreed that the salaries were low. Teachers' salaries play an important role in determining their status in society. Because of teachers' low salaries, they often work another job in order to support their families. This negatively impacts teachers' productivity, performance, and reputation. Regarding the views about professional qualities and qualifications for teachers, the participants agreed that mostly theoretical knowledge is provided during the teacher training process. However, they need more practical training. Many of them agreed that classroom-based learning during the service is superior to university-based learning. Since education is always in development, teachers should always strive to improve themselves. It was further noted that there is a need for changes in teacher training procedures. They suggested applying achievement tests to student selection in education faculties, creating new selection criteria, and reducing the students' quotas in education faculties. According to the participants, if these suggestions are achieved, it could enable attracting successful students to the education faculties.

Participants emphasized that there are major deficiencies in teacher appointment procedures and process. Experiencing problems during the appointment process, and having too many teachers waiting for their appointments may be the reason why students with better potentials do not prefer or do not choose this profession.

The theme of the benefit of the profession to society consisted of two codes: it is an important profession and the profession has lost its value. Some participants defended the opinion that the benefit of the teaching profession to society is indisputable since teaching is a profession that educates people and forms the society, it should be superior to other professions. The teaching profession has become valueless today. According to the participants, the more beneficial and useful the teachers are in the society, the more valuable it will be and the teaching profession will gain its well-deserved status. Although there are good and skilled teachers who chose the profession voluntarily and on purpose, there are also teachers who do it by chance or reluctantly. Hence, it inevitably reduces the overall success and benefits to the society, and affects the social status of the profession negatively. Participants also emphasized that government support is important in this regard and suggested that the state should show more to the teaching profession and give their due. Accordingly other institutions, including society, will be affected by the attitude, and they will respect the teaching profession as well as teachers themselves.

The theme of satisfaction with their current position as a teacher consists of satisfaction and dissatisfaction codes. Most of the participants are satisfied with their position and happy to be a teacher. The reasons why four teachers are dissatisfied with their profession stem from the independent factors such as low salary, lack of independence, and not being respected by society.

As a result of the analysis of the interview data obtained to determine the teachers' views in Kazakhstan on the social status of the teaching profession six themes emerged: the reasons for choosing the teaching profession, the problems of the teaching profession, suggestions, factors affecting social status, the benefits of the profession to society, and the satisfaction with their current position as a teacher.

The theme of the Effective Reasons for Choosing the Teaching Profession consisted of three codes: love for children, family effect, and it was my ideal. While explaining the love for children and desire to work with them, participants stated that it was the most important factor to choose the profession. Participants' answers also included familial reasons to choose teaching, either their families favored the profession of teaching or someone in their family who worked as a teacher had a positive influence on them. Being a teacher was an ideal for some of the participants as well.

The theme of the problems of the teaching profession consists of six codes: excessive workload, grading system, lack of respect, failure to meet the required conditions, teacher training, and economic problems. When the opinions of the teachers regarding the question were examined, all of the teachers admitted they dealt with too much paperwork outside the classroom; and some compulsory tasks were assigned to teachers by the principal or other administrators in the school. These duties were usually given by the administrators in violation of the principle of equality, regardless of whether the workload of the teacher is low or high and whether they are suitable for their main duty. Participants also stated that they had significant problems with the grading processes and the grade entry platforms. Regarding the disrespect code, teachers all agreed they were disrespected by both school administrators and parents. According to the participants, the respect for the teacher in the past was higher than today. About the working conditions, they complained that the necessary conditions were not provided for the teachers to teach efficiently, and there is a lack of internet and technology in schools. Another problem the participants highlighted was the problem of teacher training. Teachers thought they could not keep up with the changes and needs of the new generations since teaching approaches were not arranged according to the needs of students. The last problem highlighted was teachers' salaries. Teachers stated that salaries have recently been increased, though it is still insufficient due to the increase in prices in the market.

The theme of the status of the teaching profession consisted of two codes: status is at a good level and status is at a low level. The positive views of the participants on the status of the teaching profession were evaluated from two perspectives. Some of the participants said that the status of the teaching profession started to improve with the approval of the "Teacher Status Law". They were hopeful that the status would be better in the future. These opinions of the participants were evaluated under the code of "good status" as positive opinions about the status in general. Other positive comments were associated with increasing the base score for admissions to teaching related departments. However, some of the participants stated that the approval of the "Teacher Status Law" did not solve the teacher's status problem and that approving the law only was insufficient to solve the problem. They expressed the status of the teaching profession as "still low" or "still weak". One of the reasons addressed was lack of respect for the teaching profession as well as parents' criticisms and the failure of administrators' support. Another reason that the participants mentioned was the teachers themselves. Teachers should make an effort to improve the status of their profession.

The theme of suggestions consisted of four codes: the value shown by the state, financial support, social support, and teacher training. In general, the following suggestions were expressed by the participants: consulting teachers' opinions and approvals when decisions about teaching-related issues are taken, ensuring that the articles in the "Teacher Status Law" are enforced; supporting the economic and social situation of teachers and meeting their needs. Furthermore, supporting teachers by their ages and regional differences; encouraging teachers' self-development and specialization, improving the quality of university pedagogical education, providing free in-service training, providing motivation and support, and creating opportunities for teachers to improve themselves.

