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Mathematics Teachers' Experiences of Positive Error Climate

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to examine teachers' views on the applicability of a positive error climate in classrooms. In this qualitative case study, the study group consisted of 19 mathematics teachers with more than five years of professional experience and a master's degree, working in different provinces of Turkey. The study lasted 11 weeks and in the first two weeks, the teachers were explained what a positive error climate is and how it should be implemented. Then, the teachers were asked to prepare lesson plans according to the positive error climate framework program. These lesson plans were discussed by other participants and the researchers. The revised plans were implemented in the classrooms for seven weeks. At the end of the study, teachers' opinions about the implementation were obtained through interviews and the data were subjected to content analysis using MAXQDA. When the results were analyzed, teachers evaluated the implementation as effective, fun, providing permanent learning and increasing self-confidence. On the other hand, they stated the negative aspects as insufficient time, difficulties in classroom management and causing mislearning. Most of the participating teachers stated that they would like to use the positive error climate in their future lessons.

Keywords: Positive error climate, MAXQDA, effective and permanent learning.

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Introduction

Classroom environments are the main places where learning takes place. The classroom climate in these environments is influenced by attitudes towards learning, social norms perceived in the classroom, learning structures determined by the teacher, and the acceptance of ideas or errors in the classroom (Urdan & Schoenfeld, 2006). Turner and Mayer (1999) point out that for learning to take place in the classroom environment, risks should be taken, difficulties should be pursued and errors should be accepted as a natural element of the teaching process (Urdan & Schoenfeld, 2006). Thus, it is accepted by the class that errors are a part of learning (Ames, 1992). This situation provides the basis for students to perceive errors in the classroom in a positive way and to create positive error climates in the classroom.

Theoretical Framework

How errors are perceived, used and evaluated in the classroom creates the classroom error climate (Steur et al., 2013). To create a classroom with a positive error climate, firstly, students' negative feelings toward errors should be overcome. If a negative reaction is shown toward the student who makes a mistake in the classroom, the student is afraid of making a mistake, prefers to keep silent instead of saying something wrong, and does not want to participate in the lesson due to the fear of making a mistake (Steuer et al., 2013). The second one is that the student's strong achievement goal orientation and positive academic self-concept can be gained and the student can be directed toward self-regulated learning (Steuer et al., 2013; Tulis, 2013). Apart from these two, students should take the risk of making errors for a positive error climate. Taking the risk of making an error is expressed as academic risk-taking behaviour. Students with this behaviour engage in learning activities by considering the importance of the negativity of the error they make (Clifford & Chou, 1991). In classrooms with a positive error climate, teachers accept student errors, do not show a rigid attitude toward errors, act tolerantly and are open to discussion (Oser & Spychiger, 2005).

Heinze (2005), who mentions that being able to say why something is wrong beyond why it is right will support learning, evaluates learning from mistakes as a method. Similarly, Borasi (1994) stated that errors can be used as a springboard in education. In addition, there are many studies indicating that learning from errors positively increases student achievement and motivation (Barbieri & Booth, 2020; Durkin & Rittle-Johnson, 2012; Heinze & Reiss, 2007; Rach et al., 2013; Rittle-Johnson & Star, 2009; Yıldırım, 2019). Considering all of this, the importance of using errors as a teaching tool in education becomes apparent.

When error-based teaching studies are examined, it is seen that video recording studies are predominant (Matteucci et al., 2015; Santagata, 2005; Son, 2013; Tulis, 2013). These studies describe the current situation and offer solutions to the problems identified. Looking at the teacher dimension of the studies, it was observed that although teachers generally accepted the instructional potential of errors, they had concerns about their

use in the classroom environment (Palkki & Hastö, 2018). In the studies, it is seen that teachers who create a positive error climate in classrooms sometimes do this consciously and sometimes unconsciously (Abay & Clores, 2022; Alvidrez, 2019; Matteucci et al., 2015). In these studies, it can be said that a plan that helps to create a fully positive error climate in classrooms cannot be put forward. As a result, there is a need for planned intervention studies that fully reveal the effects of classroom error climate.

Teachers are the ones who will create a positive error climate in classrooms. Their attitude towards errors directs the student's attitude towards errors. In this regard, teachers need to be made aware of the error climate and learn how to implement the error climate in their classrooms in a planned way. The present study fulfills this requirement. The aim of the study is to examine teachers' views on the applicability of a positive error climate in classrooms. In this context, the question "What are teachers' views on the applicability of a positive error climate in the classroom?" guided the research.

Method

The case study method, one of the qualitative approaches, was used in this research. In research conducted with a qualitative approach, the situation or phenomenon investigated is analysed from the perspective of the participants constituting the study group (Ekiz, 2009; Metin, 2014). Specifically, with the case study method, the data obtained from the study group is described in depth, and the situation is divided into themes and presented effectively (Creswell, 2015). In this study, a case study was used because the positive error climate programme was examined in detail before and after the programme. Since the effects of the positive error climate programme on teachers and students were tried to be revealed comprehensively and longitudinally, a "Case Study Based on the Effects of the Programme", one of the six case study types proposed by Datta (1990), was adopted in the current study (Gökçek, 2009).

Participants

The study's participants were 19 secondary school mathematics teachers. When the literature is examined, it is emphasised that teachers should have at least three years of experience to provide effective teaching (e.g., Erdik, 2014; Star & Strickland, 2008). Since this research involved the implementation of a positive error climate in the classroom, it was accepted as a criterion with the common opinion of the researchers that teachers should have at least three years of experience. All teachers selected by criterion sampling had five years or more of professional experience and worked in different provinces of Turkey. These teachers, who were continuing their master's degrees, stated that they had not encountered a concept related to positive error climate before and that they had no idea about the positive error climate framework programme. Therefore, it can be said that the teachers participating in this study can evaluate the training given in the positive error climate programme without prejudice. Due to the

ethics of this research, the participant teachers were coded as A1, A2, A3, ..., A19. Ethics committee approval was obtained from the relevant institution for the present study.

Data Collection Processes

Since the teachers in the study group worked in different cities, the research courses were conducted online. The application lasted 11 weeks. Before starting the study, preliminary interviews were held with the teachers and their attitudes towards errors and their opinions about the use of errors in the classroom were recorded in writing.

During the first two weeks of the process, the field expert explained to the teachers what a positive error climate is, how to create one in the classroom, how to use errors as teaching opportunities, and how the process will proceed. Then, the teachers were divided into five groups consisting of at least three and at most eight people, depending on the grade levels they teach. Teachers were asked to teach their lessons according to the positive error climate framework program at the grade level they selected as a group (Özkaya et al., 2022).

Teachers, together with their groups, created lesson plans for the positive error climate they would create in their classrooms for seven weeks. These plans were presented in a two-hour online classroom and discussed by researchers and other participants. At the end of the discussions, the revised plans were implemented in the classes selected by the groups, and the teachers shared their experiences, plans, and thoughts about the error climate they created in their classes in the online lesson every week. The positive error climate framework program is given in the appendices (A1). An overview of the positive error climate program is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Overview of the positive error climate programme

Stages of the Programme	Content
Explanation	Introduction of a positive error climate
	How to create a positive error climate in classrooms?
	Positive error climate process
	Presentation of a positive error climate framework
Preliminary preparation	Determination of common student errors over the subjects taught in the class levels entered in the lesson
	Teachers' observation of the error climate in their own classrooms
Preparation of a lesson plan	Analysing the sources and collecting data to prepare the lesson plan for the identified errors

	Using the positive error climate framework in the classroom, taking into account the students'/teacher's approach to errors and the approach to errors in the teaching context
	Preparation of the lesson plan in line with the stated objectives
Finalising the lesson plans	Presenting and discussing the prepared lesson plans with other participant teachers and researchers
	Revising lesson plans in accordance with the feedback provided
Course teaching	Implementation of the plan
	Taking observational notes on the positive error climate
Summarised	Sharing ideas for a positive error climate
	Discussion of the effect of errors on student learning
	Presenting the problems in the process and offering suggestions

Data Collection and Analysis

The data of this study were obtained after the interviews with the teachers before and after the positive error climate programme. In the pre-interview questions, teachers' views on errors, whether they used them in the classroom, their reactions, feedback and help in the face of errors were asked. In the post-interview questions, teachers' positive error climate experiences, whether they would use it in the next process, and positive and negative aspects of positive error climate were asked. Interview questions are given in the appendix (A2). Mathematics teachers' views on implementing a positive error climate in the classroom before and after the positive error climate programme were subjected to content analysis. Creswell (2015) determined the stages of the data analysis process obtained as a result of the case study as follows: i) data organisation, ii) reading, taking short notes, iii) describing the data in codes and themes, iv) classifying the data in codes and themes, v) interpreting the data, vi) presenting and visualising the data. In the current study, the data were analysed by following these six stages. The MAXQDA qualitative data analysis programme was used to analyse the data. Firstly, the data obtained was converted into written form and made suitable for the analysis process.

Reliability and Validity

In this study, in which a qualitative approach was adopted, an 11-week-long positive error climate programme was conducted with mathematics teachers. There was a long-term interaction with the teachers during the research process. The data were collected in depth and analysed by two expert researchers in the current study. Throughout the implementation, the researchers guided the participants about the implementation of the positive error climate, the preparation of lesson plans and the process. The views of the participant teachers were presented in detail and the analyses were deepened by

including direct quotations. In addition, while determining the sample of this study, it was noted that the teachers had at least three years of experience. Accordingly, the study group was selected by purposive sampling. Apart from the validity measures mentioned for the current research, Yıldırım and Şimşek (2016) mention consistency examination for reliability. In this direction, the coding of the data was performed independently by the researchers. Afterwards, the coded data were compared, and the codes with disagreement and consensus were determined. Accordingly, the reliability coefficient was found to be 90%. According to Miles and Huberman (2016), the reliability coefficient should be around 90%. In this case, consistency was achieved.

Findings

While the findings were being prepared, a pre-interview was conducted to learn the participants' views on errors and their reactions, attitudes and behaviours in the face of errors. The participants' responses to the pre-interview questions were content analysed with the MAXQDA. At the end of the pre-interview, the themes of view of error and attitude toward error were formed. The codes, frequency of repetition (f) and some selected expressions from the participant responses under the theme of view of error are given in Table 2.

Table 2. The theme of the view of error

Theme	Code	F	Participant statements
View of the error	Part of the process	18	*Error is not only part of the lesson, but also part of life The aim is to recognise that mistake and not repeat the same error. (A5, 12)*
	Increases awareness	7	*Sometimes I make mistakes on purpose; I wait for a few seconds and when some students realise my mistake and tell me, I say well done, I am waiting for you to find my mistake and all the attention is focused on the mistake. (A4, 16)*
	Provides experience	5	*Making mistakes during the lesson creates an experience for the students. (A15, 16)*
	Assessment purposes	3	*In this way, I decide how much the subject has been learnt and whether it is necessary to repeat the subject or not. (A14, 16)*
	Unsuitable for classroom use	3	*It is not right to use it all the time. Because it causes confusion for the students who know the correct answer clearly. (A6, 16)*

As shown in Table 2, most of the participants stated that errors are a part of the process under *the view of error*. Participant A5 stated that *error is not only a part of the lesson but also a part of life. The aim is to recognise that mistake and not repeat the same error.* In addition, participants stated that errors help gain awareness, help gain experience and can be used for evaluation purposes. Some participants stated that errors could not be used in the lesson. Participant A6 stated that *it is not right to use it all the time. Because it causes confusion for the students who know the correct answer clearly.* As a result of the pre-interview, the categories, codes, frequency of repetition (f) and some selected expressions from the participant responses under the theme of attitude toward error are given in Table 3 below.

Table 3. The theme of attitude toward error

Categories	Code	F	Participant statements
Teacher support for errors	Making realise	5	*When helping the student who makes a mistake, I ask some questions to help him/her realise his/her mistake himself/herself. Are you sure? Is this your last decision? (A16, 16)*
	Peer tutoring	2	*I also use peer tutoring. (A15, 18)*
	Re-explain	8	*I repeat the subject, taking into account the child's cognitive characteristics. (A12, 20)*
	Give tips	9	*I help him/her find the truth by providing various clues. (A15, 18)*
	Say, "Look again".	6	*Firstly, I ask the student to read the question again. I ensure that the question is well understood. (A14, 18)*
	Solve similar questions	6	*I make him solve examples. I give examples for reinforcement. (A14, 20)*
	Say wrong	6	*I point out where he/she made a mistake (A9, 18).*
Feedback on errors	Correcting the error	2	*I correct my students' mistakes, but I do it without making them feel bad. (A1, 14)*
	Say Re-read	9	*Look again, I say. Will he notice? (A2, 14)*
	Making realise	10	*I do not intervene immediately with students who make mistakes. I even postpone telling them so that they realise it themselves. (A2, 12)*
	Say explain	3	*I ask why you think so. (A13, 14)*
	Give clue	4	*I ask short questions to find the truth. (A10, 18)*
Reactions to errors	Tolerant	9	*I am tolerant. Because if the student is afraid of the teacher, he/she does not make any promises that he/she will make a mistake. (A16, 10)*

Constructive	2	*I am constructive for students who endeavour to understand the lesson. (A18, 10)*
Patient	3	*I am patient with students who make mistakes, and I try to guide them down the right path with simple corrections. (A12, 10)*
Angry	2	*I can sometimes get angry when very simple mistakes are made (A13, 10).*
According to the question	2	*My reaction to errors in easy questions can be too much (A5, 10).*

When Table 3 was analysed, the theme of attitude toward mistakes was divided into three categories: teacher support for errors, feedback on errors and reactions to errors. When the codes of teacher support and feedback in the face of mistakes were analysed, it was understood from the teacher statements that teachers provided feedback and support by enabling students to notice their errors. Participant A16 stated, *while helping a student who makes a mistake; I ask some questions to make him/her realise his/her mistake himself/herself. Are you sure? Is it your last decision, and I do not immediately intervene with the student who makes a mistake? I even postpone what they say so that they realise it themselves*. Again, participant A15, who was directed to the truth by giving clues in the face of mistakes, stated his opinion with the expression, *I help him find the truth by giving various clues*. A2, one of the teachers who suggested rereading the question and looking at it again in the face of the student's mistake, said, *Look again. Let's see if he/she will notice*. It was seen that the teachers showed the behaviours of re-explaining the subject and solving sample questions to support the errors. When the category of reactions to errors was analysed, it was seen that participant teachers generally had positive attitudes, such as being tolerant, constructive and patient. Very few of the teachers stated that they showed anger.

At the end of the application, the opinions of the participant teachers were divided into four categories under the theme of positive error climate: positive error climate experience, its use in the subsequent process, positive aspects and negative aspects, and codes were obtained under each category. The views on positive error climate were divided into 'positive aspects' and 'negative aspects' categories. The code distributions of these categories are given in detail in Figure 1 below, together with their frequencies.
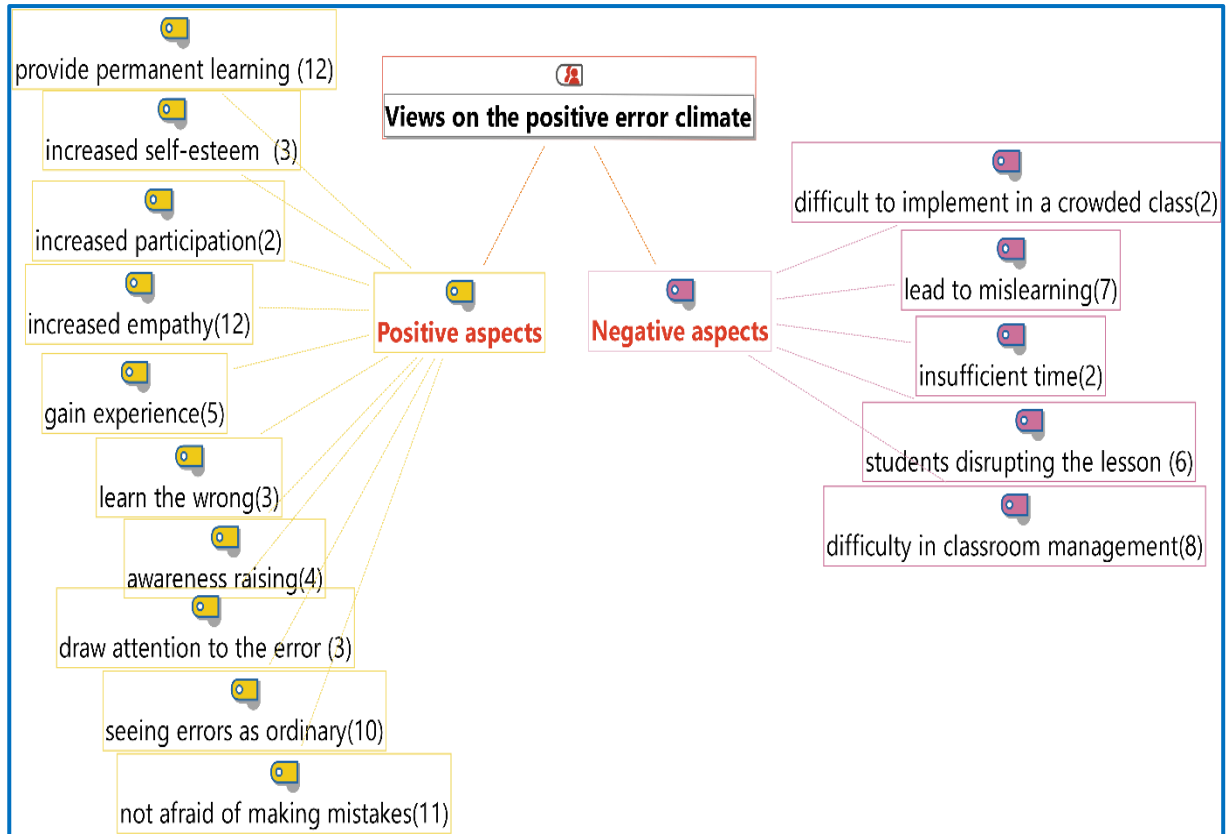
Figure 1. Views on a positive error climate

When Figure 1 was analysed, participants stated positive and negative aspects of a positive error climate in the process. Accordingly, the codes created for the positive aspects were as follows: provide permanent learning, increased self-esteem, increased participation, increased empathy, gain experience, learn the wrong, raise awareness, draw attention to the error, see errors as ordinary, and not be afraid of making mistakes.

Likewise, when the negative aspects were analysed, the codes were as follows: insufficient time; students disrupting the lesson; difficulty in classroom management, leading to mislearning; difficulty implementing in a crowded class. The participants' views about their experiences in the process were collected under the category of 'Positive error climate experience' and the coding and code frequencies of the participant statements are given in Figure 2 below.
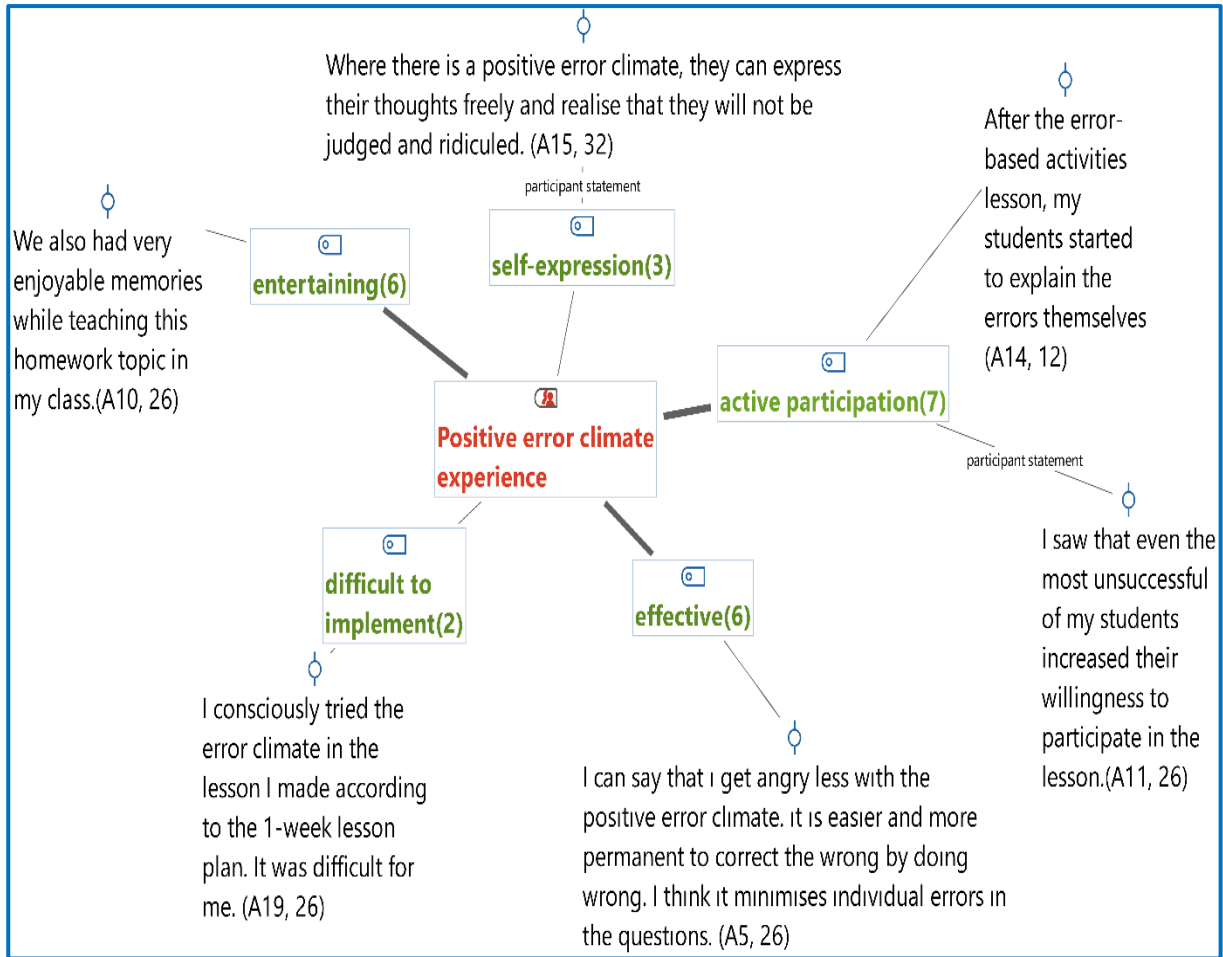
Figure 2. Positive error climate experience

As shown in Figure 2, as a result of the content analysis conducted according to the data obtained from the interview questions of the participants, the codes of entertaining, difficult to implement, active participation, effective and self-expression were obtained. Participant A5 found the positive error climate experience effective and said, *I can say that I get less angry with the positive error climate. It is easier and more permanent to correct wrong by doing wrong. I think it minimised individual errors in the questions*. Participant A10 found the experience entertaining and said, *We also had very pleasant memories while teaching this homework topic in my class*. Participant A19 evaluated the positive error climate experience as difficult and said, *I consciously tried the error climate in the lesson I made according to the 1-week lesson plan. It was difficult for me*. Participant teachers expressed their opinions about using a positive error climate in the following process under the codes of "I think" and "I do not think". The thoughts of the participants about whether or not to use the positive error climate in their classrooms after the process are given in Figure 3, together with the codes, number of repetitions (f) and participant expressions.

After the error-based activities lesson, my students started to explain the errors themselves. (A4, 12)

Because an individual who sees making mistakes as normal is not afraid of making mistakes. Thus, he/she does not criticise the mistakes made to find the truth. He does not see any problem in reaching the truth by making mistakes without hesitation or shame. (A16, 30)

Mistakes lead to more permanent learning. (A17, 32)

explaining the cause of the error(6)

the courage to make errors(7)

permanent learning(7)

I think

Subsequent use in the process

I don't think

curriculum intensity(2)

increased self-confidence

participant statement

It was useful for students to fulfil their self-confidence. (A5, 32)

increased attendance(5)

better self-expression(6)

Our lessons are usually barely enough. There is no time left for lectures, examples, exercises. A19, 32)

participant statement

Students see each other's mistakes. Class participation increases. (A17, 34)

Where there is a positive error climate, they can express their thoughts freely and realise that they will not be judged and ridiculed. (A8, 32)

Figure 3. Use of a positive error climate in the subsequent process

At the end of the process, the codes formed under the categories of "I think" and "I do not think" from the statements of the participants about whether they would use the positive error climate in their lessons in the following process are given in Figure 3. When Figure 3 was analyzed, sub-codes were formed from the statements of those who indicated they would use a positive error climate. These sub-codes include: Permanent learning, increased self-confidence, increased attendance, better self-expression, explaining the cause of the error, and the courage to make errors. When the category of I don't think was analysed, it was seen that the code of curriculum intensity was formed. Some of the participants' expressions who thought to use the positive error climate in their lessons in the following process are as follows: Participant A4 *developed reasoning ability by comparing the answer to the wrong question with the correct answer*; Participant A5 found *it useful for students to fulfil their self-confidence*; Participant A17 *students see each other's mistakes and participation in the lesson increases*; Participant A8 *Students can express their thoughts freely where there is a positive error climate, they realise that they will not be judged and ridiculed*. The statement of participant A19, one of the participants who did not think of using the positive error climate in the following process, was as follows: *Our lessons are usually barely enough. There is no time left for lectures, examples, or exercises*. While 17 of the participants said they thought of using

the positive error climate in the next process, two said they did not because of the intensity of the curriculum.

Discussion and Conclusion

The results of this study not only confirmed the findings of the studies on positive error climate in the classroom in the literature, but also took the discussions one step further. This study examined teachers' experiences of classroom practice during the 11-week positive error climate programme designed in this study and demonstrated the impact of positive error climate from teachers' perspectives. Therefore, this study provided a more in-depth look at the positive error climate in the learning process with more teachers.

According to the data of the study, it was determined that the teachers included errors in the lesson process and had a positive attitude towards errors before the positive error climate programme. As a result of the analysis of the interview data conducted with the teachers after the positive error climate programme, teachers experienced that students were better engaged in the lesson. Furthermore, the fact that the teachers wanted to use this practice afterward demonstrates that they believe it should be sustainable. The teachers stated that the use of errors in the classroom caused the students to view errors as a part of learning and to develop a positive attitude towards errors. In addition, it was determined from their views that they were concerned that the positive error climate in the classroom could cause mislearning and make the classroom management process difficult.

According to teachers' attitudes towards errors, although the participant teachers accept the role of errors in teaching and see them as a part of the teaching process, they aim at preventing errors rather than using them. Steuer et al. (2013), who stated that there are eight sub-dimensions of the error climate, stated that one of the dimensions related to the teacher's error orientation is the teacher's help and support after errors. This dimension includes the teacher's patience, explanations and help against errors in the classroom (Oser & Spychiger, 2005). When the category of teacher help in the face of errors is analysed in this study, it is seen that the teachers mostly used these types of help, such as giving hints, telling the students to look again and making them realise their mistakes. Türkdoğan and Baki (2012) stated that the most frequently used feedback techniques in teacher interventions in the classroom are ignoring the mistake or accepting it as correct, telling the answer, saying it is wrong, and feedback techniques. Teachers who think that making mistakes disrupts teaching in the classroom often intervene directly in mistakes (Heinze, 2005; Santagata, 2005).

The fact that a considerable number of teachers in this study preferred to tell the student the error directly is similar to the results of Heinze's (2005) and Santagata's (2005) studies.

In addition to the precautions they offered to prevent errors before implementation, teachers also expressed their emotional reactions to errors. Steuer et al. (2013) mention that teachers have verbal and non-verbal reactions to errors. Errors are inevitable and

natural during teaching. However, students perceive making mistakes as embarrassing, threatening, avoidable and damaging to their self-confidence, and the teacher's reaction to the mistake determines the student's reaction (see Heinze & Reiss, 2007; Rach et al., 2013; Rybowiak et al., 1999; Steuer et al., 2013; Tulis et al., 2016). The teacher's positive attitude toward student errors in the classroom will increase students' motivation and interest in the lesson (Özkaya et al., 2022). Similarly, when the responses of the participants in the category of reactions to errors were analysed, the findings showed that they were tolerant, constructive and patient in the face of student errors. The participants who stated that their reactions would change according to the difficulty of the problem and that they could get angry were a small number in the study group.

When the positive error climate experiences of the participant teachers are analysed, they express the positive error climate as effective, efficient, helpful for self-expression and fun. It has been observed that the same attitude develops in students in studies where teachers are moderate toward errors and see them as learning opportunities and tools (Bray, 2011; Heinze & Reiss, 2007; Tulis, 2013).

Participant teachers mentioned that the most cognitively positive aspects of the process were that students achieved permanent learning and that they could see errors as a part of learning. Sancar (2023), who experimentally investigated the existence of retention after the process of learning from errors, revealed that permanent learning is more common in classroom environments where errors are accepted as normal. In addition, Tulis (2013) emphasised the importance of students being aware that they can see errors as a part of learning. Students should know what they should do as well as what they should not do, which is important in learning.

Studies aiming to use errors effectively in teaching show that the error climate provides positive results for students regarding affective and motivational sense (Heinze&Reiss, 2007; Tulis, 2013). When evaluated in the affective and motivational context, the teachers in this study stated that in the classes where a positive error climate was applied, students were not afraid of making mistakes, expressed themselves better and experienced an increase in their self-confidence. Research on the perceived error climate in the classroom has observed that students are more courageous about making mistakes in a positive error climate (Bray, 2011; Rach et al., 2013; Steuer et al., 2013; Tulis et al., 2016). If the perceived error climate in the classroom is positive, students take the risk of making errors without fear or embarrassment (Heinze & Reiss, 2007; Rach et al., 2013; Steuer et al., 2013; Tulis et al., 2016).

As negative aspects of the process, the participants feared lack of time, difficulty in classroom management, difficulty of implementation in crowded classes, disruption of the lesson flow by some students, and the fear that it may cause mislearning. Likewise, when the answers given by the participants under the themes of view toward errors and attitude toward errors are analysed, it is seen that they mostly see errors as a part of the lesson and that they can be used as a teaching tool. Previous studies have shown that even if teachers have positive beliefs about using errors, they hesitate to use errors in

teaching (Palkki&Hastö, 2018). One of the main hesitations is the concern that the mistakes made will become more common, which was also revealed in the current study. Despite this, studies focusing on learning from mistakes yield positive results (See, Heinze& Reiss, 2007, Rach et al., 2013; Özkaya et al., 2022; Özkaya&Konyalıoğlu, 2019). While research on using errors in the classroom shows the positive aspects of these practices, it shows that the error culture is not sufficiently utilised and teachers do not know how to benefit from errors (Özkaya & Konyalıoğlu, 2019; Santagata, 2005). If it is desired to benefit from errors in teaching, a planned and careful process should be carried out instead of random use (Akpınar & Akdoğan, 2010; Bray, 2011; Özkaya et al., 2022). In this respect, this study will serve as a guide for creating and maintaining a positive error climate in teacher professional development.

Recommendations

In the current study, not observing teachers in the classroom is one of the limitations of the research. In future studies, a model in which the teacher is observed in the classroom can be applied. The current study was conducted with mathematics teachers. Observing the positive error climate effects in different courses can be the subject of future research.

Appendix

A1. Positive Error Climate Framework Program

1. The teacher expresses her/his tolerance towards mistakes verbally and in behavior.
The feedback that can be given is as follows:
Verbal feedback
• Answer even if you think you are wrong.   • Errors are ways that are not right, the more wrong ways we eliminate, the better.   • All mistakes are ways that will bring us closer to the truth.   • You are a student, of course you will make mistakes to find the truth, do not hesitate.   • Do not think that I will be angry with you if you make a mistake.   • You are all classmates, let's try to learn a lesson instead of laughing or getting angry at the wrong answers.
Behavioral feedback
• S/he encourages students with low attendance and who are behind the class academically to get up and respond to the lesson.   • S/he encourages the student, who is hesitant and does not want to get up, to participate in the lesson and encourages them to respond.   • S/he asks students to answer even if they are wrong.   • S/he asks the students who make mistakes why they think that way without getting angry.   • Be tolerant towards student mistakes.
2. The teacher is tolerant of the student who makes an error or gives an incorrect answer, thanks him/her for the error s/he finds and turns students' attention to that error.   *The feedback that can be given is as follows:*

- Why did you think like that?
- Shall we think together?
- Your friend has mentioned a very good mistake, let's be careful about it.
- Thanks for your friend's reply.
- Well done, you have caught a very important point -to class- do you think your friend's answer is correct?
- If it's wrong, let's think about why it's wrong.
- You gave a very good answer. Thank you.

3. *Instead of giving the answer directly, the teacher gives clues to the students. Discusses the given answers in class. Draws students' attention to the given answer.*

   The feedback on this issue is as follows.

- S/he does not directly say that the mistake made is wrong. Or s/he does not give the correct answer directly to the student.
- S/he asks questions that will help the student find the right answer.
- S/he draws the attention of the students in the class to the mistake made.
- S/he involves the entire class in the process.
- S/he explains the importance of the mistake made by the student.
- S/he provides corrective feedback to the student.
- S/he discusses the student's mistake in class.
- S/he allows students who gave incorrect answers to express the correct answer in their own words.

4. The teacher encourages the student, who is shy and does not want to attend the lesson. S/he enables them to participate in the lesson and encoureges them to respond.

The feedback that can be given is as follows:

- It does not directly say that the answer given is wrong.
- Asks the students why they gave such an answer.
- Asks the class for the student's answer.
- Makes the students think about their errors.
- S/he thanks the student for the point s/he caught.

5. After the teacher decides that s/he has solved enough examples at the end of the subject, he gives an incorrect statement about the subject or makes an incorrect solution and waits for the students to catch the mistake. Ask students to express both the incorrect statement/solution and the correct statement/solution in their own sentences.

The feedback that can be given is as follows:

- Let's examine the given statement/solution/question.
- Do you think it is true?
- If it's wrong, why is it wrong.
- If true, why is it true?

6. At the end of the subject, the teacher exams the students, the exam is not for scoring. Puts an erroneous example in the exam. At the end of the exam, he/she solves the questions in detail in the class.

A2. Classroom Error Climate Teacher Questionnaire Interview Questions

Dear Colleagues

This questionnaire was developed to understand teacher and student perceptions of student mistakes and errors made in subjects or questions in lessons. The data to be obtained from this study will be used only for scientific purposes. Therefore, it is very important for us that you answer the questions sincerely and accurately in order for the measurement results to be healthy. Thanks for your interest and help.

1. How do you react to student errors in the lesson?

2. Do you see errors as a part of the lesson? Can you explain briefly?

3. What is the first feedback you give when a student makes a mistake? Why do you prefer this feedback method?

4. Do you use mistakes as a teaching tool in the classroom? Do you think it is right to use mistakes as a learning tool? Why is that?

5. How do you help a student who makes a mistake?

6. Can you share your positive error climate experiences?

7. What do you think are the positive aspects of a positive error climate?

8. What do you think are the negative aspects of a positive error climate?

9. Would you consider making use of the positive error climate in your future lessons? Could you share your answer along with the reason?

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Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

Hata yapmak öğretim sürecinin doğal bir unsuru olmasına rağmen sınıf ortamlarında genellikle olumsuz ve utanç verici bir durum olarak algılanmaktadır (Heinze & Reiss, 2007). Bu algılar çoğu zaman öğretmenlerin ve öğrencilerin hataları öğrenme fırsatı olarak görmelerine engel olur (Özkaya & Konyalıoğlu, 2019; Palkki & Hastö, 2018). Araştırmalar hata yapmanın öğrenmeyi olumlu etkilediğini ve öğrenme sürecini geliştirdiğini göstermektedir (Borasi, 1989; Rach vd., 2013; Tulis, 2013). Sınıf içinde hataların öğrenme sürecinin ayrılmaz unsurları olarak kullanıldığı ve değerlendirildiği sınıf iklimlerinde, olumlu hata iklimi görülür (Steuer vd., 2013; Tulis, 2013). Olumlu hata ikliminin, öğrenci ve öğretmenler üzerinde duyuşsal ve bilişsel bir çok olumlu etkisi görülmüştür (Alvidrez, 2019; Heinze & Reiss, 2007; Ingram, 2015; Özkaya vd., 2022; Steuer vd., 2013; Tulis vd., 2018). Sınıfta hata kullanımına ilişkin araştırmalar, bu uygulamaların olumlu yönlerini ortaya koyarken, hata kültüründen yeterince yararlanılmadığını ve öğretmenlerin hatalardan nasıl yararlanacaklarını bilmediklerini görülmektedir (Özkaya ve Konyalıoğlu, 2019; Santagata, 2005).

Hata temelli öğretim çalışmaları incelendiğinde video kayıt çalışmalarının ağırlıkta olduğu görülmektedir (Matteucci vd., 2015; Santagata, 2005; Son, 2013; Tulis, 2013). Bu çalışmalar mevcut durumu betimlemekte ve tespit edilen sorunlara çözüm önerileri sunmaktadır. Çalışmaların öğretmen boyutuna bakıldığında, öğretmenlerin genel olarak hataların öğretimsel potansiyelini kabul etmekle birlikte, sınıf ortamında kullanımına ilişkin endişeleri olduğu görülmüştür (Palkki ve Hastö, 2018). Çalışmalarda, sınıflarda olumlu bir hata iklimi oluşturan öğretmenlerin bunu bazen bilinçli bazen de bilinçsiz olarak yaptıkları görülmektedir (Abay ve Clores, 2022; Alvidrez, 2019; Matteucci vd., 2015). Bu çalışmalarda, sınıflarda tam anlamıyla olumlu bir hata iklimi oluşturulmasına yardımcı olacak bir planın ortaya konulamadığı söylenebilir. Öğretimde hatalardan yararlanılmak isteniyorsa hataları rastgele kullanım yerine planlı ve dikkatli bir süreç yürütülmelidir (Akpınar ve Akdoğan, 2010; Bray, 2011; Özkaya vd., 2022). Sınıflarda olumlu hata iklimini oluşturacak olanlar öğretmenlerdir. Onların hatalara karşı tutumu, öğrencinin hatalara karşı tutumunu yönlendirir. Bu bakımdan öğretmenlerin hata iklimi konusunda bilinçlendirilmesi ve hata iklimini sınıflarında planlı bir şekilde nasıl uygulayacaklarını öğrenmeleri gerekmektedir. Bu çalışma bu ihtiyaca hizmet etmektedir.

Araştırmanın amacı öğretmenlerin olumlu hata iklimi ile ilgili deneyimleri ve görüşlerini incelemektir. Bu bağlamda "Olumlu hata ikliminin sınıfta uygulanabilirliğine ilişkin öğretmen görüşleri nelerdir?" sorusu araştırmaya yön vermiştir. Araştırma nitel durum çalışmasıdır ve 19 matematik öğretmeniyle toplam 11 hafta süren bir çalışma neticesinde ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu öğretmenler ölçüt örneklem yöntemiyle seçilmiş, beş yılın üzerinde hizmet süreleri bulunan ve yüksek lisans dersi alan öğretmenlerdir. Öğretmenlerle yapılan çalışmanın ilk iki haftası olumlu hata iklimini tanıtmak olmuştur. Öğretmenler olumlu hata ikliminin ne olduğunu, derslere nasıl uygulanacağını, hatalara nasıl dönüt verecekleri, olumlu hata iklimi çerçeve programının ne olduğunu bu iki haftalık süreçte alan uzmanı bir araştırmacıdan öğrenmişlerdir. Daha sonra

kendilerinden okuttukları sınıf seviyelerine göre grup oluşturmaları istenmiştir. Her grup olumlu hata iklimi çerçeve programını temel alarak ders planları oluşturmuşlardır. Bu ders planları sınıf ortamında araştırmacılar ve diğer katılımcı öğretmenler tarafından tartışılmıştır. Revize edilen planlar yedi hafta boyunca öğretmenlerin derslerini yürüttükleri sınıflarda uygulanmıştır. Uygulama neticesinde öğretmenlerden olumlu hata iklimiyle ilgili deneyimleri görüşmeler yoluyla elde edilmiştir. Veriler MAXQDA nitel analiz programıyla analiz edilmiştir. Katılımcı öğretmenler, sürecin bilişsel açıdan en olumlu yönlerinin öğrencilerin kalıcı öğrenmeyi gerçekleştirmeleri ve hataları öğrenmenin bir parçası olarak görebilmeleri olduğunu belirtmişlerdir. Hatalardan öğrenme süreci sonrasında kalıcılığın varlığını deneysel olarak araştıran Sancar (2023), hataların normal kabul edildiği sınıf ortamlarında kalıcı öğrenmenin daha yaygın olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Buna ek olarak Tulis (2013), öğrencilerin hataları öğrenmenin bir parçası olarak görebilmeleri için bunun farkında olmalarının önemini vurgulamıştır. Öğrenciler ne yapmaları gerektiği kadar ne yapmamaları gerektiğini de bilmelidirler ki bu da öğrenmede önemlidir.

Bu çalışmanın sonuçları, literatürde sınıfta olumlu hata iklimi üzerine yapılan çalışmaların bulgularını doğrulamakla kalmamış, aynı zamanda tartışmaları bir adım öteye taşımıştır. Bu çalışmada tasarlanan 11 haftalık olumlu hata iklimi programı sırasında öğretmenlerin sınıf içi uygulama deneyimleri incelenmiş ve olumlu hata ikliminin etkisi öğretmenlerin bakış açısından ortaya konmuştur. Dolayısıyla bu çalışma, öğrenme sürecindeki olumlu hata iklimine daha fazla öğretmenle daha derinlemesine bakılmasını sağlamıştır.

Çalışmanın verilerine göre, öğretmenlerin araştırma öncesinde hataları ders sürecine dahil ettikleri ve hatalara karşı olumlu bir tutum içinde oldukları belirlenmiştir. Olumlu hata iklimi programı sonrasında ise öğretmenlerle yapılan görüşme verilerinin analizi sonucunda, öğretmenlerin öğrencilerin derse daha iyi katıldıklarını deneyimledikleri görülmüştür. Ayrıca öğretmenlerin bu uygulamayı daha sonra da kullanmak istemeleri, bu uygulamanın sürdürülebilir olması gerektiğine inandıklarını göstermektedir. Öğretmenler, sınıfta hataların kullanılmasının öğrencilerin hataları öğrenmenin bir parçası olarak görmelerine ve hatalara karşı olumlu bir tutum geliştirmelerine neden olduğunu belirtmişlerdir.

Öğretmenler süreci eğlenceli, etkili, kalıcı öğrenmeye yardımcı bir süreç olarak değerlendirmişlerdir. Buna karşın sürecin olumsuz yönlerini ise sürenin yetersiz olması, sınıf yönetiminin zor olması ve yanlış öğrenmeye neden olması olarak belirtmişlerdir. Görüşmeler sonunda 19 öğretmenden 17 tanesi olumlu hata iklimini sonraki süreçte derslerinde kullanmak istediklerini belirtmiştir. Matematik öğretmenleriyle yapılan bu araştırma planlı bir olumlu hata ikliminin etkililiğini ortaya çıkarmıştır. Diğer derslerde de benzer uygulamalar gelecekteki araştırmaların konusu olabilir.

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Examining Preschool Children's Perceptions of School

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to examine the school perceptions of preschool children. The study employed a qualitative case study design to explore preschool children's perceptions of school. The research involved 100 children aged 60-72 months from five different preschools during the fall semester of the 2022–2023 academic year. Data was collected through the 'School Perception Interview Form' and 'School Picture Drawings' to explore the children's perceptions. To analyze the collected data, the study employed content analysis, a common method used in qualitative data analysis. The content analysis process involved four stages: coding the data, identifying themes, organizing codes and themes, and describing and interpreting the findings. The study findings revealed that the children perceived school as a place for learning new things and experiencing happiness. Their favorite activity was art, and they enjoyed the school's garden area. They preferred Lego/blocks and puzzles the most. Overall, they exhibited a positive attitude toward attending school, and their drawings depicted school buildings. In light of all these findings, it is recommended that the physical environments of preschool education institutions be organised, and they should be better equipped by increasing the variety of toys and materials.

Keywords: Preschool, school, perception, children

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Introduction

During the preschool period, children undergo rapid development in cognitive, language, motor, social, and emotional domains, encompassing all areas of growth. This stage holds great significance as it plays a critical role in acquiring values and behaviors that form the basis of life (Köksal & Tükel, 2017; Selçuk & Yavuz, 2018; Tunçeli & Zembat, 2017). The experiences children have during the preschool period greatly contribute to shaping the individuals they become in the future. Children begin to develop their perceptions of themselves and their surroundings, and these experiences play a significant role in determining their future characteristics and qualities. The preschool period is a time when children are particularly receptive to external influences from their environment (Akyol, 2016; Aral & Kadan, 2018). Given that children spend most of their time in school, it is important to focus on educational environments.

The environment is one of the most important factors in ensuring the effectiveness of the early childhood process, which supports the development of all areas of individuals. When designing educational environments, it is necessary to create spaces that allow children to move independently and interact with their peers, fostering their problem-solving skills and desire for learning (Pedok, 2017; as cited in the study by Gül, 2019). Educational environments also considerably influence children's life experiences (Nicholson, 2005). Therefore, when planning educational spaces, considerations such as materials, flooring, lighting, ceiling height, shape, texture, color, and size should be made to create a harmonious environment for children (Maxwell, 2007; Sakarya, 2019). Research has revealed that the quality of the educational environment affects children's cognitive and social-emotional development. It has a significant and long-lasting effect on children's development and impacts their behavior (Fontaine et al., 2006; Mashburn et al., 2008; Peisner-Feinberg et al., 2001; Sakarya, 2019). Accordingly, all arrangements to be made in the educational environment should be planned after considering the child's psychology, age group, health, safety, and comfort (Göregenli, 2013; Sakarya, 2019). However, Güven's (2006) research in Türkiye demonstrated that play and movement activities in preschool education institutions were not effectively implemented owing to inadequate implementation, materials, and the physical environment.

In this context, considering the role of schools in shaping children's behavioral and developmental changes, it is unclear how these interactions shape individuals' school perceptions. Schools, as educational institutions, play a vital role in educating today's society for the society of tomorrow (Heppell et al., 2004). Schools, serving as educational and training environments, are expected to impact children's behavior and developmental changes. The physical environment of schools should contribute to the development and learning of children (Baştepe, 2009; Güleş, 2013). Arnon et al. (2018) emphasized that children learn in indoor and outdoor learning environments in preschool education institutions. Studies comparing preschools across different countries demonstrate that the utilization of spaces and materials is closely linked to

the pedagogical approach of educators and the relationship between children and teachers (Cleghorn et al., 2008). In other words, how the child perceives the educational environment, materials and communication with the teacher is very important.

When considering the effects of educational environments on children, it is important to develop an understanding of how these effects shape individuals' perceptions of school. Perception is defined as a meaning-making process in which the stimuli received from the external world through the sense organs are interpreted through mental processes. Perception is a complex process that includes the current mental state, past experiences, and expectations about the future (Bakan & Kefe, 2014). School perception refers to individuals' overall views, observations, feelings, and thoughts about school. It is believed that attitudes toward school and the perception of school serve as predictors for various behaviors exhibited toward school (Gülcemal, 2019; Özdemir & Kalaycı, 2013). Several factors can influence school perception, such as the physical condition of the school, students' feelings at school, rules applied at school, socioeconomic status of children, and developmental level of the region where the school is located (Toprakçı & Gülmez, 2018; Voight et al., 2015; Yüner & Özdemir, 2017). Piaget stated that children cannot view the world as adults do (Wood, 2003). As different from adults, children's perception of their environment is shaped by their experiences, and their mental images of the environment develop as their interactions with the space evolve. The environment provides sensory stimuli that enable perception through the senses (Roth, 2002; Sakarya, 2019). Civek (2018) documented that preschool children perceive school as a place of learning and hold positive perceptions. They often envision their ideal school as being beautiful and large. In children's drawings, the school is depicted as a social environment where social relations are established and developed. Some children perceive school as a place that fulfils their needs for play and movement. Accordingly, the quality and quantity of preschool education institutions impact children's perceptions of school, emphasizing the importance of a comprehensive organization both indoors and outdoors. Children with positive school perception exhibit behaviors such as enjoying school, actively participating in activities, having positive relationships with peers and teachers, and indicating overall happiness. Children with negative school perceptions tend to be unhappy, reluctant to attend school, and disinterested in activities (Özdemir & Kalaycı, 2013). Andersson and Strander (2004) determined that a positive perception of school is associated with a more optimistic outlook on the future, better problem-solving skills, and the belief that conditions can be positively changed.

Aksoy and Baran (2010) concluded that the quality and quantity of preschool environments, including the content and various dimensions, significantly influence children's perceptions. Consequently, it is crucial to equip preschool education institutions with appropriate resources and environments. Studies have revealed that preschool children's perceptions of school can affect their academic achievement in the following years (Katz & McClelland, 2016; Pekrun et al., 2009). Developing a positive perception of school during the preschool years can contribute to increased

academic achievement and positively impact children's lives (Denham et al., 2015; Kostelnik et al., 2015). When the literature is examined, it is seen that there is no research examining the school perceptions of preschool children in Turkey, except for the thesis study conducted by Civek (2018). This situation shows that we do not have enough data about the factors affecting children's perceptions of school and the schools where they spend most of their time. This situation prevents the creation of educational environments and the development of educational programmes by taking into account children's perspectives on educational environments. In addition, revealing children's school perceptions is important in terms of accelerating children's school adaptation processes and their future academic lives. It is thought that the research will make significant contributions to national and international literature. Given these findings, it becomes imperative to examine the factors associated with preschool children's perceptions of school and provide recommendations to enhance their perceptions. In light of this information, this study aims to examine preschool children's perceptions of school. In order to achieve this aim, answers to the following questions were sought.

1. How do preschool children define the concept of school?
2. What are preschool children's reasons for attending school?
3. How do preschool children feel at school?
4. What are preschool children's favourite activities at school?
5. What school activities do preschool children dislike?
6. What are preschool children's favourite areas at school?
7. Which toys/materials do preschool children like the most at school?
8. What else would preschool children like to see in order to make the school a better place?
9. Do preschool children prefer to attend school or stay at home?
10. How do preschool children portray the concept of school in their drawings?

Method

Research Model

The study employed a qualitative research method to explore preschool children's perceptions of school. Qualitative research aims to understand and interpret events and phenomena in their natural environment, taking into account the holistic and realistic aspects. Qualitative research is defined as 'research in which qualitative data collection methods such as observation, interview, and document analysis are used and a qualitative process is followed to reveal perceptions and events in a realistic and holistic manner in a natural environment'. The research process follows a qualitative approach, which involves formulating a research question and seeking answers through the collection and analysis of data (Creswell, 2007; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). In this research, the basic qualitative research design, one of the qualitative research

approaches, was used. The aim of basic qualitative research, which strives to reveal the undiscovered "meanings" created by individuals, is to understand how people understand their lives and experiences. In basic qualitative research, researchers focus on the process and try to understand it (Merriam, 2013). In this study, the researcher tried to understand children's school perceptions by focusing on their perceptions.

Study Group

In the study, conducted during the fall semester of the 2022–2023 academic year, 100 children aged 60-72 months, who were enrolled in five different preschools, participated. The study group comprised 41 girls and 59 boys. Twelve children participating in the study have been attending preschool education institutions for three years, 82 children for two years and 6 children for the first time. All of the children participating in the study attend public schools. All the children in the study group exhibited normal development and did not have any special needs. The researchers employed purposive sampling to form the study group (Patton, 2014), a method commonly used in qualitative research. Purposive sampling allows for the selection of participants based on specific criteria, aiming to include individuals who can provide rich and informative insights on the research topic (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). In this sampling approach, the researchers identify important criteria for participant selection, ensuring that the sample represents the target population with its diverse characteristics (Tavşancıl & Aslan, 2001).

Data Collection Tools

To examine preschool children's perceptions of school, the study utilized two different data collection tools: the 'School Perception Interview Form' and the 'School Picture Drawings'.

School Perception Interview Form

A semi-structured interview form comprising nine questions developed by the researcher was used as a data collection tool to reveal preschool children's perceptions of school. The researcher developed the form by creating a pool of questions and selecting those that were relevant to the research objectives. The questions were formulated based on existing literature on ranking principles and data sources (Patton, 2014; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). The researcher ensured that the questions were open-ended, single-dimensional, non-directive, and easy for the participants to understand. The interview form was reviewed for content and face validity by three faculty members (one professor and two associate professors) with expertise and experience in early childhood education. The pre-application of the questionnaire was conducted with ten preschool children, and corrections were made to two questions that were unclear or poorly worded.

School Picture Drawings

As part of the data collection process, children's drawings were utilized as a tool to capture preschool children's perceptions of school. The children were provided with crayons and white A4 paper, allowing them the freedom to express their perceptions through drawings. They were given as much time as they needed to complete their drawings without any time constraints.

Data Collection from Children's Drawings

One of the major challenges in conducting studies with preschool children is their potential reluctance to provide information to unfamiliar researchers and participate actively in the research process. The study recognized the importance of engaging preschool children in a fun and interesting manner to facilitate data collection and establish trust between the children and the researcher. To achieve this, various methods were employed, including having children draw pictures, take photographs, and play games (Fargas-Malet et al., 2010; Punch, 2002). The study employed the draw-and-tell technique to collect data on children's perceptions of school. The draw-and-tell technique involves children creating drawings and subsequently providing explanations of their drawings. This technique serves as a diagnostic method that helps researchers understand how children construct thoughts and concepts (McWhirter et al., 2000; Shepardson, 2005). Prior to the implementation of the draw-and-tell technique, the children in the sample were interviewed and engaged in a conversation about school. Then, they were instructed to draw a picture by giving the instruction "Everyone draw a school picture". They were provided with crayons and white A4 paper, allowing them the freedom to draw their perception of a school. They were given ample time to complete their drawings without any interference or guidance. After the drawings were completed, each child was asked to describe their picture, and the researcher took notes during these descriptions.

Collection of Interview Data

The data collection process in the study involved conducting individual interviews with the children. These interviews were conducted in a designated area between the two classrooms to ensure that the children's responses were not influenced by each other. Prior to the interviews, introductory questions such as What is your name? and Do you have siblings? were asked to establish rapport and gather demographic information (Creswell, 2007). During the interviews, the researcher used a voice recorder to record the conversations. The interviews lasted between 30 and 40 minutes. Following the interviews, the researcher transcribed the recorded audio into a Word document on the computer.

Data Analysis

In the study, content analysis was employed as the method for analyzing the interview records and children's drawings, which is a commonly used approach in qualitative

data analysis. The content analysis was conducted in four stages: coding the data, finding themes, organizing codes and themes, and defining and interpreting the findings in the processing of qualitative research data obtained from documents (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). During the coding process, the researchers created codes based on the purpose of the research. The open coding method was used to generate the codes, and they were then tabulated and interpreted. Themes were developed by categorizing the codes, either by utilizing pre-existing themes developed by others or by creating a new theme system (Bilgin, 2006).

In the study, researchers analyzed the interviewees' discourses separately in terms of the determined themes and conducted an inter-coder reliability analysis. Aside from the researcher, one associate professor, one assistant professor, and one associate professor specializing in educational sciences participated as independent coders in the analysis of interview data. The content of the children's drawings was listed in detail. Themes related to similar qualities were created from the list. Afterwards, the themes were coded. After this first analysis, a break was given for 15 days. At the end of 15 days, the pictures were analysed again for the second time, lists were created and coding was done. The results of the first and second analyses were compared and the themes and codes were finalised. The inter-coder reliability percentage was calculated at 95% using the inter-coder reliability formula (Miles & Huberman, 1994). According to Kabapınar (2003), a consistency level of 80% or above is considered reliable in research analyses. In research using descriptive analysis, including direct quotations from the interviewees and drawing conclusions based on them are crucial (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). To ensure the transferability of the results obtained, the researchers described the data in detail and supported their findings with direct quotations from time to time. In the direct quotations, the real names of the participants were kept confidential and the direct quotations were expressed as C1, C2, etc. In the study, the researchers cited the sections they deemed important as quotations.

The Researcher's Role

At the beginning of qualitative research studies, the position of the researcher and possible biases that are thought to affect the study should be explained. In this context, if the researchers have any tendency, assumption, past experience or prejudice about the study, it is explained in this section (Creswell, 2016). The researcher has previously conducted many studies in the field of preschool education, directed theses and conducted many qualitative studies. In this study, all interviews with children were conducted by the researcher. The researcher was involved in the reporting process of the study by undertaking tasks such as content analysis, methodological structure, transcription and literature review as well as interviews.

The task of the researchers in this qualitative study is to reveal the participants' perceptions of the school and shed light on the problems and needs they experience. The researchers' other task is to protect the participants' information and data

confidentiality. The protection of data confidentiality is one of the first priorities of this study.

Findings

The study aimed to examine preschool children's perceptions of school. The findings obtained were categorized and presented in line with this purpose. In the analysis of the data collected from the demographic information form, semi-structured interview form, and children's drawings, the researchers identified ten themes related to preschool children's views on the concept of school. One of the themes focuses on preschool children's views on defining the concept of school. Figure 1 presents preschool children's views on defining the concept of school.

Findings Related to Preschool Children's Definitions of the Concept of School: Figure 1 presents the views of preschool children on the concept of school.

Figure 1. *Preschool Children's Views on the Concept of Schoo*
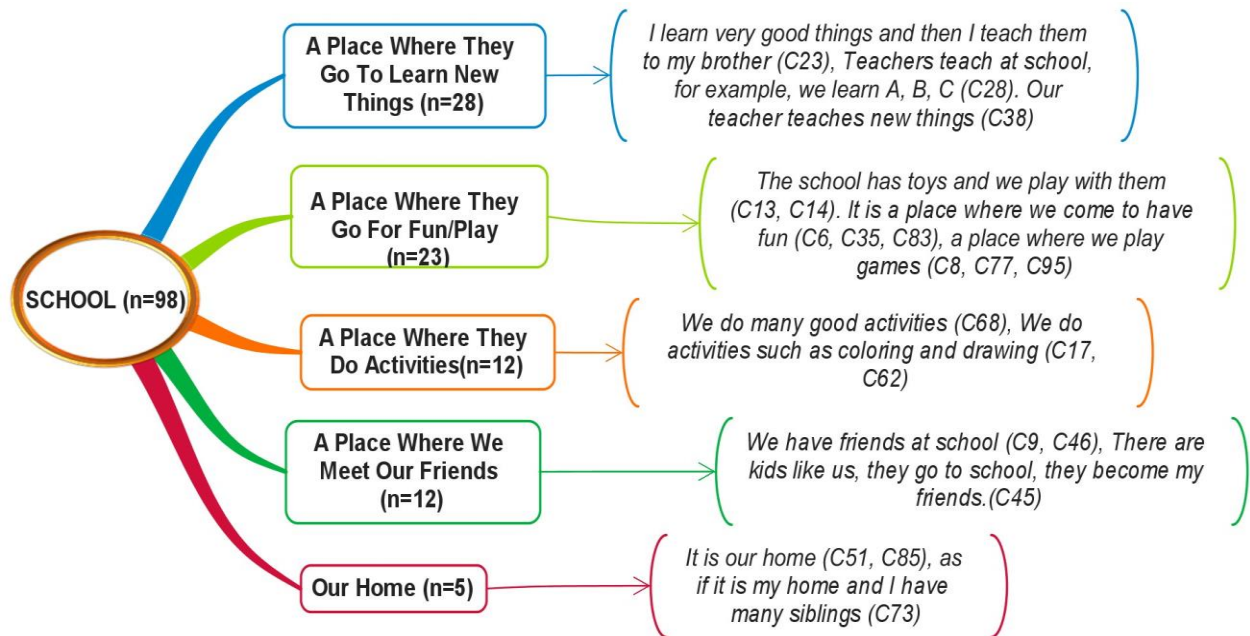
According to Figure 1, preschool children mostly defined school as A Place Where They Go To Learn New Things (n:30), A Place Where They Go For Fun/Play (n:28), and A Place Where They Do Activities (n:23). Figures 2 and 3 depict the pictures reflecting the views of the children.

Figure 2. *An example of a Picture Related to the Theme of a Place Where You Go to Learn New Things (Age5) (C23)*

Figure 2 presents a visual representation of the picture drawn by a child who defined school as 'a place to go to learn new things' at the highest rate. The child's drawing in this figure may include a teacher figure and letter symbols.

Figure 3. *An Example of a Picture from the Category of a Place to Go for Fun/Play* (Age 5) (C35)
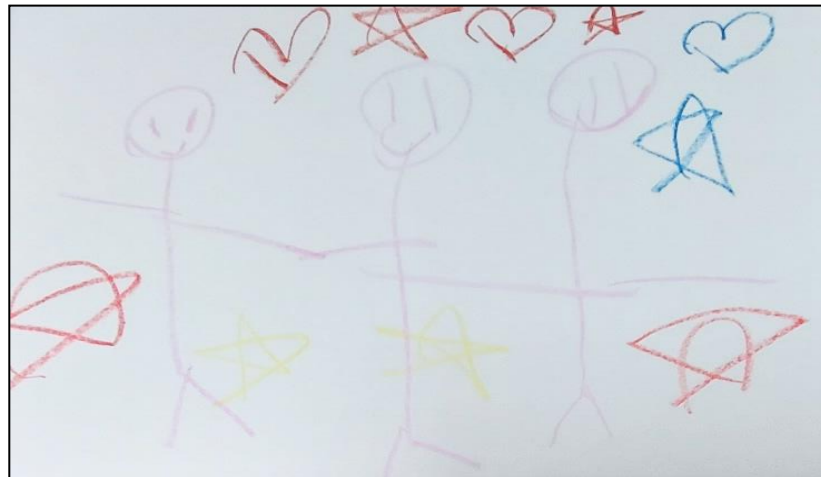
Figure 3 represents the picture drawn by a child who defined school as 'a place where children go for fun/play' at the highest rate. In this picture, the child is depicted as playing games with her friends.

Findings on Preschool Children's Reasons for Attending School: Figure 4 presents the views of preschool children on the reasons for attending school.

Figure 4. *Preschool Children's Views on the Reasons for Coming to School*
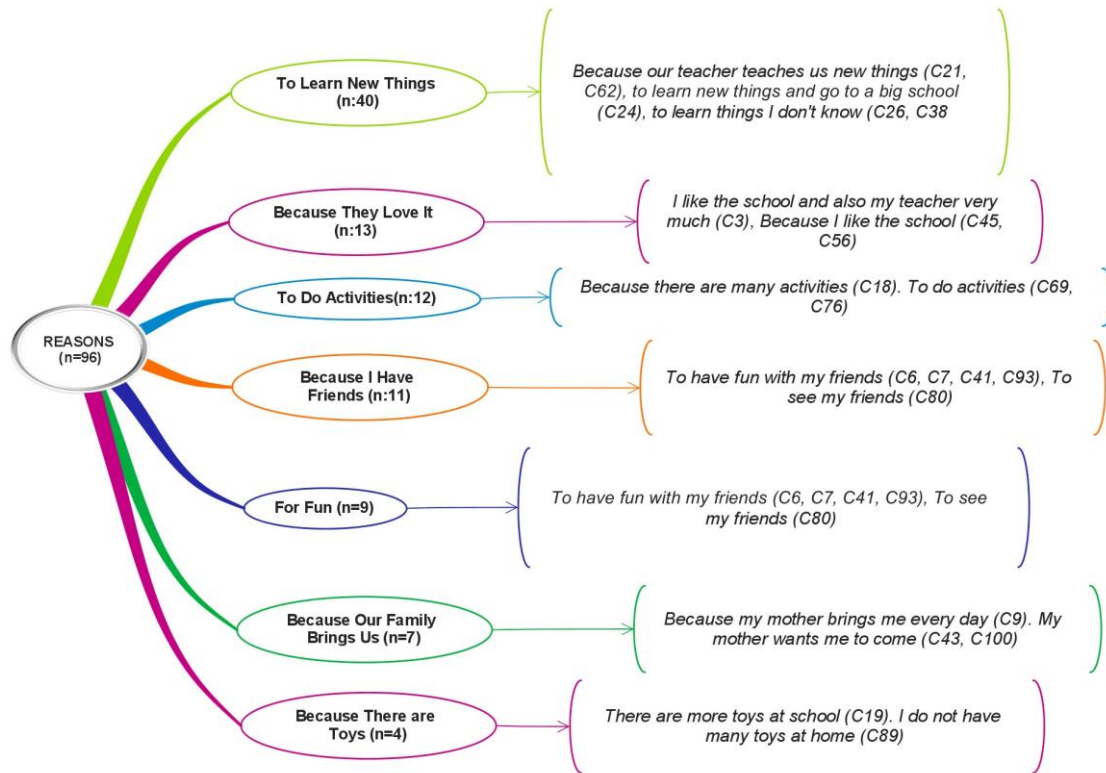
Figure 4 represents the reasons stated by preschool children for coming to school. The highest rate of responses included To Learn New Things (n: 40), Because They Love It (n: 13), and To Do Activities (n: 12). Figures 5 and 6 depict pictures reflecting the views of the children.

Figure 5. *An Example of a Picture in the Category 'To Learn New Things' (Age 6) (C38*
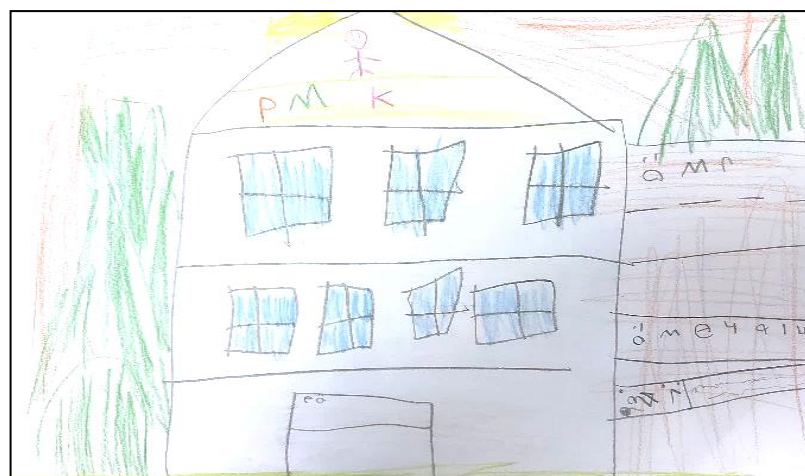
In Figure 5, the child who defined the reason for coming to school as 'to learn new things' drew letter symbols on and around the school building.

Figure 6. *An Example of a Picture in the Category 'Because I Have Friends' (Age 5) (C93)*

In Figure 6, the child who defined the reason for coming to school as 'Because I have friends' drew himself and his friends in front of the school building.

Findings on How Preschool Children Feel at School: Figure 7 presents the views of preschool children on how they felt at school.

Figure 7. *Preschool Children's Views on How They Feel at School*
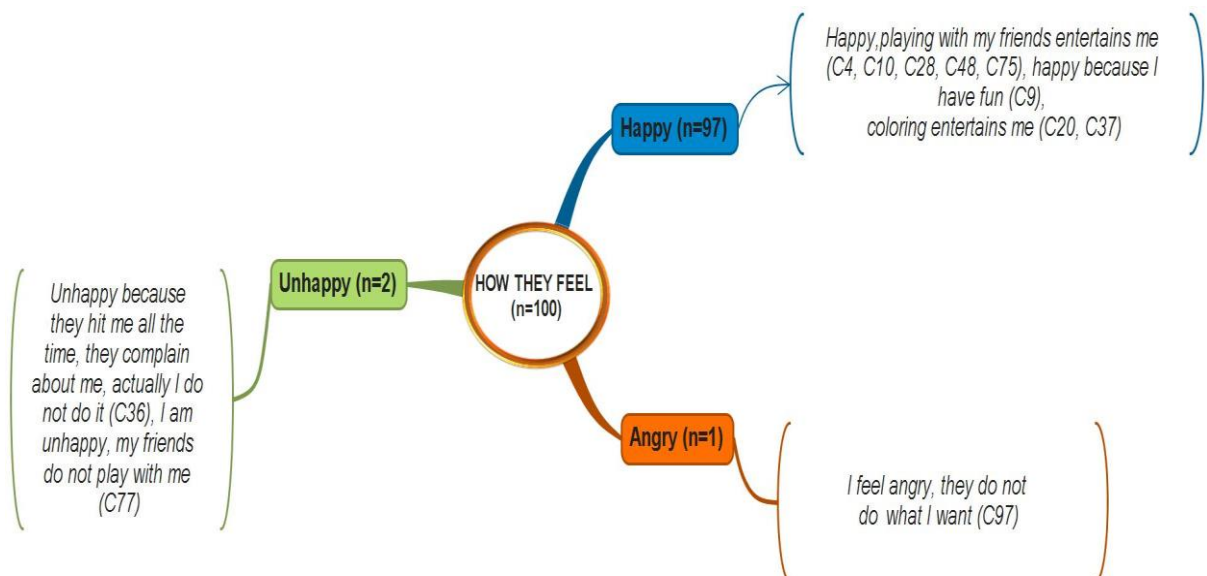
According to Figure 7, preschool children reported feeling happy at school at a very high rate (n: 97), two children reported feeling unhappy, and one child reported feeling angry. Figures 8 and 9 depict pictures reflecting the views of the children.

Figure 8. *An Example of a Picture from the Happy Category (Age 6) (C10)*

In Figure 8, the child who stated that he felt 'happy' at school drew himself inside the school building and indicated that he was happy by drawing a heart symbol.

Figure 9 *An Example Picture for the Unhappy Category (Age 6) (C36)*
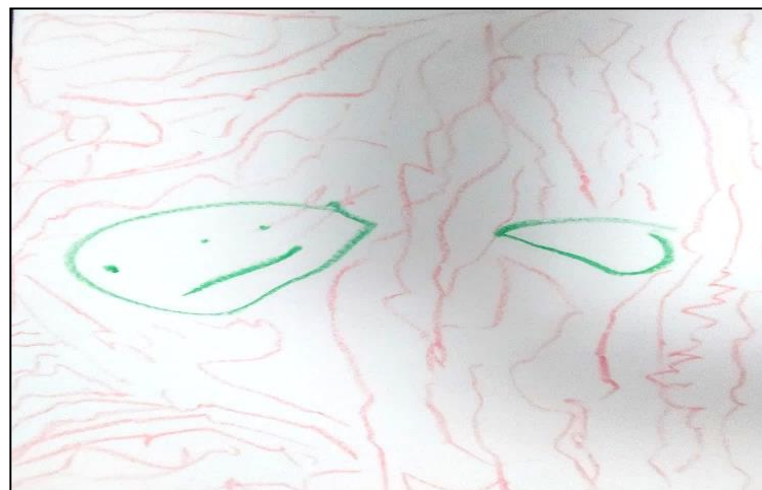
In Figure 9, the child who stated that he/she felt 'unhappy' at school drew himself/herself inside the school building with a lonely and emotionless expression.

Findings on Preschool Children's Favorite Activities at School: Figure 10 presents the preschool children's views on their favorite activities at school.

Figure 10. *Preschool Children's Opinions on Their Favorite Activities at School*
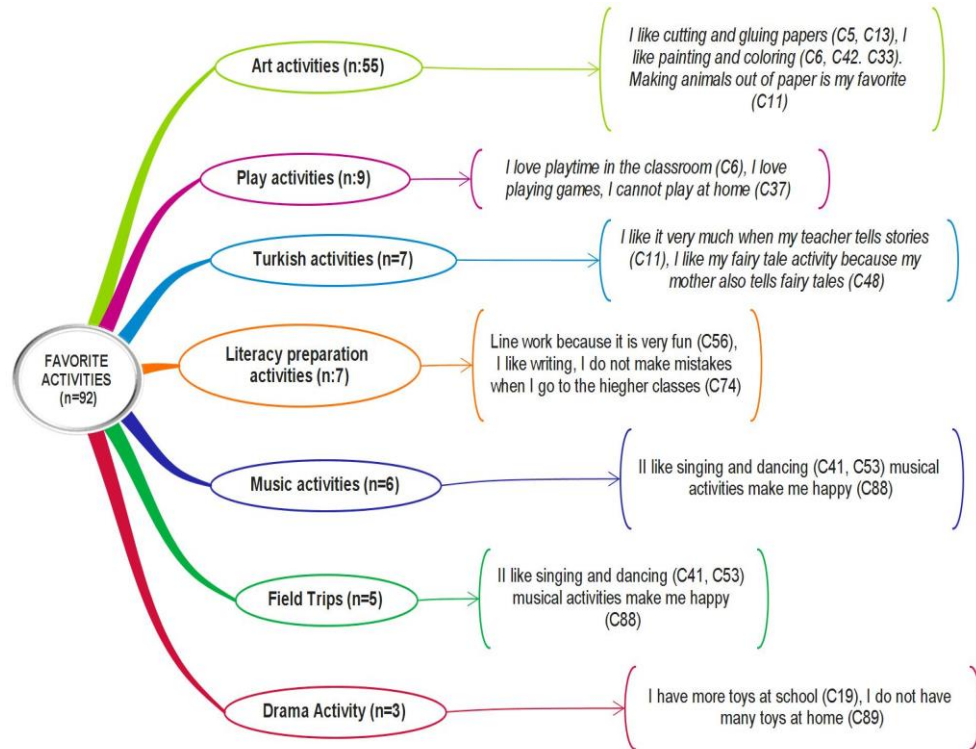
In Figure 10, preschool children's favorite activities at school included art activities (n: 55), play activities (n: 9), Turkish activities, and literacy preparation activities (n: 7). Figure 11 depicts the picture reflecting the views of the children.

Figure 11. *An Example of a Picture from the Art Activity Category (Age 5) (C42)*

In Figure 11, the child who defined his/her favorite activity at school as 'Art' drew herself with paints in her hands.

Findings Related to the Activities that Preschool Children Dislike at School: Figure 12 presents the views of preschool children on the activities they disliked at school.

Figure 12. Preschool Children's Opinions on Activities They Dislike at School
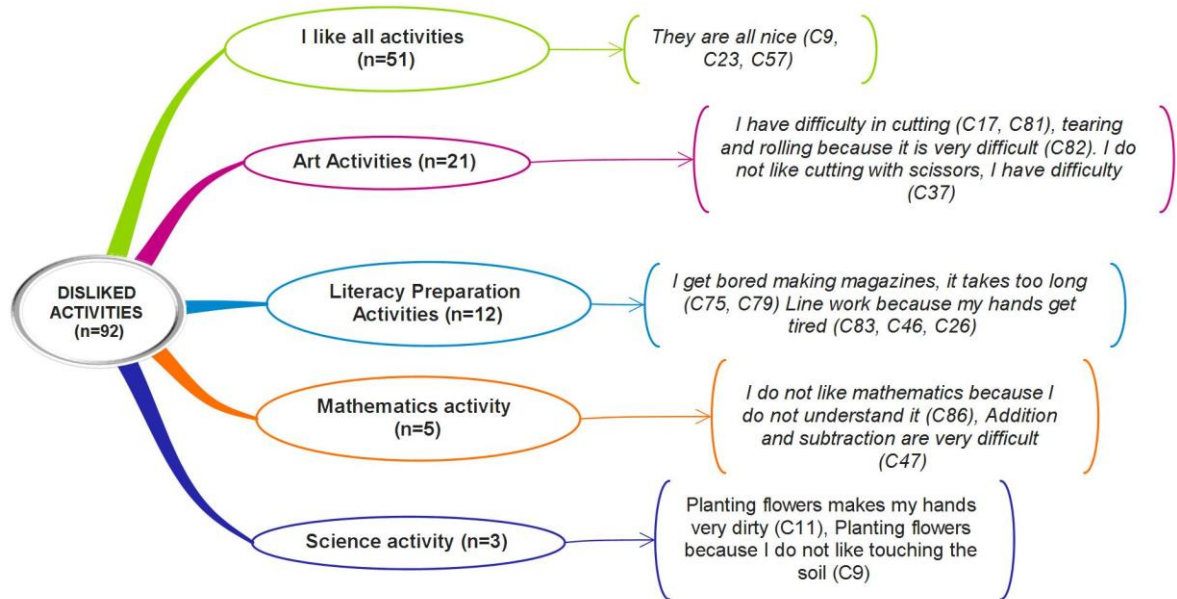
In Figure 12, the activities that preschool children disliked at school were Art Activities (n: 20) and Literacy Preparation Activities (n: 10) at the highest rate.

Findings on Preschool Children's Favorite Areas at School: Figure 13 presents the preschool children's views on their favorite areas at school.

Figure 13. *Preschool Children's Opinions on the Areas They Like at School*
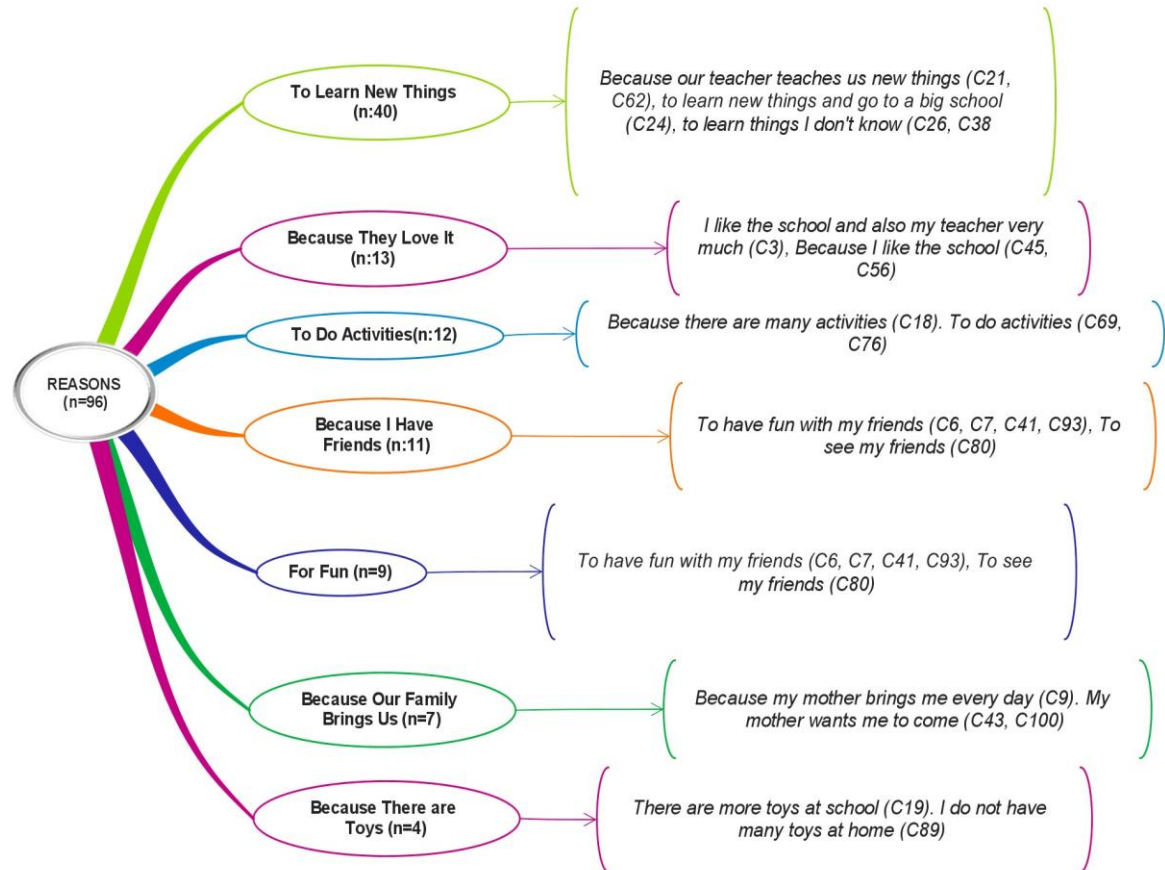
According to Figure 13, preschool children's favorite places at school were the Garden (n: 30), the Dramatic Play Center (n: 23), and the Playground (n: 14). Figures 14 and 15 present pictures reflecting the views of the children.

Figure 14. *An Example of a Picture from the Garden Category (Age 6) (C55)*

In Figure 14, the child who expressed the area he liked most as the 'Garden' drew a park area next to the school building in the picture.

Figure 15. *An Example of a Picture from the Dramatic Play Center Category (Age 6) (C14)*

In Figure 15, the child who defined her favorite place at school as the 'Dramatic Play Center' drew herself in the dramatic play center with her friends and a doll in her hand.

Findings on Preschool Children's Favorite Toys/Materials at School: Figure 16 presents preschool children's views on the toys/materials they liked the most at school.

Figure 16. *Preschool Children's Opinions on the Toys/Materials They Most Enjoy at School*
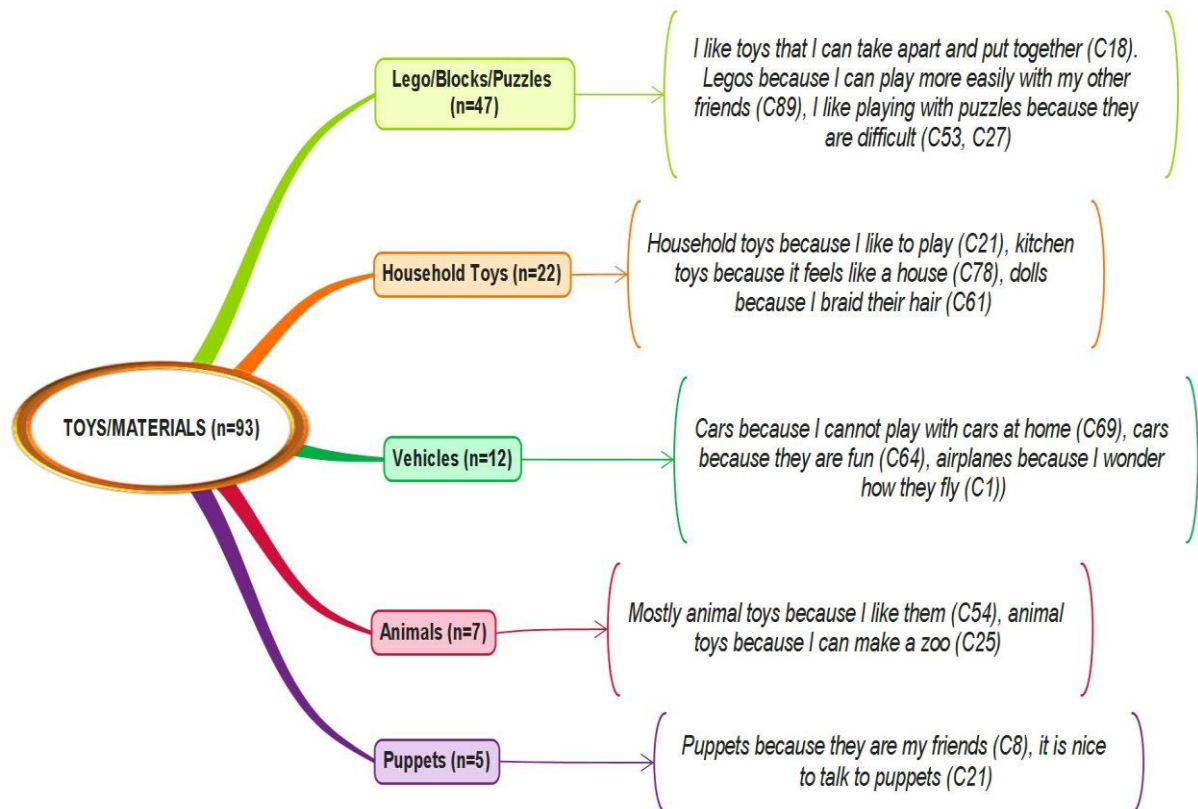
In Figure 16, the toys/materials that preschool children most enjoyed playing with at school were Lego/Blocks/Puzzles (n: 47), Play House Toys (n: 22), and Tools (n: 12). Figures 17 and 18 demonstrate pictures reflecting the views of the children.

Figure 17. *An Example of a Picture from the Lego/Blocks Category (Age 6) (C57)*

According to Figure 17, the child who defined the toys/materials she liked to play with the most at school as 'Lego/Blocks/Puzzles' made towers with blocks in the picture she drew.

Figure 18. *An Example of an Image from the Vehicles Category (Age 5) (C64)*
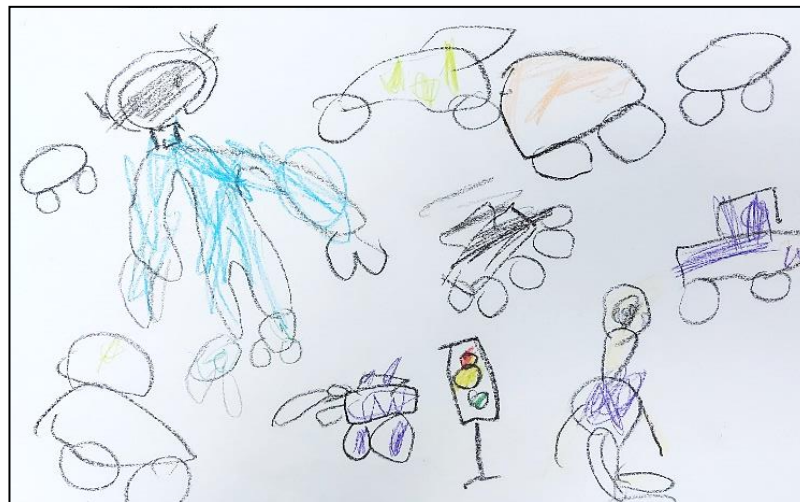
In Figure 18, the child who defined the toys/materials he liked to play with at school the most as 'Vehicles' drew cars in his drawing.

Findings Regarding What Other Things Preschool Children Want to Make School A Better Place: Figure 19 presents the opinions of preschool children on what else they would like to see at school to make it more beautiful.

Figure 19. *Preschool Children's Views on What Else They Would Like to See At School*
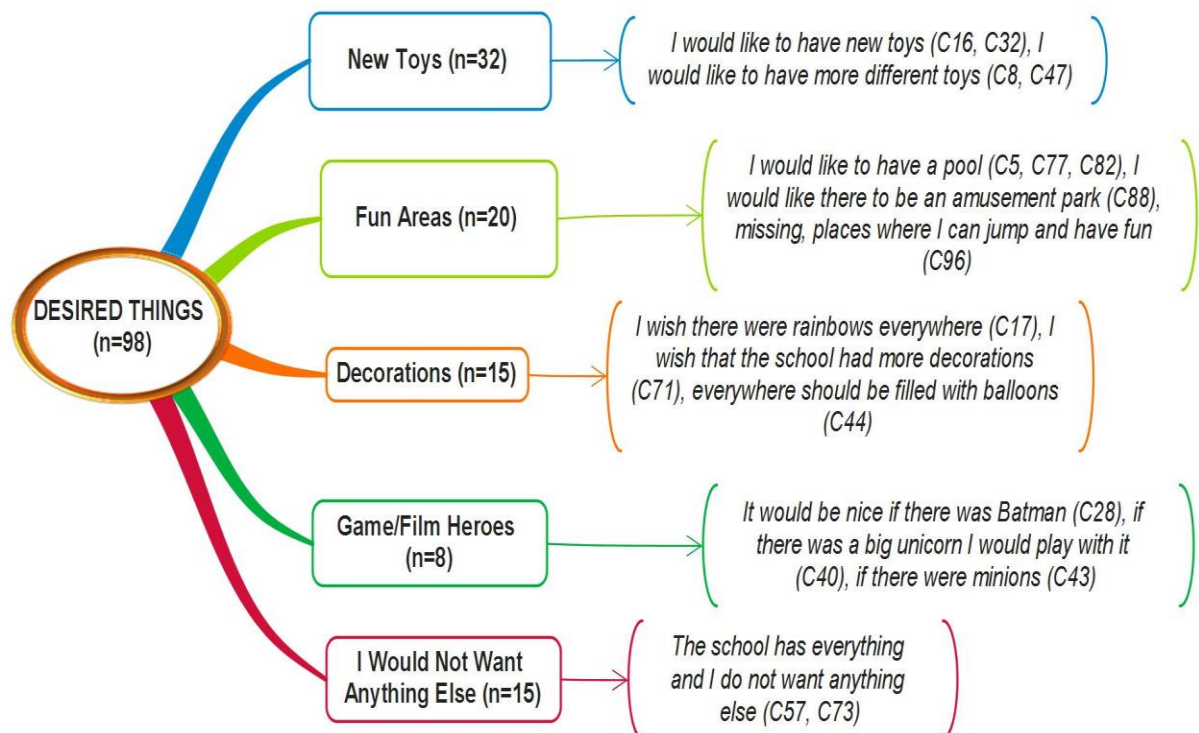
In Figure 19, preschool children stated that the school would be more beautiful if there were new toys (n: 32), fun areas (n: 20), and decorations (n: 15) the most. Figures 20 and 21 show pictures reflecting the views of the children.

Figure 20. *An Example of a Picture from the Decorations Category (Age 5) (C71)*

In Figure 20, the child who stated that the school would be more beautiful if there were 'Decorations' in the school decorated the roof of the school in the form of a rainbow.

Figure 21. *An Example of a Picture from the Decorations Category (Age 5) (C44)*

In Figure 21, the child who stated that the school would be more beautiful if there were 'decorations' in the school decorated the school with balloons.

Findings on Preschool Children's Preferences for Attending School and Staying at Home: Figure 22 presents the views of preschool children on their preferences for coming to school and staying at home.

Figure 22. *Preschool Children's Opinions on Their Preferences for Coming to School and Staying at Home*
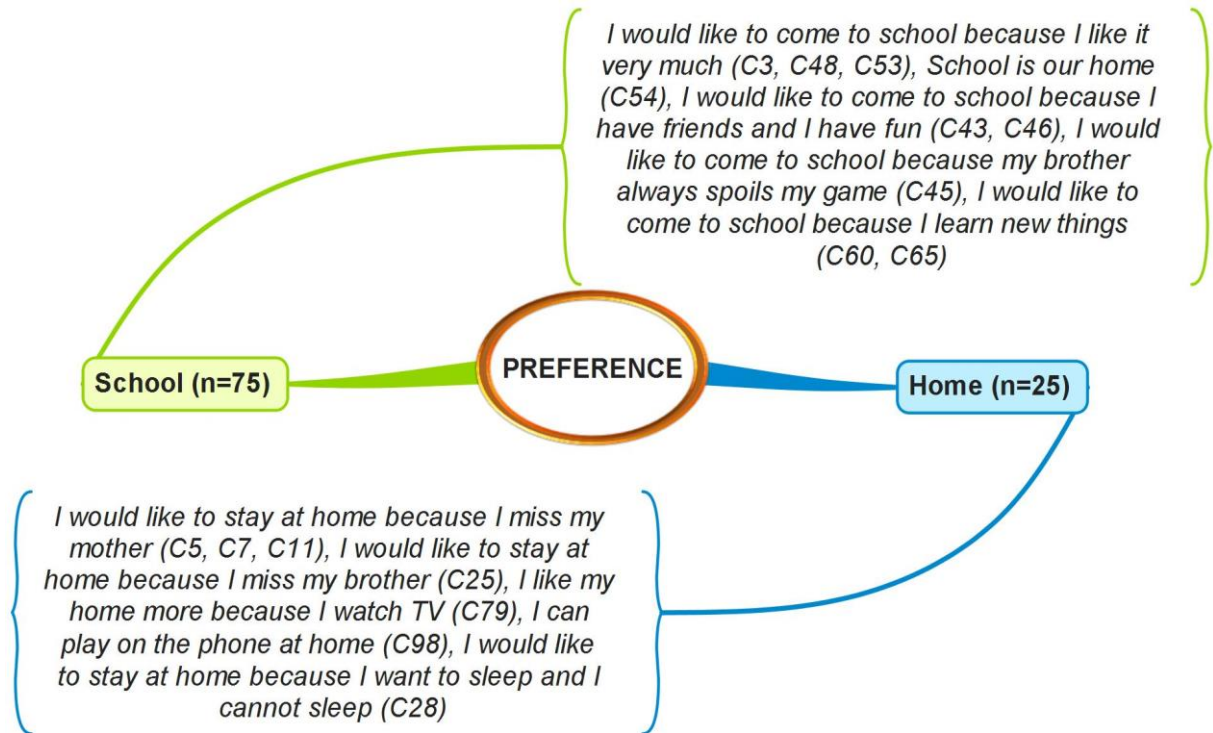
Figure 22 shows that the number of preschool children who wanted to come to school (n: 75) was higher than the number of children who wanted to stay at home (n: 25). Figures 23 and 24 show pictures reflecting the views of the children.

Figure 23. *An Example of a Picture from the Category 'I Want to Come to School' (Age 5) (C60)*

In Figure 23, the child who said 'I want to come to school' drew a picture of a school and decorated the surroundings of the school with pictures.

Figure 24. *An Example of a Picture from the Category 'I Want to Stay at Home' (Age 5) (C98)*
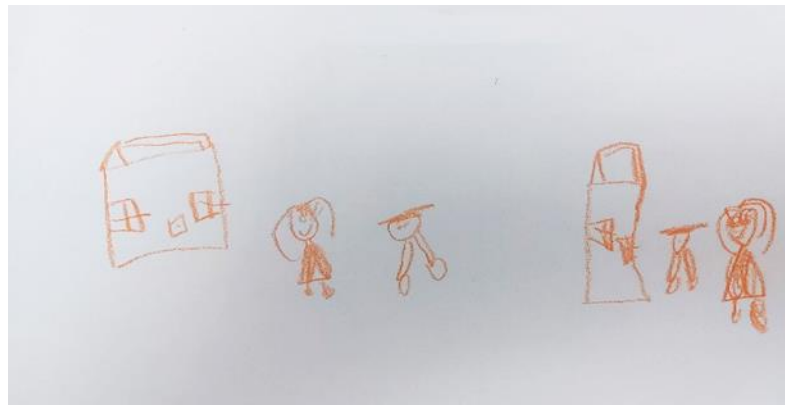
In Figure 24, the child who said 'I want to stay at home' drew his teacher and himself next to the school and his mother and brother next to the house.

Findings Related to Preschool Children's Reflection of the Concept of School in Their Drawings: Figure 25 presents an analysis of preschool children's drawings of the concept of school.