The theme of factors affecting social status consisted of three codes: Effects of working conditions, effects of economic situation, teacher training and entry conditions to the profession. The views of the participants revealed that the working conditions of teachers were bad, especially in village schools and therefore young teachers do not want to work in rural areas. In addition, the image of the teacher in the society and difficult working conditions were expressed. They believe that all these situations affect the status of the profession negatively. The participants suggested an urgency to improve this situation by facilitating the working conditions and improving support for teachers. Teachers expressed that they had a lot of paperwork and extra duties outside the classroom as well as attending compulsory meetings and activities. Such extra tasks take too much time for the teacher. Therefore, they cannot allocate enough time to their lessons and plans. The views on teacher's salary, under the category of economic conditions, are generally considered to be very important for teachers. From teachers' view, today, salaries are insufficient to meet their living needs and these factors negatively affect both teacher productivity and their status in society. Based on the data obtained, it can be said that all participating teachers are not satisfied with their economic situation. About the entry conditions to the profession, some of the participants suggested that the entry criteria to the education departments and practical teacher training lessons should be increased. In this context, they highlighted the importance of graduating from

high-quality universities since if candidate teachers graduate from good universities, it might be a criterion to be appointed to a good school and those teachers might contribute to the education quality and vision in the same way.

The theme of the benefits of the profession to society consisted of two codes: the benefit of the profession is indisputable and the profession has become worthless. In general, according to the participants, the respect and value attributed to the teacher and the teaching profession depend on how much responsibility the teacher takes for society and his profession. Based on the participating teachers' answers, it can be concluded that the benefit of the teacher to the society is enormous, but it is important that teachers take responsibility to provide this benefit. They also stated that since the society is educated and trained by teachers, they deserve special respect and value, so the society should give sufficient value to the teacher and the teaching profession.

The theme of satisfaction with their current position as a teacher consisted of satisfaction and dissatisfaction codes. Eleven out of the fourteen participating teachers said that they were satisfied and happy to be a teacher. One of the participants stated "difficulties I have experienced" as the possible reason for giving up the profession, while another said the possible reason was trying an experience in a different job.

In the literature, there are studies on the status of the teaching profession that found similar results to this research. For example, within the results of their study, Çiftçi and Özcan (2014) revealed that low levels of economic satisfaction may negatively affect not only the time that teachers will allocate for their personal development but also the expenditures to be made for such development.

Furthermore, the results obtained by Ünsal (2018) within the scope of status related issues show a great degree of similarity. In the study Ünsal (2018) collected the views of teachers on the reasons for the low status of the teaching profession. Those reasons are respectively; teacher training institutions, working conditions, economic conditions, society, teacher qualifications, administrators and education policies.

The findings of Gökırmak's (2006) research also found that teachers chose the teaching profession not because of its high status, but because they loved the profession, and they stated that the social status of the profession gradually decreased. Hence, the findings of Gökırmak (2006) and the findings of this current research match to a great extent.

In some other studies (Aslan & Akyol, 2006; Üstün, 2005; Zembat & Bilgin, 1996) on the teaching profession, the researchers found that the reasons for preferring the profession affects the attitude towards teaching. The general conclusion is that the perspective of the teacher who chooses the profession voluntarily is more positive. The choice of teaching profession, whether voluntary or imposed by family demands or job guarantees, may have an impact on the perception of the profession among individuals.

In the literature, there have been studies that describe what reduces the status of teaching as a profession, including; there are strict requirements for appointment to the teaching profession, the teaching profession is not viewed as a desirable profession for successful students, and it is difficult to train qualified teachers in teacher training institutions (Aydın et al., 2018; Çüm & Doğan, 2016, Demir & Arı, 2013).

4.1. Recommendations

Based on similar findings obtained from teachers in Turkey and Kazakhstan, common recommendations have been developed regarding the status of teachers;
- Raising teachers' salaries and improving their economic conditions is a solution to improve their social status as well as creating a positive attitude towards education in the society.
- Teachers can be offered temporary dormitories, public housing and/or discounted housing loans to provide them with financial and social support.
- Support can be provided to teachers regarding health.
- Teachers who reach a certain tenure and age can receive benefits such as early retirement leave.
- It is important to improve teachers' working conditions in a way that makes them more productive and motivated. It can be accomplished by reducing class hours, not adding extra work, and removing administrative duties.
- Increasing the number of practical lessons in teacher training institutions so that students are prepared for real-life work conditions.
- In order to improve conditions for entry into the profession, developing new methods for measuring individual characteristics, abilities, and attitudes of teacher candidates is essential.
  Suggestions about the status of the teaching profession based on the research results in Turkey are;
- By enacting the Teaching Profession Law, the employee rights of teachers in the educational system can be clarified, improved and protected.
  Suggestions about the status of the teaching profession based on the research results in Kazakhstan are;
- In Kazakhstan, the teaching profession is favored over other careers, and mainly favored by women. Consequently, regulations and methods can be implemented to encourage male teachers to become teachers.

- To alleviate the workload problem, teachers should be provided with Autonomy in their grading process and use of grade entry platforms.
  Suggestions for researchers;
- The research is limited to the opinions of the teachers who participated in the study. Further research can be conducted to examine the viewpoint of society or students on the status of the teaching profession.
- This research compares the status of the teaching profession in Turkey and Kazakhstan. It is possible to conduct comparative studies between Turkey and another country.

Research and Publication Ethics Statement

The article was written considering the principles of research and publication ethics. Ethics committee approval was obtained for this study from Gazi University, dated 27.04.2020 and numbered E.51135; The Governor's Office of National Education in Ankara dated 06.03.2020 and numbered E.11002.

Contribution Rates of Authors to the Article

The author participated in all stages of the research by oneself and was responsible for the whole article.

Support Statement

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