Figure 25. *The Distribution of the Objects Used in the Drawings of Preschool Children*
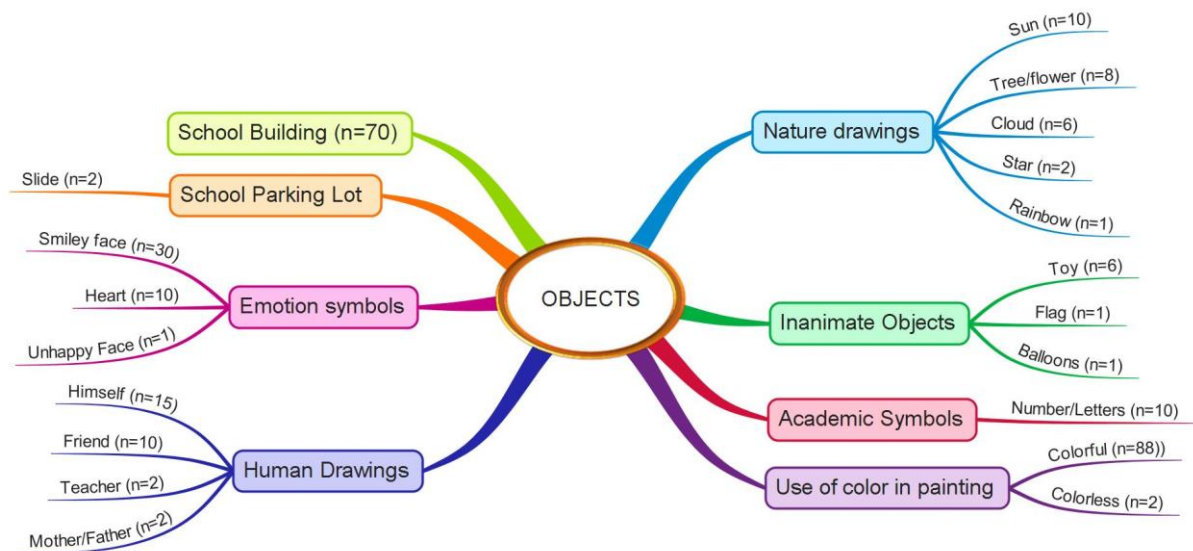
Figure 25 shows that children mostly drew school buildings (n: 70), emotion symbols (n: 41), humans (n: 27) and nature (n: 27). The category of School Buildings was the most commonly observed (n: 70) in children's drawings. This suggests that children spend most of their time at school, and this environment leaves a dominant impression on them. Representations related to the category of School Park Area, Slide (n: 2), reflect children's interest in the outdoor spaces on school premises and show children's interest in playgrounds and elements such as slides in the school park area and the significance of the time they spend in these areas.

In the Emotion Symbols category, Smiley Face (n: 30) was the most frequently drawn emotion expression, suggesting that children prefer to express their positive emotions. Further, the Heart (n: 10) symbol represented emotions such as love or contentment, and the scarcity of the Unhappy Face (n: 1) in drawings indicated that children express their negative emotions less.

Under the category of Human drawings, children drew Themselves (n: 15), Friends (n: 10) who are important in their social environment, Teachers (n: 2) and family members (Mother/Father, n: 2). In the Nature category, the use of natural elements such as the Sun (n: 10), Trees and Flowers (n: 8) and Clouds (n: 6) showed that children are interested in nature and see these elements as a part of their daily lives. Stars (n: 2) and Rainbows (n: 1) were drawn less frequently.

In the category of Inanimate Objects, Toys (n: 6) and less frequently Flags (n: 1) and Balloons (n: 1) were drawn, showing children's preferences during playtime. In the Academic Symbols category, Numbers/Letters (n: 10) were represented, indicating the importance of learning processes and school in children's lives. Regarding the Use of Colour in Drawings, the predominance of Coloured (n: 88) drawings and the scarcity of Colourless (n: 2) drawings were noteworthy.

Results and Discussion

Based on the results of the study, preschool children defined school as *The Place Where You Go to Learn New Things* at the highest rate. Children exhibited this in their drawings with the number/letter symbols they drew. The results suggested that children perceived school as a place where new acquisitions are made and academic skills are acquired. Civek (2018) observed that preschool children defined school as a *Learning Place* at the highest rate. When the literature is examined, this result is in line with the traditional perception in societies. According to the traditional view, school is considered as a place of learning, not play (Samuelsson & Carlsson, 2008). Wildinger & McIntrye (2011) stated that children think that preparation for primary school should be done in the preschool period. It can be said that parents' wishes are also effective on children's perceptions of school. Further, children perceived school as a *Place to Go for Fun/Play*. In response to the question What else would you like to see that would make the school beautiful?, the children stated that the school would be more beautiful if there were more *New Toys* and *Fun Areas*. Yazıcı et al. (2018) stated that preschool children believed that school was an 'entertaining' element and that children produced metaphors such as 'Playground', 'Park', and 'Fun' under the category of 'Fun' related to the concept of 'school'. The reason for this can be that children learn by having fun because the activities offered to children in the preschool period are play-based; therefore, they view school as an entertaining element (MoNE, 2013; Yazıcı et al., 2018).

According to the research findings, most preschool children *felt happy at school and preferred to go to school rather than stay at home.*In the school drawings of the children, the children expressed their positive perceptions of the school by using positive emotion expressions such as *Smiley Faces* and *Hearts*. In the analysis of the opinions of the children, they used expressions such as *Happy, playing with my friends entertains me,* and *Happy because I have fun*. Therefore, it is important for children to spend time and play games with their friends at school. Uusitalo-Malmivaara (2012) stated that relationships with peers are an effective variable related to school happiness (Uusitalo-Malmivaara, 2012). According to Koçyiit (2014), almost all children stated that teachers should play games and/or that they would be happier if they did. At the same time, the fact that preschool education environments are rich in materials and that children can play with toys can also be considered as a reason why children feel happy. Civek (2018) stated that in an environment with rich, pleasant, and interesting play materials, children were extremely happy and developed positive perceptions of the school environment. Aksoy and Baran (2010) examined children's perceptions of school through pictures and concluded that the content of the environment and the quantity and quality of its different dimensions effectively determined the child's perception and that it was important to equip preschool education institutions. The results of the research show that one child felt angry and two children felt frustrated at school. When the opinions of the children are analysed, it is seen that they used expressions such as "*unhappy because they hit me all the time*", "*my*

friends do not play with me". When these views of the children are analysed, it can be said that negative relationships with their friends affect their perception of school. Similarly, Uusitalo-Malmivaara (2012) and Nairn et al. (2011) stated that relationships with peers affect school perception.

The research results further suggested that while most of the children preferred to come to school instead of staying at home, some preferred to stay at home. Children who wanted to stay at home stated that this was because they did not want to be separated from their family members, such as *I want to stay at home because I miss my mother*, I *want to stay at home because I miss my sibling* and because they wanted to play with technological devices, such as *I like home more because I watch TV, I can play on my phone at home.* When a child's enrolment in preschool coincides with the birth of a sibling, if the birth of a sibling coincides with the start of preschool education, the child may worry that their family no longer values or loves them as much as before. These concerns can manifest as resistance or reluctance towards attending school (Özkaya, 2020; Solter, 2020; Yavuz, 2016). One can assume that these children have negative perceptions toward school due to the reasons mentioned above. Özdemir and Kalaycı (2013) stated that children with a negative school perception were unhappy, did not want to come to school, and exhibited disinterested behaviors in activities.

The results of the research indicated that preschool children's favorite activities at school were *Art Activities* and *Play Activities*. Their least favorite activities were *Art Activities* and *Literacy Preparation Activities*. The examination of the opinions of the children revealed that their opinions regarding the reasons for not liking art activities were as follows: *I have difficulty in cutting, tearing, rolling because it is very difficult*, *I do not like cutting with scissors, it is hard for me*. Their opinions regarding the reasons for not liking the Literacy Preparation Activities were as follows: *I get bored making magazines, line work takes too long, and my hands get tired*. Based on these results, one can understand that the fine motor development of the children was not at the desired level and the activities being carried out were not suitable for their developmental characteristics. Accordingly, children developed a negative attitude toward the work done in these activities. An analysis of the literature revealed studies showing that teachers lacked sufficient knowledge to support preschool children's writing preparation skills (Fogo, 2008; Güleç, 2008). Children with inadequate readiness in skills such as holding a pencil and cutting with scissors may experience frustration and develop negative emotions, which may also affect their academic success. For this reason, researchers have stated that practices that will improve children's attention and fine motor skills should be included more (Ericsson, 2008; Grissmer et al., 2010; Vander Fels et al., 2015).

When the results are examined, it is noteworthy that *Art Activity* was among the activities that children both liked and disliked. Teachers may have incorporated art activities more frequently than other activities, which is why this condition exists. According to Kesiciolu (2018), art activities were the activity that preschool teachers included the most. Civek (2018) stated that the activities that children did at school

were mostly limited to activities such as games, art, and literacy preparation activities and that other activities were not included much.

Another finding of the study indicated that preschool children's highest-rated favorite places at school were the *Garden* and the *Dramatic Play Center*. Aksoy and Baran (2010) concluded that the place where children felt the happiest in the school environment was the section for playing at home. They stated that this situation was caused by the fact that this section was mostly accessible and usable by children. In the literature, similar studies have shown that the area that the children preferred the most was the dramatic play center (Çandır, 2020; Özyürek & Kılınç, 2015; Yılmaz, 2019). Çandır (2020) stated that the reason for this situation was that the dramatic play center was rich in terms of materials and that the variety of activities was high. İsmailoğlu and Yılmaz (2019) stated that all children enjoyed spending time in the garden. Çandır (2020) observed that children preferred a structured playground consisting of playground equipment such as slides, climbing areas, and large towers. However, an analysis of the results of this study revealed that only two children drew pictures of the school garden area. The reason for this situation can be the lack of space in the garden area, the insufficiency, or the underutilization of school garden areas. Hinkley et al. (2016) stated that children enjoyed spending time in the garden, but there were not enough activities organized in these areas. Similarly, Çelik (2012) stated that the open spaces in preschool education institutions were not used effectively and that the gardens were not suitable for children to move freely. Karaküçük (2008) stated that the gardens in preschool education institutions did not have sufficient features. Kuo and Faber Taylor (2004) stated that children who spend time in nature are less stressed and happier than those who do not spend time in nature. Similarly, Wells and Evans (2003) and Lundy and Trawick Smith (2021) found that children who spend time in nature have longer attention spans, higher creativity, and increased levels of the happiness hormone. In a study conducted by Bjørgen and Svendsen (2015), it was determined that as teachers included outdoor activities, teachers enjoyed garden activities more and became better role models for children.

Recommendations

In light of all these findings, preschool education institutions should be better equipped by increasing the variety of toys and materials. Researchers should investigate the reasons why children do not want to go to school. In preschool education institutions, teachers should include all activities based on children's developmental levels. They should conduct appropriate activities for fine motor skills development. Promoting children's perceptions of school can be achieved through various strategies, including organizing school areas to meet children's mobility needs and maximizing the utilization of school gardens. For preschools without a dedicated garden, it is important to create alternative spaces that cater to children's needs. Additionally,

establishing social areas that encourage peer interaction can contribute to positive perceptions of school among children.

This study's limitations include the fact that there were only 100 children in the study group, and that the data collected only included the participants' drawings and responses to the semi-structured interview questions. Although it is acknowledged that the effects of uncontrollable variables on participant answers may be minimal, they might nonetheless originate from the researcher, participants, and application contexts.

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Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

Okul algısını okulun fiziki durumu, çocukların okulda kendilerini nasıl hissettiği, okulda uygulanan kurallar, çocukların sosyoekonomik durumu, okulun bulunduğu bölgenin gelişmişlik düzeyi gibi faktörler etkileyebilmektedir (Toprakçı & Gülmez, 2018; Voight, Hanson, O'Malley & Adekanye, 2015; Yüner & Özdemir, 2017). Piaget, çocukların dünyayı yetişkinlerin gördüğü gibi göremeyeceklerini belirtmiştir (Wood, 2003). Bu nedenle çocukların okula ilişkin algıları da yetişkinlerden farklı olacaktır. Çocuk için mekân doğrudan anlaşılmaz. Fakat yaşadıkları deneyimler aracılığıyla şekillenir. Mekân ile etkileşim geliştikçe; mekânın zihinsel çerçevede oluşan görüntüleri de gelişmektedir. Mekân sahip olduğu pek çok uyarıcı ile duyu organlarına bilgi aktarımı sağlamaktadır. Olumlu okul algısı olan çocuklar okul öncesi dönemden itibaren okulu sevme, etkinliklere katılma, arkadaşları ve öğretmeniyle iyi geçinme, mutlu birer birey olma gibi davranışlar sergilerken, okul algısı olumsuz olan çocukların bu durumun tam tersi olarak mutsuz oldukları, okula gelmek istemedikleri ve etkinliklere ilgisiz davranışlar sergiledikleri gözlemlenmektedir (Özdemir & Kalaycı, 2013).

Okul öncesi dönem çocukların okul algılarının ortaya çıkarılması amacının gerçekleştirilmesi için araştırmada nitel araştırma yöntemi kullanılmıştır Nitel araştırma "gözlem, görüşme ve doküman analizi gibi nitel veri toplama yöntemlerinin kullanıldığı, algıların ve olayların doğal ortamda gerçekçi ve bütüncül bir biçimde ortaya konmasına yönelik nitel bir sürecin izlendiği araştırma" türü olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Bu araştırmada temel nitel araştırma modeli kullanılmıştır (Creswell, 2007; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). Araştırmaya 2022-2023 eğitim-öğretim yılı güz döneminde beş farklı anaokulunda eğitim gören 60-72 ay olmak üzere toplamda 100 çocuk katılmıştır. Çalışma grubundaki çocukların 41'i kız, 59'u erkek çocuktan oluşmaktadır. Çalışma grubunda yer alan çocukların tamamı normal gelişim gösteren ve özel bir gereksinimi bulunmayan çocuklardır. Çalışma grubunun oluşturulmasında amaçlı örnekleme kullanılmıştır (Patton, 2014). *Okul öncesi dönem çocukların okul algılarının incelenmesi amacıyla "Okul Algısı Görüşme Formu" ve "Okul Resimlerinin Çizimi"* olmak üzere iki farklı veri toplama aracı kullanılmıştır. Okul öncesi dönemde çocuklarla yapılan çalışmaların en büyük zorluklarından biri çocukların tanımadıkları bir araştırmacıya bilgi vermek istememesi ve araştırmaya katılmak istememesi olabilmektedir. Çocuklara resim çizdirme, fotoğraf çekme ve oyun oynama vb. yöntemler; yapılandırılmamış süreçlerle çocukların daha eğlenceli ve ilginç zaman geçirmesini sağlayacak ve çocukların araştırmacıya olan güvenini artırarak veri toplamasını kolaylaştıracaktır (Punch, 2002; Fargas-Malet, McSherry, Larkin & Robinson, 2010). Bu nedenle araştırmada çocukların okul algılarına ilişkin verileri toplamak için çiz ve anlat tekniği kullanılmıştır. Araştırmada ikinci olarak veriler görüşme tekniği kullanılarak elde edilmiştir. Çocuklarla yapılan görüşmeler iki sınıf arasında bulunan alanda çocuklarla tek tek yapılmıştır. Bu sayede çocukların birbirinin cevaplarından etkilenmeleri engellenmiştir. *Her bir görüşme öncesi* öncelikle, çocuklara daha rahat iletişim kurabilmeleri için ve demografik bilgilerini de ortaya çıkaran "Adın nedir?, Kardeşin var mı?" gibi ısındırma soruları sorulmuştur (Creswell, 2007). Görüşmeler ses kayıt

cihazı ile kayıt altına alınmıştır. Her bir görüşme 30-40 dakika arası sürmüştür. Daha sonra alınan ses kayıtları araştırmacı tarafından bilgisayar ortamında word belgesi olarak hazırlanmıştır. Görüşme kayıtlarının ve çocukların resimlerinin değerlendirilmesi sürecinde, elde edilen verilerin daha ayrıntılı bir şekilde irdelenmesi amacıyla, nitel veri analizinde kullanılan yöntemlerden biri olan "içerik analizi" kullanılmıştır.

Araştırma sonucunda çocukların okulu yeni şeyler öğrenilen yer olarak tanımladıkları, okulda kendilerini mutlu hissettikleri, en sevdikleri etkinliğin sanat etkinliği olduğu, okulda en sevdikleri alanın bahçe alanı olduğu, en çok lego/blok ve yapbozları tercih ettikleri, okula gelmeyi tercih ettikleri ve resimlerinde en çok okul binası çizdikleri görülmektedir. Tüm bu bulgular ışığında okulöncesi eğitim kurumlarında oyuncak ve materyal çeşitliliğinin artırılarak daha donanımlı hale getirilmesi, okula gelmek istemeyen çocukların okula gelmeme nedenlerinin araştırılarak özellikle ebeveynlere kardeş kıskançlığı üzerine eğitimler verilmesi, okul öncesi eğitim kurumlarında öğretmenlerin etkinlikler arasında denge sağlayarak bütün etkinliklere dengeli bir şekilde yer verilmesi, öğretmenlerin çocukların gelişim düzeylerini çok iyi saptaması ve yapılan etkinliklerde çocukların gelişim düzeylerine, özellikle küçük kas gelişimlerine, uygun etkinlikler yapılması, okullarda çocukların hareket ihtiyaçlarını sağlayacak alanlar düzenlenmesi ve özellikle okul bahçelerinin etkili olarak kullanılması, okul bahçesi bulunmayan anaokullarında çocuklara uygun alanlar ve çocukların akranlarıyla zaman geçirebilecekleri sosyal alanlar oluşturulmasının çocukların okula ilişkin algılarını olumlu yönde artırabileceği düşünülmektedir.

Ethics Committee Approval: The ethics committee approval for this study/reserach was obtained   from   Giresun University (Number: E-50288587-050.01.04-159906).

Informed Consent: Informed consent was obtained from the 100 of participants.

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High School Teachers' Opinions on Homework

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Abstract: The research aims to examine the opinions of high school teachers about homework. The present study was designed as a phenomenology design, a qualitative research method, according to the researchers. In this study, the researchers developed a semi-structured interview form as a tool for data collection. Six branch teachers working in three different types of high schools, namely Vocational High School, Anatolian High School, and Project-Based Science High School in Erzurum city centre during the 2021-2022 academic year, voluntarily participated. They were included in this research using the maximum variation sampling method. The researchers examined the data obtained using the thematic analysis method. As a result of the analysis, while there were general differences in our teachers' opinions about homework, similarities were seen in using homework as a measurement-evaluation tool. Notably, homework, which serves as an essential method in the educational process, exhibited profound differences among teachers and students. These differences encompassed a broad spectrum, spanning from the type of school to the type of course, encompassing how homework was implemented and the approaches students took towards it. Furthermore, the researchers identified that the primary motivation for completing homework in high school either stemmed from anxiety about receiving grades or arose from the preference of senior students for a single type of homework (question-solving) as they strived to prepare for university exams. By examining the perspectives of high school teachers, this study significantly contributes to our understanding of the potential effects of homework on student success and learning processes.

Keywords: Homework, high school, homework types, teacher views, measurement and evaluation

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Introduction

Homework is a learning activity frequently used in education, especially in reinforcing and repeating in education, including out-of-school applications and research of what has been learned. In this way, teachers follow their students, and students can maintain their learning and development (Koç Akran, 2021; Cooper, 2001; Deniz, 2019; Gökdağ Baltaoğlu et al., 2017; Türkoğlu et al., 2014).

Educators assign students various assignments at every level of education, with different purposes and types. Homework is recognized as being assigned both for educational objectives and for the students' self-improvement. In particular, because classroom teachers aim to reinforce and recapitulate lessons through homework, they often extend this practice to out-of-school activities to help students retain the information conveyed in the classroom (Arslan & Elma, 2023; Baynazoğlu, 2018; Demir & Yaman, 2020; Susam & Demir, 2019).

Homework intensity is a highly debated topic, with the amount of homework given dependent on the student's grade level and developmental stage (Taşlıcalı, 2020). Intensive homework can create pressure from parents and school expectations, leading to time constraints that harm the student's personal time and family relationships. This can even cause neurobehavioral problems in adolescents (Galloway et al., 2013; Simplicio, 2005; Yu et al., 2023). Research suggests that students may even need to take a break from school due to the heavy workload (Kralovac & Buell, 2001; Rudman, 2014). Khan (2016) believes that homework only highlights the inadequacy of classroom teaching and imposes the responsibility of learning on the student at home. Homework deadlines have also been a topic of discussion, with research showing that they can elevate anxiety levels and lead to conflicts between students and parents (Cooper, 2001; Çelebi & Arslantaş, 2021; Pomerantz et al., 2006; Walker et al., 2004).

Homework may vary according to its purposes, content, method, teacher's strategy, and levels, such as primary school, secondary school, high school and even university. These are numerical, verbal and professional course assignments depending on the course content; subject revision homework; preparation homework; project and performance homework depending on their purpose, such as research assignments or observation assignments, according to the method. Depending on the location, it can be classified as classwork, homework, or library homework. As for the duration, it can be categorized as daily, monthly, semester, or annual homework. Regarding the number of participants, it can be classified as individual or group homework. Depending on the format, it may be called written, oral, visual, or material homework (Güneş, 2014). While the homework given in primary school includes many features, such as providing more permanent learning, providing application practice, preventing forgetting due to developmental age, comprehending information and developing the ability to take responsibility, at the secondary school level, learning is permanent, reinforcement of knowledge and transfer to new situations, increasing in-class performance and sustainable learning are achieved. It may include making the process visible, doing more

research at the high school level, processing information with other disciplines and making it permanent, retention in the course, providing sanctions with grading, using it as a measurement tool and authentic practices (Avcı, 2022; Çelebi & Arslantaş, 2021; Duru & Çöğmen, 2017). With these acceptances, in recent years, the purpose of homework has begun to be diversified according to developmental stages. Project-based homework types that aim to create a new and original product, as opposed to memorization practices, have begun to attract attention, and attention has been drawn to the content of homework and multiple acquisition targets (Çelebi & Arslantaş, 2021; Türkoğlu et al., 2014). Studies emphasizing the responsibilities that the school, student, teacher and family must undertake for homework to achieve these goals have stated that cooperation is a prerequisite for the success of this process (Büyüktokatlı, 2009; Ilgar, 2005; Koçak & Göçer, 2020; Walker et al., 2004).

The topic of homework given in high school has garnered attention, as it is a controversial subject in education, particularly regarding its impact on teenagers. Turkey has implemented a learner-centered and comprehensive approach with its 2023 Education Vision (2018b). This has resulted in new education policies and practices, such as reducing exam pressure and focusing on developing 21st-century skills, as highlighted in international reports (see OECD, PISA and TIMMS). This research, which examines the nature of high school homework, the reasons why teachers assign it, and how students approach it, may provide insight into the current state of homework practices. Instead of just gaining knowledge in a single subject, students are expected to acquire interdisciplinary knowledge, solve problems with creative and critical thinking skills, participate in the active learning process, take responsibility for their learning with self-control skills, and apply cognitive, social, and emotional methods to new learning and problem situations. These 21st-century skills, which include transfer ability (MEB, 2011; OECD, 2018, 2022), come with significant responsibilities and expectations for students, which can be achieved through teacher-guided classroom practices and more effective types of homework.

Homework is crucial for developing students' sense of responsibility, as emphasized by Güneş (2014). It goes beyond merely aiding in the development of self-control skills, encompassing aspects like setting learning goals, making decisions, and fostering independent work. Moreover, homework contributes to the enhancement of communication, self-confidence, and access to information (Güneş, 2014). Deniz (2019) also found that homework improves cognitive strategies and management skills, which are vital for academic success. Studies on homework motivation and student success (Benckwitz et al., 2023; Dumont et al., 2014) emphasize the multidimensional effects of homework, and parents prefer homework that is engaging and beneficial (Davidovitch & Yavich, 2017; Duru & Çöğmen, 2017; Gill & Schlossman, 2004; Ok & Çalışkan, 2019; Ok, 2018). However, homework can create a competitive environment and negatively affect students' learning efforts, leading to anxiety, stress, and physiological problems (Avcı, 2022; Cooper, 2007; Çelebi & Arslantaş, 2021; Koç Akran, 2021; Kohn, 2020; Sadlier, 2011; Türkoğlu et al., 2014; Xu & Yuan, 2003; Yu et al., 2023). Thus, the benefits and drawbacks of homework continue to be a controversial issue. While

homework can enhance academic performance and personal development, it may also lead to negative consequences.

Since high school is one of the most critical stages in students' educational lives, homework given to students beyond lectures is more vital than achievements at lower levels. It offers promising opportunities to prepare them for life (Super, 1963). Students in this group are now approaching choosing a profession and completing a development process in which they will become aware of their predispositions according to their characteristics (Gottfredson, 2005). In particular, high school students who are in the abstract period and can actively employ high-level cognitive skills can influence the quality of their homework. This highlights the importance of clearly defining the purposes for which homework should be assigned (Akgündüz, 2019; Aydın et al., 2015; Gander & Gardiner, 1993; OECD, 2023; Senemoğlu, 2020). However, in recent years in Turkey, educators have overlooked that homework assigned in high school has become standardized for university entrance exams and is primarily utilized for grading purposes. Homework assignments determined in line with the objectives of current education programs consist only of test books and cannot meet the definition and achievements of homework (Akgündüz, 2019; TEDMEM, 2022, 2023b, 2023c; Yıldırım Taştı & Engin Demir, 2022).

Cooper (2001) in his homework research, has found the opinions and recommendations regarding the effect and importance of homework in the educational process to be somewhat inconsistent with the literature. Although studies on homework generally exhibit a consistent stance on the purposes, achievements, and types of homework, teacher-student-parent interviews have revealed differing viewpoints on topics, such as homework implementation, evaluation, and its impact on academic success (Baynazoğlu, 2018; Demir & Yaman, 2020; Kırmızıgül, 2019; Koç-Akran et al., 2021). Even the incongruity in research results regarding the effect of homework on student success has exposed the subject's potential for insurmountable controversy (see Cooper & Nye, 2000; Çelebi & Arslantaş, 2021; Demir & Yaman, 2020; Kohn, 2020).

When evaluated in the light of research and experience, the main issue to consider is how homework should be performed regarding quality and quantity rather than whether homework should be included in education or not (Gill & Schlossman, 2004; Kohn, 2020; Sullivan & Sequieria, 1996). Because there may be differences in student grade levels and the purpose of the implementation of homework, especially in the primary school age, it may not affect academic success expectations. However, it can be partially effective in middle school, and homework contributes more to the high school period (Cooper, 2001; Cooper et al., 2006; Cooper & Valentine, 2001; Rudman, 2014). As a result, we need to assign reasonable amounts of homework enriched with content, offering opportunities for multiple benefits, engaging various learning methods, and targeting the specific needs of different levels (see Akgündüz, 2019; Baynazoğlu, 2021; Kırmızıgül, 2019; MEB, 2020; TEDMEM, 2023c). We should design homework to equip students with 21st-century skills, foster their creativity, and enable them to transfer the information they acquire at school to their daily lives. We recommend giving it with

approaches that will provide gains in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor areas (Baynazoğlu, 2021; Ekici & Akdeniz, 2018; Güneş, 2014; see MEB, 2018a; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) 2019, 2018; TEDMEM, 2023b).

There are various studies examining the issue of homework at the high school level from different perspectives (Aydın et al., 2015; Ekici & Akdeniz, 2018; Li et al., 2015; Xu, 2023; Xu and Núñez, 2023; Yu et al., 2023). These studies collectively cover aspects such as the effectiveness of performance assignments, the adverse effects of academic loads, students' perceptions of homework's benefits and quantity, and homework's impact on academic success, self-regulation, and seeking approval. However, considering the breadth and depth of these issues, a study focusing primarily on "High School Teachers' Views on Homework" is needed. While current research touches on students' perspectives, homework effectiveness, and homework's impact on various factors, taking the opinions of high school teachers will also make a significant contribution. Teachers play a crucial role in assigning and evaluating homework and understanding their perspectives" can provide a comprehensive view of the challenges, benefits, and potential improvements associated with homework in high school settings. Such a study could provide valuable information that could help improve homework policies, increase their effectiveness, and promote a more conducive learning environment for high school students.

The main focus of this study is to investigate high school teachers' viewpoints on homework. The research question is: "What are their opinions on homework?" To delve deeper into this question, there are two sub-questions in this study:

1. What are the opinions of high school teachers about homework practices?

2. What are the opinions of high school teachers about their students' approaches to doing homework?

Method

Research Design

This study utilized a phenomenology design, a type of qualitative research design. Within this framework, researchers collected data from people who had experience with the phenomenon in question and tried to define it with the data set obtained from the primary source (Creswell, 2021; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). "The phenomenological pattern focuses on phenomena that we are aware of but do not have an in-depth and detailed understanding of" (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021, p. 66). The research revealed how teachers perceive and apply this concept, especially regarding content. The researchers determined teacher branches based on maximum variation according to the type of school. They organized the data obtained from teacher interviews, created codes, and interpreted the findings within the scope of the research questions in this study.

Participants

We used a maximum variation sampling method to select research participants who volunteered to participate in this study. The participants comprised teachers from various branches at Vocational High School, Anatolian High School, and Project-based Science High School located in the city centre of Erzurum, Eastern Anatolia, during the 2021-2022 academic year (Table 1). This region and city were preferred because the researchers were working there, and it provided ease of access to the participants. Considering that homework practices and teachers' opinions may differ between different types of high schools, participants were selected from three different types of high schools. We conducted semi-structured interviews with six branch teachers to gather their opinions and thoughts. The teachers included one literature teacher, one biology teacher, one physics teacher, one mathematics teacher, one vocational teacher, and one foreign language teacher. In order to ensure maximum variation, it was deemed sufficient to select teachers from six different branches. The semi-structured interview technique allowed for flexibility during the interview and helped clarify questions prepared in advance by the researcher (Ekiz, 2020).

Table 1. *Demographics of Participants*

	Gender		Class			Branch							Seniority			
	Female	Male	9 12	10	11	Physics-English-Vocational-Literature-Mathematics-Biology							5-10	11-15	16-20	26-30
Teacher	5	1	6	6	6	6	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2

As shown in Table 1, five participants were female, and one was male. The high school participants in this study attended classes at all grade levels: K-9, K-10, K-11, K-12. Regarding their experience, two of them were 5-10, one was 6, the other was 8, 11-15, one had 13. They had 16-20 years of professional seniority, one of them had 18, and 26-30 years of professional seniority, of which two had 26.

Data Collection

As a data collection tool, a semi-structured interview form was used, which is frequently used in qualitative research methods, as it is both valuable and comprehensive. Regarding the internal reliability of the interview, the opinions and evaluations of three field experts were sought. One of the experts worked as a professor, the other as an associate professor and the third as a lecturer. We updated the interview form per the experts' input and feedback. In the interview form, nine basic questions regarding the sub-goals of the research were asked. The interviews lasted approximately one hour. We recorded the interviews with a voice recorder. After the interview, we converted the voice recordings into written text using the Transcriptor software program. We used participant

verification and expert review to ensure credibility within validity and reliability. For participant verification, we interviewed each participant twice. During the first interview, we collected the data, and in the second interview, we verified the accuracy and completeness of the results. In accordance with the suggestions, we finalized the interview texts and the research analysis. Following a pilot application with two branch teachers, we sought input from a field expert and increased the number of questions from 8 to 9. The questions in the interview form are as follows:

1. What do you think homework is? How would you define it?
2. When assigning homework, what are the main purposes behind it?
3. What kind of homework do you give? Can you give examples?
4. How do you evaluate your assignments? How do you give feedback?
5. Can you give information about the students' homework process?
   a. How do students do the homework you assign? Can you give me information?
6. Can you describe your students' approach to homework?
   a. How would you describe your students' attitudes towards the homework you assign? Can you give examples?
7. What do you think about incorporating homework into measurement and evaluation?
8.
9. If you do not give homework, can you explain why?

Data Analysis

We analyzed the data with thematic analysis, one of the qualitative analysis methods. Thematic analysis is a method used to identify, analyze and report patterns (themes) in data. Thematic analysis allows you to organize your data set at the smallest size and provide in-depth (rich) descriptions. However, the thematic analysis does not only remain in this dimension; it goes one step further and makes sense of many dimensions of the research subject (Boyatzis, 1998). The process, which begins at the beginning of the analysis and even during the data collection process, begins when the person doing the analysis notices the meaning patterns in the data and topics that may interest the researcher and begins to search for "themes" (which are abstract (and often vague) structures that the researcher defines before, during and after the analysis). Ryan & Bernard, 2003), that is, it includes the stages of reporting the content and meaning patterns (themes) in the data and finalizing the analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

First, we transcribed the data obtained and recorded during the interviews with the participants. Subsequently, we presented the transcribed data to the participants and obtained their approval regarding the accuracy of the texts. We then coded the data using qualitative research data analysis software (Nvivo and MAXQDA) to create subcategories and parent categories. We organised the resulting codes with semantic consistency and identified categories associated with these codes. Subsequently, we

derived superordinate categories (themes). We used tables to present each sub-questions utilising codes, categories, and themes.

Throughout this process, we thoroughly analysed the collected data, interpreting the findings and compiling them into a research report. The research report did not contain any personal data about the participants, such as names, surnames, or places of employment, as all personal information was kept confidential. In the analysis, we identified participants using their respective branches' initials (Biology: B, English: E, Mathematics: M, Literature: L, Vocational Course (Child Development): C, Physics: P). The primary objective was to gain better insights into how the type affected responses when coding and directly quoting participants.

Findings

"How do you define homework?" Teachers' answers to the question are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. *Teachers' Definitions of Homework*

Categories	Codes
Positive effects of homework on student success	Reinforcement, repetition, comprehension, preparation for the lesson, follow-up, self-improvement, gaining responsibility
Negative effects of homework on student success	Drudgery

Table 2 shows the definitions of homework given by teachers in three different high schools. Different types of subject teachers' definitions of homework emerged in two categories. These categories were created under the headings "Positive effects of homework given in high school on student success" and "Negative effects of homework given in high school on student success." While some of our teachers perceived homework as an essential activity of the education process regarding the type of school and branch they worked in, one of our teachers mentioned the negative impact on success in the category of "chore" apart from these definitions. Our teachers in the P, E, L, B, and M branches generally defined homework as "Subject repetition and reinforcement" practices.

In contrast, our teacher in the C branch defined it as "Drudgery." Participants E and L, who found it appropriate to use homework in their lessons, drew attention to its developmental contributions with the definition "It is the student's opportunity to do research and improve themselves outside of school." Participant M defined this issue as "Awareness of responsibility." According to another participant (C), homework added a different code to the definition of "following" the student's learning process outside of school.

"If you give homework, for what purposes do you give it?" Teachers' answers to the question are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3. *Teachers' Purposes for Assigning Homework*

Categories	Codes
Learning goals	Reinforcing the subject, repeating the subject, taking tests for the exam, reading, comprehending, researching, practising
Student goals	Ability to take responsibility, manage time, learn on one's own, do research, improve oneself, increase motivation and interest
Preparation goals	Preparation for the course

In Table 3, teachers' purposes for giving homework were determined under three categories. All of our teachers said that their goals in assigning homework were to achieve learning goals, develop the student, and be prepared for the lesson. While some of our teachers preferred homework for academic development, others said they gave homework for academic and personal development purposes. The codes we classified under three categories differed regarding teachers' branches and student classes. According to the data obtained from the teachers regarding the purpose of giving homework, the first codes that emerged were "repetition and reinforcement of the subject" they studied in their lessons (B., L., P., C., E., M.). Although general codes, such as "reinforcement of the subject, repetition of the subject, solving tests for the exam, reading, comprehension," were identified in the responses received from the branch teachers, differences were observed in assigning homework depending on the content of the courses. C. Our participant said, "I want the student to do activities related to my course outside school." While participant E. expressed his opinion, "They should be able to learn on their own and practice so that they do not forget... As they do research, their interest in the course increases." He gave his homework for this purpose. Participant E. said, "I give homework, especially for research and reading. In addition, I allow them to make their own products by giving them homework that covers the topics they learn in class. They improve what they have learned, learn new things, and enjoy my course more." He stated his purpose: Participants P., M., C., L. and B. said, "I give homework to see whether the subject covered in the lesson is learned. In this way, I can check them in the next lesson and see who is struggling and where." While it was seen that they adopted common goals with their statements, participant E. specifically said, "I give homework for research." He repeated his purpose frequently.

In the category of student goals, our participants M., E., L., and C. said, "I also draw attention to their contribution to their individual development while giving their homework" and added: "To be able to take responsibility, manage time, learn on one's own, do research, increase motivation and interest" expressed their codes.

It was observed that there were standard features in the answers of our branch teachers regarding the purposes of assigning homework. However, there were also differences depending on their approaches and the type of course and the school. It was observed

that these differences in terms of the achievements and quality of the homework were closely related to the course teaching processes of E., B., C., and L. teachers.

"What kind of homework do you give? Can you give examples?" Teachers' answers to the questions are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. *Teachers' Assignment Types*

Categories	Codes
Repetition and Reinforcement Assignments	Attainment tests, question solutions, textbook applications, teaching instructive texts, reference books, websites, textbooks, writing, grammar tests, and translated texts
Preparatory Assignments	Author introduction research, research, word finding
Creative Assignments	Project and performance assignments, material design, experiment preparation, model making, story and essay writing, game design, lullaby and song creation, text writing, drama activities, social and cognitive development

The codes obtained in Table 4 were classified under three categories: "repetition and reinforcement assignments, preparation assignments and creative assignments." Notably, some of our participants used the codes created under these categories in common, while others gave homework types within the scope of codes for a single category. Three categories of homework types were created because the codes in the analysis of the data obtained differed as a way for teachers to increase their lessons' efficiency and conduct more effective lessons. Since teachers often gave assignments according to the type of their lessons (numerical and verbal), assignments aimed at revision of the subject were preferred. In contrast, in some courses, assignments focused on research and activities are preferred. Teacher L. stated that he did not give homework often and said, "I give homework based on practice and research. Because I think it will be more beneficial for them to learn my course this way, as it covers general cultural information that will be useful not only at school but also in their daily lives." It seems that he aims for more acquisitive tasks. Teacher E. gave similar types of homework and said, "I give them activities that they can do at home and have fun without getting bored." Classical homework is not done and is useless. I also increase their interest in my course by giving them homework that allows them to create their learning process and get involved." expressed his opinion. Teacher C. said, "Our course requires learning by doing applications and research. That is why I find it appropriate to give them homework that includes designs and activities highlighting their creativity." Teachers P., M., and B., who focus on homework types aimed at comprehension and repetition of the subject, said: "We need repetition and practice in understanding the subjects. For this reason, we mostly use problem-solving assignments based on textbooks and reference books." They frequently expressed the codes in the "repetition and reinforcement tasks" category with their statements.

Teachers M. and B. said, "Test books and reference books are preferred since the students know their goals according to their school." They expressed their opinions in this regard. Another issue that affected the type of homework was the student's grade level. Our participants, from different branches, attended 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grade classes in the schools where they worked. During this process, they stated that while they could give various types of homework, especially in the 9th and 10th grades, there was a decrease in the types of homework in the 11th and 12th grades. Teachers B. and M. said, "We give homework for the exam, especially in the senior grades, because their time is limited." L. and P., "9. While the homework we give in the 10th and 10th grades has more developmental content, in the 11th and 12th grades, I mostly give question and solution homework. They demand this homework because they are preparing for the exam." Teachers E. and C. said, "In the following grades, we generally prefer homework that is easier to do in less time. " Students in these classes do homework to avoid losing their exam scores.. His opinions also showed that the diversity in homework types decreased in the advancing grades (11th and 12th).

"How do you evaluate your assignments? How do you give feedback?" Teachers' answers to the questions are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. *Teachers' Homework Evaluation Styles*

Categories	Codes
Grading	Verbal grade, +/- scoring, quizzing
Feedback/Correction	Give feedback, check, make corrections

Table 5 created two categories related to how our teacher participants evaluated the assignments. All our participants stated that their assignments were checked and graded. Although there were differences in their grading styles, they stated that the frequency of doing homework decreased or even disappeared when no grade was given. That'swhy the teachers in this study gave grades frequently, but they differed in checking regularly and giving feedback. Therefore, two categories named "Grading and Feedback/correction" were created in the data codes obtained. These differences may also occur based on the type of assignment. They also stated that they graded and corrected some assignments with feedback. While our teachers P., E., C., L. and B. checked their homework weekly, our teacher M. reported that he made a collective check at the end of the semester or year. While teachers E., C. and L. checked the deficiencies and made corrections during the course, our P., M. and B. teachers made corrections by waiting for the students to ask about the points they did not understand or had difficulty with in their homework, especially to use the lesson time carefully. Teacher M. said, "I do not check the homework; students of this age should now take responsibility and check their homework. The student also shows whether he has done his homework or not through his performance in the course. In such a case, I request and examine the homework book." He pointed out that homework control should be the individual's responsibility and that they should adopt an approach free from fear of teachers. It was

observed that the differences between the course content and teaching method significantly affected the evaluation of the assignments. Performance and project assignments were also evaluated and graded at the semester's or year's end and were reflected in the report card grade.

"Can you give information about the students' homework process? How do students do the homework you assign? Can you give information?" Teachers' answers to the questions are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. *Students' Homework Processes*

Categories	Codes
Assessment and Evaluation/Grade Anxiety	Getting bad grades, not getting grades, failing exams, failing written exams, being followed, being controlled
Learning Objective	
- Positive Behaviors	Loving the lesson, being willing, being responsible, learning, having curiosity, being interested
- Negative Behaviors	Reluctance, lack of responsibility, indifference

Two categories were created from the codes obtained in Table 6. In the first category, codes regarding students' homework processes, especially that they completed their homework out of fear of getting grades, were listed. In contrast, the positive attitudes of students who did their homework on time towards the learning goal and the negative attitudes they exhibited towards learning were collected in subcategories. Different answers influenced the formation of these categories. It was observed that some students might still exhibit very negative attitudes despite all this, just because they wanted to get grades, some because they would appear in the exams. "They must do their homework because it affects their oral grade." Teachers P., C. and L. stated that it was not done very enthusiastically because it was an imposition of grades. Our teacher E. said, "If students love their lessons and their teachers, they do their homework more regularly. "I even have students who want extra homework to improve themselves." He described the process of doing homework. Teachers M. and B. pointed out that there were variations in their students' homework processes and said that "it varies from class to class and even from student to student." The most important thing about variability from student to student was that students could carry out this process more willingly when they were responsible, knew their goals and had high awareness (conditioned). The difference from class to class was that both grades and university exam sanctions were combined (P., L., M., B., E). The general belief in homework was the relationship between grading and the student doing homework. Teachers C., L. and P. said, "It is a fact that most students will be very reluctant to take and do homework if there are no grades, written papers and the expectation of university exams." His opinion suggests that the homework given, especially in high school, is tried to be completed outside of its real purpose. Because of these differences in approaches to homework from student to student, it could be said that learners who had discovered how to learn did not have difficulty fulfilling

their homework responsibilities by being more responsible, rather than the students we tried to make them take responsibility with homework.

"Can you describe your students' approach to homework? How would you describe your students' attitudes towards the homework you assign? Can you give examples?" Teachers' answers to the questions are shown in Table 7.

Table 7. *Students' Approaches to Homework*

Categories	Codes
Willing	Positive attitude, academic progress, achievement, interest, effort
Reluctant	Drudgery, lack of enthusiasm, anxiety, strain

In Table 7, students' approaches to homework were divided into two categories: "willing and reluctant," based on the evaluations received from the participants. The structure of the school played an essential role in forming these categories. While students in some types of schools were more willing to do homework, they might be reluctant in other types of schools. The student's characteristics also contributed to the differentiation of these answers. "They do it because of test anxiety and academic success." Teacher P. responded that they did not have negative attitudes towards doing their homework. While teachers B. and C. stated that their students were not very enthusiastic about doing homework, our other participants stated in their answers that it varied depending on the type of homework, the student's grade level and the type of course. Teacher M. "9. While 10th and 10th graders are in the process of struggling and need reminders about homework, upper grades may request extra homework. Students who know their homework responsibility and achievements enjoy their homework." He pointed out that individual development and characteristics severely affected the process of taking and completing homework. In addition, conditioning to be successful in the university exam also caused changes in attitudes towards homework. Teacher L. said, "They enjoy doing their homework in my class. While students in lower grades like research papers, upper grades focus on problem-solving." He pointed out the role of the exam and the type of homework in getting homework.

"What do you think about using homework in measurement and evaluation?" Teachers' answers to the question are shown in Table 8.

Table 8. *Opinions on the Place of Homework in Measurement and Evaluation*

Categories	Codes
Grading	Mandatory, necessary, sanction, obligation

In Table 8, codes were created under a single category. While our teachers P., L., E., B. and C. pointed out that grading was both essential and necessary, our teacher M. said, "If you work hard, I will give you this much money." He stated that students were put

under pressure on the condition that they did their homework. In contrast, the student's homework process was a responsibility under his/her control. They reasoned that grading regarding obligation affected the verbal grades at the end of term or end of year report card, that the student clinged to the lesson, that they prevented forgetting by repeating what they had learned outside of school, that the seriousness was not lost, that they could take responsibility, and that since the student took notes, they acted more disciplined, going beyond arbitrariness, in terms of sanctions.

If you don't give homework, can you explain why? Most of the participating teachers could not answer the question because they had adopted the homework policy. Participant C expressed his wish with the answer, "I wish we could eliminate homework."

Discussion & Conclusion

According to the findings obtained in the current study, all high school teachers defined homework as "ensuring the permanence of what has been learned, repeating and reinforcing the subjects." They indicated that they assigned homework for these purposes. A literature review revealed that teachers defined homework in similar terms, emphasizing aspects, such as reinforcement, repetition, comprehension of the subject, receiving feedback, preparation for the next lesson, research on the topic, taking responsibility, and time management evaluation (Demir & Yaman, 2020; Duban, 2016; Duru & Göçmen, 2017; Kalsen et al., 2020; Koç Akran, 2021; Ok, 2018; Susam & Demir, 2019; Üstünel, 2016; Yel, 2019). Consistent with the findings obtained in this study, previous studies reported that regardless of their level, our teachers expressed the same opinions on the definition of homework (Demir & Yaman, 2020; Duban, 2016; Duru & Göçmen, 2017; Kalsen et al., 2020; Koç Akran, 2021; Ok, 2018; Susam & Demir, 2019; Üstünel, 2016; Yel, 2019). Moreover, regardless of their level, our teachers expressed the same opinions on the definition of homework.

We observed that teachers from various branches align their homework assignments with the objectives outlined in the homework definition, which include learning goals, student goals, and preparation goals. Homework given at the high school level is also learning-oriented, not to forget the subject covered in the lesson and to ensure permanent learning. It includes more academic purposes, such as preparing for lessons and gaining responsibilities, creating awareness, and using out-of-school time productively. Hence, we have uncovered that teachers predominantly assign homework, although the types of homework may vary depending on the course type. We have observed that verbal courses primarily incorporate research- or practice-based assignments, while numerical courses frequently assign tasks related to topic repetition and question-solving. Grade level has also been another crucial factor affecting the type of homework. While the assignments given to the 9th and 10th grades are more gain-oriented and aimed at improving the learner, in the 11th and 12th grades, question solution assignments based on the permanence and repetition of knowledge for the

university exam are preferred. There are also field studies stating that the types of homework given increase students' desire to do homework, that qualified homework that overlaps with daily life (authentic tasks) and that meets the student's learning needs is received more positively, and that homework that only focuses on grading and punishment is not effective (Ekici & Akdeniz, 2018; Turanlı, 2007) produced the same results. Therefore, while students show interest in some types of homework, they generally find homework useless and boring, and they do it only because they have to finish it (Davidovitch & Yavich, 2017; Galloway et al., 2013; Xu & Yuan, 2003). Another research study notes that homework that lacks interest, appeal, and benefits is completed reluctantly (Özer & Öcal, 2013). It is evident that enhancing the diversity of homework types and assigning tasks that involve research and problem-solving play a crucial role in fostering a deeper understanding of learning. This approach provides more meaningful opportunities for students to apply the information they acquire in school to their daily lives (Alpayar, 2020). In conclusion, we can assert that there is a significant correlation between the types of homework assigned and the willingness of students to participate in homework activities.

According to the research results, teachers frequently checked the homework they gave and evaluated, especially with symbolic notes and opinion notes. Teachers have indicated that grading serves as both a sanction and a reinforcement. We have observed that some teachers assign and grade homework with the anticipation of receiving rewards (motivation), while others primarily participate in this process due to anxiety about grades. It is also possible to say that homework given in high school seriously contributes to oral grades and that homework is seen as a salvation because it does not negatively affect students' average achievement rather than their academic success. In grading assignments, more than half of our teachers stated that grading is a reinforcer that rewards the student and motivates him/her to do the following assignments. There were also differences among teachers in giving feedback on assignments. Participating teachers give feedback in line with their own experiences and the type of course. While checking their homework daily, weekly, and semesterly with different methods (e.g., symbols: +/-), this process depends on the nature of the homework (e.g., homework, project homework, and course/test book homework). It may also change. It has been emphasized that teachers play a crucial role in providing feedback on homework, and it has been noted that homework that needs timely feedback gains its effectiveness in the eyes of students and can lead to significant issues in their approach to homework. Consequently, regular teacher supervision and assessment of homework contribute to increasing students' interest in the subject (Kırmizigül, 2018). Arıkan (2017) also stated in his research that giving feedback is vital to homework achievements and academic success. Taş (2013) also noted in his research that the teacher gives assignments in which qualified homework covers higher-level cognitive steps, and the evaluation is carried out individually, especially with feedback, contributing to the success of the course and not postponing homework.

Research findings regarding students' homework assignment processes have shown that students are unaware of doing homework. While they are more willing to do the

homework of the teacher or course they like, they may be less interested in the homework of the courses they find difficult or do not like. The general evaluations of our teachers are in this direction, and their interests may vary depending on the type of homework they are checked for and assigned. Students who selectively choose their homework assignments often do so with the goal of achieving higher grades or passing exams in mind. In a study conducted on high school students' concept of homework, students showed their perceptions of homework with 17 metaphors in the category of homework being compulsory, stating that if teachers do not make homework compulsory, most students will prefer not to do their homework (Ekici & Akdeniz, 2018). In another similar study, they used metaphors to showthat they found the types of homework that prepared them for the exam valuable and that they preferred to do homework that was not boring (Atalay Kilit, 2022). While some students tend to do research assignments, others participate fully in assignments that take little time. This situation may vary from student to student, across all classes and depending on the type of school. According to the exam results, students placed in high school are more conscious about their homework, and they pay more attention to their homework to prepare for the university exam. The findings obtained in this study suggest that although homework is a common criterion in terms of measurement and evaluation according to school types, students who are placed in schools with a specific exam score differ from students in average schools in terms of their expectations of homework and the meanings they attach to homework.

According to the findings, school types also influenced teachers' opinions on students' approaches to homework In this context, variations in their approaches to homework were exposed, contingent on the type of school and the student's academic achievements. While students in the type of school where they are placed based on their high school exam average find homework very useful, in another type of school, students see homework as a burden and an element of stress (Galloway et al., 2013). This situation is closely related to student-to-student relativity and the teacher's methodology in the same school type. The student's awareness of responsibility and homework and the types of homework given by the teacher according to the type of lesson are also effective. While half of our teachers found students' attitudes towards homework positive, the other half reported that students were uninterested in homework and saw it as a chore. There is a direct proportion between students' performance in the homework process and their approaches to homework. We can say that students who do not have difficulty in their lessons. Thus, students who are aware of homework, have learning goals and have a developed sense of responsibility are generally more willing to do homework (Xu, 2023; Xu & Núñez, 2023). While academically successful students develop positive feelings towards homework, students with academic difficulties may be anxious about doing it. However, although studies have shown (Çelebi & Arslantaş, 2021; Demirbağ, 2020; Deniz, 2019; Üstünel, 2016) that doing homework contributes to academic success, it depends on whether the success in the learning process, that is, the student's purpose for participating in homework, encourages doing homework or the consistency in doing homework. Whether it increases success should be among the issues that need to be investigated from multiple aspects. As a result of his research on

homework in his book, Kohn (2020) drew attention to the dilemma on this issue by stating that homework is not an effective tool in predicting course success in terms of measuring the level of knowledge and understanding in that field and in teaching the student skills, such as responsibility.

The general opinion of teachers regarding the place of homework in measurement and evaluation is that we have to grade homework. Suppose this issue is evaluated in two dimensions. In that case, the obligation to grade assignments is a sanction involving the student in the learning process, and the data obtained in the research indicate that when the assignment is not graded, it is generally not done. On the other dimension, it is necessary to give a grade as one of the multiple measurement elements (written, oral and homework) in the overall evaluation of the course, as it affects the report card grade. One of the most important purposes of our research, seeing homework as a grading activity, has shown that homework in high school is also implemented in this direction. Therefore, grading homework is implemented by all our participating teachers as a measurement-evaluation strategy. Homework, as a product of the student's performance in the learning process, is generally graded as measurement material. However, since homework given by teachers as an evaluation tool can affect students in many ways, teachers know what purposes the homework should contain (cognitive, affective, social development). If students and parents are informed about the achievements of the homework, the student can complete the homework more meaningfully and completing this process can make it more efficient (Demerath, 2009; Gökdağ Baltaoğlu et al., 2017; Işık & Ozan, 2023; Koç Akran, 2021; Türkoğlu et al., 2014; Xu & Yuan, 2003). Consequently, we can assert that homework is primarily utilized as an assessment tool for grading students.

If the research results are summarized, there are severe differences in the answers to the interview questions due to the findings. In light of the data obtained according to these differences, it has been revealed how teachers' homework practices can be affected by both the style of teaching the lesson and the purpose of assigning homework in line with their experiences, by the type of school, grade level and differences between students. Our participating teachers have also stated that there are differences between the quality of homework and homework performance in the 9th and 10th grades, as well as their performance and quality in the 11th and 12th grades. Therefore, the importance of assigning homework in high school according to the grade level's needs in terms of quality and quantity comes to the fore. The fact that evaluation is mainly done with grades has transformed the awareness that homework is an essential exercise in the learning process into the condition that if I do my homework, I will get good grades. Because the traditional homework policy both meets parents' expectations and puts the expectation of academic success on homework (Yavich & Davidovitch, 2020). However, this research has suggestions for homework: Increasing interest in differentiated assignments that include research achievements, reading, producing projects, analysis and synthesis, and drawing attention to instrumental assignments and providing sustainable learning environments that communicate with the environment and do not create indirect or direct pressure on purely exam-oriented assignments (Avcı, 2022;

Kosmerl & Mikulec, 2022; MEB, 2018; TEDMEM, 2023a, 2023b; Scott, 2021; Vatterot, 2018; Yavrutürk, 2023). In this high school-level research, we observed variations in the opinions of the participating teachers based on the type of lessons, grade levels, and their experiences. However, the most prominent shared aspect of their views is that teachers employ course materials or lecture notes to assess homework.

Recommendations

According to the results obtained in the present study, the following suggestions can be made to both homework practitioners and researchers who are interested in researching this subject. A homework assignment guidebook and service in line with the determined purposes so that teachers can adopt common goals and achievements and homework assignment styles regarding homework given in high school. Providing in-house training will be significant in acquiring a common homework language. What benefits will students have from this type of homework, and why do I need to do this homework? If homework acquisition criteria are determined for each course, positive student participation can be encouraged to gain awareness. It is also essential for teachers to provide individual and explanatory feedback when evaluating their homework. Thus, if the measurement method imposed on homework, that is, grading, is eliminated and teacher guidance is put into effect by providing more comprehensive evaluation and homework types, the purposes of assigning homework can be made more visible. In short, this complex and variable process can be improved with a homework assignment paradigm, differentiation of homework assignments, and homework support applications that are both more attainable and can be completed according to the outcome (Sadlier, 2011).

Using homework as a bargaining tool to achieve a specific grade limits its potential beyond passing exams or obtaining good grades. Homework should be seen as a means of developing students throughout their lives rather than just preparing for exams. Teachers should play a significant role in selecting homework content and determining the type of homework to be assigned. Providing booklets with step-by-step examples for evaluation can help achieve consensus and prevent differences in practice and purpose. This study collected the opinions of teachers from various school types and branches. It is also recommended to collect the opinions of students and parents to add different perspectives to the study. In addition, the quality of homework should be evaluated regarding its contribution to developing 21st-century skills and multiple learning processes. Research can be conducted to examine learners' cognitive and affective development when they do not want to do their homework, the performance of completing homework without being graded, and the attitudes of students with high academic success towards homework. Longitudinal studies and new-generation homework research should be conducted, including research on the possibilities of completing homework in digital learning, the types of homework and the evaluation styles that can be used with the digitalization of education.

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Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

Eğitim-öğretim sürecinin önemli bir uygulaması olarak ev ödevi, okulda öğrenilen bilgilerin tekrar edilmesi ve pekiştirilmesi amacıyla daha çok ev etkinliklerini kapsamakta ve okul ile ev arasında bir etkileşim aracı olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Cooper, 2001; Deniz, 2019). Bu nedenle eğitimin her kademesinde öğrencilere hem kişisel gelişimleri hem de akademik başarıları için çeşitli amaçlar ve türlerde ödevler verilmektedir. Ev ödevleri; amaçlarına, içeriğine, yöntemine, öğretmenin stratejisine hatta deneyimine ve öğrenciye göre farklılık gösterebildiği gibi okul seviyesine (ilkokul, ortaokul, lise, üniversite gibi) göre de farklılık gösterebilmektedir (Güneş, 2014). Bu farklılıklardan dolayı eğitimin önemli bir politikası olarak öğrenme-öğretme sürecinde ev ödevleri, en tartışmalı konuların başında gelmiş, çeşitli yöntemlerle ve farklı bakış açılarıyla incelenmeye değer görülmüştür (Cooper, & Nye, 2000; Çelebi & Arslantaş, 2021; Demir & Yaman, 2020; Koç Akran, 2021; Kohn, 2020).

Ödevlerin eğitim-öğretim sürecinde özellikle ergenler üzerindeki etkilerinden dolayı lisede verilen ev ödevleri hakkında öğretmen görüşleri merak uyandırmıştır. Çünkü Türkiye 2023 Eğitim Vizyonu (2018b) ile öğrenen merkezli ve bütüncül bir gelişim anlayışının benimsemesi; özellikle sınav baskısının azaltılması ve uluslararası raporlar sonucunda (PISA, TIMMS vb.) 21. yüzyıl becerilerini geliştirici hedeflerin ön plana çıkması, yeni eğitim politikaları ve uygulamaları kapsamında ev ödevinin sorumluluklarına dikkat çekmiştir (Baynazoğlu, 2021; Ekici & Akdeniz, 2018; Güneş, 2014; bkz. MEB, 2018a; Ekonomik İşbirliği ve Kalkınma Örgütü (OECD) 2019, 2018; TEDMEM, 2023b). Lise kademesinde verilen ödevlerin niteliği, öğretmenlerin hangi amaçla ödev verdiği ve öğrencilerin ev ödevlerine yaklaşımlarının nasıl olduğunu inceleyen bu araştırma, ev ödevlerinde gelinen noktaya ışık tutabilir.

Özellikle, lise öğrencilerinin soyut dönemde olmaları ve üst düzey bilişsel becerileri daha aktif kullanabilmeleri ödev performanslarını etkileyebildiğinden ödevlerin veriliş amaçları ve türleri ön plana çıkmaktadır (Akgündüz, 2019; Aydın vd., 2015; Gander & Gardiner, 1993; OECD, 2023; Senemoğlu, 2020). Oysa ülkemizde son yıllarda özellikle lisede verilen ödevlerin üniversite sınavına yönelik hazırlık amacıyla tek tipleştiği ve ağırlıkta not vermeye yönelik kullanılmaya başlandığı gözden kaçmaktadır. Mevcut eğitim programlarının hedefleri doğrultusunda belirlenen ev ödevleri neredeyse test kitaplarından ibaret olmakta ve ev ödevi tanımını ve kazanımlarını karşılayamamaktadır (Akgündüz, 2019; TEDMEM, 2022, 2023b, 2023c; Yıldırım Taştı & Engin Demir, 2022). Lise düzeyinde uygulanan ev ödevi çalışmaları sınırlı olduğundan bu kademede verilen ödevlerin Türkiye 2023 Eğitim Vizyonu kapsamında nasıl gelişim gösterdiğini belirlemeye ihtiyaç duyulmuştur. Bu bakımdan araştırmada lise öğretmenlerinin ev ödevlerine yönelik görüşlerinin değerlendirilmesi amaçlanmaktadır.

Araştırma, nitel bir araştırma yöntemi olan olgu bilim (fenomenoloji) deseni olarak tasarlanmıştır. Araştırmada veri toplama aracı olarak araştırmacılar tarafından geliştirilen yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın katılımcılarını, maksimum çeşitlilik örneklemesi yöntemiyle gönüllülük esasına göre çalışma kapsamına

alınan, 2021-2022 eğitim öğretim yılında Erzurum il merkezinde, Meslek Lisesi, Anadolu Lisesi ve Proje Temelli Fen Lisesi olmak üzere üç farklı lise türünde görev yapan altı farklı branş öğretmeni oluşturmaktadır. Elde edilen veriler ise tematik analiz yöntemiyle incelenmiştir.

Araştırmadan elde edilen bulgular sonucunda görüşme sorularının yanıtlarında ciddi farklılıklar görülmektedir. Bu farklılıklara göre öğretmenlerin ev ödevi uygulamalarında hem dersin işleniş biçemi hem de deneyimleri doğrultusunda ödev verme amaçları; okulun türü, sınıf düzeyi ve öğrenciler arasındaki farklılıklardan etkilenebildiğini ortaya çıkarmıştır. Ayrıca katılımcı öğretmenlerimiz 9. ve 10. sınıflarda ödev niteliği ve ödev yapma performansı ile 11. ve 12. sınıflardaki performansları ve niteliği arasında da farklılıklar olduğunu aktarmışlardır. Dolayısıyla lisede verilen ödevlerin nitelik ve nicelik bakımından sınıf düzeyinin ihtiyaçlarına göre verilmesinin önemi ön plana çıkmaktadır. Değerlendirmenin çoğunlukta not ile yapılması, ödevlerin öğrenme sürecinin önemli bir gerekliliği olmasının farkındalığını, ödevlerimi yaparsam iyi not alırım koşuluna dönüştürmüştür. Çünkü geleneksel ödev verme politikası hem ebeveynlerin ve okulun beklentisini karşılamakta hem de akademik başarı beklentisini ev ödevlerinin sırtına yüklemektedir (bkz. Yavich & Davidovitch, 2020). Ancak ev ödevi üzerine yapılan araştırma önerileri; araştırmaya, okumaya, proje üretmeye, analiz ve sentezleme yapabilmeye yönelik kazanımları kapsayan farklılaştırılmış ödevler ile ilginin artırılması, araçsal ve çevresi ile iletişime geçirici sürdürülebilir öğrenme ortamlarını sağlayıcı ödevlere dikkat çekerek dolaylı ya da doğrudan salt sınav odaklı ödev baskısının oluşturulmaması yönündedir (bkz. Avcı, 2022; Kosmerl & Mikulec, 2022; MEB, 2018; TEDMEM, 2023a, 2023b; Scott, 2021; Vatterot, 2018; Yavrutürk, 2023).

Araştırma, özellikle lise düzeyinde ev ödevlerinin bir not verme etkinliği olarak algılandığını ve bu nedenle öğretmenler tarafından bir ölçme-değerlendirme stratejisi olarak uygulandığını göstermektedir. Ev ödevlerinin ölçme-değerlendirmedeki yeri ile ilgili öğretmenlerin genel kanısı ev ödevlerine not vermek zorunda olunduğu yönünde olmuştur. Ödevlere not verme zorunluluğu, öğrencinin öğrenme sürecine katılımını sağlamak adına yaptırım niteliğinde bir boyutta değerlendirilebilir. Araştırmadan elde edilen verilere göre, öğrencilerin genellikle ödevi tamamlamadıkları durumda not verilmediği gözlemlenmiştir. Diğer bir boyutta ise, ödevlerin karne notunu oluşturan çoklu ölçüm unsurlarından biri olarak değerlendirilmesi gerekliliği bulunmaktadır, zira bu durum dersin genel değerlendirmesine etki etmektedir. Öğrencinin öğrenme sürecindeki performansının ürünü olarak ev ödevleri aslında bir ölçüm materyali olarak genellikle notlandırılmaktadır demek mümkündür. Oysaki öğretmenler tarafından bir değerlendirme aracı olarak verilen ev ödevleri öğrencileri birçok yönden etkileyebildiği için öğretmenler ödevlerin aslında hangi amaçları (bilişsel, duyuşsal, sosyal gelişim) içermesi gerektiğini bilir, öğrenciler ve veliler de verilen ödevlerin kazanımlarından haberdar edilirse, öğrenci ödevleri daha anlamlı tamamlayabilir ve bu süreci daha verimli hâle getirebilir (Demerath, 2009; Gökdağ Baltaoğlu vd., 2017; Koç-Akran, 2021; Türkoğlu vd., 2014; Xu & Yuan, 2003). Sonuç olarak araştırmada ev ödevlerinin öğrencileri değerlendirmede özellikle bir not aracı olarak kullanıldığı belirlenmiştir.

Bu çalışmada üç farklı okul türünde ve farklı branşlarda görev yapan öğretmenlerin görüşleri alınmıştır. Eş zamanlı olarak aynı okul örneklemindeki öğrenci ve velilerinin de ev ödevi hakkındaki görüşlerinin alınması çalışmaya farklı boyutlar katabilir. Ayrıca ödevlerin nitelikleri bakımından 21. yüzyıl becerilerini ne kadar kapsadığını anlama, ev ödevlerinin ders tekrarı hedefinden ziyade öğrencinin çoklu öğrenme sürecine katkılarını değerlendirme, ev ödevinin yapılmak istemeyişinde öğrenenin bilişsel ve duyuşsal gelişimlerini inceleme, not verilmemesine rağmen ev ödevi alma ve tamamlama performansı (bir eylem araştırması), akademik başarısı yüksek öğrencilerin ev ödevlerine karşı tutumu, dijital öğrenmede ev ödevi tamamlama olanakları, eğitimin dijitalleşmesiyle verilecek ev ödevi türleri ve değerlendirme biçimleri gibi konularda boylamsal çalışmalar ile yeni nesil ödev araştırmaları önerilebilir.

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Ageless Wisdom: A Cross-Cultural Study on Enhancing Life Satisfaction through Skills Promotion among Older Adults

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Abstract

This article explores the pervasive issue of ageism and its detrimental effects on the elderly population. Ageism or the prejudice and discrimination against older adults based on their age, can have significant impact on their well-being and life satisfaction. However, the article also delves into the potential positive effects of continuous learning on reducing ageism and enhancing the life satisfaction of the elderly. As a proactive approach, lifelong learning presents an opportunity for the elderly to challenge stereotypes, remain engaged in society, and foster personal growth. This study highlights how training and educational programs can empower older adults, instilling a sense of purpose and accomplishment, leading to a more fulfilled and satisfying life in their later years. The main purpose was to investigate how continuous learning affects the lives and life satisfaction perception of elderly people over the age of 65 from Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland and Turkey after one week and 25 hours of technology, art and psychotherapy trainings that are believed to support them in every aspect of life.

Keywords: Ageism, life satisfaction, lifelong learning, elderly

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Introduction

Ageing is a complex process characterized by progressive physiological changes in organisms, leading to senescence-a decline in biological functions and the ability to adapt to metabolic stress (Britannica, n.d.). This biological phenomenon results from the accumulation of molecular and cellular damage over time, leading to a gradual decrease in physical and mental capacity, increased disease vulnerability, and ultimately, death (WHO, 2022). However, ageing is not solely a biological process; it is intricately intertwined with social contexts and influenced by various social factors (Ayalon, Tesch-Römer 2018).

Ageism is a form of discrimination and prejudice that targets individuals based on their age (Palmore 1999, p.3-4; Gullette 2017 p. xiii; Macnicol, 2006). It encompasses several aspects, such as stereotyping or discriminating against individuals or groups based on their age, especially older people, and the systemic mistreatment or neglect of the elderly within society or the workplace. Ageism can manifest as denying job opportunities to older job applicants, assuming that older people are incompetent or infirm, or disregarding the valuable contributions of older individuals to society (Hartung, 2018). This discriminatory attitude can have profound consequences not only for older adults but also for younger generations, as it perpetuates negative attitudes and misconceptions about ageing.

In the realm of research, ageism primarily focuses on older people or those in late adulthood (Nelson 2005, Kang, Kim 2022). Ageism can be analyzed through three dimensions: stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination (Brinkhof et al., 2022). These dimensions may manifest through unconscious thoughts, feelings, behaviors, or deliberate actions (Iversen et al., 2009). Notably, Paweł Szukalski emphasizes that ageism often stems from the assumption that older people are incapable of fulfilling certain social roles, especially those deemed productive by society (Szukalski, 2008, p. 156). The concept of ageism was introduced by Robert Butler, who likened it to racism and sexism, highlighting the collective threat these prejudices pose to social sustainability (Szukalski, p.157).

Ageism, with a long-standing research tradition, holds a prominent place in the literature. The ever-evolving socio-political and economic landscape necessitates new analytical perspectives to tackle ageism effectively. By understanding ageism's multidisciplinary nature, we can develop comprehensive strategies and terminological approaches to combat this pervasive issue. To date, research has highlighted the pressing importance of addressing ageism in order to promote a more inclusive and age-friendly society.

Successful ageing is not only vital for the individual, but it also has broader societal implications, as ageing-related declines can impact various areas such as functional, social, and financial status, raising significant public health concerns. ageingageing However, despite its importance, the construct of successful ageing lacks a precise definition in the literature (Simone, Haas & Gomez, 2015, p. 178). Therefore, promoting

integration among older individuals can contribute to a more satisfying and cohesive society.

ACTIVE AGEING

Active aging is a concept that emphasizes optimizing opportunities for health, participation, and safety to enhance the quality of life as people age. With the increasing ageing population, active aging has become more important as individuals seek to maintain independence and engagement in society. The approach recognizes the significance of physical, emotional, and social well-being for older adults, encouraging them to remain active participants in their communities while maintaining their health and overall well-being.

Physical activity plays a crucial role in active aging, as regular exercise has been shown to have numerous benefits for physical health. It can reduce the risk of chronic diseases like heart disease, diabetes, and certain cancers. Additionally, exercise has positive effects on cognitive function, potentially helping to prevent cognitive decline in older adults. Engaging in physical activities can also improve mental health and foster social connections, which are vital aspects of overall well-being. Social engagement is another important aspect of active ageing. Older adults who actively participate in their communities and maintain social connections tend to experience better health outcomes compared to those who are socially isolated. Being involved in community activities, volunteering, and spending time with family and friends can provide a sense of purpose and belonging.

Lifelong learning is also highlighted in the concept of active ageing. Continuously learning new things can help keep the mind sharp and improve cognitive function. It offers a sense of purpose and accomplishment, contributing to a fulfilling life in later years. Lifelong learning can take various forms, from enrolling in classes to learning new skills or pursuing hobbies. By promoting and supporting active ageing, society can enable older adults to maintain their independence and continue making valuable contributions to their communities. Recognizing the importance of physical, emotional, and social well-being for older adults helps create an inclusive and supportive environment where individuals can enjoy a fulfilling life as they age.

The 21st century has been marked by rapid technological advancements, changing demographics worldwide, climate change, and shifts in business organizations. These transformations have necessitated the development of individuals who can adapt quickly to these changes and thrive in an unpredictable future. Training and development have emerged as crucial tools to facilitate this transformation, especially in light of technological developments and increasing competition. In this fast-changing landscape, lifelong education and training have become essential for individuals to cope with the challenges posed by these dynamic shifts. Continuous learning allows people to stay updated with the latest developments, acquire new skills, and remain relevant in their fields. It empowers individuals to take charge of their lives and actively contribute to

society. Moreover, it helps individuals embrace and appreciate cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity, fostering a positive and inclusive society.

Positive psychological well-being is highlighted as a valuable resource for older adults in the face of vulnerabilities. Education plays a vital role in maintaining this well-being by providing opportunities for personal growth, intellectual stimulation, and social interaction, all of which contribute to an improved quality of life. The European Commission recognizes education, in its broadest sense, as the key to equipping individuals with the knowledge and understanding needed to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world. It is through education that individuals can develop critical thinking skills, adaptability, and resilience to navigate through uncertainties and thrive in a continuously evolving environment.

In conclusion, in the face of technological advancements, shifting demographics, climate changes, and business transformations, training and development are indispensable tools to help individuals adapt, thrive, and contribute positively to society. Lifelong education is essential for individuals of all ages to embrace change, maintain well-being, and meet the challenges of the modern world. Through education, people can acquire the skills, knowledge, and mindset needed to navigate a rapidly changing world successfully.

LIFELONG LEARNING IN ELDERLY

The importance of lifelong learning among the elderly is a topic of growing interest and recognition. Researchers and experts have highlighted the benefits of continuous education for seniors in various aspects of their lives. Suryadi et al. (2022) define lifelong education as the ongoing effort of individuals to increase their knowledge and equip themselves through education. It involves using various learning strategies, approaches, and resources to empower the elderly through educational interactions. Lifelong learning has been acknowledged as a powerful tool to combat ageism and promote the well-being of older adults (Field, 2009).

The positive impact of lifelong learning on mental health and cognitive abilities in the elderly cannot be understated. It has been shown to help prevent cognitive decline and stimulate the brain, leading to improved cognitive function (Narushima et al., 2018). Education can also provide seniors with a sense of purpose and fulfillment after retirement, helping them discover and utilize their talents, skills, and qualities (Stankov, 2017).

Lifelong learning is not limited to formal educational institutions but encompasses a wide range of learning experiences, including non-formal and informal learning in various settings such as the workplace and civil society organizations (Soliman et al., 2021). The concept of lifelong learning has gained global recognition and has been integrated into governmental action plans to empower older people, combat ageism, and enhance their self-confidence (Flauzione et al., 2022). Universities and educational institutions have also recognized the need to address the educational needs of older adults. Universities

of the third age and other educational programs for seniors provide spaces and tools to support active ageing, foster social connections, and offer opportunities for lifelong learning (Fragoso and Fonseca, 2022).

Several international plans and declarations, such as the global strategy and action plan on ageing and health, have emphasized the importance of lifelong learning in promoting healthy ageingageing and ensuring the participation of older people in society (World Health Assembly, 2016). Initiatives by governments and non-governmental organizations aim to encourage seniors to continue contributing their knowledge and expertise through continuous learning, volunteerism, and employment (Singapore Government, 2015).

Overall, the growing recognition of lifelong learning's significance among the elderly highlights the need to develop geragogy models that empower older adults, increase their self-efficacy, and combat prejudices against them (Odinma, 2022). Encouraging lifelong learning for seniors is crucial to promote their overall well-being, social engagement, and active participation in society.

THE AGE-FRIENDLY UNIVERSITY (AFU) MOVEMENT

Since its inception in 1973, the University of the Third Age (U3A) has emerged as a prominent organization in the realm of older adult learning. With a remarkable expansion of centers and members worldwide, U3A has played a crucial role in promoting lifelong learning opportunities for seniors (Formasa, 2020). Additionally, the concept of an age-friendly university, pioneered by Dublin City University (DCU) in Ireland, has gained traction. This strategic approach, developed by DCU, aims to incorporate the interests of older adults into the core activities of universities, including teaching, research, and civic engagement (Talmage et al., 2016).

Embracing the responsibility of addressing the ageing population, educational institutions are increasingly recognizing the need to become more age-friendly. This realization has been further emphasized during the pandemic, as institutions strive to provide a diverse and age-inclusive learning environment. Age-friendly universities extend beyond simply catering to older learners; they also promote intergenerational learning, offer opportunities for non-traditional-aged individuals, and foster community dialogue on ageing-related matters (Montepare and Brown, 2022).

The design principles of an age-friendly university, initially formulated by Dublin City University in 2012, offer a comprehensive framework for incorporating older adults into university life. These principles encourage older adults' active participation in educational and research programs, support personal and career development in the later stages of life, recognize diverse educational needs, and promote intergenerational knowledge exchange. Additionally, they emphasize increasing access to online educational opportunities, aligning research with the needs of an ageing society, and raising awareness among students of the importance and complexities of ageing. Moreover, age-friendly universities enhance access to health and wellness programs, engage with

the retired community, and maintain open dialogue with organizations representing the interests of the elderly (Talmage et al., 2016).

Supporting ageing as a component of diversity and inclusion is gaining momentum in higher education environments, reflecting a growing interest in addressing the unique challenges and barriers faced by older adults (Simon et al., 2022). As major educational providers, universities have a significant role to play in adapting to meet the learning needs of seniors and providing appropriate opportunities for lifelong learning (Talmage et al., 2016).

In conclusion, the growing prominence of the University of the Third Age and the concept of age-friendly universities underscore the importance of addressing the educational needs of older adults and promoting lifelong learning opportunities. As the global population continues to age, it is essential for educational institutions to embrace age diversity and create supportive environments that cater to learners of all ages, fostering an inclusive and enriching learning experience for everyone.

Method

The study described below is a by-product of the Erasmus+ project, Wiselife: Raising Awareness about Ageism, which was co-funded by the European Union to promote active ageing and combat age discrimination. Coordinated by Izmir University of Economics in Turkey, WISELIFE brought together partners from Turkey (Bartın University), Italy (I.S.R.A.A), Hungary (University of Szeged), Poland (University of Lodz), and Greece (University of the Aegean).

The primary aim of the project was to raise awareness about ageism and discrimination against the elderly. Unlike other forms of discrimination based on ethnicity or gender, ageing is a universal experience that will likely affect every individual. Thus, activities focusing on ageism and measures to combat age discrimination were deemed crucial not only for specific groups of people but also for the overall well-being of humanity.

As part of the project's five outputs, the second output involved developing a training package for the elderly to promote active ageing. The partners agreed upon a training plan, which was implemented and evaluated through pre-test and post-test assessments. The training sessions took place in Turkey, Hungary, Poland, Italy, and Greece between May and June, 2022.

The training content consisted of three modules: Psychological Wellbeing, Physical Wellbeing, and Technological Wellbeing. Under Psychological Wellbeing, various courses were offered, including Mindfulness, Group Therapy focusing on ageing and ageism, and Art Therapy. Physical Wellbeing courses included Chair Yoga and Meditation, as well as Breathing Exercises. The Technological Wellbeing module covered

courses aimed at creating awareness about cyber-crime, accessing public services online, and the responsible use of social media.

Overall, the training sessions amounted to 25 hours of instruction and were conducted in all partner countries. Out of the 300 trainees who participated in the training, 20 volunteered to take part in the study described in the subsequent sections.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The research described in this section utilized a phenomenology design, which is a qualitative research method focused on understanding how participants make sense of their personal experiences and the nature of this sense-making process (Christensen et al., 2015; Patton, 2014). The central aim of phenomenology is to gain insight into human experience and how individuals perceive and interpret a particular phenomenon or concept (van Manen, 2007).

Phenomenology as a qualitative research approach allows participants to express their understanding, emotions, perspectives, and perceptions related to the subject of investigation. It seeks to capture the essence of how individuals experience a phenomenon and how they give meaning to it (Rose, Beeby & Parker, 1995). In this type of research, data is collected from individuals or groups who have direct experience with the phenomenon being studied and can articulate and reflect on their experiences. Not everyone is suitable for participating in phenomenological research, as it requires a willingness and commitment to exploring and expressing personal experiences (Wilson, 2015; Creswell, 2020).

To ensure the purposeful selection of participants, phenomenological studies often involve recruiting individuals who have experienced the specific concept or phenomenon under investigation (Baker, Wuest & Stern, 1992). The research participants' experiences were evaluated using descriptive phenomenology, focusing on the lived experiences of the participants without imposing subjective interpretations from the researchers. This approach aims to provide an in-depth and rich understanding of the phenomenon in hand.

Participants

The study group for this research was determined from the pool of 300 trainees enrolled in the WISELIFE Project. After obtaining ethical approval from the Ethics Committee, the researchers contacted these trainees and invited them to voluntarily participate in the study. Twenty trainees expressed their interest and willingness to participate in the research, forming the study group.

In phenomenology research, the number of participants can vary, and different views exist in the literature. Some scholars, like Dukes (1992) and Polkinghorne (1984), suggest a range of 3 to 25 participants, while Dukes (1984) proposes 3 to 10 participants, and Polkinghorne (1989) recommends 5 to 25 participants. For this

particular study, the researchers conducted interviews with the selected 20 trainees to explore and gain insights into their phenomenological experiences. The participants were from different countries, representing a diverse range of backgrounds and perspectives.

Table 1. *Demographics of the participants*

Participant	Gender	Country
P1	Female	Türkiye
P2	Male	Türkiye
P3	Female	Türkiye
P4	Female	Türkiye
P5	Male	Türkiye
P6	Female	Türkiye
P7	Female	Türkiye
P8	Female	Türkiye
P9	Female	Hungary
P10	Male	Hungary
P11	Female	Hungary
P12	Female	Hungary
P13	Female	Italy
P14	Female	Italy
P15	Female	Italy
P16	Female	Greece
P17	Female	Greece
P18	Male	Greece
P19	Female	Poland
P20	Female	Poland

Data Collection

The data for this research were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted by the researchers involved in the WISELIFE Project. Initially, five open-ended questions were prepared based on expert opinions, and these questions were finalized for the interviews. The researchers conducted interactive interviews with the trainees to obtain in-depth and enriched discourse. They were flexible in their questioning approach and asked additional questions when necessary (Burns & Peacock, 2019). The interviews were conducted one-on-one at mutually agreed-upon times and locations. To overcome language barriers, the interviews were conducted in the participants' mother tongues.

Each interview was video recorded with the participants' consent. Subsequently, the video recordings were translated and transcribed for analysis. The researchers used descriptive analysis within the framework of descriptive phenomenology to analyze the qualitative data obtained from the interviews. They read and interpreted the transcriptions, classified

the findings, and presented them in tables. To support the research findings, direct quotations from the trainees' responses were included in the relevant sections of the study. To ensure confidentiality and ethical considerations, each participant was given a code (PT1 to PT20) instead of using their personal information (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2014).

For validity and reliability, the researchers addressed credibility, transferability, consistency, and confirmability dimensions. A literature survey was conducted to enhance the believability of the study, and a conceptual framework was developed. Detailed information about the participants and the research process was provided to help readers assess the credibility of the findings. Expert opinions were sought to ensure the research's reliability. The participants were informed about the study's purpose, and confidentiality was emphasized to create a safe and comfortable environment during the interviews. Prolonged interaction with the participants was helpful in obtaining reliable data. To ensure transferability, the interviews and analysis steps were described in detail for readers to understand the research process.

For consistency, face-to-face interviews were recorded, and multiple researchers and experts reviewed the data set to maintain coherence. The researchers ensured that the conclusions drawn from the data were free from personal assumptions and biases. Confirmability was achieved by aligning the study's findings with the literature and presenting them objectively. Figures and accessible language were used to aid comprehension (Creswell, 2013).

Ethical procedures were followed throughout the study. The elderly participants were informed about the ethical considerations, including the voluntary nature of participation and their right to withdraw from the study at any time. They were assured that they could choose not to answer any specific questions without revealing their identity. Confidentiality of the data was maintained, and the study received ethical approval from the Ethics Committee of the coordinating university (Izmir University of Economics).

Findings

In this section, an analysis of the findings obtained through participant interviews will be presented with tables and direct quotations. The participants were given codes representing their origin of country gender as stated below:

TRF: Türkiye/Female	TRM: Türkiye/Male
PLF: Poland/Female	PLM: Poland/ Male
ITF: Italy/Female	ITM: Italy/Male
GRF: Greece/Female	GRM: Greece/ Male
HUF: Hungary/Female	HUM: Hungary/Male

The first question to be answered according to the research problem was "How do you feel in this period of your life?". Most of the participants reported positive views about their feelings for their present lives.

Table 2. *Feelings*

How do you feel in this period of your life	Participant Code	F	%
Feeling Positive	TRF1, TRF2, TRF3 TRM1, TRM2, GRF2, PL1, HUM1, ITF3	15	75 TRF4, TRF5, TRF6, GRM1, GRF1,
Feeling Negative	ITF1	1	5
Feeling Neutral	HUF2	1	5
Depends	HUF1, PL2, ITF2	3	15

Some positive feeling remarks were as follows: "Every age has its own beauty." or "I have more time for myself". HUF1 was one of the participants who explained her present feelings about her life in a positive manner:

I can focus on myself a bit more, I have more time for myself, and at this time, I usually organise my things. I look at the books I was presented with at Christmas, later, I plan to sit down and read them. I watch movies, and I try to find out how to please my family.

HUM1 expressed a happy mood as well:

Practically, I had to realise that this has been the most beautiful phase of my life because when I worked, most of the time I was out, and I did not have much time other than for my family. Nowadays, I have taken part in various associations, and I can accomplish lots of things I didn't even know I would be able to.

A participant from Greece expressed his happiness in the context of being busy with his grandchildren:

I am very well, although I was in a pickle, I am perfect now. (…). I have two grand-grand-children and they were at home the day before yesterday, they were very, very good, I played with them like I was a baby too. (GRF1)

Another participant from Greece connected his happiness with his wife:

(…). I'm fine, I have a good wife who plays a big part in this thing, so I'm fine.

The second question to be answered according to the research problem was "When did you first start feeling aged?". Some of the participants stated that they didn't feel aged (TRF1 TRM1 PLF1 PLF2):

Honestly, I haven't felt anything yet. I'm very sincere. I still feel like I'm 20 years old. I go to concerts; I play music myself. I have a band. I play the guitar. I try to take advantage of opportunities whenever possible. What happened...when I don't do sports, I feel

sluggish, but I realised I couldn't do it and I started taking steps... 10 thousand steps… (TRM1)

Well, I am a senior citizen as it were by age. But youth is no age. So I'm 67, soon I'll be 68. This doesn't mean that I'm old, I'm in good health, I have no health problems, my retirement is good, and I still help seniors who are very ill, even, because they are very ill... (PLF2)

Some participants stated that some physical changes, loss of energy and health problems they experienced made them feel aged:

… there are wrinkles, of course I don't want to intervene… (TRF2)

I had an operation, I asked the doctor why, he said due to age... so I said I was old. When you take the crutch, you reach a turning point in life. The words of my late grandmother came to my mind, I must die standing up without being in someone else's hands, and I accepted old age there. (TRM2)

The first time I felt ageing was when I had to acknowledge that my energies should be well allocated for the 24 hours of the day. Before, I was able to work for 24 hours, but now I must save my strength. The more I want, the less I am able to accomplish. For me, fortunately, ageing now only means that I do not want to do all things at once, and I feel that nobody urges me. So, ıf I am not able to finish today, I can do so at other times, or I ask someone else to help me out. I do not want to do everything on my own. (HUF1)

The first time I felt ageing was when I was around sixty or later. Before, during my 43-year-long service, I had never gone on sick leave, but after sixty, not too big problems, but some little health issues started appearing. In the first few months right after retirement, I was a bit depressed, so this was the state I soon broke out of, and started to realise how enjoyable a pensioner's life could be. (HUM1)

A participant mentioned some events after which they started to feel aged:

When you lose your mate. But you say I need to be stronger. I need to be self-sufficient. When I lost my Ahmet, I started to think about these things. (TRF3)

The third question to be answered according to the research problem was "What does ageing mean to you?".

Table 3. *Definition of Ageing*

Definition of Ageing	Participant Code	F	%
Positive Perspective	TRF2, TRF4, GRM1, TRM2, PLF2, HUM1	6	30
Negative Perspective	PL1, TRF1, TRF3, TRM1, ITF3, TRF5, TRF6, HUF2, HUF3	9	45
Neutral	ITF1, ITF2, GRF1, GRF2, HUF1	5	75

Participant expressions for a positive definition of ageing was as follows; "Just getting old in numbers", "Maturity, becoming more active", "I feel just like when I was young", "It is first and foremost life experience, and wisdom".

HUM1 expressed his positive feelings through the transformation he experienced:

As for me, things seem to be a bit contrary to others, since for me the phase of ageing has become a positive stage of my life, owing to the fact that I have met lots of new friends and participated in numerous events and projects, which formerly I had not had much time for, because besides my work and family, I did not have time left. So ageing is definitely a positive experience for me.

Participant expressions for a negative definition of ageing was as follows:

· Physical changes in appearance,

· Coping with disease,

· Becoming dependent on someone else,

· Low energy, no enjoyment of life, withdrawal into a shell,

· Losing curiosity, self-isolation,

· Pessimism,

· Slight irritability,

· Getting tired easily.

Some participants who define old age from a negative perspective do not experience their old age period in a negative way as they define it through:

My heart is still beating like I'm 20 years old. I go to concerts, I play myself. I have a band. I play the guitar. I try to take advantage of opportunities whenever I can. When I don't exercise, I feel sluggish, but I can't do it. I started taking steps... 10,000 steps...." (TR2M)

HUF2 expressed her opinions about ageing as losing self-reliance and health:

Well, I do not really know what old age is. As long as I can fend and care for myself, as long as I do not have 24-hour pains, I can enjoy my free time, I can go on excursions or holidays, or I can engage myself in handicraft activities, and I do not think about illnesses.

HUF3 emphsized health issues while mentioning being aged:

It means that I am getting 'rich', not financially but having diseases one after another, for example, varicose veins, irregularities in the functioning of the heart. Nevertheless, thanks to God, I do not have brain problems, which I especially pay attention to.

The fourth question to be answered according to the research problem was "Has anything changed in your life before /after the training? How?"

Table 4. *Changes in Life*

Description of change in the participants' life	Participant Code	F	%
Positive Change Description	TRF1, TRM1, TRF2, TRF3, TRF4, TRF5, TRF6, GR1, GR2, GR3, POLF1, POLF2, HUF1, HUF3, HUM1, ITF2, ITF3	17	85
No change	HUF2, TRM2, ITF1	3	15

It was observed that almost all participants (%85) illustrated that something had positively changed in their lives after training (n=17). Participants stated that they learned new information and life skills that they had never learned before. In addition, many participants stated they were very happy after the training. Some of the participants made the following remarks:

I thought I knew many things, but I learned a lot and gladly went. I learned a lot about how to eat and keep my mood in order. It has helped me a lot. I recommended it to all my friends. (TRF4)

Good. When I arrived, I had reservations. I met you all here, and we had a very, very nice time; I enjoyed myself. I learned how to use the Internet a little bit, a little bit, not much yet, yes, very, very nice, very nice; I mean I understood that we are cared for, we are cared for by our fellow human beings, it doesn't matter that we are grown up people, we were put into a program to learn that which we couldn't learn at home on our own. (GR1)

Another participant added:

Well, this programme helped me in a way that made me realize that I should open to people. I am an extremely reserved person. I have a lot of hobbies that I enjoy. Well, the programmes I attended made me aware of the fact that we need to meet others, to get

acquainted with others, and to attend various events, which is only possible if you live behind the walls of your home. No matter how I am, sometimes I must move out of my room. Many programmes gave me the opportunity to do so, for example, in the small groups where I could make friends with people I had not met before. Or I was able to travel to lands in my imagination, or be at an event, where I will never visit but I can see the world, or at least a little corner of it through others' experiences and reports. (HUM1)

Some participants stated that their training, especially on technology, made their lives easier. For example:

I attended all sessions of the training, I had not had too much expectation, because I did not know what exactly it would give me. Nevertheless, I am very happy that I did participate, because, for example, related to holidays, we watched travel and photo reports, which I especially like since I myself like travelling as well, so one of the positive outcomes was that I got inspired by what my next destination could be. Not to mention the training part, which was offered by an information technology expert who has been the best teacher in my life, so to speak. Formerly, I was a bit resistant to smart phones and computers, but the training sparked something in me, and now, I got to the point when, with the help of my son, I started using them. (HUF3)

Few participants (%15) stated that there was no change in their lives after the training they received (n=3). One of the participants stated:

Can I be honest? I would say no. I mean, they always increase the knowledge and skills that one may have. But at my age … you know how many I have, right? So let's take a guess, next month, I do eight- two. (ITF1)

Another participant said:

It did not meet my expectations. I came with much bigger dreams. What I was told and what I saw there were very different. Or our group was different. It was not a place for conversation, not a barren golden day. It's about the standards of the participants. I completed all my scans and added something in the middle. There were police friends. Or, because law is my field, it seemed very simple to me. There is nothing like this in Turkey; it happens in American movies. I wouldn't say I like to chase raw dreams. (TRM2)

The fifth question to be answered according to the research problem was "Have you ever experienced ill-treatment, discrimination, or disadvantage because of your age?". The results of this question are shown in the table below.

Table 5. *Ageism Experiences*

Experiencing any ill treatment, discrimination or disadvantage	Participant Code	F	%
Yes, I have experienced	TRM1, TRF3	2	10
No, I have not experienced	TRF1, TRM2, TRF2, TRF4, TRF6, GR2, GR3,	15	75

	POLF1, POLF2, HUF1, HUF2, HUF3, HUM1, ITF2, ITF3		
Traumatic/Domestic Violence	ITF1, GR1, TRF5	3	15

_____

It was found that only a few of the participants (%10) indicated that they had experienced ill-treatment, discrimination, or disadvantage because of their age (n=2). Some of the participants made the following remarks regarding this subject:

There was a woman in trauma recently. I said don't do it… Recently, trauma, izban metro was very good… I said no, ma'am, I forced her to sit there. I still feel young. Little things happen. We do a check-up. So it is. (TRM1)

For example, years ago everyone used to call me sister. A lady at the cottage started calling me auntie. 10 or 12 years ago they had big kids. The one who calls her aunt has a son and grandson. Another neighbor said how can she be your aunt? Anyway, she gave up. Let's let her say it, everyone... one more... get in my pocket... 77 started it. Anyway, let them say I'm used to it... Of course, I don't want fat, lumbering, self-abandoned people with grandchildren... My children also tease me. (TRF3)

Some respondents (%15) reported that they had experienced traumatic problems or domestic violence when they were young; however, these were not related to the issue of age-related ill-treatment, discrimination, or disadvantage (n=3). Some of the participants made the following remarks regarding this subject:

No, at age no, but a little bit yes when I was young, a traumatic experience unfortunately. (ITF1)

Look, I felt a little bit of abuse from my husband, that, he was a little bit strange, but he was a good man but not that. Discrimination no, I don't think I felt any discrimination, no, not in my work, not in my social life, no, no, I never felt discrimination. (GRE1)

I've been through a lot. Violence is what I want to use as an example. Discrimination, for example, how can I say? Unrest. So I can't really say. I've had terrible experiences. (TRF5)

It was observed that almost all participants (%85) stated that participants emphasized that they have not experienced ill-treatment, discrimination, or disadvantage because of their age (n=15)

One of the participants mentioned:

Thankfully I haven't experienced it yet. Hopefully, I will not experience this in the future. (TRF6)

Another participant said:

No, I mean, for example, no, I haven't had anything like that happen to me, that someone told me you're old or there, you don't know anything or something. (POLF1)

One of the participants stated:

I consider myself lucky in this aspect as well. It may be because I move out little into the outer world, I have never been a victim or target of discriminative acts or ill-treatment. I would not say that just because of my age, I have suffered disadvantages. (HUF3)

Results and Discussion

This article has explored ageing as a biological and social process, as well as the detrimental effects of ageism on individuals and society as a whole. Understanding and addressing ageism is vital for fostering a society that values and respects individuals of all ages. By dismantling ageist attitudes and practices, we can pave the way for a more equitable and supportive environment for both current and future generations.

In conclusion, this journal article has shed light on the critical issue of ageism and its impact on the lives of older adults. Ageism, fueled by negative stereotypes and discrimination, can have far-reaching consequences on the psychological and social well-being of the elderly. However, there is hope in the form of continuous learning and educational opportunities, which have emerged as powerful tools to combat ageism and enhance the life satisfaction of older individuals.

Lifelong learning presents a proactive and transformative approach to empower the elderly, providing them with opportunities to challenge ageist beliefs and remain active participants in society. By engaging in diverse educational programs, older adults can break free from the shackles of age-related biases and discover new avenues for personal growth and self-improvement.

The positive effects of continuous learning on ageism are multi-faceted. Education equips older adults with knowledge and skills that enable them to maintain their independence, self-confidence, and resilience. Engaging in learning activities also fosters a sense of purpose and accomplishment, combating feelings of social isolation and irrelevance. As older adults become active participants in educational settings, they become ambassadors for change, challenging ageist perceptions and promoting intergenerational understanding and cohesion.

Moreover, the findings suggest that training and educational programs tailored for the elderly can significantly contribute to enhancing life satisfaction. By acquiring new knowledge and skills, older individuals feel a renewed sense of purpose and relevance in their lives. Lifelong learning also creates opportunities for social interaction, building new relationships and support networks, which are vital for overall well-being.

In conclusion, this article highlights the transformative potential of continuous learning in shaping a more inclusive and age-friendly society. By recognizing the value of lifelong learning for the elderly, we can work towards dismantling ageism and promoting a culture that values and respects individuals of all ages. By embracing lifelong learning as a societal norm, we can unlock the full potential of older adults and enrich the lives of future generations.

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Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

Bu makale, yaygın bir sorun olan yaş ayrımcılığını ve bunun yaşlı nüfus üzerindeki zararlı etkilerini incelemektedir. Yaşlı yetişkinlere karşı yaşlarına dayalı önyargı ve ayrımcılık olan yaşçılık, yaşlı bireylerin refahını ve yaşam memnuniyetini önemli ölçüde etkileyebilir. Bununla birlikte, makale aynı zamanda sürekli öğrenmenin yaş ayrımcılığını azaltma ve yaşlıların yaşam memnuniyetini arttırma üzerindeki potansiyel olumlu etkilerini de incelemektedir. Proaktif bir yaklaşım olarak yaşam boyu öğrenme, yaşlıların kalıp yargılara meydan okuması, toplumla bağlarını sürdürmesi ve kişisel gelişimlerini desteklemesi için bir fırsat sunmaktadır. Bu çalışma, eğitim ve öğretim programlarının yaşlı yetişkinleri nasıl güçlendirebileceğini, bir amaç ve başarı duygusu aşılayarak ilerleyen yaşlarında daha tatmin edici ve doyurucu bir yaşam sürmelerini sağlayabileceğini vurgulamaktadır. Çalışmanın temel amacı, Yunanistan, Macaristan, İtalya, Polonya ve Türkiye'den 65 yaş üstü yaşlıların, yaşamın her alanında kendilerini destekleyeceğine inanılan bir haftalık ve 25 saatlik teknoloji, sanat ve psikoterapi eğitimlerinin ardından sürekli öğrenmenin yaşamlarını ve yaşam memnuniyeti algılarını nasıl etkilediğini araştırmaktır.

Aktif yaşlanma, insanlar yaşlandıkça yaşam kalitesini artırmak için sağlık, katılım ve güvenlik fırsatlarını optimize etmeyi vurgulayan bir kavramdır. Yaşlanan nüfusun artmasıyla birlikte, bireyler bağımsızlıklarını ve topluma katılımlarını sürdürmeye çalıştıkça aktif yaşlanma daha önemli hale gelmiştir. Bu yaklaşım, yaşlı yetişkinler için fiziksel, duygusal ve sosyal refahın önemini kabul etmekte ve onları sağlıklarını ve genel refahlarını korurken toplumlarında aktif katılımcılar olarak kalmaya teşvik etmektedir.

Elimizdeki çalışma, aktif yaşlanmayı teşvik etmek ve yaş ayrımcılığıyla mücadele etmek amacıyla Avrupa Birliği tarafından ortaklaşa finanse edilen Wiselife: Raising Awareness about Ageism adlı Erasmus+ projesinin bir ürünüdür. Türkiye'de İzmir Ekonomi Üniversitesi tarafından koordine edilen WISELIFE, Türkiye (Bartın Üniversitesi), İtalya (I.S.R.A.A), Macaristan (Szeged Üniversitesi), Polonya (Lodz Üniversitesi) ve Yunanistan'dan (Ege Üniversitesi) ortakları bir araya getirdi. Bu araştırma için çalışma grubu, WISELIFE Projesine kayıtlı 300 katılımcıdan oluşan havuzdan belirlenmiştir. Etik Kurul'dan etik onay alındıktan sonra araştırmacılar bu kursiyerlerle iletişime geçerek onları çalışmaya gönüllü olarak katılmaya davet etmiştir. Yirmi katılımcı araştırmaya ilgi duyduklarını ve katılmaya istekli olduklarını ifade ederek çalışma grubunu oluşturmuştur.

Sürekli öğrenmenin yaş ayrımcılığı üzerindeki olumlu etkileri çok yönlüdür. Eğitim, yaşlı yetişkinleri bağımsızlıklarını, özgüvenlerini ve dayanıklılıklarını korumalarını sağlayan bilgi ve becerilerle donatır. Öğrenme faaliyetlerine katılmak aynı zamanda bir amaç ve başarı duygusunu teşvik ederek sosyal izolasyon ve ilgisizlik duygularıyla mücadele eder. Yaşlı yetişkinler eğitim ortamlarında aktif katılımcılar haline geldikçe, değişimin elçileri haline gelmekte, yaşçı algılara meydan okumakta ve nesiller arası anlayış ve uyumu teşvik etmektedirler. Ayrıca bulgular, yaşlılara yönelik eğitim ve öğretim programlarının yaşam memnuniyetini artırmaya önemli ölçüde katkıda bulunabileceğini göstermektedir. Yeni bilgi ve beceriler edinen yaşlı bireyler, yaşamlarında yenilenmiş bir amaç ve alaka

duygusu hissederler. Yaşam boyu öğrenme aynı zamanda sosyal etkileşim için fırsatlar yaratmakta, genel refah için hayati önem taşıyan yeni ilişkiler ve destek ağları kurmaktadır.

Sonuç olarak bu makale, daha kapsayıcı ve yaş dostu bir toplumun şekillendirilmesinde sürekli öğrenmenin dönüştürücü potansiyelini vurgulamaktadır. Yaşlılar için yaşam boyu öğrenmenin değerini kabul ederek, yaş ayrımcılığını ortadan kaldırmak ve her yaştan bireye değer veren ve saygı duyan bir kültürü teşvik etmek için çalışabiliriz. Yaşam boyu öğrenmeyi toplumsal bir norm olarak benimseyerek, yaşlı yetişkinlerin tam potansiyelini ortaya çıkarabilir ve gelecek nesillerin yaşamlarını zenginleştirebiliriz.

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Evaluation of Quiet Quitting: Is the Bell Ringing?

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Abstract

This study empirically explores the concept of Quite Quitting (QQ), which is defined as the factors that prevent teachers from feeling a sense of belonging to their profession despite their efforts in school settings. It also identifies the reasons why teachers do not feel engaged in their profession and the types of disengagement behaviors they exhibit. In this research, mixed research methods were employed, among which the exploratory sequential design was utilized. The design comprised two phases, the first being phenomenology with 32, and the second being the quantitative phase with 484 teachers in the Eskişehir region of Turkiye. The results provided evidence that although the QQ phenomenon was a post-pandemic trauma that occurred especially in Generation Z, the findings showed that QQ had very different dimensions in Turkiye and that its origins were deeper. The interpretation followed the four factors of QQ: management factors, social factors, economic factors, and factors that affected teachers' well-being. As aftereffects, teachers showed emotional distance, simurg effect, apathy, and revenge from the student. The conclusions and recommendations were discussed.

Keywords: Quite Quitting, Turkish Educational Settings, Teacher Behaviours, Mixed-Method Study, Post-Covid 19.

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Introduction

The COVID-19 has presented a difficult stage of growth for Turkish education (Yavuz et al., 2021), and for education in other parts of the world (A'yun et al., 2022; Armstrong-Mensah et al., 2020). As the saying goes, "order out of chaos." While all parties in education, including educators, have attempted to adapt to a new order, this new process has forced scholars in education to reconsider this situation. In recent years, a global interest in education has been on the rise, with a focus on expanding the horizons of all individuals by following trends. Studies related to education aim to improve the structure of global education systems (Molina & Lattimer, 2013) by emphasizing decision-making styles and data-based approaches in education (Schildkamp et al., 2017). Moreover, scholarly investigations strive to recognize gender, regional, and economic disparities that give rise to inequities in educational opportunities (Ferreira & Gignoux, 2008). Accordingly, recommendations are made to develop school environments that furnish students with enriching learning prospects (Uline, 2022).

Turkiye is experiencing progress in education in certain domains. Recent developments in the education sector in Turkiye are noteworthy. For instance, the personnel expenses of the Ministry of National Education's budget increased from 71.7% in 2019 to 72.9% in 2020 in conjunction with the rise in enrollment rates (Eğitim Reformu Girişimi [ERG], 2021). However, various concerns have been revealed by research on the working conditions and challenges encountered by teachers in Turkiye. First, teachers in Turkiye receive lower salaries compared to their counterparts in OECD countries (Demirel-Yazıcı & Cemaloğlu, 2022; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2018; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2022). Furthermore, teachers in Turkiye report low levels of job satisfaction (Ulukan, 2020) and often express concerns regarding organizational justice (Aydin & Karaman-Kepenekci, 2008), favoritism (Aydoğan, 2009), and the tediousness of school tasks and procedures (Kazak, 2019).

Educational policies are subject to constant change, and professional dignity is often lacking (Eğitim ve Bilim Emekçileri Sendikası [Eğitim-Sen], 2015). These challenges have led to burnout among teachers in Turkey (Seferoğlu et al., 2014), as well as the manifestation of organizational silence and cynicism behaviors (Demirtaş et al., 2016), reduced organizational commitment (Ergen, 2015), and a decline in the quality of work life (Erdem, 2008).

In recent studies, researchers have examined factors that contribute to Quiet Quitting (QQ), including burnout, using different variables. The resulting data have been analyzed within the framework of dependent and independent variable causality, indicating the need for a multifaceted approach to understanding this phenomenon. Additionally, previous research has explored and discussed changes in the lifestyles of teachers, suggesting significant differences from the past.

'Is it always the right thing to give 110% at work? Is this kind of diligence a virtue? There is little doubt that QQ stands in opposition to a hustle or rise-and-grind culture that demands a ceaseless commitment to

productivity and the pursuit of career-oriented goals. But that's kind of the point. The contention at play concerns whether there is anything morally wrong with fulfilling our contractual expectations but not seeking to rise above them (Arnet, 2022: n/a).'

'It is understood that the QQ that dominated the pre-pandemic period was not so secret and silent. With the change, employees are no longer putting their work at the center of their lives; they want to establish a work-life balance by prioritizing their private lives. It should not be forgotten that QQ is a long-term product of the process (Çimen & Yılmaz, 2023: 32).'

In this research, QQ is defined as a broad term in the existing literature and is empirically tested in Turkish schools for the first time. Initially, the factors that give rise to QQ among teachers were comprehensively identified, followed by the examination of the QQ behaviours that they exhibit as an aftermath. This study is noteworthy as it elucidates a prevalent and concerning trend of QQ in Turkish schools amongst local educators. Moreover, this paper offers international readers insight into the underlying causes of QQ, effective strategies to mitigate QQ, means to bolster organisational culture and teacher welfare, and, therefore, promote policy development and implementation.

Educational Settings in Turkiye

The education system in Turkiye is characterized by a centralist approach, where the Ministry of Education develops the curriculum, and teachers are expected to implement it. However, studies have shown that teachers often make changes to the curriculum based on their preferences or student needs (Bümen et al., 2014). This centralist nature has been criticized for its organizational structure and its failure to mitigate existing inequalities in society (Özdemir & Demircioğlu, 2014). The system is highly exam-oriented, with national centralized exams holding significant importance in shaping the future of Turkish youth (Toksöz & Kılıçkaya, 2018). These exams have been found to significantly influence students' motivational sources and attitudes towards education (Polat, 2020). Additionally, the pressure and consequences attached to high-stakes tests have been observed to have various effects (Toksöz & Kılıçkaya, 2018). The impact of the university entrance exam on English language education has also been studied, highlighting its influence on pre-service teachers' perspectives. Furthermore, the system has faced challenges in meeting the needs of students and has encountered various problems due to its centralist state. The pandemic further accelerated the shift from traditional face-to-face education to total distance education in Turkiye (Korkmaz et al., 2021). The centralist and exam-based education system in Turkiye has also influenced adult education policies, with efforts made to harmonize the system with EU countries' systems (Vezne & Yildiz, 2021; Dilbaz, 2021). Moreover, the system has had a significant impact on career choices, with university entrance exam scores playing a substantial role in students' subject choices. The centralist nature of the system has also been found to affect consistency among curriculum, textbooks, and placement tests. Additionally, the system has influenced the evaluation and selection of students for higher education institutions. The impact of the system on student achievement has been a subject of study, with the effect of curriculum-based external exit exam systems being evaluated (Bishop, 2000). In conclusion, the education system in Turkiye is characterized by a centralist and

exam-oriented approach, which has significant implications for student motivation, inequality, and the overall educational experience.

The centralized educational system in Turkey significantly affects the academic, social, and cultural aspects of teachers' lives, imposing constraints that limit their creative and personalized teaching approaches (Collie et al., 2012), thereby undermining their job satisfaction (Sarpkaya and Kırdök, 2019) and academic freedom (Bourn & Soysal, 2021). This system's strict curriculum oversight and standardized educational practices hinder equitable learning opportunities and fail to meet the diverse needs of students across gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic backgrounds, undermining efforts to create a diverse and inclusive educational environment. Moreover, the system places undue pressure on teachers, affecting their professional and personal well-being and restricting their opportunities for professional development and meaningful student interactions. Advocating for systemic changes to grant teachers more autonomy could profoundly improve the educational framework, benefiting both educators and students by fostering a more dynamic and supportive learning experience.

Background of this Study

When COVID-19 lost its impact, the situation that started in the United States in 2021 and spread to many countries, along with a significant number of employees resigning, was referred to as the 'Great Resignation Movement.' While the Great Resignation continues to reverberate in business circles, the concept of the QQ began to be discussed by 2022. The concept of QQ regained popularity worldwide with COVID-19 due to the disruption of work-life balance. This concept manifests itself through the inadequacies or negatives in psychological, social, physical, and economic conditions, leading individuals to be physically present in the workplace but not engaging in anything beyond their job description and working hours. The concept of QQ entails the individual's reaction to questioning themselves with questions like "for what?" "What am I doing?" "Is it worth it?" and the answers to these questions being against the employer or the workplace (Fuller & Kerr, 2022; Parker & Horowitz, 2022; Yıldız & Özmenekşe, 2022). This concept represents the employee's limited commitment to the workplace in terms of fulfilling assigned tasks and giving up any other tasks not specified in the job description (Çimen & Yılmaz, 2023; Formica & Sfodera, 2022).

The current business world has undergone a significant transformation, particularly with the impact of COVID-19. It is observed that this transformation has had negative impacts on both employees and employers. Employers have faced outcomes, such as downsizing, staff reduction, and changes in work patterns, while employees have started experiencing the burden of excessive workload and increased physical and mental exhaustion. In fact, this situation indicates that the problem existed before COVID-19 but was triggered by the pandemic itself (Fuller & Kerr, 2022; Önder, 2022). In a study conducted by Harter (2022), the percentage of employees under the age of 35 who claimed to be engaged in their work decreased by six points from 2019 to 2022. The same study also found that the percentage of young employees who strongly agreed that someone cared about

them, supported their development, and provided advancement opportunities experienced a decrease of more than 10%. The change brought some discussions on the ethics of work-life. Although it is not one of the classical virtues, working hard could be accepted as a moral virtue, which is an excellent character, generally worth cultivating before the pandemic. It is understood that the silent resignation that dominated the post-pandemic period was not so secret and innocent. With the change, employees are no longer putting their work at the center of their lives; they want to establish a work-life balance by prioritizing their private lives. It should be noted that silent resignation will change the work-life balance radically (Arnet, 2022). The destructive wave brought by the pandemic has prompted employers to develop strategies to protect their businesses and companies, while employees have focused on protecting themselves. Employers have assigned additional tasks to their remote workers that were not originally part of their job descriptions, flexed the concept of working hours by scheduling meetings at their convenience, and often refrained from making salary adjustments due to employees not physically being present in the office. On the other hand, employees have sought alternative solutions, such as renegotiating salaries and other financial benefits, and ensuring flexible working conditions and hours (Ulutürk, 2022). This process, which started with a lack of communication between employers and employees, particularly in the United States, led to millions of workers spending the majority of the year at home due to the pandemic, starting from the beginning of the spring of 2020.

About a year later, after the lockdowns were lifted, it was expected that employees would return to their workplaces as the impact of the pandemic weakened. However, around 47 million Americans refused to do so and did not go back to their jobs (Fuller & Kerr, 2022). In the United Kingdom, in May 2021, the university union signed a manifesto-like set of decisions to regulate work without resorting to strikes. While employees continued to perform their duties, they began to exhibit QQ behaviors, such as not rescheduling classes, appointments, meetings, or other tasks cancelled due to industrial action, not attending meetings longer than 50 minutes, not sending emails before 9:00 am, and after 5:00 pm, and not taking on more work than committed to. This situation indicated to the employers that the university would not function without the staff taking on additional tasks beyond their routine duties (Lord, 2022). DeSmet et al. (2022) identified the reasons behind the great resignation wave as low wages, the perception of employee impoverishment, a lack of recognition and a sense of disrespect for performance, a toxic culture, and job dissatisfaction and a lack of meaning. Zenger and Folkman (2022) found that managers who were concerned about the needs of others had the lowest percentage of resignations in the great resignation movement.

Youthall, a company that conducted research on QQ in Turkiye, determined that 24% of the young workforce experienced the process of QQ, while 47% were very close to QQ (Kariyer platformu…, 2022). Considering that Turkiye has the highest average weekly working hours in Europe (Duman, 2022), it can be expected that employees will work long hours and become exhausted. According to the data from the Turkish Statistical Institute (2021), only 16.3% of approximately 34 million employees in Turkiye

feel happy in their work due to job satisfaction, financial reasons, and success. In other words, it can be said that there is a majority who are unhappy and dissatisfied and are the target of QQ. Çimen and Yılmaz (2023) clarified the issues, such as the reasons that cause QQ, the behaviors by which individuals manifest QQ, and what to do to prevent them. Also, they proposed measuring employee expectations and, developing related practices, and creating a safe and supportive working environment as the first solutions that come to mind for preventing QQ. This study aims to explore the teachers' perceptions, and their experiences regarding the reasons for and aftereffects of QQ. The findings aim to assist teachers, educational administrators, and policymakers in mitigating the negative impacts that decrease teacher motivation and disrupt students' educational experiences. Therefore, the researchers prepared research questions, and they are related to *(i)* the aspects of QQ, *(ii)* How QQ is perceived at schools by teachers, and (iii) How much QQ is perceived at schools by teachers. Thus, we aimed to ask these questions to the teachers the following questions:

- How would you define and explain the factors that cause your limited commitment to your teaching profession due to your working conditions?
- How do the factors that cause you to have limited commitment to your teaching profession due to your working conditions affect you?

Method

This study utilised an exploratory sequential design approach, commonly used in mixed methods research (Creswell et al., 2003). The design comprised two phases, the first being Phenomenology (N=32), and the second being the quantitative phase (N=484). This design is particularly beneficial when qualitative data exploration is an initial requirement for subsequent quantitative data collection. Exploratory sequential designs prove invaluable when tackling complex and poorly understood research problems or questions. Researchers can delve into the topic in great depth before moving on to the quantitative phase of design.

The initial qualitative phase furnishes contextual knowledge and comprehension that facilitate the creation of research tools, hypotheses, and the entire quantitative research plan. This approach can enrich and validate the research findings by merging the potentials of both qualitative and quantitative research techniques (Creswell et al., 2003). We initiated our exploration of the phenomena through a qualitative phase by conducting interviews to collect data. This approach provided us with comprehensive insights, allowing us to identify crucial patterns and themes in the data. Following this, researchers moved on to the quantitative phase where they employed surveys to collect numerical data.

Our objective was to validate the results obtained from the qualitative phase using statistical analysis to draw conclusions and generalize the findings with the quantitative

data. In the last step, both phases were put together, and we showed a full understanding of the research problem through a table-based display that put both findings next to each other (Fetters et al., 2013).

Participants

Phenomenology Phase

The phenomenology phase entailed conducting semi-structured interviews with 32 teachers (8 males and 24 females) who taught in various schools within the Eskisehir region of Turkiye. In the selection process, we utilised the snowball sampling discriminative exponential approach. This approach necessitates the recognition of a preliminary group of interviewers who will be interviewed. At the conclusion of their interview, these individuals will be asked to put forward potential subjects who exhibit comparable traits and are pertinent to the survey's objectives (Noy, 2008). Teachers' ages ranged from 21 to 52 (21 to 31=12, 31 to 40=17, 41 to 50=2, Upper 51=1). In terms of school types, six were from private schools, and six were from state schools. Table 1 depicts the participants' demographic information.

Table 1. *Demographic values of phenomenology participants*

Variables		Categories of variables										
		School types			Age					Gender		
		Private School	State school	Total	21 to 30	31 to 40	41 to 50	Upper 51	Total	Female	Male	Total
Qualitative Phase	Phenomenology	17	15	32	12	17	2	1	32	24	8	32

Quantitative Phase

In the quantitative phase, we used convenience sampling, which refers to collecting data by convenience to collect data from the Eskişehir and Muğla regions of Turkiye. This technique lets us conduct the research quicklyand conveniently. It is one of the most frequently used sampling strategies as well as the least desirable (see McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). Answers were collected from 447 teachers with different teaching experiences, academic degrees, ages, and genders teaching at different schools. Their teaching experiences ranged from 0 to 31 (0 to 10=126, 11 to 20=170, 21 to 30=123, Upper 31=28). Regarding academic degrees, three were associates, 293 were bachelors, 145 were graduates, and six were doctorates. Their age ranged from 21 to

51 (21 to 30=37, 31 to 40=189, 41 to 50=154, and upper 51=67). As for gender, 447 teachers participated in the survey (Male=161 and Female=286). Table 2 presents participants' demographic information.

Table 2. *Demographic values of quantitative participants*

Variables	Teaching experience					Academic degree					Age					Gender		
	0 to 10	11 to 20	21 to 30	Upper to 31	Total	Associate	Bachelor	Graduate	Doctorate	Total	21 to 30	31 to 40	41 to 50	Upper 51	Total	Female	Male	Total
Quantitative Phase	126	170	123	28	447	3	293	145	6	447	37	189	154	67	447	286	161	447

Trustworthiness of the Qualitative Study

High-quality qualitative research requires critical reflection and a rationale for the chosen framework used in the study. Our recent study was assessed using four criteria to evaluate its trustworthiness (Stahl & King, 2020): credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. We established alignment between QQ, research question, data collection, analysis, and results for credibility and chose and explained the sampling strategy, the depth and volume of data, and the analytical steps taken. For dependability, we provided sufficient information so that another researcher could follow the same procedural steps. Confirmability is another step in applying trustworthiness by showing how we reached our findings through detailed descriptions. Finally, transferability was achieved by describing the context of the research. The data from the phenomenology phase were analyzed using MAXQDA2022, and the qualitative design was analyzed using JAMOVI 1.1.9 Advanced Statistical Package.

Reliability of the Quantitative Study

We obtained the consistency of our data collection tool's construct by measuring the test-retest reliability. To measure the construct of the data collection tool, we applied it to a group of teachers in the first part of May 2023 using it again on the same group of teachers 18 days later. We checked the test-retest correlation between two sets of Pearson's r scores which was found ($r=+.91$) to be considered good reliability. We assessed the content validity through inter-rate reliability. Five academics assessed the questions in the beginning, demanding some corrections. We met their requirements and sent them back again. Finally, we calculated the Lawshe Content Validity Ratio (L-

CVR) with a panel size of 5 and the minimum number required to agree with an item essential for inclusion of 5 for every question (Lawshe, 1975).

Data Collection

Phenomenology

The initial stage of our qualitative research utilised phenomenology to reveal the nuanced and context-specific dimensions of user experiences (Weaver-Highhtower, 2018). Our application of phenomenology allowed us to examine the distinct requirements, emotions, and perspectives of teachers in their perception of QQ and how these affected their professional and personal lives. The present study examined the experiences, behaviours, opinions, values, feelings, knowledge, and sensory perceptions of teachers (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). Sample research questions include: *(i)* What are the factors attributed to facing QQ? (ii) In what ways do the factors affect your emotions in relation to QQ? What was your response?

In this study, participant recruitment was actively conducted over four months, from January to April 2022. During this phase, initial interviews were carried out, and the data were analyzed using an inductive, non-directive approach. The research progressed through sequential qualitative phases. The insights gained from the phenomenological analysis in phase 2 informed the development of interview questions for subsequent teacher interviews. Before the pilot study, these interview questions were reviewed and approved by three field experts. The format of the teacher interviews comprised open-ended questions, specifically designed to explore teachers' perceptions of the QQ framework.

Phase 2 Quantitative Method

The second phase of this study was a quantitative cross-sectional analysis focused on examining the predisposing factors affecting QQ. This phase involved collecting data from a varied group of teachers at a single time point, aiming for an impartial observation of variables, as described by McMillan & Schumacher (2006). The qualitative data from the first phase was analyzed to identify patterns and themes, aiding in the development of a new instrument or taxonomy for the quantitative stage. Following the qualitative analysis, the research team advanced to quantitative data collection, primarily through surveys. These surveys, formulated after the phenomenology phase, incorporated Likert-type questions that resonated with the qualitative findings. The purpose of the survey was to explore the dynamics of QQ and to validate the qualitative results. It was disseminated electronically via Google Docs, featuring a self-completion question format. For the analysis and interpretation of the quantitative data, the JAMOVI 1.1.9 Advanced Statistical Package was utilized, incorporating insights from the qualitative phase. The quantitative measurement of QQ was structured around four dimensions identified in the qualitative research. Key survey questions included assessing teachers' perceived societal value and experiences with psychological health issues. Descriptive analysis was employed to review both qualitative and quantitative survey data,

with the entire study receiving approval from the Eskişehir Osmangazi University Ethics Committee in Turkiye.

Phase 3: Building the Mixed Methods Integration

This research adopted a dual-analytical approach to integrate and generate meta-inferences from qualitative and quantitative data (Table 3). The initial phase involved sequentially linking each study to the subsequent one, with tables playing a crucial role in aligning the findings of each study. O'Cathain et al. (2010) propose an additional step in the final phase of research, which involves using a joint display for meta-inferential analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data, as discussed by Bazeley (2016). This analysis entails placing qualitative quotes and themes alongside quantitative measures, followed by a comprehensive summary comparing these two components. The hermeneutic cycle, a phenomenological concept, was used to interpret the findings. The results from the quantitative phase complemented each other, confirming the effectiveness of this integrative approach, as also noted by Moran-Ellis et al. (2006).

Table 3. *Phases of the study*

Phase 1- Qualitative Phase			Phase 2-Quantitative Phase	Never							Sometimes			Always							Mean	SD	%95 CI	
Themes	Sub-themes		Items	1		2		3		%	4		%	5		6		7		%	Mean	SD	Low	Up
				N	%	N	%	N	%		N	%		N	%	N	%	N	%					
Management State	**EA's management style**	Unplannedness Intimidation Discrimination	EA distributes responsibilities fairly	107	22	62	12,7	81	16,7	51,4	111	22,5	22,5	71	15	29	6	23	4,9	26,1	3.33	1.74	3.17	3.49
			EA uses threatening language	49	10,1	59	12,1	62	12,8	35	81	16,8	16,8	85	17,5	71	14,6	77	16,1	48,2	4.40	1.85	4.23	4.57
	Teacher drudge	Handyman, Advertiser, Nannying teacher	EA gives trivial tasks.	23	4,8	32	6,6	33	6,8	18,2	58	12	12	101	20,9	81	16,8	155	32,1	69,8	5.17	1.78	5.00	5.33
	Mobbing	Emotional pressure	EA applies pressures.	31	6,4	29	6	44	9,1	21,5	85	17,6	17,6	102	21,2	80	16,6	111	23	60,8	5.05	1.77	4.88	5.21
		Favoritism, Discrimination Stigmatization High expectations Exclusion Threat	Teachers are exposed to mobbing	24	4,9	34	7	33	6,8	18,7	66	13,4	13,4	91	18,9	71	14,8	166	34,1	67,9	4.82	1.78	4.65	4.98
Social State	**Worthless teacher**	Social prejudice Unworthy teacher Pitiful teacher Self-value-less teacher	Society is biased	18	3,7	15	3,1	15	3,1	9,9	16	3,3	3,3	38	7,9	76	15,7	306	63,2	86,8	6.05	1.61	5.90	6.20
			Society renders value to the teachers	165	34,1	112	23,1	79	16	73,2	59	12,3	12,3	48	10,1	15	3,1	6	1,2	14,5	2.58	1.55	2.43	2.72
			MoNE renders value to the teachers	250	51,5	104	21,6	61	12,6	85,7	42	8,7	8,7	15	3,1	7	1,5	5	1	5,6	2.01	1.35	1.88	2.13
	Teacher under pressure	Student pressure Group pressure Parent pressure Workload pressure	Students respect teachers	71	14,7	88	18,2	80	16,5	49,4	113	23,3	23,3	72	14,9	41	8,5	19	3,9	27,3	3.48	1.65	3.33	3.63
	Life zest-less teacher	Loss of enthusiasm Private life-less teacher Unhappy and demotivated teacher	I am valuable	67	13,8	68	14	81	16,7	44,5	101	21	21	65	13,4	38	7,9	64	13,2	34,5	3.87	1.91	3.69	4.05
Economic State	**Poverty**	Low salary and poverty-based future anxiety	I am economically promising for my family.	206	42,6	99	20,5	78	16,1	79,2	55	11,4	11,4	27	5,5	13	2,7	6	1,2	9,4	2.29	1.48	2.15	2.43
			My salary allows me to live well.	212	43,8	91	18,9	88	18,1	80,8	60	12,2	12,2	17	3,5	6	1,4	10	2,1	7	2.30	1.52	2.16	2.44
Well-being State	**Health problems**	Psychological and physical disorders	I have psychological problems	115	23,8	88	18,2	38	7,9	49,9	70	14,5	14,5	67	13,7	38	7,8	68	14,1	35,6	3.53	2.10	3.34	3.73
			I have psychical problems.	103	21,1	74	15,3	50	10,4	46,8	60	12,4	12,4	67	13,9	58	12	72	14,9	40,8	3.74	2.12	3.54	3.93

3. Results

This study investigates Turkish teachers' experiences of the QQ phenomenon, exploring how it emerged and how it affected them through qualitative and quantitative methods.

3.1 Phase I Qualitative Results

We employed a phenomenological study to explore the dynamics that prompt teachers to engage in QQ. We investigated a self-reinforcing sequence of events or circumstances in which teachers are driven to perpetuate each other, resulting in a negative outcome or a situation that begets it. The origin of this self-perpetuating harmful cycle lies in administrative factors, making it challenging to disrupt. Subsequently, social and economic factors fuel this cycle. Unfortunately, this leads to adverse impacts on the physical and psychological well-being of teachers.

3.1.1 Management Factors

In this study, teachers most often referred to the administration dimension of QQ. In Turkiye, the education system and administration are centrally managed, resulting in similarities across schools regarding climate and architectural structure. School management boundaries are generally determined by the education system's structure and objectives. School administrators are expected to possess the necessary competencies to accomplish expected outcomes and align school goals with predetermined objectives.

School administrators are crucial to the success of education, as their failure can lead to the failure of the entire system. Our study highlights the concept of justice as a critical factor that initiates a vicious cycle in school administration. During the study, it was noted that participant teacher G15 considered justice to be a self-sufficient virtue, akin to happiness. However, it was also found that school principals are not always fair in their actions: "*I don't believe they display a high degree of impartiality. I perceive unjust acts are being perpetrated*." According to teachers' perspectives, school principals possess power and resources derived from laws. Teachers perceived this power and stated that they were exposed to nepotistic behavior by principals. G25 attributed the origins of nepotism to "*union influence or mutual interests*." Unions, which serve to ensure social integration in organized societies, have been identified as a phenomenon that generates tension and conflicts among teachers in our study. Therefore, the management component appears to function as a mechanism that unevenly distributes power and resources, ultimately resulting in injustice.

A less equitable management climate has given rise to a whistleblowing mechanism that relies on mutual benefit to maintain its sustainability, prompting teachers to engage in QQ. Participant teacher G23 stated that "*the system for reporting misconduct was established and supported by the school principal in both public and private schools.*" The presence of both favoritism and whistleblowing mechanisms hinders the ability of school principals to establish an equitable administration. Moreover, this creates a one-way communication

style from the principal to the teacher, perpetuating a vicious cycle. The language used in communication becomes threatening, resulting in discrimination. School principals primarily discriminate based on gender. Participant G18 stated, "*Especially in activities where dominance is important, only male teachers are given tasks.*" Additionally, school principals exhibit preferential treatment towards teachers who are their close acquaintances. Conversely, teachers who are less familiar with the principal are assigned challenging, intricate, and oftentimes mundane tasks pertaining to the upkeep and repair of the school. During registration periods, teachers at private schools are assigned to promote their institution at stands set up on streets and in shopping malls or to distribute brochures. Participant G4, who was very dissatisfied with this situation, expressed his views as follows: "*On occasions like school introduction days, you're doing the school's advertising like an advertiser. Teachers are given brochures to distribute, and promotion is done at shopping malls.*"

In addition to favoritism, school principals sometimes utilize an oppressive management style towards teachers, which can be considered unfair. One of the emotional pressures that teachers often perceive is being made to feel guilty. Participant G7 exemplifies this by stating, "*For example, I had a task to complete at school but was sick that day, unable to attend and do my work. The following day, pressure was immediately applied to make me feel guilty.*" In addition to favoritism, school principals employ an unfair management style that oppresses teachers. The initial emotional pressure experienced by teachers is guilt induction. For instance, participant coded G7 emphasizes "*feeling emotional pressure due to sickness causing them to miss a school assignment. The next day, the principal immediately attempted to induce a sense of guilt in the participant.*" Teachers reported that school principals insinuated that teachers were neglecting their duties and discriminated against them on this basis. Our finding suggests that favoritism in schools creates emotional pressure. In this case, favoritism emerges as a pragmatic tool resulting from the social hierarchical structure within the school and the relationship between the administrator who possesses authority and the teacher who favors them. The finding revealed by Participant Teacher G32's coding indicates that every vice principal has a teacher nearby. In addition, school administrators engage in the behavior of psychological violence by ignoring it as a form of emotional pressure. For instance, teacher G11 reported that the school principal disregards her with unresponsiveness, stating, "*For instance, we have paperwork to do. He turns his face... He ignores us. He doesn't greet us.*"

Another situation that caused emotional pressure for teachers was the expectation of their students' success. Some teachers believed that this expectation was unrealistic. Teacher G26, who worked at a private school, explained that emotional pressure arose when a student fell short of achieving the desired target on an exam."...*Our school places great importance on academic success and organizes all educational processes in this direction. So, there is pressure on us in this regard. Because whenever there is even the slightest change in the exam results of students, we are interrogated...*"

Social State

In our research on the perception of QQ by teachers, we identified the concept of status, which determines the position and reputation of teachers in society. We examined the

impact of society's perception of teachers as it reflects their societal status. We revealed the effects of status on teachers' self-esteem, social relationships, and stakeholder interaction.

Society harbors negative attitudes, beliefs, and sentiments about teachers and the teaching profession. These widely held views lead to generalizations about educators. The initial factor behind such generalizations is the working hours and working conditions of teachers. G21 described a societal perception that has arisen in recent years as follows: *"They say things like, 'You earn money by working very little, lying down all day.' "* The social perception indicated a decline in the social status of teachers, resulting in their devaluation and subsequent feelings of being devalued.

This persistent devaluation is systemic in nature. G7 states: *"I think the teaching profession is somewhat belittled nowadays. I believe it should be one of the most esteemed professions in this country."* The full extent of the value decrease was total. Teachers reported receiving criticism from all segments of society, which can occasionally escalate to disrespectful behavior. G19 supports this view with the following statement: *"As a teacher, I see that even a bus driver disrespects a teacher. I see a teacher who has led students in singing the national anthem being scolded by the administrators."* As a result, teachers felt worthless in the social appearance process. This worthlessness caused teachers to show various reactions. Participant G29, who feels worthless, expressed that I posed distance with the family, saying: *"…I provide the knowledge required by my profession, I express my thoughts about the children, and then I remain silent. I try to keep a distance with my parents."*

Another reflection that teachers showed was the decrease in commitment to their profession and they only focused on their primary duties, avoiding extra tasks, as expressed by participant G26: *"We only do what our profession requires. I don't feel like doing anything extra."* Teachers attained social status in society through their achievements, conduct, and the highly qualified individuals they instruct. This status was earned and was influenced by factors, such as teachers' social contributions to society, job performance, and professional excellence. This recognition can result in individuals gaining a respected status in society based on their professional expertise and experience.

In this study, it was discovered that teachers had a perception of social mobility in reverse, meaning that they experienced lost status. As a result, teachers tended to devalue themselves. Participant G22 states, *"Teachers devalue themselves. This happens due to their choice of clothing, their lack of knowledge about their labor rights, and their inability to unite. Their inability to unite among themselves exacerbates this situation."* G16, another participant, argued that "*the behavior of some colleagues contributes to this self-devaluation showing inappropriate behavior, such as harassment, further diminishes the value of teachers.*" We identified given status and lost status as the two qualities that determined the position of teachers in society and led to reverse social mobility.

Teachers emphasized the pressures they experience as the primary reason for these qualities. Overall, societal pressures in the form of student workload and family obligations have been found to lead teachers to exert more control over their students

rather than foster their autonomy. Moreover, policymakers in the field of education in Turkiye are known for frequently altering laws, practices, and norms, resulting in swiftly changing societal expectations and regulations. Unfortunately, these changes often result in a negative impact on families, students, and educators. For a considerable period, academic failure and failing grades have not been implemented in the Turkish Education System. Grade repetition is viewed as a disciplinary measure by teachers, but this can erode their power. Consequently, students across all levels of education believe that they will not fail and repeat a grade. However, primary school marks the beginning of a structured learning experience for children. Disciplinary authority is a crucial component for upholding the sustainability of this structure. G13 mentioned the absence of this element in the following words: "Students *sometimes exceed the boundaries of discipline, subjecting teachers to disrespectful behaviors because they know no sanction*" With these words, G13 stated that students sometimes exceeded the limits of discipline and behaved disrespectfully towards teachers. This pressure was even harsher and worse in private schools. Teachers remarked that private school students utter heartbreaking words to teachers, and some students with higher socio-economic backgrounds say, *'Your salary is my shoe money.'*"

The actions and beliefs of parents can result in teachers feeling pressured and exhibiting particular behaviors. This pressure is amplified for instructors employed in private schools. Additionally, teachers working in small, boutique schools, where tuition is lower than in chain schools, face pressure from principals, parents, and students. In the Turkish education system, achieving high grades at the time of graduation is crucial for success in the central placement exams. Therefore, teachers face significant pressure from educational administrators, parents, and students. They are urged to inflate grades, and if they resist, their exam papers may be tampered with. Despite stakeholder pressure, when teachers decline to comply with demands, parents and students express dissatisfaction under various pretexts. According to G4, "*the Ministry of Education used to have a parent complaint hotline and presidential contact center (CİMER) established primarily for lodging complaints regarding teachers.*" In public schools, there appears to be a growing challenge in the education system regarding how grades are determined for students. It appears grades are based on the insistent requests of parents and the urgings of school administrators, some of whom may have been appointed without merit.

Participants especially from private schools' expressed discomfort with the excessive workload imposed on teachers beyond their primary duties and the pressure from extra tasks. G8 states, "*Excessive workload, extra workload. Coming here on weekends outside regular class hours, the absence of Sundays. These are the things that lower my motivation.*". Besides workload pressures, private school teachers were exploited.. In the teachers' employment contract, salaries were shown as the minimum wage. If the salary is more than the minimum wage (and some teachers earn less than the minimum wage), they hand over the rest of the salary. In this way, they also reduce their insurance costs. The pressures had negative effects on teachers, but most of the time, teachers cannot react because politicians, yellow unions, and religious groups harm teachers as the instruments of pressure. In such a situation, participant G20 expressed their reaction as follows: "*I don't engage in*

activities with their children. For example, when they want to do an activity outside of school, we exclude that child from that activity. I transfer the pain to the child."

Economic State

Economic challenges faced by teachers in Turkey were a contributing factor to QQ in our research. Economic insufficiencies lead to feelings of worthlessness among teachers because the income they receive does not provide them with a comfortable life. In this context, participant G1 clearly illustrated how economic concerns could lead to both financial and emotional distress: *"I worry about my finances, especially during the pandemic when insurance contributions were not paid, salaries were incomplete, and we received part of our salaries in cash. These things really hurt me."* Teachers worked extra jobs outside of teaching, and this described the extent of their poverty beyond the teaching profession. Nearly every participant teacher had expressed their economic challenges. Participant G19 not only addressed economic poverty but also openly expressed regret for choosing the teaching profession, saying, *"I think I will experience very serious, difficult days financially. Because my children will grow up, they will want to go to school, get married. Maybe I will want to buy a house, a car, or a summer house. My father was also a teacher, and during his time, it was possible to achieve these with a single salary. Currently, even with two salaries, we can't manage it,"* conveying their concerns about how poverty affects not only them but also their children.

Well-being State

Teachers experience various health issues as a result of their profession. Facing physical and psychological problems, teachers move away from self-sacrifice and focus solely on their core duties, only completing their daily routines. G1, who experienced physical discomfort due to intense stress, stated, *"I already have eczema as a disease, but stress affects it the most. I had a problem at school, and because of that, I went and got some help."* Many of the teachers dealt with stressful working environments causing some physical reactions, such as teeth grinding and poor-quality sleep. Participants emphasized their physical issues related to stress. Those who cannot overcome these problems on their own seek professional help, as indicated by statements from participants like G9 *"I haven't sought support due to the problems I've experienced, but there have been times when I took tranquilizers."*, G11 *"I received support for anxiety disorder and am taking medication for hypertension."*, and G15 *"I'm going to therapy. I receive psychological support because it's very difficult to continue under current conditions."*

3.2 Phase 2 Quantitative Phase

The qualitative data contained information about teachers' QQ perceptions, such as managerial, social, financial, and well-being aspects (see Table 3). A total of 14 questions were asked and analyzed descriptively according to a seven-Likert data collection tool that changed from 1-Never to 7-Always. For example, the question of "EA distributing duties fairly" was answered as 1-Never distributed fairly to 7- Always distributed fairly. When we analyzed the results, we did not consider 4 because it seemed undecided or mediocre. Thus, the decision was taken NOT DO, 1-3 and DO, 5-7.

Based on the responses of teachers to the first question was "I believe that education administrators do not distribute tasks related to education fairly." Teachers' perceptions were: [(Never. N=250 %=51,4); (Sometimes. N=111, %=22,5); and (Always. N=113, %=26,1)]. Figure 1 reflects that a majority of teachers perceive that education administrators do NOT distribute tasks related to education fairly (NEVER), followed by those who believe it happens SOMETIMES or ALWAYS. This visualization accurately represents the teachers' opinions on this matter with the revised data.

Figure 1. *Teachers' perceptions of fairness in task distribution by EA*
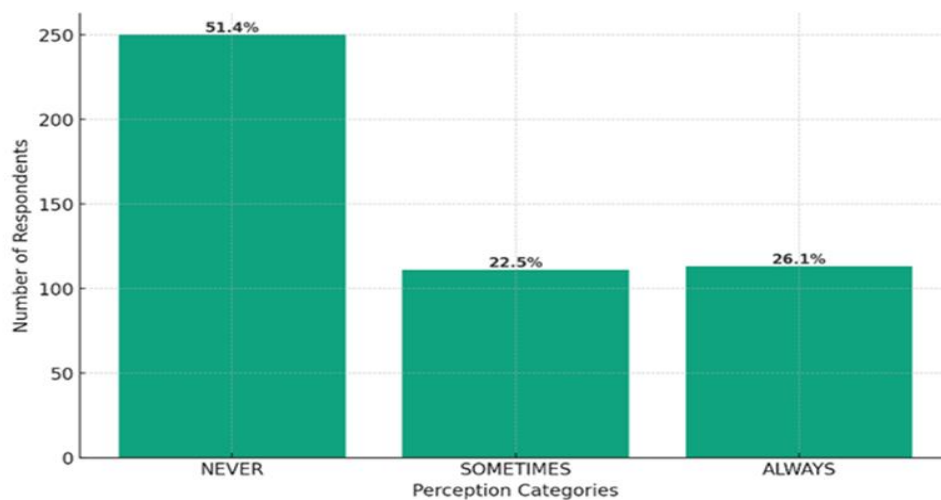
The second question, "Education administrators use threatening language in school," teachers' perceptions were: [(Never. N=169 %= 35); (Sometimes. N=81, %=16,8); (Always. N=233, %=48,2)]. Figure 2 shows that a significant proportion of teachers perceive that administrators ALWAYS use threatening language, followed by those who believe it NEVER happens, and a smaller group perceives it happens SOMETIMES.

Figure 2. *Teachers' perceptions of EA using threatening language in school*
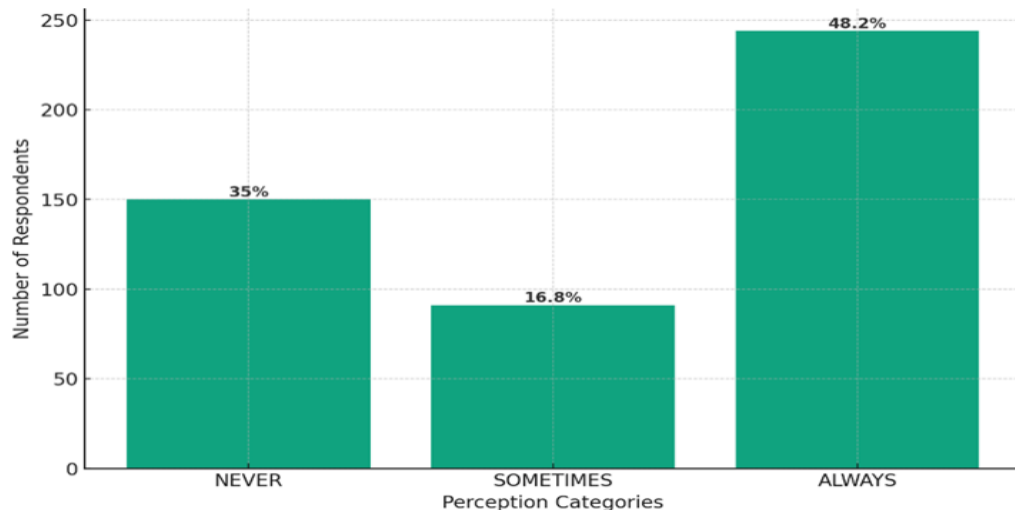
The third question is "Teachers are given trivial tasks," Teachers' responses were: [(Never. N= 88 %= 18,2); (Sometimes. N=58, %=12); (Always. N=337, %=69,8)]. Figure 3 clearly illustrates that most teachers perceive that they are ALWAYS given trivial tasks. This is followed by those who believe it NEVER happens and a smaller group who perceive it happens SOMETIMES.

Figure 3. *Teachers' perceptions of being given trivial tasks*
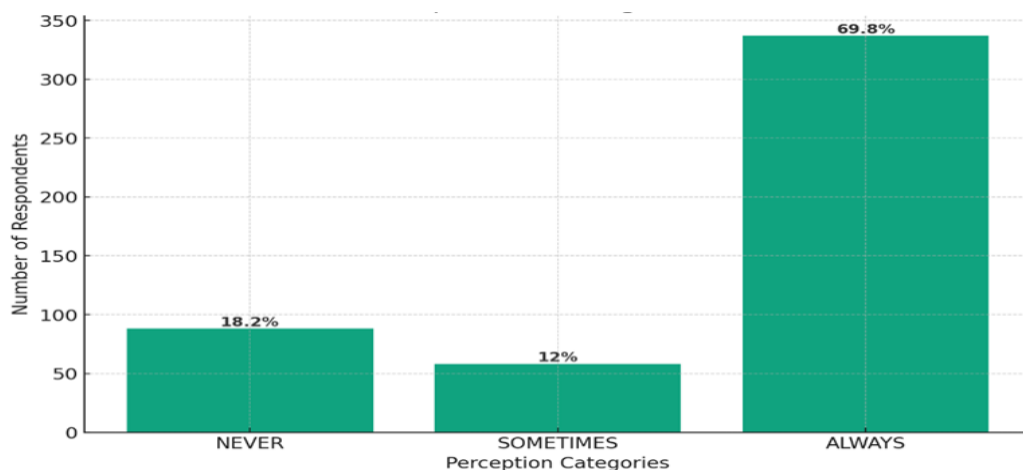
The fourth question is "EA applies pressures". Teachers' responses were: [(Never. N= 104 %= 21,5); (Sometimes. N=85, %=17,6); (Always. N=313, %=60,8)]. Figure 4 reveals that a majority of teachers perceive that they are ALWAYS under pressure from education administrators, followed by those who believe it NEVER happens and a smaller group who perceive it happens SOMETIMES.

Figure 4. *Teachers' perceptions of pressure applied by EA's*
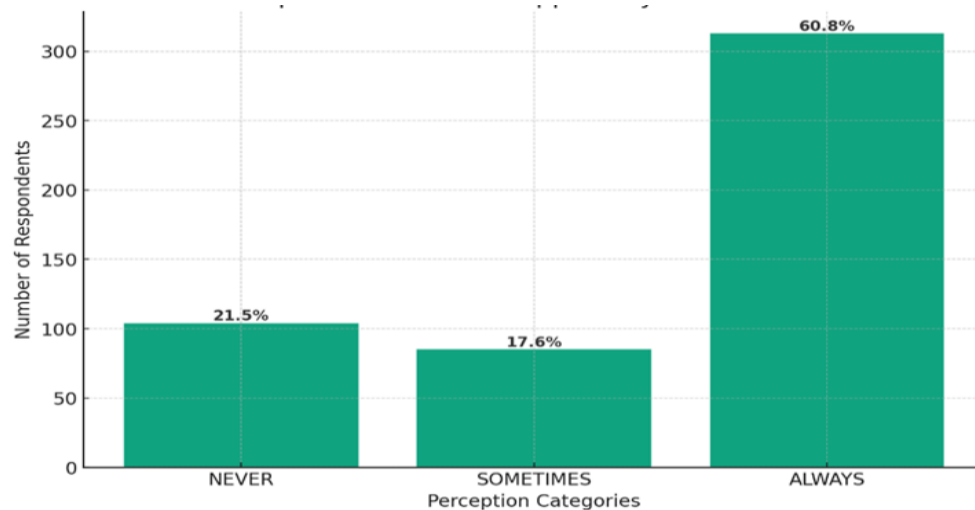
The fifth question is "Teachers are exposed to mobbing". The results were [(Never. N=10 %= 18,7); (Sometimes. N=63, %=13,4); (Always. N=322, %=67,9)]. Figure 5 shows that most teachers perceive that they are ALWAYS exposed to mobbing. A smaller proportion believes it NEVER happens, and an even smaller group perceives it happens SOMETIMES.

Figure 5. *Teachers' perceptions of being exposed to mobbing.*
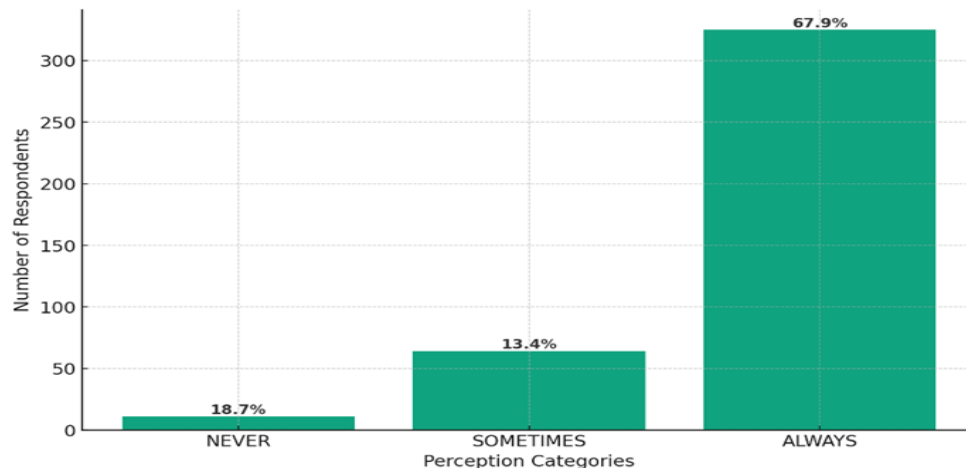
The sixth question "Is Society biased?" They replied as [(Never N=48 %=9,9); (Sometimes. N=16, %=3,3); (Always. N=420, %=86,8)]. Figure 6 shows that an overwhelming majority of teachers perceive that society is ALWAYS biased, with a very small proportion believing it NEVER or SOMETIMES happens.

Figure 6. *Teachers' perceptions of societal bias*
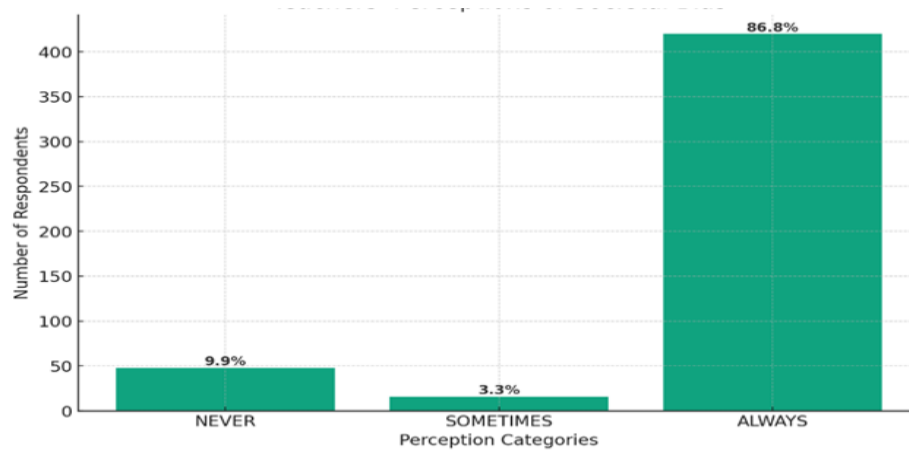
The seventh question of the research, aimed to address the issue of "Society givingteachers the value they deserve," was asked. According to the answers [(1-3. N=285 %=73,2); (4. N=58, %=12,3); (5-7. N=68, %=14,5)]. Figure 7 clearly shows that most teachers feel that society NEVER gives them the value they deserve, as indicated by the high percentage in the NEVER category. This is followed by smaller proportions in the SOMETIMES and ALWAYS categories.

Figure 7. *Teachers' perceptions of the value society places*
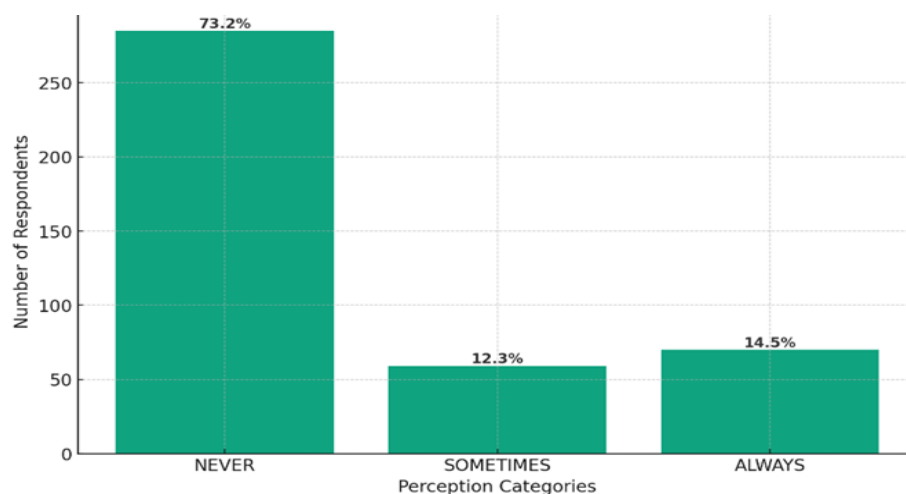
The eighth question "MoNE gives teachers the value they deserve" was asked. According to the answers [(Never. N=411 %=85,7); (Sometimes. N=42, %=8.7); (Always. N=27, %=5,6)]. Figure 8 clearly shows that most teachers feel that MoNE NEVER gives them the value they deserve, as indicated by the high percentage in the NEVER category. This is followed by smaller proportions in the SOMETIMES and ALWAYS categories.

Figure 8. *Teachers' perceptions of the value given by MoNE*
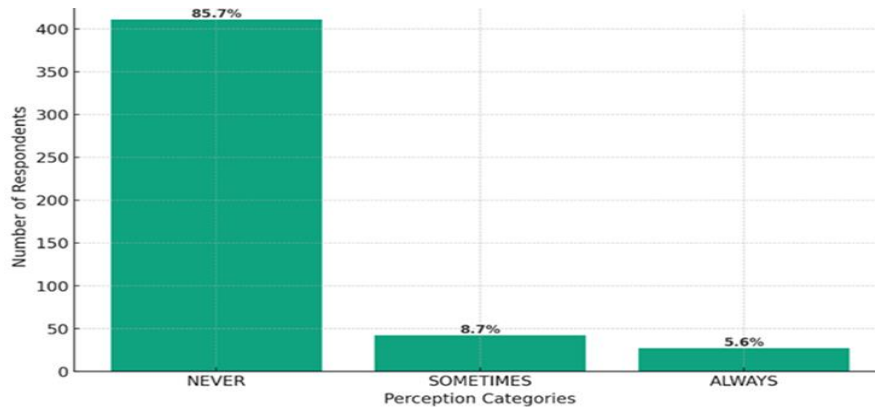
The ninth question is "Students respect teachers". The answers were [(Never. N= 238 %=49,4); (Sometimes. N=113, %=23,3); Always. N=132, %=27,3)]. Figure 9 illustrates that a substantial proportion of teachers perceive that students NEVER respect them, while a notable number believe that respect is shown SOMETIMES or ALWAYS. This provides insights into how teachers view the level of respect they receive from their students.

Figure 9. *Teachers' perceptions of students' respect towards teachers*
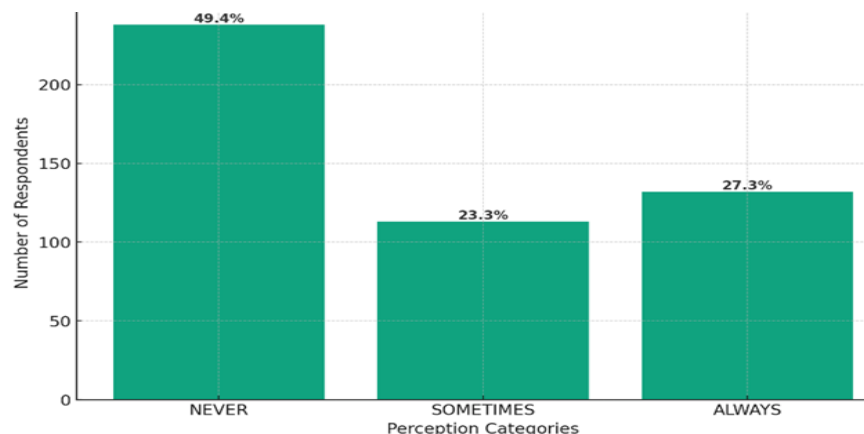
The tenth question was "I am valuable." The answers were [(Never. N=216 %= 44,5); (Sometimes. N=101, %=21); (Always. N=167, %=34,5)]. Figure 10 reveals that a significant proportion of teachers feel they are NEVER valuable, while others perceive themselves as valuable SOMETIMES or ALWAYS. This provides insight into how teachers view their own values in their professional context.

Figure 10. *Teachers' self-perceptions of being valuable*
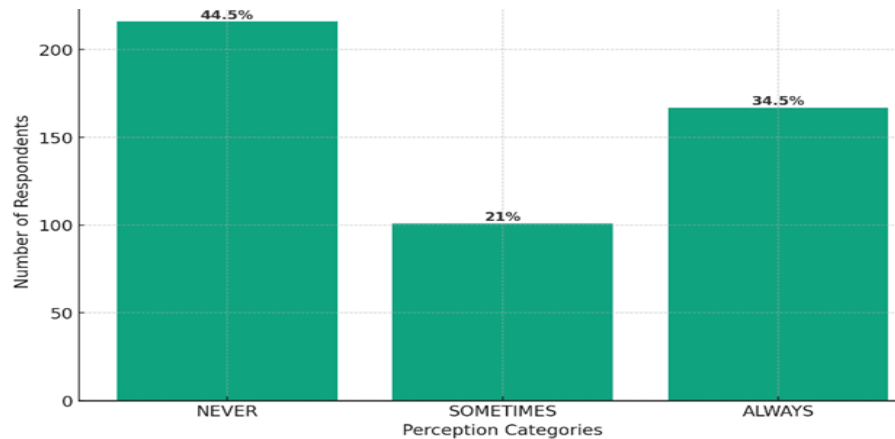
The eleventh question of the research was "I am economically promising for my family."
The answers were [(Never. N=383 %=79,2); (Sometimes. N=55, %=11,4); (Always.
N=46, %=9,4)]. Figure 11 indicates that a substantial majority of teachers feel they are
NEVER economically promising for their families, with smaller proportions perceiving
themselves as sometimes or always economically promising. This highlights the
economic concerns and perceptions among the surveyed teachers.

Figure 11. *Teachers' perceptions of being economically promising for their family*
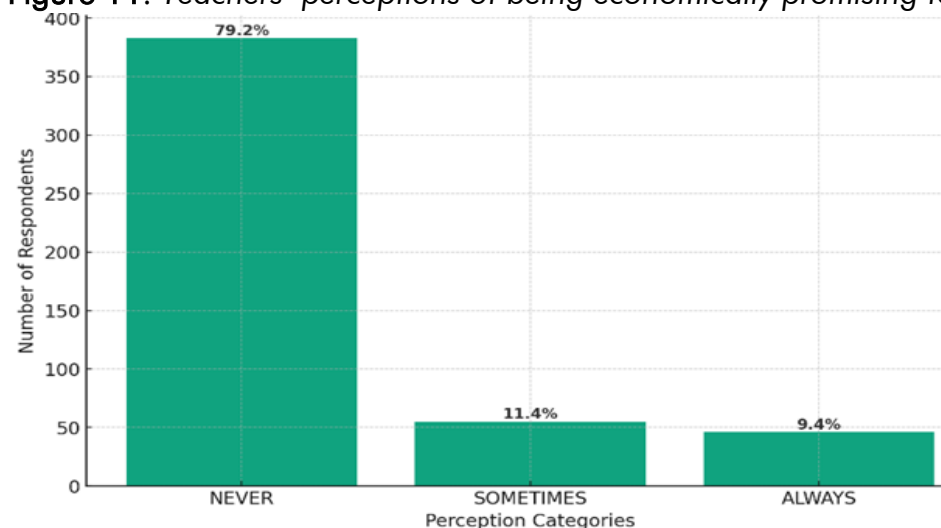
The twelfth question was "My salary allows me to live well". The answers were [(Never.
N=387 %=80,8); (Sometimes. N=54, %=12,2); (Always. N=46, %=7)]. Figure 12
illustrates that most teachers feel that their salary does NOT allow them to live well, as
indicated by the high percentage in the "Never" category. This is followed by smaller
proportions of people who feel this way SOMETIMES or ALWAYS. This visualization
conveys the financial challenges faced by the surveyed teachers.

Figure 12. *Teachers' perceptions of their salary allowing a good living*
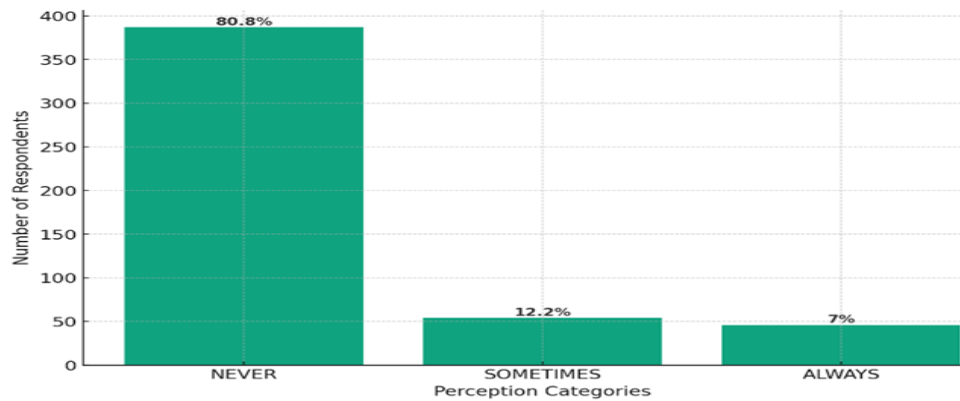
The thirteenth question was ""I experience psychological problems." The responses were [(Never. N: 241 %: 49,9); (Sometimes. N=70, %=14,5); (Always. N=172, %=35,6)]. Figure 13 indicates that nearly half of the teachers reported they NEVER experience psychological problems, while a significant portion feel they experience these problems ALWAYS or SOMETIMES. This provides crucial insights into the mental health and well-being of the surveyed teachers.

Figure 13. *Teachers' perceptions of experiencing psychological disorders*
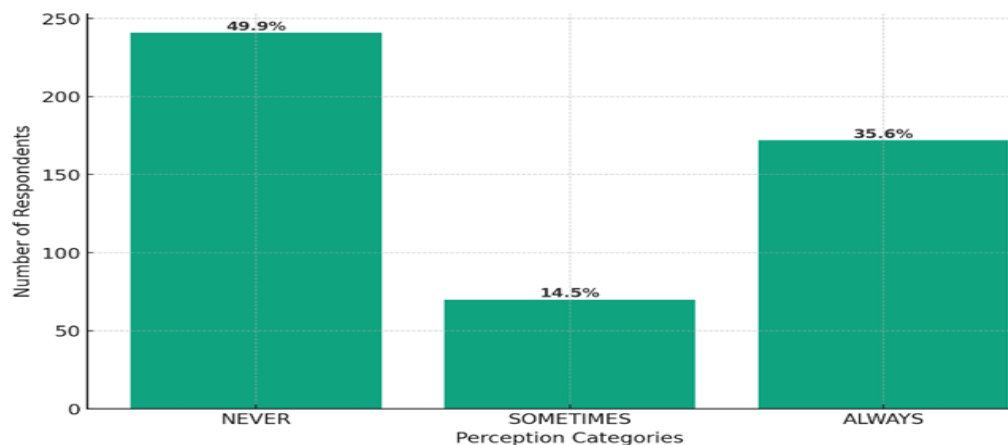
The last question asked, "I experience physical health problems as a teacher." Teachers' perceptions were [(Never. N=226 %=46,8); (Sometimes. N=60, %=12,4); (Always. N=197, %=40,8)]. Figure 14 illustrates that a substantial proportion of teachers feel they NEVER experience physical health problems, while a notable number report experiencing these problems ALWAYS or SOMETIMES. This visualization provides a clear view of the physical health concerns among the surveyed teachers.

Figure 14. *Teachers' perceptions of experiencing physical disorders*
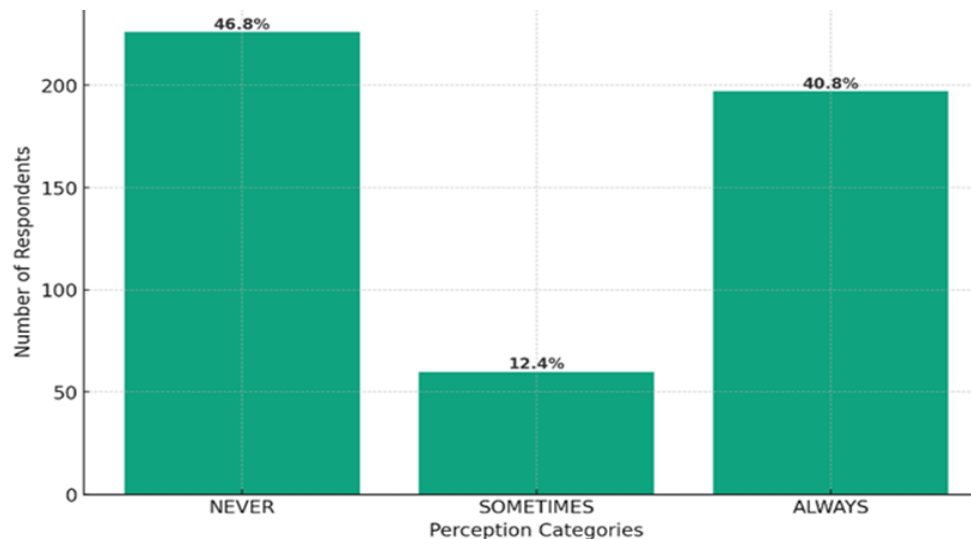
Phase 3 Meta-Inferences and Revealing Predisponent Effects

Meta-inferences

The important findings from the three studies were combined in Table 1, which was used to investigate the factors of QQ, how they emerged as precursors, and what behaviors they led teachers to adopt as successors. Lastly, meta-inferences were drawn.

Management Factor Meta-Inferences: In Table 1, the 'Qualitative Phase 1' section delineates several dimensions, with the primary one being the management styles of educational administrators. The initial qualitative findings suggested a tendency for schools to be managed haphazardly, characterized by the use of threats and discriminatory practices by school principals. This aspect was subsequently quantitatively evaluated by querying teachers on their perceptions of the fairness in task distribution related to education. The responses indicated a predominant perception of unfair task distribution by educational administrators, with 51.4% (N=250) responding 'Never', 22.5% (N=111) 'Sometimes', and 26.1% (N=113) 'Always' (N=484, Mean=3.33).

Additionally, the use of threatening language by educational administrators was quantitatively assessed. A significant 48.2% (N=233) of teachers perceived that administrator always used threatening language, while 35% (N=169) believed it never occurred, and 16.8% (N=81) felt it sometimes occurred (N=484, Mean=4.40), indicating a high level of affirmative responses.

The second sub-dimension under management style revealed teachers' perceptions of being assigned unnecessary tasks at schools. This qualitative finding was corroborated by quantitative data, where a considerable majority, 69.8% (N=337), reported always

being burdened with trivial tasks, compared to 18.2% (N=88) who felt this never happened and 12% (N=58) who experienced it sometimes (N=484, Mean=5.17).

Mobbing within schools emerged as a significant challenge in the qualitative phase, leading to teachers' QQ experiences. This was quantitatively explored by assessing whether educational administrators exerted pressure on teachers. A substantial majority, 60.8% (N=313), perceived constant pressure from educational administrators, while 21.5% (N=104) believed this never occurred, and 17.6% (N=85) felt it sometimes happened (N=484, Mean=5.05).

Furthermore, the pressure was linked to expectations of students' academic performance, with teachers reporting high levels of mobbing. A striking 67.9% (N=322) of respondents perceived constant exposure to mobbing, compared to 18.7% (N=10) who never experienced it and 13.4% (N=63) who encountered it occasionally (N=484, Mean=5.08). These data indicate a prevalent perception among teachers of being subjected to significant levels of mobbing at schools.

Social Factor Meta-Inferences: The investigation delineated social factors as a contributing secondary dimension that precipitated teachers' experiences of QQ. A notable perception among teachers was that they were undervalued and subjected to societal prejudices. Quantitative data indicated a strong sense of bias perceived by teachers, with a considerable majority (86.8%, N=420) consistently experiencing this, contrasted with a minority who never (9.9%, N=48) or occasionally (3.3%, N=16) felt such biases (N=484, Mean=6.05). This suggests a dominant belief among educators regarding the prevalence of bias within society, with only a small fraction perceiving its absence or infrequency.

Moreover, the survey revealed a significant sentiment among teachers about being undervalued by society. A substantial majority (73.2%, N=285) reported never feeling valued for their profession, while smaller proportions sometimes (12.3%, N=58) or always (14.5%, N=68) felt valued (N=484, Mean=2.58). This indicates a pervasive feeling of lack of recognition for their professional contributions. In addition, this study explored teachers' perceptions of the Ministry of National Education's policies towards their profession. An overwhelming majority (85.7%, N=411) believed that the Ministry never accorded them the value they deserved, with smaller percentages sometimes (8.7%, N=42) or always (5.6%, N=27) feeling valued.

This study also identified societal pressure as an influencing factor. Quantitative findings showed that teachers experienced pressure from students, with a moderate perception of student respect (N=484, Mean=3.48), where 49.4% (N=238) never felt respected, 23.3% (N=113) sometimes did, and 27.3% (N=132) always felt respected.

A significant phenomenological finding was the negative impact of teaching on teachers' personal lives, contributing to their unhappiness. The quantitative data supported this, showing that teachers felt only moderately valued due to their profession (Never: 44.5%, N=216; Sometimes: 21%, N=101; Always: 34.5%, N=167; N=484, Mean=3.87).

Economic Factor Meta-Inferences: These research outcomes suggest a prevalent state of poverty among teachers, underlined by apprehensions concerning their future, primarily attributed to inadequate remuneration. This notion was corroborated in the quantitative phase of this study, where a significant proportion of educators indicated that their monthly earnings were insufficient for a satisfactory standard of living. Specifically, 80.8% (N=387) of the participants reported never being able to lead a comfortable life on their current income, 12.2% (N=54) sometimes experienced this difficulty, and 7% (N=46) consistently faced this issue (N=484, Mean=2.30).

The survey findings further revealed that a substantial majority of the teaching cohort experiences financial strain due to their salaries. A notable percentage of educators disclosed an inability to maintain an adequate living standard with their present income. Additionally, a majority expressed a lack of economic optimism for their family's future. Concerns regarding their low-income levels and future prospects for themselves and their dependents were prevalent. Survey data indicated that 79.2% of teachers never felt positive about their future prospects, 11.4% occasionally harboured positive feelings, and 9.4% consistently felt optimistic (N=484, Mean=2.29).

Well-being state meta-inferences: The concluding aspect contributing to educators' experiences of QQ pertains to the emergence of a state of well-being, signifying health-related issues within the teaching profession. It was observed that during the interviews, certain educators encountered psychological and physical discomforts. The quantitative analysis revealed that educators were subject to moderate levels of psychological health afflictions. According to survey data, out of 484 respondents, 241 (49.9%) reported no experience with such issues, 70 (14.5%) encountered them occasionally, and 172 (35.6%) consistently experienced them. Furthermore, the frequency of physical health problems among teachers varied, with 46.8% never experiencing them, 12.4% sometimes, and 40.8% always experiencing them (N=484, Mean=3.74).

Conclusion and Discussion

The purpose of this study is to reveal the reasons and types of QQ behaviors that caused important challenges to the social, psychological, and physical lives of teachers working in private and public schools in Turkiye and more importantly, what lessons can be learned for the well-being of teachers and the quality of education. In this study, we investigated the concept of QQ in the Turkish school system. We used the conceptual framework and dimensions in the phenomenology phase and revealed which factors cause QQ. Finally, we compared the findings from the quantitative phase and the phenomenological phase.

In the literature reviews, we have seen that the QQ phenomenon is a post-pandemic trauma that occurs especially in Generation Z employees (Xueyun et al., 2021). However, in this current research, we have seen that QQ has very different dimensions in Turkiye

and its origins are deeper. Teachers struggle with severe problems (Kurt & Duran, 2019). For example, administrative problems that push teachers to QQ (Frostenson, 2015; Skinner et al., 2021) cause them to involuntarily perform tasks outside the definition of teaching (Kazak, 2019; Sugden, 2010; Toker Gökçe & Özen, 2019), while socially devaluing them (Cane, 1987) and negatively affecting their health. This is a vicious circle. Negative administrative attitudes first discredit teachers (Daliri-Ngametua & Hardy, 2022). Then, they are subjected to mobbing through various apparatuses, such as discrimination and labeling (see Table 3). The teacher who is victimized by various elements firstly encounters a sense of worthlessness in society and then meets with both physical and psychological disorders. Again, the fact that the state pays teachers salaries so low that they are almost living on the hunger line in Turkey is a major factor causing QQ, which in turn leads teachers to exhibit aftereffects, such as minimum performance, not showing commitment, producing low-quality work, taking it out on the students, moonlighting, and apathy. Generally, a significant relationship exists between the student-teacher ratio and academic achievement (Ajani & Akinyele, 2014). However, in a study conducted among 8th-grade students and teachers in Turkiye, no significant relationship was found between the number of students per teacher and student achievement. This finding shows that teachers are engaged in QQ behavior (Suna et al., 2021).

The finding that EAs' management styles are a crucial factor leading teachers to QQ is in line with the literature. More importantly, managerial factors create a butterfly effect, gradually causing problems to grow and paralyzing teachers' functions. However, management styles are a factor that determines and directs teacher policies. Teaching is a specialized profession and involves robust professional and pedagogical training processes. Policies contrary to this are practices that will discredit the teaching profession in the eyes of society. In Turkey, the Ministry of National Education's practice of "paid teaching" is an example of this. While this practice may be deemed necessary in exceptional circumstances, it is being generalized in increasing numbers every day, although it is also mentioned as a "weakness" in MoNE reports (Aktaş Salman et al., 2021).

Teachers see themselves as doing drudgery because their professional independence at school, especially their decisions about what and how to teach their students, are not made autonomously but centrally. However, teachers should have a sphere of authority and freedom in matters related to their profession. In short, teachers are not autonomous and free. In Turkey, decisions about education are made by the central organization and this rate is the highest among OECD countries (Korlu et al., 2021). Teacher autonomy is also related to teachers' subjective well-being (Frostenson, 2015). In addition, subjective well-being is a situation that empowers and motivates teachers. In our study, we reached results that disrupted teachers' subjective well-being and made their psychological and physical integrity sick.

Increasing teachers' autonomy through educational policies and positioning them as active subjects in society play an important role in educational reforms. For this, teachers

should be given a certain amount of autonomy because each child is as unique as a fingerprint and one size does not fit all (Graves, 2009). Teachers need to be given the opportunity to think and act together about how they can transform their work practices and professional identities (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009). Thanks to this facility, when teachers work together in groups, they can produce new knowledge and disseminate this knowledge; this way of working will cause teachers and principals to transform school and classroom practices (Ayan, 2020). Shortly, the consequence is an eviscerated form of schooling that may jeopardize students' long-term academic and social development in Turkey if not necessary steps are taken. We mean that bells are ringing.

Limitations of the Study and Recommendations

The findings of this research should be interpreted with some warnings because of their limitations. The first limitation of this study is that the data were collected between September 2022 and April 2023. The economic condition worsened after the election in May 2023 because some economic decisions were taken; all the goods prices were increased twofold, and extra direct taxes were burdened on the people. We believe that data should be refreshed especially after the election. The second limitation is that Turkiye's political system is getting much more oppressive. Thus, teachers were anxious when they took part in both qualitative and quantitative parts of this research in case they could be spotted as they were criticizing the power.

Despite these limitations of current research, we hope that the umbrella concept of QQ that was developed out of our current study will furnish a suitable base for EA's, educational planners, and policymakers to develop a successful and sustainable school ethos for their schools, with the aim of improving learning and attainment for all pupils. Whilst we understand the conceptual framework and have developed a beneficial heuristic device for our research, there are of course other factors that could have been dealt with and incorporated into the successful healing of the effects of QQ and improved teacher resilience. We propose that any other options should be considered in any further research on the reasons for and aftereffects of QQ.

Disclosure statement

There was no discussion of any potential conflicts of interest by the author(s).

Ethics Permission

This research's ethics approval was granted by the Eskişehir Osmangazi University Social Sciences and Humanities Human Research Ethics Committee in Turkiye on February 27, 2023.

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Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

Bu araştırma, COVID-19 salgınının Türk eğitimi üzerindeki etkisini incelemekte, zorlu büyüme evresini vurgulamakta ve bunu eğitimdeki küresel eğilimlerle karşılaştırmaktadır. Son yıllarda, veriye dayalı karar alma süreçlerine vurgu yaparak ve eğitim fırsatlarındaki toplumsal cinsiyet, bölgesel ve ekonomik eşitsizlikleri ele alarak bireylerin ufkunu genişletmeyi ve küresel eğitim sistemlerini iyileştirmeyi amaçlayan eğitime yönelik küresel odaklanma artmıştır. Türkiye'de eğitime ayrılan bütçenin artması eğitim alanında kayda değer bir ilerlemedir, ancak OECD ülkelerine kıyasla daha düşük öğretmen maaşları, düşük iş tatmini ve örgütsel adalet ve kayırmacılıkla ilgili endişeler gibi sorunlar devam etmektedir. Türkiye'de öğretmenlerin karşılaştığı tükenmişlik, örgütsel sessizlik ve bağlılığın azalması gibi zorluklar, eğitim politikalarında ve mesleki saygınlıkta değişiklik yapılması gerektiğini vurgulamaktadır. Sessiz İstifa (QQ) kavramı, Türk okullarında türünün ilk ampirik çalışması olarak Türk eğitimi bağlamında incelenmiştir. Mevcut literatürde geniş bir şekilde tanımlanan QQ, öğretmenler arasındaki nedenleri ve sonuçta ortaya çıkan davranışlar açısından incelenmiştir. Bu çalışma, Türk eğitimciler arasında QQ'nun yaygınlığını ortaya koyması ve altında yatan nedenlere ilişkin içgörü sağlaması açısından önemlidir. Ayrıca, QQ'yu azaltmaya, kurum kültürünü ve öğretmen refahını artırmaya yönelik stratejiler sunmakta ve politika geliştirme ve uygulamayı teşvik etmektedir. Bu çalışma, QQ'nun uluslararası düzeyde anlaşılmasına, öğretmenler üzerindeki etkilerine ve eğitim politikası ve kültürüne yönelik çıkarımlarına katkıda bulunmaktadır. Bu karma yöntem çalışmasında araştırmacılar, karmaşık bir araştırma problemini anlamak için keşfedici bir sıralı tasarım yaklaşımı kullanmışlardır. Çalışma, 32 fenomenolojik görüşmeyi içeren nitel bir aşama ile başlamış, örüntüler ve temalar hakkında derin içgörüler sağlamıştır. Bu aşama, 484 katılımcıyla yapılan anketleri içeren bir sonraki nicel aşama için araştırma araçlarının ve hipotezlerin oluşturulmasını sağlamıştır. Amaç, nicel verilerin istatistiksel analizi yoluyla nitel bulguları doğrulamaktı. Çalışma, hem nitel hem de nicel yöntemlerin güçlü yönlerini birleştirerek araştırma konusunun kapsamlı bir şekilde anlaşılmasını sağlamıştır. Bu aşamaların entegrasyonu, genel araştırma sonuçlarını zenginleştirmek ve doğrulamak için her iki aşamadan elde edilen bulguları yan yana getiren tablo aracılığıyla sunulmuştur. Araştırma, QQ'ya yol açan faktörleri belirlemek için fenomenolojik bir aşama ile başlayan ve ardından doğrulama için nicel bir aşama ile devam eden karma bir yöntem yaklaşımı kullanmaktadır. Bulgular, Türkiye'de QQ'nun benzersiz boyutlara sahip olduğunu ve kökenlerinin Z kuşağı çalışanlarında tipik olarak görülen pandemi sonrası travmadan daha derin olduğunu göstermektedir. Öğretmenler, idari sorunlar, öğretmenlik dışındaki görevler, sosyal değersizleştirme ve düşük maaşlar gibi zorluklarla karşılaşmakta ve bu da minimum performans, bağlılık eksikliği ve düşük kaliteli iş gibi sonuçlara yol açmaktadır. Çalışma ayrıca, Türkiye'de öğrenci-öğretmen oranı ile öğrenci başarısı arasında anlamlı bir ilişki olmadığını ve öğretmenlerin QQ davranışlarına katıldığını göstermektedir. Çalışma, yönetim kararlarının öğretmenlerin işlevleri üzerinde yarattığı kelebek etkisine vurgu yaparak, öğretmenler arasında QQ'ya yol açmada yönetim tarzlarının önemini vurgulamaktadır. Özellikle eğitim içeriği ve yöntemlerine ilişkin karar alma süreçlerinde öğretmenlerin

özerkliğinin olmaması, öznel refahlarını ve mesleki özgürlüklerini önemli ölçüde etkilemektedir. Türkiye'de eğitimle ilgili kararların diğer OECD ülkelerine kıyasla daha fazla merkezileşmesi, öğretmen özerkliğini ve refahını zayıflatmaktadır. Araştırma, öğretmenlerin özerkliğinin ve eğitim reformlarına aktif katılımının artırılmasını savunmakta, öğretmenlerin özerklik ve işbirliğine dayalı çalışma uygulamaları yoluyla güçlendirilmesinin yeni bilginin yaratılmasına ve yayılmasına, okul ve sınıf uygulamalarının dönüştürülmesine yol açabileceğini öne sürmektedir. Çalışma, bu konuların ele alınmaması halinde öğrencilerin akademik ve sosyal gelişimleri üzerindeki potansiyel uzun vadeli sonuçlar konusunda uyarıda bulunmakta ve Türk eğitim sisteminde acil bir reform ihtiyacına işaret etmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sessiz İstifa, Türk Eğitim Ortamları, Öğretmen Davranışları, Karma Yöntem Çalışması, post-Covid 19.

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Parent Opinions Regarding The Services Received In Special Education And Rehabilitation Centers For Individuals With Multiple Disabilities

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Abstract

Individuals with multiple disabilities (MD) could receive services from different institutions throughout their lives. One of these institutions is Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers. Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers provide various services to individuals with MD. The quality of these services affects the quality of life of both the children with MD and their parents. Therefore, this study aims to determine the views of parents on the services received by the individuals with MD from Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers. Eleven female and two male parents participated in this study. The study was designed with the phenomenology pattern, one of the qualitative research methods, and data were collected with the semi-structured interview technique. The interviews lasted between 12 and 18 minutes. The data obtained from the interviews was analyzed with the descriptive analysis technique. The findings showed that parents receive various support services from Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers for both themselves and the individuals with MD, they were very content with the education and physiotherapy services provided by the institutions, and these services were very effective and beneficial for their children and themselves. In addition, it was concluded that the duration of the education services provided was too short and insufficient for their children that the state should support such institutions and that they wanted their children to be hired in a job within their competence.

Keywords: Multiple disabilities, individual with multiple disabilities, parent, education, special education and rehabilitation center

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Introduction

Multiple disabilities (MD) is defined as a situation that contains more than one disability and could be seen together with various health problems (Eldeniz Çetin et al., 2020). Individuals with various health problems, in addition to more than one disability could be called individuals with MD. Because children with MD have more than one disability, they may need intensive and systematic special education and rehabilitation services. The term 'special education and rehabilitation' is defined as "all the studies conducted to determine the state of disability or minimize its effects, maximize the skills again and enable them to adapt to society and improve the basic self-care skills and independent living and vocational skills of the disabled individuals with language and speech disorders, intellectual, physical, sensual, emotional and behavioral problems" in the article no. 3 of the Special Education Institutions Regulation of the National Education Ministry (MEB).

It is seen as important that the individuals living in society and having a disability be provided with opportunities for education, work, adaptation to society, environment, treatment, care and rehabilitation (Aykara, 2010) and the educational rights of the children with MD containing their educational services have been guaranteed with the Law on the Disabled no. 5378 introduced in 2005. There are institutions affiliated with the Ministry of National Education (MEB) that provide educational services and supportive services to prepare children with MD for life. Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers are among these institutions affiliated with the Ministry of National Education.

The children affected by MD benefit from the educational services provided by state or private people or institutions and the support services in special education and rehabilitation centers. Special education and rehabilitation centers are defined as "the special education institutions conducting activities for the purpose of terminating and minimizing the speech and language development disorders, voice disorders, intellectual, physical, sensual, social, emotional or behavioral problems of the individuals requiring special education, maximizing their skills again, developing their basic self-care skills and independent living skills and enabling them to adapt to society" in the Law of Special Education Institutions (www.resmigazete.gov.tr/acc. dat.: 28.02.2019).

Individual, group and both individual and group education are given to the individuals seen as convenient for having supportive education in the special education assessment board report in special education and rehabilitation centers. The supportive education program approved by the ministry is applied (Regulation on Special Education Institutions, 2012). The children with MD could have supportive education from special education and rehabilitation centers with the special education assessment board decision. This supportive education has been stated in the Regulation on Special Education Institutions of National Education Ministry no. 28296 as "at least eight-course hours of individual education and/or at least four-course hours of group education

should be given in a month in return for the monthly determined sum by the institution to the disabled individual," and the students with MD could also benefit from these services.

It is specified in the Law of Special Education Institutions that the Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers are the institutions established for adapting to society the individuals who cannot adapt due to their intellectual, physical, emotional, social speech, visual and hearing deficits and gaining them the necessary skills and providing services to the individuals taking place in this group (www.resmigazete.gov.tr/acc. dat.: 28.02.2019). These institutions enable the individuals to get ready for life by taking their interests, skills and needs into consideration and using special methods, personnel and tools. They help the individuals with disabilities establish good relations with their surroundings, adapt to the society they live in and be an individual beneficial to their environment (Palas Karaca et al., 2016). Also, there are Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers in our country in unique number and quality. The prices of almost all of the children receiving special education and rehabilitation services from the centers are paid by the state (Kulaksızoğlu et al., 2011).

Both children with hearing, visual, intellectual, physical, speech, emotional, social, mental and learning disabilities, highly gifted children, children with autism spectrum disorder (Mengi, 2020), and children with more than one disability could also benefit from the services given in Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers. Together with the conducted legal regulations (MEB Regulation of Special Education Institutions), the services of individual and group education, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, laboratory training-education, speech, hearing therapy, family consultancy and family education could be provided in these kinds of centers within the direction of the demands and needs of the children with MD and their families (MEB, 2013). In addition; the children with MD are supported with the services of daily life skills, communication skills, self-care skills and social skills and they could also have the services for decreasing problematic behaviors and gaining convenient behavior (MEB, 2015).

The fact that the intensity of the special education services provided to children with disabilities is low in Turkey and the education given to these children taking place in this group cannot be sufficiently met by the Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers makes it obligatory for the parents to take part in the education of their children (Özdemir, 2013). Besides, the studies conducted in special education reveal the requirement that the special education and support provided to the children with disabilities also be provided to the family members of the children (Şardağ, 2010). Therefore, family consultancy and family education services are also given to the parents with children with MD in these kinds of centers and institutions providing special education and rehabilitation services to the children with MD (MEB, 2015), and the parents are enabled to take a role in the education and supportive services of their children. Furthermore, more than one vocational group works in cooperation for the children with MD to be able to have better service in the institutions and centers where they have special education and rehabilitation services. A team consisting of the

headmaster, deputy headmaster, preschool teacher, child development and education teacher, teacher of the mentally handicapped, psychologist or advisory teacher and physiotherapist works in Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers (MEB, 2015).

When the studies conducted on Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers in our country are examined, these studies could be divided into three groups. It is seen that in the first group, the studies have been conducted on the expectations and suggestions of the families with children affected rather by intellectual disability and autism spectrum disorder from the Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers (Çetin, 2004; Demirdağlı, 2014; Şanlı, 2012; Yıkmış and Özbey, 2009; Yıldırım and Conk, 2005); in the second group, the studies have been conducted on the general structure of the special education and rehabilitation centers, hardships faced in operation and suggestions for solutions (Akbulut and Sancar, 2012; Altınkurt, 2008; Aydın, 2017; Güven Arslan, 2014; Korucu, 2005; Smagulova, 2009) and in the third group, studies have been conducted on the services given to families in special education and rehabilitation centers (Antmen, 2010; Demirel, 2005; Güler, 2006; Sarı et al., 2017). Moreover, Gürgür et al. (2016) have examined the teacher views on the supportive services provided to the students with hearing loss in Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers. As a result of this study, problems have been detected regarding the reports of the Counseling and Research Center, the cooperation necessary to be conducted, the periods of the given support services and the content of the undergraduate programs.

Upon the studies conducted in the literature, it could be said that the special education and rehabilitation services provided to the students with disabilities outside of the school environment are given to the students and their parents by the special education and rehabilitation centers (Gürgür et al., 2016). However, it is seen that no study has been conducted regarding the quality of the special education and rehabilitation services provided to the children with MD and the views of the parents on at what level these services are beneficial for the children with MD. Therefore, upon the fact that the supportive services (special education and rehabilitation services) provided to the children with MD out of the school environment are given by the Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers, it has been aimed to examine the quality and benefits of these given services and the views of the parents on their expectations in this study.

Aim of the Study

This study aims to examine the views of the parents regarding the services taken by the children with MD from the Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers. The following questions have been tried to be answered within the direction of this main aim:

What are the views of the parents:

1. on the services taken by the children with MD in the Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers,

2. on the educational services taken by the children with MD,

3. on the relations of the personnel working in Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers with the family and

4. what are the views and experiences, suggestions and expectations of the parents from Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers and the state?

Method

The model of the study, participants, data collection, validity and reliability of the study and data analysis are given in this part.

Research Model

Phenomenology pattern being one of the qualitative research methods has been used to determine the views of the parents on the education taken by the children with MD from Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers. Phenomenology is a pattern aiming to reveal the experiences of individuals on any event or phenomenon (Schram, 2003). In this study, this design was used since it was aimed at determinining the views and experiences of the parents regarding the services received.

Participants

The participants of this study consisted of parents with children with MD. The participants were selected using a criterion sampling technique. The determined criteria were having an additional disability to the intellectual disability for their children, attendance at Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers by their children and continuation of taking service from these institutions. The parents of children with MD meeting these criteria formed the participants of this study. The demographic data regarding the parents participating in the study are given in Table 1.

Table 1. *Demographic data of the parents*

Code name	Gender	Age	Education level	Profession	Disability type and severity of the child	Gender and age of the child	The period of the education taken by the child in SERC	The state of having FTS by the child or not
K1	K	52	Primary	Cook	VI and MOID	E-21	16 Years	No
K2	K	44	High School	Housewife	ASD and PD	E-3,5	3 Years	Yes
K3	K	43	Primary	Housewife	SLD and LSD, SP	K-8	4 Years	No
K4	K	35	Secondary	Housewife	MOID and ASD	K-13	9 Years	No
K5	K	42	Secondary	Housewife	PD and MID	E-22	21 Years	Yes

K6	K	45	Secondary	Housewife	MOID and PD	E-16	14,5 Years	Yes
K7	K	42	Primary	Canteen personnel	LSD and MOID	K-10	2 Years	No
K8	E	57	Secondary	Retired officer	MOID and PD	E-28	10 Years	Yes
K9	K	53	High School	Housewife	MOID, PD and DS	K-19	20 Years	Yes
K10	K	44	Primary	Housewife	SID, SP and PD	E-22	14 Years	Yes
K11	K	37	Primary	Housewife	MOID and PD	K-15	8 years	Yes
K12	K	40	Primary	Housewife	MOID and PD	E-15	10 years	Yes
K13	E	55	Secondary	Retired	MOID and PD	E-17	9 years	Yes

Key: SERC: Special Education and Rehabilitation Center, FTS: Physiotherapy Service, MID: Mild intellectual disability, MOID: Moderate intellectual disability, SID: Severe intellectual disability, SLD: Special learning disability, PD: Physical Disability, SP: Cerebral palsy, DS: Down syndrome, ASD: Autism spectrum disorder, VI: Visual Impairment, LSD: Language speech disorder

When Table 1 is examined, 11 of the parents were female and two of them were male. Parents were within the age range from 35 to 57. Six of them were graduates of primary school, five were secondary school graduates and two of them were high school graduates. One of the parents worked as a cook, nine of them were housewives, two of them were retired and one of them worked as canteen personnel. Seven of the children had a physical disability in addition to a moderate intellectual disability; one with cerebral palsy and physical disability as well as a severe intellectual disability; one with an intellectual disability as well as a visual impairment and one had a special learning disability, language speech disorder and cerebral palsy. Eight of the children with MD were male, and five were female. he children received supportive education from the institutions for a period of two to twenty years. While nine of them had physiotherapy, four of them had no physiotherapy.

Data Collection

One of the data collection techniques is interview in qualitative research methods. In this study, the semi-structured interview technique is one of the interview techniques used, and the questions taking place in the interview were prepared by the researchers after examining the literature. The prepared questions were finalized by receiving the opinions of the expert in special education and assessment and evaluation. The interview questions were checked by a linguist to determine whether the questions to be submitted to the participants during the interview were comprehensible or not. Afterward, a pilot interview was conducted with a parent having a child with MD to determine the

understandability of the prepared questions by the participants and as a result of the pilot interview, the questions were determined to be understandable. The questions prepared in accordance with the semi-structured interview technique were asked of the parents one by one. The researchers prepared an interview guide, which was used in the interviews. The interview guide was prepared to conduct the interviews carefully and meticulously. ccording to Yıldırım and Şimşek (2005), the interview guide to be used in the interviews was formed to secure the scope of the study's problem status and the research questions. An interview guide prepared by the researchers has been used in this study and the researcher conducting the interview has recorded what s/he has conducted using an interview monitoring device in accordance with the guide. The researcher has first introduced himself in the interviews, explained the aim of the present study and stated to the parents how the interview would be conducted. The consent of the parents was obtained by informing them of the fact that their real names would be reserved and the data of this study would be kept confidential. The interviews lasted approximately 12-18 minutes.

Validity and Reliability

According to Yıldırım and Şimşek (2008), validity and reliability studies in qualitative research are expressed with the concepts of *"persuasiveness, transmissibility and confirmability."* On behalf of persuasiveness within the scope of this study, the interview questions, the data obtained from this study and the comments made on the obtained data were submitted to the experts, and their opinions were taken. In addition, the findings obtained as a result of this study showed that 25% (3 parents) of the parents voluntarily participated in this study and participant consent was obtained. Besides, what the parents stated regarding the external validity of this study was put in the related parts of this study in quotes.

The raw data attained to provide transmissibility, the results regarding these data and the comments made on the views were submitted to experts and their approval was obtained. Furthermore, the environment where interviews were conducted was specified and details as to how the participants were determined were expressed. To ensure confirmability, a literature review on the subject was conducted and the questions were prepared accordingly. The main aim of the present study has been specified and the answers given by the participants to the questions were transcribed.

Data Analysis

The answers given by the parents of children with MD to the interview questions were transcribed. The reliability of the deciphering process was conducted on 30% of the documents and was calculated at 100%. A descriptive analysis technique was used to conduct data analysis on computer media. The data were summarized and interpreted using descriptive analysis techniques. Furthermore, the researcher coded the responses to the interview questions and created a code key. The code key was filled out by the

three academicians who are experts in their areas and conduct qualitative research for each interview form prepared afterwards.

Whether there was consistency among the coders was calculated with the formula "Reliability = Consensus / (Consensus + Dissensus) x 100," as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994). The average was calculated at 97% due to the calculations conducted.

The questions asked in the interview were accepted as themes. The data were formed and analyzed according to these themes. The parents were given code names and their views were transmitted. The questions taking place in this study were determined categorically and given by taking the utterance frequency into consideration. Direct citations were given place to be able to properly reveal the ideas of the participants in descriptive analysis (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008). Also, in this study, the expressions of the parents were directly cited as said in quotes with the codes, such as K1 and K2.

Findings

The findings of the study aiming to reveal the views of the parents regarding the services taken by the children with MD from Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers are given below.

The Views of the Parents regarding the Services Taken by their Children from Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers

The parents having children with MD had specified that their children take services from Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers on group academic education (f:10), physiotherapy (f:9), individual academic education (f:6), education for developing language skills (f:3) and service for developing handicraft. The statements of the parents on the subject are given below.

K2- S/he receives individual education from a physiotherapist. K3- He has a course, my teacher. He takes a language course. They play games with friends, that's all.

K6-S/he is taking courses; I mean, s/he is taking language courses, because s/he is disabled. In handicrafts, we already work with two teachers. There are such things. We do not have physical education.

K9- Math and Turkish; s/he got physiotherapy at first periods of time. Then, literacy courses, I mean, we have taken courses from almost anything.

The Views of the Parents regarding the Services they have Taken from Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers

While some of the parents having children with MD specified that they took services from Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers on guidance service (f:5) and family

education service (f:5), some of them expressed that they did not benefit from any service (f:8). The statements of the parents on the subject are given below.

K10- We do not have any education from the institution. We haven't had any education except for the education of our child.

K3- We can talk to the psychologists when we have a problem. I think it is a good service.

K4- I am not taking any education from the institution.

K5-Both necessary notifications and status assessments are made regarding my child and the teachers are so interested. They deal with us very well. For instance, they share everything with us even when U is unproductive. Well, it is good to inform us. They have plans for us to take the children to different places and tours, such as picnics and nice environments. I am content with all of them.

Their views on family education taken from the institution

While some of the parents having children with MD specified that they did not take services from Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers on family education (f:8) and could not regularly participate in the family education services given by the institution (f:3), some of them expressed that they regularly participated in the family education services given by the institution (f:4). They found it very beneficial (f:5). The statements of the parents on the subject are given below.

K5- Well, let me tell you something about family education. I cannot mostly go to the education about the institution and the family education; because I cannot leave the elderly alone at home. But, I heard that most of them are so content, parents are so content and mom and baby education is very good. I know that they are so happy that there are such women. It means they are so productive that they are so content.

K6-Well, actually, a group has been established. Zoom meetings have begun for family education. If you ask me, I couldn't participate.

K8- Family education for me? Of course not. I told you that I went there twice and I didn't get any education like that. I sat there and looked at my child to see what they were doing. I already didn't get anything on behalf of myself except for that.

K13- I am regularly participating. I have information about my child, myself and related situations when I participate. I personally find this education very beneficial.

The Views of the Parents regarding the Educational Services Taken by the Children with MD from Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers

When the views of the parents having children with MD regarding the educational services taken by their children from the institutions were examined, two sub-themes were reached quality and duration of the educational services given by the institution.

Their Views on the Quality of the Taken Education

Parents stated that they found the educational services given to their children qualified for their children (f:8) and they found them productive for their children because this service given to their children developed their children in all aspects (f:7). The statements of the parents on the subject are given below.

K1- It is going well. My child loves the school, so s/he is pleased that s/he is going there with love. S/he loves his/her teachers very much. They are interested, I mean. I cannot deal with him/her due to the heavy workload I have if there is something that is due to me, but I am so content with the teachers.

K6- I mean I am content. If you mean that, I am happy, especially with our hearing teacher. Actually, I am content with both of them.

K10- My child was more introverted before starting this rehabilitation; s/he was silent. Now, s/he can express himself/herself better and communicate more comfortably. S/he had no conversation with anyone. Now, s/he can express himself/herself in a certain way.

Their Views on the Duration of the Taken Education

Parents stated that they did not find the educational services given to their children sufficient in terms of duration. They expressed that the duration of the educational services given to their children with MD should be increased in Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers. The statements of the parents on the subject are given below.

K9- Of course, how productive can a 40-minute lesson be? It becomes different when there is support at home. And the teacher is very important. The lessons become more different when the student loves his/her teacher. Fortunately, I have always met good teachers until now. There is no problem. But, everything gets more different when there is support at home.

K2- Well, I think this special education should not be for two hours. I think it should last for five days, like school, because 40 minutes is nothing. Two 40 minutes per week is not enough.

Views of the Parents on the Benefits of the Educational Services Taken from the Institution

Their views on the benefits for parents

They stated that the education taken by their children from Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers gave them the skills to become aware of themselves for all the children with disabilities (f:5), they gained information regarding the disabilities owned by both their own children and those of other children with special needs and the characteristics of these disabilities (f:5) and they gained information about all developmental fields of their children (f:4). The statements of the parents on the subject are given below.

K2- Well, of course the education taken by my child is beneficial for us and our child. We knew nothing about Down syndrome. We learnt about that from our teachers and the rehabilitation centers.

K5- It facilitates my work. For example, when we come home after the motor education s/he takes and we make repetitions, I continue again after doing the physical education and having a little pain or hurt. S/he relaxes. S/he gets more comfortable. It is productive for me and also for U. He blows off some steam.

K8- I had information from the teachers related to my child, his/her lessons and his/her behaviors in the institution my child goes to. I sometimes go there and ask questions about the development of my child.

Their views on the benefits for children with MD

Regarding the benefits of the educational services taken from the institution for their children, parents stated that their children showed academic development (f:8), they had physical comfort after coming and going to the institution (f:4), their children became happy when they went to the institution. Hence, they reached a positive state of mood (f:3), their movement skills increased. Therefore, it made them independent (f:3) and their self-confidence increased (f:3). Regarding the social skill gains, they stated that their children established positive communication with their friends and interacted with them (f:9), their social circle increased by going to the institution and they made friends easily (f:6), they communicated with their teachers (f:6), they gained greeting and skills (f:6), children positively interacted with their families and communicate with them easily (f:5) and also they gained the queuing skills when they were in the environments where they needed to form a line (f:2). The statements of the parents on the subject are given below.

K10- To himself, namely the benefits for my child … S/he also became more social because s/he communicated more comfortably on the outside.

K9- Yes, at least s/he socializes there. S/he has a circle of friends. That's all, nothing else.

K2- Of course, there are benefits for my child. S/he socialized more and became more different for his/her teachers and society. Before going there, s/he became more aware and different.

K4- His/her pettishness is gone. My daughter was so pettish; she became calm and mature. She would always fidget around. I can say that she is calm now. That's all.

K3- Teacher, his/her self-confidence has increased. I mean, s/he became more social. S/he could never say 'How are you?' even to you. S/he can say that now, for example. I think it is a very good education.

Views of Parents on the Quality of the Education Given in Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers

While some of the parents having children with MD specified that they found the education given in Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers very beneficial for their children and, therefore, specified that the education given to the children with MD was qualified (f:10), some parents stated that they did not find the given education beneficial (f:3). The statements of the parents on the subject are given below.

K2- Well, I think individually it has added too many things. For my child, I mean. It has been very beneficial in good ways.

K3-Teacher, it could be more things. We could stay longer. I would want to, but still, it is good; I am pleased.

K5- They at least support us in a forward-looking way. They help us. They are constructive. Of course, the teachers at the institution are also very important. The institutions that are more aware and in which teachers do their job with love are always productive. For this reason, their awareness and the beneficial education they give my child make me really happy when we consider things in terms of quality. That's why I am comfortable with this issue.

K7- I mean, what shall I say? I haven't filled something like this before. I don't know what to say. I will be more pleased if there are more different things to do in his/her leisure time. We have a game room, but only for the children to spend time in their free lessons; I think it will be better if more instructive and active things are implemented. I don't know; they just sit and talk.

The Views of the Parents on the Physiotherapy Service Given in Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers

The parents having children with MD specified that they were content with the physiotherapy services their children took in the Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers (f:9), the physiotherapy services were so beneficial for their children (f:8) and the received physiotherapy service results were very positive (f:7). The statements of the parents on the subject are given below.

K5- It is very good for U. It is also good for me, too. For example, the relaxed muscles show that the education that day and the support s/he takes there are really productive. And it shows that they are dealing with him/her. For example, U is very tired when s/he comes from there; because s/he had a productive education there on that day, s/he feels more comfortable. I put on some ointment when s/he has some pain. I mean, we are good.

K8- Well, it is a good thing. I saw and looked for some time at the way s/he walks, s/he was doing physical-fitness exercises, and it has benefits.

K10- I can really say that it is a beneficial education for my child. Otherwise, s/he wouldn't even be able to sit. S/he couldn't even sit this way. We attained this much as a result of the exercises s/he has taken.

Views of the Parents on the Relations and Communications of the Personnel Working in Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers with them

Parents stated that the personnel working in Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers showed interest in both the children and parents (f:12). They were so content with this situation and became happy (f:11), and the personnel were very genial towards them (f:9), the personnel were sharing about any issue (f:8) and they were sincere towards themselves and their children (f:5). The statements of the parents on the subject are given below.

K5- I say it is so nice. I say very nice just with a single word. They are really interested, both Mrs. O, Mr. M and the teachers, everyone. For example, they welcomed me when I went there for U. They were really smiling. I don't know if there are other places, but I just went to the center in Karasu, where people are doing their job with love. But it was one of the few places that I went to until today. It is one of the best, so I give them credit for this.

K6- They are much better; I can even drink tea or coffee in the same room, even with the headmaster of the institution and talk when B is in his/her lesson. May Allah bless them; they gave so much importance to B, especially during the pandemic. They have not put him/her in a collective place because s/he has a disorder in terms of different metabolic meanings. B, the headmaster and I are sitting at the breaks directly in the headmaster's room. We can have a good talk with the headmaster when s/he is at the lesson, too.

K7- I am really happy with the place I go. I can ask them something and consult them about anything with comfort. I haven't had any problems until now, I haven't seen any insults or problematic reactions. I can comfortably trust them with my child and ask anything I want. There is no problem; I am content with the staff and the instructors. I haven't had any problems.

Views of the Parents on the Hardships Faced during the Educational Process of the Child with MD

Views of parents on the hardships they face

Parents stated their opinions on the hardships they faced during the educational process of their children with MD. They specified that their children were taken to the Special Education and Rehabilitation Center by the institution within school hours (f:5), they could not sufficiently deal with their children with MD during their educational period due to their intensive working life (f:4), the children could not go to the institution by themselves due to the additional disabilities of the children with MD. Therefore, they went to the institution together with the child (f:4) and they felt stressed stemming from this situation

(f:3). Some of the parents participating in this study expressed that they did not have any trouble regarding the issue (f:7). The statements of the parents on the subject are given below.

K2- Of course, we have had some problems during the education process. In the beginning, we felt empty. We didn't know who we were. My child didn't accept the situation and didn't want to go through the educational process. We had some problems during that period. S/he didn't want his/her teachers, cried a lot. I was always with him/her. We had some problems at that time, and we have done many things within these three years. Just now, I can comfortably leave him/her and go to the room. I couldn't before. It took a long period of time for us to get used to it.

K7- Hehe. I was just indecisive about sending him/her alone. Whatever it is, s/he acts a little different when I am there. S/he is so comfortable when I am not there. S/he is so talkative. The only problem is that I am afraid of the road; it is not like being my own child whatever happens. Somebody else could be treated in a calmer way, either on the school bus or at school. For example, I am stricter, s/he is more stable when I am there, but S is more comfortable when I am not there. S/he is comfortable when with me, but still, there is some doubt. Whatever happens, s/he is just a child, I don't know if s/he could make it. I don't say my child never does it. People can make mistakes. I haven't had any problems until now; I have been sending him/her alone for almost a month. They take him/her from the door and leave at the door. But I am more comfortable when I go there myself.

K10-Hardship… I don't know how to say. Rather than being hard, it is easy. The school bus comes to the door and takes him/her. They bring him/her again to the door when the education is over. We didn't have so much trouble.

Views of parents on the hardships the children with MD face

Parents specified that their children are reluctant to go to the Special Education and Rehabilitation Center (f:7), they could not accept their teachers working in the institution (f:7), they had hardships in accepting the institution (f:6), the children came back home tired after the education (f:5), they had hardships in the institution in communication (f:3) and learning (f:3). Thus, the children showed inconvenient behaviors, such as nail-biting (f:2). Moreover, some of the parents expressed that their children did not have any hardship in this process (f:7). The statements of the parents on the subject are given below.

K3- As s/he couldn't speak, s/he started to bite his/her nails. Afterwards, s/he had self-confidence after arriving there. I don't know, I still realize his/her self-confidence myself. For example, we couldn't come this summer, we couldn't start when the center was opened in Kaynarca, s/he got different at those times. He felt empty, but fortunately he is good now. Our self-confidence is back thank Allah.

K4- Of course my child is getting tired. S/he is going to two schools within the same day and gets two lectures. It wasn't like this before. Karasu used to accept students at weekends. He would at least rest mentally and physically. Now, when s/he comes back from there, s/he just falls to the bed. They are already setting off on the road at half past 8 in the morning. There is no other problem for S. I mean, s/he is still going there, no problem; because s/he likes the interest of the teachers, children already love interest very much.

K8- I have really not seen him/her having any hardship in there, but sometimes s/he gets bored.

Views of Parents on their Expectations from Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers

Expectations of the parents on physiotherapy and education

Parents having children with MD specified that their children should have more intense physiotherapy service (f:8), qualified teachers and personnel should work in the institution (f:6), the personnel working in the institution should be more productive (f:5), more qualified education should be given to their children in the institution (f:5), the institution should support the work so that the worker could be more eager (f:4), more intense academic education should be given because the education given in the institution was insufficient (f:2) and they expected the institution to prepare their children for an upper educational institution (f:1). In addition, some parents expressed that they do not have any expectations (f:2). The statements of the parents on the subject are given below.

K1- I don't have any expectations. They are doing what is necessary. May Allah bless all of them. They are doing their best. We are so happy.

K2- Humans expect much more, but unfortunately it does not happen. One thing is so important. I think teachers are very important. If s/he is a person who works by loving his/her job, we can proceed. You cannot get any education from the people who see this only as a job and the child cannot be productive, either.

K4- Well, I want my child to study. Now, s/he is in 8th grade. I want them to be able to prepare him/her for high school. When middle school is over, I don't want him to stay at home and shy away, they should make him finish high school, too. I want him to have a job and work somewhere like a government office. I want them to develop my child.

Expectations of parents on family education

Parents stated that they expect more and more detailed feedback from the Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers for the development of their children (f:7), they should be trained as to the deficiencies of their children (f:5) and more frequent and intensive training and seminars should be arranged (f:4). The statements of the parents on the subject are given below.

K7- It would be very good if they gave us information about the deficiencies of the children. For example, I don't know how to treat this. It would be good if they gave us training.

K11- Well, as an expectation, it would be beneficial for them to give us education related to how my child should behave there, what we should do at home and how we should behave.

Expectations of the parents on the relations and communication of the personnel of the institution

Parents expressed that they had expectations from the personnel working in the institution to be smiling (f:7), sincere (f:5) and emphatic (f:5). Some parents said that they did not have any expectations (f:9). The statements of the parents on the subject are given below.

K5- Sweet talking and friendliness, intelligent feedback, notifications. I do not expect anything else.

K1- I don't have any expectations. Everything is fine.

K10- As I said, they are already doing enough things. They treat children like their families. Everyone from the school bus driver to the teacher already acts like family. I do not expect much other than that.

K9- I swear I do not expect anything; everything is perfect. Everything is good from the staff to the cleaning service. We do not have any complaints. We are also very good with them, too. I don't have any expectations.

Views of parents on other expectations

Parents stated that they expected the institutions to increase the lecture durations left for the children (f:7), employ the children (f:5) and teach leisure time activities to the children (f:2). The statements of the parents on the subject are given below.

K1- All I expect is something like this. I want to be able to employ my child. I mean, my child wants a job and to work. Nobody is hiring him because he has an intellectual disability. For example, there is a personnel cadre we apply to, but s/he is rejected due to being intellectually disabled. My child can work. He can do all kinds of work. All we want is for him to work.

K4- In general , I want my child to have a better education.

K10- I do not have any expectations other than the education of my child. As I said, if s/he could walk as much as s/he could meet his/her own needs, this is enough for me even if s/he is on four hands

The Expectations of Parents from the State on Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers

Parents specified that the duration of the supportive education given to their children in Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers was short. This duration should be increased (f:7); job opportunities should be provided to their children for them to sustain their lives after the completion of their educational life (f:6), social areas should be increased for the children with MD to cohere with society and socialize (f:5), qualified personnel numbers should be increased for providing better service to the children with MD (f:3), and more support should be provided to the special education and rehabilitation centers in these issues (f:3). Some parents having children with MD specified that they did not have any expectations from the state (f:3). The statements of the parents on the subject are given below.

K1- I want my child to be hired. All I expect is that these children should have a job. There must be a job these children could do.

K2- Actually, this is my expectation from the state. This is our expectation from the state, having longer periods of lessons for special children. I think forty minutes, two and eight hours are not enough. We expect this from the state for the rehabilitation centers.

K9- Lesson hours could be a little longer, maybe. I mean, the lesson hour is 40 minutes for Turkish, and 40 for math. What is it per week? Let's say, it takes two hours. This makes it 2,4,6,8 hours per month. It would be better if it was longer.

K3- Teacher, our state is already doing everything; we do not have any other expectations.

Results and Discussion

In this study, the views of parents on the services their children with MD take in the Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers have been examined. When the findings obtained in this study are examined,, themes are seen to have emerged on the services taken by the parents and their children from Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers, views of parents on the educational services, benefits of the given services to parents and their children, quality of the given education, views of parents on the physiotherapy service, views of parents on the communication and interaction of the personnel, hardships faced at the educational process and the expectations of parents. The findings attained in this part of this study have been compared to the findings of previous studies and discussed in light of the literature.

It could be said that interdisciplinary cooperation is needed to reach success in special education. Thus, it is considered to give family education to parents by an instructor and psychologist expert in their areas in Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers (Akçamete and Kargın, 1999). The parents participating in this study have specified that

they have also taken guidance and family education services from Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers as well as the educational services taken by their children. While some of the parents have regularly participated in these educations, some of them have stated that they could not regularly participate in them. The parents being able to regularly participate in the guidance and family education have stated that they are content with the education and find it beneficial for themselves.

One of the services taken by the children with MD from Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers is the physiotherapy service which is beneficial for them regarding their physical disability. Parents have specified that they have taken group academic education, individual academic education, handicraft education, and language and speech skills education from these types of institutions providing supportive service. In addition, they have also taken the physiotherapy service, which is very important for their children and they are so content with this service. They have stated that it is significant to the motor development of the children and that it provides physical relaxation. The findings obtained in this study are consistent with Mengi's (2020) study. According to the findings, the participants expressed that they went to the Special Education and Rehabilitation Center twice a week, they had physiotherapy there depending on their disabilities and the individuals with visual impairments had training in walking sticks and braille. The individuals with MS () had the education for massage, stretching and exercises and the individuals with physical disability and Cerebral Palsy (CP) ()had the education of walking on the treadmill, walking, stretching and waist/back working etc. The findings suggest that every child takes supportive services depending on their characteristics and disability types in Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers and they benefit from these services in a productive way although their duration is not enough.

Another finding of this study is that the educational services given to children with MD in the institution have positive contributions to the academic improvement, social skill gaining and motor development of the children. Within this direction, the parents participating had specified that the given educational services support the development of their children and that the given supportive services contribute to the self-confidence improvement of the children. The benefits of the supportive services given to students with hearing loss have been stated in the study conducted by Gürgür et al. (2016). The teachers participating in the study have expressed that the supportive services given by the institution have positive contributions to the academic success and social skill development of the children. This finding of the study shows similarity with the finding that the educational and supportive services given to children with MD support the development of the children.

Parents have stated their opinions on the requirement that the support given to Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers by the state should be increased. In a study conducted by Altınkurt (2008), it has been detected that the only financial resource of the institution, according to the managers of the institution, is the educational fees given by the state. The works related to education delay in the event of the delay in the given fees, and this situation reflects on the students. This finding reveals how important and

vital it is for the Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers to be supported by the state.

When the views of the parents on the relations and communication of the personnel working in Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers with the family are examined, the fact that they are smiling towards themselves, they deal with both children with MD and their parents, personnel act sincerely towards the interests and requests of the parents and they are sharing is among the findings of this study. They have stated that they could comfortably share their problems and troubles related to both themselves and their children. In another study (Antmen, 2010), 77% of the parents stated that they share their daily problems and get positive feedback. Also, another study (Güven Arslan, 2014) cites that the problems faced in the institution are solved within the same day and hour, time is adjusted according to the parents and the sensitivity necessary for the parents and their children to benefit from the institution at a maximum level is shown. These results could be said to be in parallel with the findings of this study. Besides, sharing the problems in daily life and the troubles experienced with the children and the professional support taken from the institution could be said to possibly both decrease the burnout feeling of the family and easily solve the problems experienced by the parents related to their children.

The parents stated their views on the hardships they face during the educational process. They have expressed that they have had to go to the institution with their child, they sometimes could not deal with their children. Therefore, they have had some stress about these issues. They have expressed that they have had hardships, especially in the issue of taking the child to the institution after taking him/her from school at the school hour and not making any plans about this. In this way, it could be said that the child goes to the institution in a reluctant way and therefore, the supportive services given to children do not fulfill their function. It could be thought that the child going to the institution, especially during school hours will also hinder the education given to the child at school and this will negatively affect the school success of the child. Moreover, taking the child to the institution within school hours brings to mind the question of where the supportive services are given to the child with MD or where they should be given. Furthermore, it is seen that the children with MD are reluctant to go to the institution, and have hardships accepting their teachers and the institution. In this way, the children show nail-biting behaviors and are reluctant to do the activities and homework given at school because they are tired while coming back from the institution. In light of these findings, it could be specified that the institution managers should make the necessary arrangements by taking the demands of the children and parents into consideration.

When the parents have been asked about their expectations from the Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers related to physiotherapy and its education, they have expressed their expectations on the issue of extending the duration of the period left for the education. Upon this finding, it could be said that the given supportive services should be arranged in terms of duration and frequency for them to be more qualified and beneficial for the children with MD. It is seen in the studies conducted in the literature

that not only the parents, but also the teachers and institution managers have expectations about this issue in the same direction (Gürgür, 2016; Güven Arslan, 2014; Korucu, 2005; Sağıroğlu, 2006).

Recommendations

As a result of the study, it has been concluded that the parents having children with MD have various supportive services both for themselves and their children with MD from the Special Education and Rehabilitation Centers. They are so content with the education and physiotherapy services given by the institutions, these services are so productive and beneficial for both themselves and their children, but the duration of the given educational services is low and it is insufficient for their children. The state should support these kinds of institutions and they want their children to be hired within their capabilities Based on the findings of this study, revisions could be made to the frequency and duration of supportive services given to children with MD. Necessary in-service education and seminars could be given to the personnel to increase the quality of the education and services given in the institution and ensure the children with MD benefit from these services at a high level. Awareness work could be conducted on the requirements and needs of children with MD and seminars could be given to both the parents and the instructors and physiotherapists taking place in this group. urther studies could examine the views of physiotherapists on the physiotherapy services provided to children with MD and the difficulties encountered in this process.

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Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

Çoklu yetersizlik (ÇY), birden fazla yetersizliği içerisinde barındıran, çeşitli sağlık sorunlarıyla birlikte görülebilen bir durum olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Eldeniz Çetin vd., 2020). Birden fazla yetersizlikle birlikte çeşitli sağlık sorunlarına sahip bireyler ise ÇY sahip birey olarak isimlendirilebilir. ÇY olan çocuklar birden fazla yetersizliğe sahip olduğu için yoğun, sistematik bir şekilde özel eğitim ve rehabilitasyon hizmetlerine ihtiyaç duyabilmektedirler. ÇY olan çocukları yaşama hazırlayan eğitim hizmetleri ve destek hizmetler sunan Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'na (MEB) bağlı kurumlar bulunmaktadır. Özel Eğitim ve Rehabilitasyon Merkezleri Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'na bağlı bu kurumlar arasındadır.

Özel eğitim ve rehabilitasyon merkezlerinde, özel eğitim değerlendirme kurulu raporunda destek eğitim almaları uygun görülen bireylere bireysel olarak, grup olarak veya hem bireysel hem de grup eğitimi verilmekte ve bakanlık tarafından onaylanmış destek eğitim programı uygulanmaktadır (Özel Eğitim Kurumları Yönetmeliği, 2012). Çoklu yetersizliği olan çocuklar özel eğitim değerlendirme kurulu kararı ile özel eğitim ve rehabilitasyon merkezlerinden destek eğitim alabilmektedirler. Bu destek eğitim 28296 sayılı Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı Özel Eğitim Kurumları Yönetmeliğinde "Engelli bireye kurumca, aylık olarak belirlenen tutar karşılığında bir ayda en az sekiz ders saati bireysel ve/veya dört ders saati grup eğitiminin verilmiş olması" şekilde ifade edilmiş olup bu hizmetlerden çoklu yetersizliği olan öğrenciler de yararlanmaktadırlar.

Özel Eğitim Kurumları Kanunu'nda Özel Eğitim ve Rehabilitasyon Merkezleri; zihinsel, fiziksel, duygusal, sosyal, konuşma, görme, işitme yetersizliğinden dolayı topluma uyum sağlayamayan bireyleri topluma uyum sağlamak, gerekli olan becerileri kazandırmak için kurulan ve bu grupta yer alan bireylere hizmet sunan kurumlardır (www.resmigazete.gov.tr/erş. tar.: 28.02.2019). Bu kurumlar yetersizliği olan bireyleri, özel yöntem, personel, araç gereç kullanarak bireylerin ilgi, yetenek ve ihtiyaçlarını göz önünde bulundurarak yaşama hazırlanmalarını sağlar. Yetersizliği olan bireylerin çevresiyle iyi ilişkiler kurmasına, yaşadığı çevreye uyum sağlamasına ve çevresine faydalı bir birey olmasına yardımcı olur (Palas Karaca vd., 2016).

Alanyazın incelendiğinde ÇY olan çocuklara sunulan özel eğitim ve rehabilite hizmetlerinin niteliğine ve bu hizmetlerin ne derece ÇY olan çocuklara faydalı olduğuna ilişkin ebeveynlerin görüşlerinin incelendiği bir araştırmanın gerçekleştirilmediği görülmektedir. Dolayısıyla okul ortamı dışında ÇY olan çocuklara sunulan destek hizmetlerin (Özel eğitim ve rehabilite hizmetleri) Özel Eğitim ve Rehabilitasyon Merkezlerince verildiği gerçeğinden yola çıkarak bu araştırmada verilen bu hizmetlerin niteliğine, faydalarına ve ebeveynlerin beklentilerine yönelik ebeveyn görüşlerinin incelenmesi amaçlanmaktadır. Dolayısıyla bu çalışmanın genel amacı; ÇY olan çocukların Özel Eğitim ve Rehabilitasyon Merkezlerinde aldıkları hizmetlere ilişkin ebeveynlerin görüşlerini incelemektir. Bu genel amaç doğrultusunda aşağıdaki sorulara yanıt aranmıştır:

Ebeveynlerin;

1. ÇY olan çocukların Özel Eğitim ve Rehabilitasyon Merkezlerinde aldıkları hizmetlere ilişkin görüş ve deneyimleri,
2. ÇY olan çocukların aldıkları eğitim hizmetlerine ilişkin görüşleri
3. Özel Eğitim ve Rehabilitasyon Merkezlerinde çalışan personelin aile olan ilişkilerine yönelik görüş ve deneyimleri,
4. Özel Eğitim ve Rehabilitasyon Merkezlerinden ve devletten beklentilerine ilişkin görüş ve önerileri nelerdir?

Yöntem

Bu araştırmada ÇY olan çocukların Özel Eğitim ve Rehabilitasyon Merkezlerinde aldıkları eğitime ilişkin ebeveyn görüşlerini belirlemek amacıyla nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden fenomonoloji/olgu bilim deseni kullanılmıştır. Fenomenoloji bireylerin herhangi bir olay ya da olgu üzerine olan deneyimlerini ve yaşantılarını ortaya koymayı amaçlayan bir desendir (Schram, 2003). Araştırmanın katılımcılarını ÇY sahip çocuğu olan ebeveynler oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmanın katılımcıları ölçüt örnekleme tekniği kullanılarak belirlenmiştir. Belirlenen ölçütler ise; çocuklarında zihin yetersizliğine eşlik eden ek bir yetersizliğin olması, çocuklarının Özel Eğitim ve Rehabilitasyon Merkezlerine devam ediyor ve bu kurumlardan hizmet alıyor olmasıdır. Bu kriterleri karşılayan ÇY sahip çocuğu olan ebeveynler araştırmanın katılımcılarını oluşturmuştur.

Nitel araştırma yöntemlerinde veri toplama tekniklerinden biri görüşmedir. Bu araştırmada görüşme tekniklerinden yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme tekniği kullanılmış olup görüşmede yer alan sorular alan yazın incelenerek araştırmacılar tarafından hazırlanmıştır. Hazırlanan sorular Özel eğitim ve ölçme değerlendirme alanında uzman kişilerin görüşleri alınarak son hali verilmiştir. ÇY sahip çocuğu olan ebeveynlerin görüşme sorularına verdikleri yanıtlar yazılı hale getirilmiştir. Yapılan deşifre işleminin güvenirliği dokümanların %30 unda yapılmış ve %100 olarak hesaplanmıştır. Bilgisayar ortamına verileri çözümlemek için ise betimsel analiz tekniği kullanılmıştır.

Sonuç

ÇY sahip çocuğu olan ebeveynler çocuklarının Özel Eğitim ve Rehabilitasyon Merkezlerinde grup eğitimi, bireysel eğitim, fizik tedavi ve el becerileri kazanmaya yönelik eğitim aldıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Ebeveynler, Özel Eğitim ve Rehabilitasyon Merkezlerinden aile eğitimi ve rehberlik hizmetleri aldıklarını fakat düzenli olarak katılamadıklarını ifade etmişlerdir. Özel Eğitim ve Rehabilitasyon Merkezlerinde verilen eğitimi nitelikli ve çocukları açısından verimli bulduklarını ancak verilen eğitimi süre açısından yeterli bulmadıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Çocuklarına verilen fizik tedavi hizmetinin çocukları için faydalı olduğunu ve dolayısıyla kendilerini de mutlu ettiğini ifade etmişlerdir. Özel Eğitim ve Rehabilitasyon Merkezinde çalışan personelin gerek ebeveynlerle gerekse çocuklarla çok ilgili olduklarını, bu durumun kendilerini çok memnun ettiğini, kuruma giriş çıkışlarda kendilerini güler yüzle karşıladıklarını ve samimi davrandıklarını belirtmişlerdir. ÇY sahip çocuğu olan ebeveynler devletten

çocuklarını kendi ilgi, istek ve becerilerine yönelik bir işe yerleştirmesine, kurumda verilen eğitim süresinin uzatılmasına yönelik görüş bildirmişlerdir.

Tartışma

Özel eğitimde başarıya ulaşmak için disiplinler arası bir işbirliğine gereksinim olduğu söylenebilir. Bu nedenle de Özel Eğitim ve Rehabilitasyon Merkezlerinde alanında uzman olan bir eğitimci ve bir psikolog tarafından ebeveynlere aile eğitimi verilmesi gerektiği düşünülmektedir (Akçamete ve Kargın, 1999). Araştırmaya katılan ebeveynler, Özel Eğitim ve Rehabilitasyon Merkezlerinden çocuklarının aldığı eğitim hizmetlerinin yanı sıra kendilerinin de rehberlik hizmeti ve aile eğitimi hizmeti aldıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Kimi ebeveynler verilen bu eğitime düzenli olarak katılırken kimi ebeveynler düzenli olarak katılamadıklarını ifade etmişlerdir.

Yapılan araştırmanın bulgularından birisi de kurumda ÇY olan çocuklara verilen eğitim hizmetlerinin çocuğun akademik gelişimine, sosyal beceri kazanmasına, motor gelişimine olumlu katkılarının olduğudur. Bu doğrultuda araştırmaya katılan ebeveynler verilen eğitim hizmetlerinin çocuklarının gelişimini desteklediğini ve verilen destek hizmetlerin çocuğun özgüveninin gelişmesine katkı sunduğunu belirtmişlerdir. Gürgür vd. (2016) yaptığı araştırmada verilen destek hizmetlerin işitme kayıplı öğrencilere olan yararlarını ifade etmişlerdir. Araştırmaya katılan öğretmenler, kurumda verilen destek hizmetlerin çocukların akademik başarılarına ve sosyal beceri kazanımına olumlu katkıları olduğunu belirtmişlerdir. Araştırmanın bu bulgusu ÇY olan çocuklara verilen eğitim ve destek hizmetlerin çocukların gelişimini desteklediği bulgusuyla benzerlik göstermektedir.

Ebeveynlere, çocuğun fizik tedavi ve eğitimi ile ilgili Özel Eğitim ve Rehabilitasyon Merkezlerinden beklentileri sorulduğunda eğitime ayrılan sürenin kısa olduğu, bu sürenin uzatılması konusunda beklentilerini bildirmişlerdir. Bu bulgudan yola çıkarak ÇY olan çocuklara verilen destek hizmetlerin daha nitelikli ve yararlı olması için sunulan destek hizmetlerin süre ve sıklık açısından düzenlenmesi gerektiği söylenebilir. Alanyazında gerçekleştirilen araştırmalarda da sadece ebeveynlerin bu konuda bir beklenti içinde olmadığı öğretmenlerin ve kurum yöneticilerinin de aynı doğrultuda bir beklenti içinde olduğu görülmektedir (Gürgür, 2016; Güven Arslan, 2014; Korucu, 2005; Sağıroğlu, 2006).

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Academic Self-problems of Candidate Teachers of Native Language: "I am not sure what or how to learn." But I must be sure of what I can teach."

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Abstract: Academic self-concept is an individuals' self-definition using their experiences in the educational process or their views on their own skills and interests. This study aims to determine the academic self-perception of teacher candidates of native language. This study was conducted with a qualitative approach in a phenomenological design. The study group consisted of 10 female and 6 male native language teacher candidates at a university located in the eastern part of Turkey. During the data collection process, semi-structured interviews were conducted with open-ended questions, the data collected with a voice recorder was converted into a written text. Participant views were subjected to content analysis. The first, last, and focus codings were completed for "coder reliability;" and an external controller was also used. In this study, the data source was diversified with reminder notes and observation reports for stability and transparency. The findings revealed that most participants had high verbal abilities and interests, and weak numerical abilities and interests. Additionally, the views that they were unable to make the right choices in line with their abilities and interests and therefore could not achieve their academic self-concept and goals are remarkable.

Keywords: Academic self-concept, native language education, teacher candidate.

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Introduction

Individuals begin to observe their environment during infancy. Thus, they increase their knowledge about the environment. With this experience, they realize that they are a part of a group and the characteristics of that group and their own from a very young age. They begin to define their differences better under the influence of the environment. They create structures in which they classify themselves and others (Aydın, 1996). These structures play an active role in one's thoughts, behaviours, approaches, expectations, and orientations. As individuals become more curious about their inner structures, they start to think and research more about themselves. The desire of an individual to understand and explain himself is an issue that is always on the agenda. One has always been a mystery to himself (Jung, 1999). All kinds of research and defining efforts to solve this mystery enabled the determination of the main subjects of philosophy and many disciplines including sociology, psychology, anthropology, and archaeology. Considering "human" as the basis of the subjects, one's cognitive and sensory structures, his characteristics that distinguish him from other people, lifestyles, relationships with others, and behavioural structures became the basic research areas of the social sciences. Researchers conceptualized the term "self" with the structures that consist of the inner and personal perceptions of human beings and introduced many definitions for this concept.

Self-concept in the Philosophy Dictionary is defined as the spiritual center of one's intense interaction with himself and the environment in which he lives in (Frolov, 1991). In sociology, it is defined as intellectual abilities with reflective properties and a way that encourages people to consider themselves as objects of their own thoughts while emphasising the two-way effect of it between the individuals and society (Marshall, 1999; Mead, 1934). Later, self-concept became one of the main topics in psychology, which deals with the inner aspects of human beings. The self-concept term was first defined by William James in his work entitled "The Principles of Psychology" and he initiated studies on this concept. In the studies, the concept of personality was also emphasized along with the concept of self-concept. Many approaches to explaining the two concepts from different aspects led to different personality theories. There are six basic approaches according to Burger's classification: psychoanalytic, distinctive feature, biological, humanistic, behavioral, and cognitive approach (2006). The self-concept is defined as a biological-based and acquired behavior with immutable attribution which depends on individuals' learning processes and encourages people to answer the questions of who am I, what are my values, what do I want and what can I do (Burger, 2006; Rogers, 2011; Yazgan İnanç & Yerlikaya, 2012). While some researchers use these two concepts interchangeably, others state that the self-cencept is one of the important aspects of personality. In general, both concepts were not considered separately from each other, and it was observed that the definitions were intertwined.

There are other definitions and studies about self-concept in the literature. The self-concept was first seen as a concept that reflects wishes, expectations, feelings, thoughts, beliefs, interests, and abilities, encompasses all individual judgements, the mental

counterpart of personal perspectives, past lives, future goals, social duties, and answers questions, such as what a human being is, what he aims to be and how he is recognized by his environment, what his opinions are about himself, how he defines himself, how he positions himself (Bakırcıoğlu, 2012; Kuzgun, 2002; Ghazvini, 2011; Atkinson, Atkinson, Smith, Bem & Hoeksema, 2008; Rogers, 2011; Yavuzer, 2016; Aydın, 1996). The self-concept is considered developmental, acquired, learned, changeable, dynamic, active, and strong. It is directly based on many sources related to people's lives, including family, friends, ethnicity, cultural elements, the behaviors and opinions of other people, the judgements they make about themselves based on their own reactions, the emotional reactions they give depending on external situations, the discovery of their own characteristics that make them different from other people, and the comparison of themselves with others (Ghazvini, 2011; Markus & Wurf, 1987; Purkey, 1988; Kenç & Oktay, 2002; Taylor, Peplau & Sears, 2010).

In many studies, the flexibility of the self-concept was emphasized. In this context, a model known as the "Shavelson Model" was introduced. According to the model, the self-concept has a gradual structure. There are two components under the general self-concept, namely, academic and non-academic self-concept. In addition, these two components are classified according to their own properties. According to Shavelson et al. (1976), while academic self-concept can be divided into subject areas and then specific areas within these topics, non-academic self-concept can also be divided into social, emotional, and physical self-concepts. Along with the studies on the model, the concept of academic self-concept gained importance in educational studies. It is defined as students' opinions about how they see themselves academically in relation to their perception of competence and ability level, their opinions about their abilities and interests, their interest and attitude towards a topic and theme, their confidence in whether they pass a course, and their general opinion about the courses. Also, it is considered a mediating variable that often facilitates the achievement of other desired outcomes, such as academic achievement (Shavelson & Bolus, 1981; Craven, Marsh & Debus, 1991; Kuzgun, 1996; Piyancı, 2007; Başbay & Senemoğlu, 2009; Kirk, as cited in Çağlar, 2010; Koç, 2011). In summary, the academic self-concept is a phenomenon that an individual acquires based on his experiences in school life to define himself as successful or unsuccessful in academic life both based on himself and through comparison with peers.

Studies have shown that there is a causal relationship between the academic self-concept and other factors, including academic interest, attitude, academic achievement, desire to learn, and academic performance in the future (Byrne, 1986, as cited in Bıyıklı, 2014; Cokley, 2000; Marsh et al., 2005; Marsh, 1986; Byrne, 1984). There are two models of academic self-concept: The personal development model posits that self-concept affects academic achievement and the skill development model reveals that self-concept is a result of academic success (Guay, Marsh & Boivin, 2003). Academic self-concept affects not only students' academic performance but also their efforts, participation, continuity, motivation, behaviors, and choices in classroom activities (Marsh & Yeung, 1997; Hanan, Shabana & Mona, as cited in Yanal, 2019; Kuzgun, 2009). Noting that

academic self-concept is divided into two categories, mathematical and verbal academic self-concepts, it is also divided into sub-dimensions within itself to refer to some concepts, such as interest and ability. The "Academic Self Concept Scale" developed by Kuzgun (1996), who deals with ability and interest dimensions under the academic self-concept, is one of the important sources in the studies conducted on behalf of this concept in Turkey. Kuzgun identified four ability areas in her study (1996): verbal, numerical, shape-space, and eye-hand coordination ability. Accordingly, verbal ability refers to reason with words, to understand what is read, and to express feelings and thoughts clearly with words; numerical ability refers to thinking with numbers, processing, and solving problems; shape-space ability is related to detecting similarities and differences among shapes and visualizing different formal features and situations that shapes and objects will take; eye-hand coordination is associated with performing tasks, such as cutting, piercing, and drawing, which requires both hands and eyes to work together (Kuzgun, 1996).

Explanation and development of academic self-concept are crucial in terms of determining the interests and abilities of a person in the education process, allowing people to make appropriate choices and see their place in life better. As a result, it gained educational psychologists' attention and became a widely used concept in both career choices and vocational guidance. While some studies aimed to explain and develop academic self-concept, and determine the academic self-concept in individuals (Shavelson, Hubner & Stanton, 1976; B. M. Byrne, 1984; Marsh, 1986; Herbert & Marsh, 1990; Marsh & Craven, 1996; Kuzgun, 1996), there are other studies examining the academic self-concept through correlations by employing quantitative research models (Byrne, 1986; Marsh, Byrne & Shavelson, 1988; Marsh, Chessor, Craven & Roche, 1995; Subaşı, 2000; Korkmaz & Kaptan, 2002; Kenç & Oktay, 2002; Marsh, Trautwein, Lüdtke, Köller & Baumert, 2005; Pesen, Odabaş, Bindak & Kudu, 2005; Göktaş, 2008; Başbay & Senemoğlu, 2009; Karasakaloğlu & Saraçoğlu, 2009; Koç, 2011). In some master's theses, although some variables of academic self-concept, including attitude, academic achievement, student access, and interest in profession were examined, the relationship between academic self-control and academic achievement has been explored in the majority of studies (Yağcı, 1997; Çalışkan, 2004; Sevilmiş, 2006; Piyancı, 2007; Yılmaz, 2009; Gökmen, 2009; Çağlar, 2010; Baran, 2011; Turgut, 2011; Baştürk Tekin, 2014; Uzunoğlu, 2019; Yanal,2019). Considering those studies, there is a severe lack of qualitative research on this phenomenon that has such an impact on success and decision systems. To my knowledge, there is no qualitative study in the literature on the academic self-control of native language teacher candidates. Studies examining the effect of academic self-control on personality characteristics specific to an individual will contribute to the field. The fact that qualitative research enables deeper explanations about a phenomenon revealed the necessity of studying the academic self-concept qualitatively. Jung (1999) stated that for one to recognize himself, he should question himself, which results in psychological gain. It is believed that this study enables native language teacher candidates to question their opinions about themselves.

This study aims to determine the perceptions of native language teacher candidates about their academic self-concept. In line with this general purpose, this study examines how those candidates evaluate their effective communication skills, what they think about problem-solving skills using numerical operations, which ways they follow while doing a job, what they do regarding visual skills and hand skills, the extent of their interest in social sciences and learning a foreign language, how they evaluate themselves in terms of social assistance, and to what extent they match themselves with the field they have chosen.

Method

This study was conducted according to a phenomenological design, which is concerned with qualitative research types. In such studies, the dimensions of the phenomenon are explained subjectively as a result of the interviews conducted with the participants who are at the level of living and transferring the phenomenon and supported by the researchers' participatory observations and reminder notes (Baş & Akturan et al., 2017; Büyüköztürk et al., 2018; Patton, 2014; Yurdakul, 2016). Creswell (2017a) states that phenomenological studies, frequently preferred in qualitative research, have philosophical foundations and include descriptions of participants as a result of their experiences. At this point, a biaxial focus is achieved in accordance with the phenomenological design.

Participants

The study group was formed through stratified purposeful sampling, one of the purposeful sampling methods. The purposeful sampling method is a method that is frequently used in qualitative research, and participants are selected according to some characteristics (Sönmez & Alacapınar, 2018). The rationale for this selection is due to the limitations of defining the universe and the logic and context of social processes that cannot be interpreted by random sampling (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In these studies, it is focused on how the sample, or the sum of small case studies, units or activities illuminate social life rather than the representative power of the sample, and the main concern of the researcher is to find case studies that will improve what is learned about context-centered social life processes (Neuman, 2017). The study group consisted of 16 teacher candidates (10 female and 6 male) who were in the Department of Native Language Teaching at a Faculty of Education in a university located in the eastern part of Turkey. First, two participants were selected from each grade level. Then, new participants were added until the data provided little in terms of new perspectives or themes in the study, which resulted in 16 participants in total in this particular study.

Data Collection

In this study, open-ended questions were preferred in the data collection process so that the participants could think independently. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to

ask additional questions when necessary. Interviews help researchers understand and describe the phenomenon in a phenomenological design (Büyüköztürk et al., 2018). While interviews are conducted with questions or directions to reveal the subjects to be discovered, neither a sentence structure nor a definite decision on the questions in advance is required (Merriam, 2015). Based on the principle that "Interviewers are active participants" in qualitative research, the researchers do not monopolize the conversations/interviews but prioritize creating interaction-based environments in order not to disappear in the background (Silverman, 2018). In this study, an interview protocol consisting of 10 questions was used as a data collection tool. Each item in the interview protocol explained a different aspect of the research phenomenon. While preparing the protocol, the literature was reviewed first and criteria/categories were determined as suggested by Berg and Lune (2015). The "Academic Self-Concept Scale" developed by Kuzgun (1996) was used to determine the criteria. For the validity of the content, expert opinions were gathered from faculty members serving at the Faculty of Education. Based on the feedback from the experts, the protocol was finalized. All the data obtained as a result of the interviews were recorded, and reminder notes and observation reports were written during the interviews. The determination of the study group and data collection and analysis processes were carried out simultaneously (Interview (I) 1>Analyses (A) 1>I2>A2>In>An) as suggested by Creswell (2017b). In contrast to quantitative research, research questions cannot be finalized before the data collection and data analysis processes are completed at a significant level (Maxwell, 2018).

The Data Analysis

The interviews were recorded with a tape recorder and then transferred into electronic text format. The data were analyzed through content and descriptive analysis methods. Content analysis allows researchers to identify the existence of words, concepts, themes, idioms, characters or sentences in texts and express them numerically (Kızıltepe, 2017). While content analysis is the method in which the researcher, who has obtained sufficient information about the content, categorizes the data and expresses and interprets the relationship among them, the descriptive analysis method refers to describing the participant views by a researcher (Sönmez & Alacapınar, 2018).

In qualitative studies, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are the four aspects critical for the robustness of the study. To increase the credibility of the study, member checks, persistent observations, discussions about the phenomenon with peer debriefing during the data collection process, the researcher's interaction with the participants for progressive subjectivity and adapting the dynamic participant-observer role, and data triangulation through reminder notes and observation notes were followed in the study as Çelik and Ekşi (2015) suggested. Informing participants about the purpose of the study, including direct quotations reflecting the feelings and thoughts of the participants in reporting the findings, explaining the findings in detail, and employing purposeful sampling were also employed to increase the transferability of the study (Çelik & Ekşi, 2015).

For the dependability of the study, the researchers asked an expert from another university to analyze the data to ensure the themes and categories. The expert examined how the methodology of the pattern was developed and changed and the adequacy of this process in terms of defining, exemplifying, and supporting it as suggested by Çelik and Ekşi (2015). In addition, the coding process was held twice. Each interview datum was analysed after the interview, which was the first coding process. The second coding process was carried out twenty days after the first coding process. The reliability between the two coding processes was calculated using Miles and Huberman's (1994) formula of "reliability = number of agreements / (total number of agreements + disagreements)" and found to be 90.83%. After the second coding process, with the random sampling method, the data obtained from four participants was selected among the data of 16 participants for content analysis. The expert examined the data obtained from those four participants. The intercoder reliability was calculated through the same formula and found to be 81.82%. Checking the consensus between different coders mainly provides the reliability check in qualitative data analysis and contributes to the thoroughness of the interpretation process in analyzing a qualitative database (Creswell, 2017).

To ensure the confirmability of the study, the sensitivity of the researchers to the process steps enables them to be independent of the values, instincts, and political beliefs stemming from their own paradigms in their analysis and interpretation of the findings (Çelik & Ekşi, 2015). In addition, instead of statistical generalization, the "analytical generalization approach" was adopted in accordance with the epistemological foundations of qualitative research. To realize the triangulation method developed by Merriam (2015), "descriptive phenomenology" was used to describe the phenomenon and "interpretive phenomenology" was used to explain the phenomenon. In the study, sample opinions of the participants for each category were provided. The principle of "axiological subjectivity" between the participants and researchers was adopted in explaining the perception of the phenomenon. Descriptive and interpretive phenomenology were basically carried out to provide interpretation validity, which is the ability to accurately document and reflect on the phenomenon by accessing participants' minds to concretize the extent to which the phenomenon/subject is represented correctly (Christensen, Johnson & Turner, 2015). To increase the strength and transparency of the study, the data source was diversified by keeping reminder notes and observation reports. Reminder notes taken during one-to-one interviews contribute to the researcher's ability to evaluate the experiences in the data collection process, to make comparisons on the data, and to examine the case in detail. Also, reminder notes are expected to be useful for other researchers who tend to apply the method in terms of concretizing the research process. The category clarity was ensured by creating the categories based on the literature to reflect the sub-dimensions of each phenomenon. A phenomenological reduction was made by removing the data that was not related to the problem. By carrying out content analysis, the data were subjected to three-step coding as initial, final, and focus coding by employing open coding and association coding methods. With the "coding" used for adding conceptual labels to the data, the data were analyzed by adding the label to the data piece, whichwas followed by associating these relational

codes to theorize (Urguhart, 2018). While open coding ensures that the concepts, words, and features of a subject are listed under a general category, associative coding involves the association of categories and subcategories with each other (Sönmez & Alacapınar, 2018).

Findings and Interpretation

In this section, the findings obtained through the content analysis method are presented in tables and explained with interpretive phenomenology based on the literature. "What difference or similarity is there between the world in which the participants live and their individual experiences?" constitutes the focus of interpretative phenomenology (Ersoy, 2017). In addition, during the interviews, the reminder notes, and observations, which were the product of the participant observer/researcher role, were subjected to descriptive phenomenology. This role increased our awareness and curiosity about interactions around us, enabled the researcher to be involved in the environment, people, and research questions, and to understand whether the participant observer/researcher role was fulfilled, which is related to whether the researcher feels an increasing determination or not (Glesne, 2015).

Table 1. *Participants' opinions on effective communication skills*

Codes	First coding f			Last coding f			Focus coding f
	Positive	Negative	Total	Positive	Negative	Total	
Grammar	15	5	20	17	6	23	
Area of expertise	8	3	11	8	3	11	
Memorization	6	-	6	5	-	5	Verbal skills
Vocabulary	5	-	5	3	-	3	6
Pronunciation	3	-	3	2	-	2	
Style	3	-	3	3	-	3	
Expression	57	33	90	47	31	78	
Comprehension	40	4	44	34	7	41	
Socialization	28	4	32	20	11	31	Communication
Persuasion	20	4	24	22	5	27	5
Leadership	5	-	5	4	-	4	
Linguistic Consciousness	10	-	10	12	-	12	Psychology of language
Empathy	8	-	8	10	-	10	3
Anxiety	4	-	4	6	-	6	
Gestures	8	4	12	8	3	11	Non-verbal communication
Tone of voice	3	-	3	3	-	3	2
Competence	6	1	7	6	1	7	Area of expertise
Family	4	-	4	4	-	4	2
Total	233	58	291	214	67	281	18

It was determined that the participants' opinions regarding effective communication skills mostly emphasized the codes of "comprehension" and "expression." There are common views that effective communication is based on expressing oneself and understanding others correctly. Some of the participants stated that they had difficulties in speaking to a group of people as opposed to individual relationships. This may be because the participants do not have the opportunity to speak in front of a group and they do not have many platforms to practice. The concentration of the participants on the concept of sociability is related to the fact that the interaction is based on communication since individuals establish relationships with others through communication and then the socialization process begins. Participants reported that they express themselves in social settings, communicate without hesitation in a new environment, and easily adapt to the environment. Some of the participants stated that they could not socialize due to the fear of not being able to express himself/herself well and the opinions of other people about him/her during communication. In addition, opinions about gestures and tone of voice were determined as factors affecting communication. It was argued by the participants that persuasion skill is essential for effective communication. It was determined that most participants thought that they could impose their ideas on other people. It was observed that the participants who defined themselves as the dominant character during communication emphasized the concept of leadership. They also highlighted the importance of verbal communication skills and stated that they paid attention to their pronunciation, style, and vocabulary. They stated that they were more successful in non-mathematics courses and, therefore, their interests and skills in this area intensified. The participants who provided positive opinions about the grammar code emphasized the linguistic consciousness code by saying that they pay attention to grammar rules in texts and speeches of others and try to correct the mistakes made. The source of these opinions may be related to the department of the participants. In addition, they stated that they chose the department because of their verbal skills.

Table 2. *Participants' opinions on problem-solving skills using numerical operations*

Codes	First coding f			Last coding f			Focus coding f
	Positive	Negative	Total	Positive	Negative	Total	
Biology	19	-	19	18	2	20	
Chemistry	6	2	8	7	2	9	
Physics	-	6	6	-	6	6	Sciences 5
Respect	4	-	4	4	-	4	
Astronomy	5	-	5	5	-	5	
Subscription to periodicals	10	2	12	14	3	17	
Research	6	4	10	7	4	11	Scientific research 5
Study	1	7	8	1	7	8	
Documentary	5	1	6	5	1	6	
Reading	4	2	6	6	2	8	
Mathematics	5	15	20	4	16	20	
Problem solving	4	6	10	4	6	10	Numerical skills 3
Processing skills	10	7	17	6	7	13	

Codes	First coding f			Last coding f			Focus coding f
	Positive	Negative	Total	Positive	Negative	Total	
Self-efficacy	5	12	17	2	12	14	Area of expertise choice 2
Teacher	-	2	2	-	2	2	
Total	84	66	150	83	70	153	15

The findings showed that most participants first preferred the mathematics code in the numerical skills focus code. The participants mainly focused on mathematics when it came to the numerical field since they believed that mathematics is related to all other numerical fields. Participants stated that they were unsuccessful in mathematics. For example, they stated that they could not solve problems, did not have processing skills, and had difficulty even in four operations. Some of the participants stated that they can perform simple operations in daily life and that they believe that they can improve themselves in this area if they prefer. While making comments about science, the participants stated that the field of "biology" was interesting and that they understood this field better. When asked about the reason, the participants associated this situation with the verbal aspect of biology. In relation to the "Scientific Research" focus code, the participants stated that they were particularly interested in technological developments, astronomy, and research on the lives of living things. They also stated that they read scientific publications, actively use social media, and watch documentaries. Some of the participants stated that they respect the research and envy successful scientists. On the other hand, they stated that they did not carry out any research and that they could not imagine themselves doing research in the future. They associated this situation with their dislike and seeing themselves as inadequate in these areas. They also stated that the self-efficacy and teacher guidance they received in their K-12 education were insufficient.

Table 3. *Participants' opinions on work discipline*

Codes	First coding F			Last coding f			Focus coding f
	Positive	Negative	Total	Positive	Negative	Total	
Responsibility	21	4	25	25	10	35	Work awareness 4
Concentration	18	2	20	20	2	22	
Work culture	9	1	10	6	1	7	
Discipline	8	7	15	15	9	24	
Detail	18	-	18	28	-	28	Attention 3
Foregrounding	3	-	3	3	-	3	
Research	10	-	10	15	-	15	
Time management	18	12	30	25	12	37	Competence 2
Planning	30	21	51	37	20	57	
Total	135	47	182	174	54	228	9

It was determined that most participants primarily focused on the planning code. Along with the participants who provided positive comments that they regularly conduct their

daily work and make a weekly schedule, there were also participants who said that they were not planned at all, and that they worked randomly in their work. However, some participants stated that they worked by paying attention to time management. Participants said that regardless of the task, they always completed it on time. Participants stated that they felt responsible about their duties, tried to fulfill them in the best way, focused on their work, tried to be disciplined, and did not start another task before their duties were over. They also stated that a work culture was necessary for collaborative work to be successful. Participants stated that while performing their responsibilities, they paid attention to details, evaluated their own competencies in the relevant subject, and cared about the opinions of people they considered to be experts. In this context, it can be said that the participants generally have process management sensitivities.

Table 4. *Participants' opinions on their visual memory*

Codes	First coding f			Last coding f			Focus coding f
	Positive	Negative	Total	Positive	Negative	Total	
Recall	46	8	54	48	8	56	
Attention	31	6	37	31	6	37	Store 5
Coding	7	-	7	10	-	10	
Sense of direction	5	5	10	10	6	16	
Estimation	4	2	6	4	4	8	
Visual memory	20	7	27	30	9	39	
Symbolic memory	17	8	25	19	9	28	Memory 3
Auditory memory	6	-	6	5	-	5	
Assemble parts	7	-	7	7	-	7	
Three-dimensional thinking	5	3	8	4	2	6	Synthesis 3
Puzzle	3	-	3	2	1	4	
Total	151	39	190	170	45	215	7

The findings obtained in this study showed that the participants focused on the "memory" code in questions related to their visual memory. Participants stated that they did not easily forget people who they had seen before, the places where they had been, and the text that they had read. They stated that it was easier for them to remember especially when they paid attention. They stated that they encoded some shapes, symbols, words, and concepts so that they could easily remember them. Participants specified that they did not have any difficulty in finding their directions, whether it was a place they went before or a place they went for the first time. The participants who had positive views had the ability to analyze the environment well, solve complex systems, and have high spatial perceptions. Some of the participants indicated that they relied on their predictions in finding their directions, predicted the different shapes a shape would take, and noticed the changes. Participants who mentioned visual memory, auditory memory, and symbolic memory mentioned that they did not forget what they had seen before, they coded some words and concepts with figures and symbols while preparing for the exams, and they were more sensitive to auditory materials than visual materials.

Participants' comments, such as visualizing the new shapes when the figures were rotated, seeing the similarities and differences between shapes, reading maps, doing puzzles, combining models were associated with the codes of "three-dimensional thinking", "combining parts", and "puzzle." The high level of visual labelling skills of the participants may be related to the fact that their educational background consisted of non-numerical courses. In other words, it may be said that most participants used symbolic coding as a method of memorization.

Table 5. *Participants' opinions on their handicrafts*

Codes	First coding *f*			Last coding *f*			Focus coding *f*
	Positive	Negative	Total	Positive	Negative	Total	
Repair	12	5	17	12	5	17	
Drawing	11	4	15	10	5	15	
Cutting	6	3	9	6	3	9	Handicrafts 6
Designing	5	2	7	5	2	7	
Predisposition	5	2	7	6	3	9	
Daily routine	3	5	8	3	5	8	
Hobby	8	10	18	12	18	30	
Attention	7	6	13	10	12	22	Tendency 4
Family	4	5	9	4	3	7	
Need	2	-	2	2	-	2	
Total	63	42	105	70	56	126	10

Most participants stated that they were interested in simple repairs, they liked assembling some items that required installation, they made writing and tracing work, and they liked cutting and glueing paper. Some of the participants stated that they were able to produce ideas, but they were not able to create them in real life. The positive comments may be associated with their mechanical interest. Generally, the participants expressed positive opinions about their predisposition in areas related to handicrafts. On the other hand, some participants stated that they were not interested in these areas at all and that they could not do it when they attempted. Some of the participants stated that the reason for this situation was related to their families' attitudes. They mentioned that they were not given responsibilities by their families and their families did not direct them, so their hand skills did not develop. Some of the participants stated that they were interested in subjects that require handicrafts, and some of them stated that they only attempted handicrafts when needed. There were also participants who did not have any hobbies. It may be said that the participants tend to only focus on their own fields because of the department in which they are enrolled and that they are not interested in different fields.

Table 6. *Participants' opinions on social sciences*

Codes	First coding *f*			Last coding *f*			Focus coding *f*
	Positive	Negative	Total	Positive	Negative	Total	
History	32	8	40	36	10	46	
Geography	29	6	35	27	7	34	Social sciences
Psychology	29	2	31	22	4	26	4
Sociology	4	2	6	4	2	6	
Reading	20	11	31	18	10	28	
Documentary	8	2	10	10	2	12	Research 3
Conversation	3	-	3	3	-	3	
Importance	10	-	10	10	-	10	
Curiosity	10	2	12	12	2	14	Relevance 3
Relevance	10	1	11	10	1	11	
Sightseeing	9	2	11	9	2	11	Enculturation
Cultural development	2	-	2	2	-	2	2
Total	166	36	202	163	40	203	12

When asked about their opinions on social sciences, most participants stated that they were more interested in this topic. Participants reported that they were interested in history in the social sciences, information about history attracts their attention, they generalized from history, and they were interested in archeology and anthropology. They said that Turkish history was especially important to them and that they should learn about it. Also, the participants stated that they were interested in geography, and they did not have difficulty in this area. On the other hand, there were some participants who stated that they did not like or were not interested in geography. It may be concluded that the numerical content in geography is effective in participants' negative opinions. Participants indicated that they were curious about subjects, such as mental health, subconsciousness, and character analysis related to the area of psychology. In an academic context, every teacher candidate works in educational sciences, and this leads them to a psychosocial process. As a result, they have psychosocial-centered academic perspectives. Participants' focus on psychology and sociology may be explained in this context. Participants mentioned that they mostly read articles and books in the social sciences, followed publications in these fields, and especially enjoyed reading books on history and psychology. Some participants stated that they watched documentaries with interest, talked among themselves about the documentaries they watched, visited museums, and organized trips to explore the geographical features of some places. They also said that all these are important to their cultural development. Thus, it may be said that the participants have a tendency towards social disciplines.

Table 7. *Participants' opinions on producing and analyzing a work of art*

Codes	First coding f			Last coding F			Focus coding f
	Positive	Negative	Total	Positive	Negative	Total	
Eagerness	29	11	40	28	5	33	
Talent	14	8	22	15	13	28	Artistic production 5
Selectivity	9	5	14	6	6	12	
Performance	6	9	15	7	13	20	
Procrastination	-	5	5	-	5	5	
Music	34	17	51	31	10	41	Art Branches 3
Literature	36	4	40	34	7	41	
Painting	15	21	36	19	21	40	
Artist	11	7	18	12	6	18	Analysis 2
Artwork	11	5	16	18	9	27	
Total	165	92	257	170	95	265	10

Most of the participants stated that they were interested in producing and examining works of art, and that they liked listening to music and going to concerts. The others said that they were not interested in music and did not like listening to music. The participants who stated that they were interested in literature said that they liked reading poems, novels, and stories and that they thought about them. Participants often mentioned the art of painting. They said that they were willing to paint, produce, and examine any work of art, but they said that producing a work of art required talent. However, they said that they postponed them both because of their conditions and of their own will. Some participants stated that they played musical instruments, painted, wrote novels or poems, and they interpreted these efforts in the context of production. There were also participants who were curious about the context of being an artist or an artist's process of producing work, who loved to read books or articles containing an artist's life story, and who gathered information about artists. Participants stated that there was no selectivity while listening to music, they listened to all kinds of music that was pleasing to their ears, and they did not have any language preferences. Environmental effects may be mentioned in the participants' interpretation of the arts. The reason for their tendency to produce works of art may be that their daily lives are progressing in different areas. Art, on the other hand, includes activities that require attention and effort beyond the activities of our daily lives. Art in general may be considered a need for people. It may be concluded that each participant considered art as a means of expression without being aware of it.

Table 8. *Participants' opinions about learning/knowing a foreign language*

Codes	First coding ƒ			Last coding ƒ			Focus coding ƒ
	Positive	Negative	Total	Positive	Nagative	Total	
Job opportunity	5	3	8	5	3	8	
Personal development	4	-	4	5	-	5	Benefit 5
Privilege	4	2	6	5	2	7	
Information	3	-	3	3	-	3	
Tourism	2	-	2	2	-	2	
Communication	24	-	24	21	-	21	
Multilingualism	17	2	19	20	3	23	Importance 4
Culture	6	-	6	7	-	7	
Mother tongue	3	-	3	2	-	2	
Learning	43	18	61	43	22	65	
Aim	29	2	31	31	3	34	Education 4
Teacher	2	-	2	2	-	2	
Talent	2	-	2	5	-	5	
Total	144	27	171	151	33	184	14

Most of the participants stated that they wanted to learn at least one foreign language and they took or planned to take foreign language courses. Some participants stated that if they liked their teachers, they would want to learn a foreign language for purposes, such as academic career, meeting new people, tourism, and trips abroad. Participants emphasized the benefits of knowing a foreign language and they said that knowing a foreign language would make it easier for them to find a job, contribute to their personal development, and put them in an advantageous position. On the other hand, some of the participants indicated that they did not need a foreign language due to the department they are in, that they did not consider it necessary because they did not consider making an academic career, and that a foreign language was not required to become a teacher. The participants also pointed out that it was not possible to learn a foreign language in a short time and that proficiency was acquired in the long term. The different opinions of the participants may have been caused by the different learning approaches they were exposed to. It may be said that the participants with negative opinions were closed to innovations, changes, new learnings, and new cultures.

Table 9. *Participants' opinions about their skills to solve problems in their environment*

Codes	First coding f			Last coding f			Focus coding f
	Positive	Negative	Total	Positive	Negative	Total	
Carelessness	30	6	36	27	10	37	
Sufficiency	18	8	26	20	10	30	
Request	12	3	15	10	1	11	Solidarity 6
Moral aid	12	3	15	12	3	15	
Financial aid	6	6	12	6	6	12	
Necessity	4	-	4	3	-	3	
Children	4	-	4	4	-	4	
Old peoples	4	-	4	4	-	4	Awareness 3
Animals	2	-	2	2	-	2	
Participation	30	9	39	30	10	40	Project 2
Pioneer	20	12	32	20	12	32	
Total	142	47	189	138	52	190	11

Most of the participants emphasized that they were not unmindful of any problem in their environment, that helping people was necessary and a priority for them and they were willing to help people out. This situation may be related to the helping attitudes of the participants. Participants mentioned helping each other in two dimensions: financial aid and moral aid. Participants stated that they listened to the problems of the people around them and tried to find solutions to those problems. They stated that they took part in aid projects and activities, that they were members of social aid associations as much as possible, and that they encouraged their friends to become members of those associations. These statements revealed that the social sensitivity levels of the participants were high. It can be said that this results from the participants having a high level of awareness of social belonging and displaying an approach in line with professional requirements.

Table 10. *Participants' opinions about their academic selves*

Codes	First coding f			Last coding f			Focus coding f
	Positive	Negative	Total	Positive	Negative	Total	
Choice of profession	12	24	36	8	24	32	
Stability	5	7	12	7	9	16	
Achievement	9	2	11	9	2	11	Career 5
Future anxiety	10	-	10	15	-	15	
Family	6	-	6	6	-	6	
Professional field	16	11	27	18	12	30	
Ability	13	4	17	13	7	20	Self-awareness 4
Self knowledge	11	4	15	11	4	15	
Career goal	4	11	15	2	15	17	
Total	82	63	145	89	73	162	9

When asked if they had any other opinions on their academic self-concepts, most participants focused on the issue of choice of profession. Some participants stated that they actually studied a department other than the department they wanted, that the department they studied did not fully meet their expectations, and that they were not sure that they would be able to teach in the future. They stated that success, family factors, future anxiety, and stability codes under the career focus code were effective in their career choices. From this point of view, the participants seem not to be able to decide freely. For the stability code, the participants mentioned the issues of completing the department they studied, performing, and continuing this profession. Some of them stated that they liked their departments, that they aimed to complete their education in the best way and that they wanted to serve as teachers. Some participants, on the other hand, stated that they wanted to study another major at a university even if they completed their education in this department. They had doubts about whether they could perform the profession properly, and they were not sure whether they were in the right department. At the same time, some of the participants mentioned that they had different abilities and that they thought that these abilities were in the background of their choosing this department. In general, the participants seemed to know themselves well and be aware of what they liked and disliked and what they could and could not do. Participants who expressed a negative opinion about the aim code stated that their goals were not to seek a degree in this department, they were not at the point they aimed to achieve academically, and they had many skills to develop. These statements reveal that the participants are undecided between career expectations and having a profession. The inconsistency between expectations and preferences may cause uncertainty in most participants' academic self-concepts. Thus, although they chose the department in accordance with their interests and abilities, they were unable to experience academic satisfaction.

Results and Discussion

Each table contains a different aspect of the academic self-concept, and the participants also had different views on the research phenomenon. Marsh (1990) stated that the academic self-concept is remarkably subject-specific. This diversity can be interpreted from this perspective or explained by the view of Markus and Wurf (1987) that self-conceptions on different subjects can be at different stages of development. In this study, it was determined that the positive and negative frequencies of some codes were close to each other and the opposite was the case in some of them. Specifically, some participants' self-representations corresponded to their current and past experiences and some participants' self-representations corresponded to future expectations (Markus & Wurf, 1987). It was determined that the participants had verbal skills, and accordingly.

They were successful in this field and these are effective when choosing a major. These findings are consistent with the findings of the other studies showing a mutual interaction between academic self-concept and academic performance (Byrne, 1984; Guay, Marsh & Boivin, 2003; Pehlivan & Köseoğlu, 2011; Göktaş, 2008; Çağlar, 2010; Marsh et al.,

2005; Byrne, 1984). However, in a study conducted by Kenç and Oktay (2002), it was stated that the relationship between academic achievement and academic self-perception was at a low level. It was determined that the participants thought that their verbal abilities were mostly related to their previous school life success. Marsh (1990) also discussed that the perception of academic ability is typically associated with school life. According to the reminder notes taken in this study, the participants mostly provided their self-perceptions about their verbal skills with the feedback they received from others around them. This finding is compatible with the finding in Purkey's (1988) study that most successes and failures people experience in many areas of life are closely related to their relationships with others. The participants stated that they preferred the department mostly based on their proficiency in verbal areas. This finding can be based on the view that academic self-concept influences preferences (Pullman & Allik, as cited in Yanal, 2019). People prefer to do the jobs that will allow them to use their abilities (Markus & Wurf, as cited in Trope, 1983). Based on the participants' views on their verbal proficiency and interests, it may be concluded that they have the qualifications and requirements for Turkish language teaching.

Most participants have extremely negative thoughts especially about the field of mathematics. This was also associated with unsuccessful results in mathematics courses. This situation was found to be similar to another study that concluded that there is a significant relationship between mathematics achievement and academic self-concept (Sürmeli & Ünver, 2017). In addition, it was observed that the participants had prejudices towards the field of mathematics. The participants stated that they did not like mathematics, so they were not interested in it and because they realized that they were not successful before, their interest in mathematics decreased. This finding is supported by the other studies showing that academic achievement, academic self-control, and interest are interrelated (Trautwein et al., 2006, p. 413; Pesen, Odabaş, Bindak & Kudu, 2005). However, the participants stated that the teacher factor was effective in shaping their negative perspectives on numerical-based fields and in their preferences. This finding can be explained by the fact that the individuals' ways of expressing themselves academically is closely related to their learning history and the judgements of their teachers (Yanal, 2019).

It was also determined that many participants had to postpone their desire to work on their areas of interest. From this point of view, it can be inferred that the participants could not find an area to work on their interests and they had to focus on their own areas. The fact that this opinion was expressed more especially in the senior group can be associated with the fact that these participants had an exam-oriented year and could not spare time for their hobbies. It can be said that the freshmen and sophomores in the study were able to achieve their wishes more easily. Kuzgun (1996) determined that the students at the lower grades were more interested in fine arts than the students in the upper grades and this situation was related to the fact that the students in the upper grades were more oriented towards academic subjects. When the views of the participants were evaluated according to their grade levels, it was determined that the self-perceptions of the participants became clearer as the grade level increased. This

situation may be explained through the result of Kuzgun's study on the academic self-concepts of middle school and high school students. Kuzgun concluded that interests and abilities develop with education and experience (1996). The senior participants pointed out that they did not choose their major in line with their interests and abilities and as a result, they thought that they were unable to reach their goals, and therefore, they did not make the right choice. This finding suggests that although interest and ability develop with age, this progress depends on the individual's feeling of harmony with the chosen area. According to Tuzcuoğlu's study (2000), a relationship was found between the personality traits of senior students and their career choices. However, this finding differs from the opinions of the senior students in this particular study, who stated that they could not realize their academic self-concept.

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Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

Dil, insanları diğer varlıklardan ayıran, önce kendisini daha sonra çevresini anlamlandırma ve tanımlama çabasında etkin bir rolü olan, sosyal bir varlık olarak insanın sosyalleşme sürecinde doğrudan kullandığı bir araçtır. Tüm bu yönleriyle ana dili ise bireyin içinde bulunduğu çevreden edindiği kendisini en iyi anlamlandırabildiği ve anlatabildiği dildir. Sosyal ve psikolojik yönleri olan bir varlık olarak insanın ana dilinin tüm özelliklerini bilmesi ve imkânlarına sahip olması kendini gerçekleştirme sürecinde önemli bir yere sahiptir. Bu bağlamda bireyin ana dili üzerine alacağı eğitimin sağlam temellere oturtulması şarttır. Eğitim sürecinde ise öğretmenlere ciddi görevler düşmektedir. Dolayısıyla ana dili eğitimini verecek öğretmenlerin yetiştirilmesi ve seçilmesine büyük önem verilmelidir. Çünkü öğretmenlerin ve öğretmen adaylarının kendilerini algılama şekilleri ve bu konudaki görüşleri sağlıklı nesiller yetiştirmek adına sürecin daha kontrollü ilerlemesi açısından son derece önemlidir. Bu noktada bireyin kendini algılaması ve değerlendirmesi anlamına gelen "benlik kavramı" ortaya çıkmaktadır. Benlik kavramı bağlamında yapılan araştırmalar konuyu akademik ve akademik olmayan benlik olarak iki boyutlu ele almıştır. Bu araştırmalar ışığında akademik benlik, bireyin eğitim sürecindeki deneyimlerinden faydalanarak kendisini bu anlamda tanımlaması ve değerlendirmesi, yetenek ve ilgileri hakkındaki görüşleri ve kendini akademik olarak konumlandırması olarak tanımlanabilir. Araştırmanın amacı Türkçe öğretmeni adaylarının akademik benliklerine ilişkin görüşlerinin belirlenmesidir. Bu genel amaç doğrultusunda öğretmen adaylarının ilgi ve yeteneklerinin belirlenmesi ve akademik benlik algılarının ortaya koyulması hedeflenmiştir. Bu araştırma nitel araştırma türünde olgubilimsel (fenomenolojik) desende gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu tür çalışmalar, olguyu yaşayan ve aktarabilecek düzeyde olan katılımcıların araştırmacıyla gerçekleştirdiği görüşme sonucunda olgunun boyutlarını öznel olarak anlattığı çalışmalardır (Büyüköztürk vd., 2018, s. 22). Creswell (2017), nitel araştırma türünde sıkça tercih edilen olgubilim çalışmaları, felsefi temellere sahip olmakla birlikte katılımcıların deneyimleri sonucu yaptıkları betimlemeleri içerdiğini söyler. Nitel çalışmalar bir olguyu daha iyi tanımamıza ve anlamamıza yardımcı olur (Büyüköztürk vd., 2018 s.23).

Çalışma grubu, Fırat Üniversitesi Türkçe Öğretmenliği Programında öğrenim gören her sınıf düzeyinden 4 olmak üzere 10 kadın, 6 erkek toplam 16 öğretmen adayından oluşmaktadır. Çalışma grubu bu öğretmen adayları içerisinden gönüllülük esasına dayalı olarak amaçlı örnekleme yöntemlerinden sınıf değişkeni açısından "tabakalı amaçsal örnekleme" yöntemiyle süreç içerisinde oluşturulmuştur. Amaçlı örnekleme yöntemi nitel araştırmalarda sıklıkla kullanılan katılımcıların bazı özelliklere göre seçildiği bir yöntemdir (Sönmez ve Alacapınar, 2018, s. 174).

Nitel çalışmaların doğasına uygun olarak katılımcıların bağımsız düşünebilmesi hedefiyle veri toplama sürecinde, açık uçlu sorular tercih edilmiş ve gerekli durumlarda ek sorular yöneltilmesi mümkün kılınması için yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmeye çalışılmıştır. Araştırmada 10 sorulu bir görüşme kılavuzu veri toplama aracı olarak kullanılmıştır. Görüşme kılavuzundaki maddelerin her birinin araştırma

olgusunun farklı bir yönünü aydınlatması amaçlanmıştır. Kılavuz hazırlanırken önce alanyazın taranmış ve ölçütler belirlenmiştir. Ölçütlerin belirlenmesinde Kuzgun (1996) tarafından geliştirilen "Akademik Benlik Kavramı Ölçeği"nden yararlanılmıştır. Kapsam geçerliliği için eğitim fakültesinde görevli öğretim üyelerinden ilgili görüşme kılavuzunu değerlendirmeleri istenmiştir. İlgili uzmanlardan gelen görüş ve değerlendirmelerden hareketle düzeltmeler ve eklemeler yapılmıştır. Katılımcılarla gerçekleşen bire bir görüşmeler sonucunda elde edilen tüm veriler kayıt altına alınmıştır. Daha sonra bu veriler katılımcılara tek tek kontrol ettirilip teyit ettirilerek araştırmanın "inandırıcılığı", görüşmeler sırasında katılımcılara araştırma süreci hakkında ayrıntılı bilgi verilerek araştırmanın "aktarılabilirliği" sağlanmaya çalışılmıştır. Amaçlı örnekleme yöntemiyle oluşturulan çalışma grubu, veri toplama süreci ile eşgüdümlü tamamlanmıştır. "Kuramsal doyum ve görüş tekrarı" ölçütleri ışığında 16. katılımcı ile çalışma grubu tamamlanmıştır. "Kategori netliğinin" sağlanması için kodların ve temaların alan yazınla uyumuna dikkat edilmiştir. Bunun için de gerekli durumlarda "fenomonolojik azaltma" gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Verilerin çözümlenmesinde içerik ve betimsel analiz gerçekleştirilmiş, "sağlamlık", "saydamlık" ve "veri kaynağının çeşitlendirilmesi" adına hatırlatıcı notlar ve gözlem raporları kullanılmıştır. Araştırma verileri "başlangıç, sonuç ve odak kodlamalarla" kodlanmış, "açık kodlama ve ilişkilendirerek kodlama" yöntemleri kullanılmıştır. Başlangıç kodlamada her görüşmenin analizi görüşmenin ardından yapılarak çapraz görüşme ve analizler yapılmıştır. Sonuç kodlama ise başlangıç kodlamalarından 20 gün ara verildikten sonra gerçekleştirilmiştir. İki kodlama arasındaki uyumun ilk etapta %70'in üzerinde çıkmasıyla da kodlayıcı güvenirliği sağlanmaya çalışılmıştır. Kodlayıcı güvenirliğinin sağlanması için *Miles ve Huberman'ın* (2016) *"Güvenirlik=Görüş Birliği Sayısı/Toplam Görüş Birliği + Görüş Ayrılığı Sayısı" formülünden yararlanılmıştır*:(119/119+12)x100=90.83). Türkçe öğretmeni adaylarıyla gerçekleştirilmiş görüşmeler belirlenen alt amaçlar doğrultusunda analizlerle çözümlendikten sonra benzer cevaplar bir araya getirilerek, cevapların toplam cevaplar içindeki frekansı tablolaştırılmış ve frekanslar tabloların altında alan yazından hareketle yorumlanmıştır. Bununla birlikte yorumlarda olgunun tanımlanması adına betimsel fenomenoloji, olgunun açıklanması adına yorumsayıcı fenomenoloji kullanılarak Merriam (2015), tarafından geliştirilen üçgenleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Her bir kategoriye yönelik katılımcıların örnek görüşleri verilmiştir. Olguya yönelik algının açıklanmasında katılımcılar ve araştırmacılar arasındaki aksiyolojik öznelliğin sağlanması ilkesi gözetilmiştir.

Bulgulardan, olumlu ve olumsuz görüşlerde bulunan katılımcı sayılarına göre yapılan değerlendirmelerden, hatırlatıcı notlar ve gözlem raporundan hareketle katılımcıların çoğunun sözel yeteneklerinin yüksek olduğuna, sözel yetenek gerektiren alanlara ilgi duyduklarına buna bağlı olarak dil ve edebiyat alanlarına yönelik ilgilerinin fazla olduğuna, bununla ilişkili olarak ikna kabiliyetlerinin ve ilgilerinin yüksek olduğuna; sayısal yeteneklerinin zayıf olduğuna ve sayısal yetenek gerektiren alanlara ilgi duymadıklarına ancak sayısal alanlarda sözel alanlarla benzerlik gösteren içeriğe sahip alanlara ilgi duyduklarına; sanatsal faaliyette pek fazla bulunmadıklarına; şekil-uzay

yeteneklerini görsel bellek açısından başarılı gördüklerine, el-göz koordinasyonlarına yönelik çok fazla çalışma yapmadıklarına ve bu anlamda becerilerinin zayıf olduğuna, sosyal yardım konusunda öncü ve katılımcı yönlerinin olduğuna, iş ayrıntılarına önem verdiklerine; katılımcılarının çoğunun istek ve hedeflerine, ulaşamadıklarına, kendileriyle seçmiş oldukları alan uyumunu tam olarak sağlayamadıklarına, yetenek ve ilgileri doğrultusunda doğru tercih yapamadıklarına bu bağlamda akademik benliklerini gerçekleştiremediklerine dair görüşleri olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

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Native Chinese Language Teachers' Beliefs about Teaching Chinese Abroad

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Abstract: The impact of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) expansion has changed the dynamics of foreign language learning in Pakistan. Due to the increased regional importance of Chinese language, some public and private sector universities are offering Chinese as a compulsory language course at the undergraduate level. Due to the significance of forthcoming opportunities for local youth, one public university in Karachi, Pakistan hired native Chinese teachers to teach undergraduate students Chinese as a foreign language. The present study explored the beliefs of Chinese teachers based on their teaching experiences at the university. Data for this collective case study was collected through semi-structured interviews with three native-Chinese teachers and analysed thematically. The findings revealed that the Chinese teachers held positive beliefs about the prospects of Chinese language learning in Pakistan due to job opportunities. However, they seemed to hold reservations regarding the limited time span for the offered Chinese language course. There were also certain negative beliefs in connection with the traditional learning practices of the learners which the teachers considered barriers to the learners' language learning. These findings depict the requisite exigency to address the issues highlighted by the Chinese teachers for effective Chinese language learning. The beliefs of teachers and their shared experiences need to be addressed for productive development in teaching and learning Chinese. Curriculum designers and decisionmakers should consider teachers' beliefs to align the curriculum and teaching methodologies as per the provision that includes teachers' experiences to further improve Chinese language teaching and learning.

Keywords: Chinese; foreign language learning and teaching; Chinese teachers; teachers' beliefs; CPEC

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Introduction

In the present time, Chinese has emerged as one of the most powerful languages worldwide (Fan, 2018). Consequently, it is on its way to becoming a global language due to the economic strength and cultural influence of China across the globe (Zhou, 2022). There is a major increase in the number of Chinese departments in international universities and Chinese language learning institutions across the globe. Liu (2009) believes that the world has seen the rapid development of China in the economic world, which has resulted in the expansion of the learning and teaching of Chinese as a foreign language. With the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) agreement, the bond between the two countries has become much stronger. As a result of CPEC expansion in the country, the linguistic dynamics have changed in Pakistan as Chinese as a foreign language has entered the university level to teach Chinese as a foreign language at the undergraduate level in order to maximize students' job opportunities. According to Bacha (2018), the CPEC is the major reason behind people's increasing interest in learning the Chinese language. Chinese is being offered across several higher education institutions, whereas it has even been introduced as a mandatory foreign language for students (Khan et al., 2023). On the other hand, Chinese is not one of the most familiar languages in the Pakistani context. But its intensifying importance in the region due to political, economic, and social factors has influenced the linguistic interest of Pakistan. In connection with the same reason, the government of Pakistan as well as other private organizations have introduced Chinese language courses with either the collaboration of university management or in the form of private language centres. Many of these educational institutions prefer native Chinese teachers over local teachers to teach Chinese as a foreign language to undergraduate students.

The language learning and teaching domain comprisesa group of people, which includes teacher educators, course designers, program administrator, and curriculum developers, learners and most importantly teachers. All of these stakeholders have the intentional or unintentional impact of their own distinctive sets of beliefs on classroom teaching and learning practices, and other important academic decisions; of which teachers' beliefs are most crucial as they directly get translated in classrooms as well as get influenced by them. Therefore, teachers' belief in the language learning environment is crucial for understanding the process of language learning (Kern, 1995). The investigation of beliefs is of utmost importance as it helps in understanding the definite progression in the acquisition of a second or foreign language and the causes behind the success or failure of the learning process (Gibello, 2017). Farahian (2011) highlighted the importance of language teachers' beliefs, as they had a powerful impact on their pedagogical decisions and strongly influenced the patterns through which teachers learn and process their own language education.

Thus, investigating teachers' beliefs is an important research area, as it plays a significant role in learning outcomes and has a deep influence on the learning process of a learner through their experiences in the classroom with the learners. There is ample research relative to Chinese as a foreign language conducted in different parts of the

world (Chan et al., 2022; Cui, 2014; Le, 2004; Yang, 2015; Ye, 2011). In Pakistan, there is a recent uplift in research related to Chinese as a foreign language domain (Aftab et al., 2022; Ali et al., 2023; Ameen and Khemlani, 2022; Iftikhar et al., 2024; Liu et al., 2022) due to the rapid expansion of Chinese investment and economic opportunities in the country. Universities and local language learning institutions across Pakistan have initiated different Chinese language learning courses and hired local as well as native Chinese speakers as teachers to teach Chinese. Under these contemporary circumstances, there is a need to investigate the beliefs that Chinese teachers hold towards Chinese learning programs based on their experiences during the teaching of newly introduced foreign languages.

Literature review

According to Borg (2006) and Pajares (1992), beliefs are considered essential acts in diversified zones of existence as they assist individuals in making the world meaningful and impact the approach in which new information is accepted. Altan (2006) interconnected the construct with behavior and defined beliefs as a major construct in every field that involves human behavior and learning. As White (1999) mentioned, beliefs help people understand the word of affairs, including their own personalities. As defined by Ellis (2002), beliefs are both situated and dynamic. They change according to the situational experience. The pioneer of research on beliefs in language learning, Horwitz (1985, 1987, 1988), has provided different terminologies in her studies for beliefs, which were preconceptions (1985), preconceived ideas (1987), and preconceived notions (1988).

Teachers' beliefs and foreign language teaching

Studies show that the beliefs of the teachers have an in-depth impact on the language learning process as they deeply affect their approaches to teaching (Chiang, 2010; Kulm & Wu, 2004; Palmer & Field, 2011; Radwan, 2019; Wang & Du, 2014). Teachers belonging to different academic backgrounds might hold different beliefs linked to their teaching profession and their pupils (Kinoshita, 2023). The teaching instructions were based on their personally developed beliefs related to the teaching and the classroom behaviour of teachers might be reflected through their attitudes towards themselves and students (Burns, 1992). Moreover, the teachers' beliefs are also interrelated with the personalized lives in which they were brought up and the experiences they have encountered (Perine, 2012, p.371, <u>as quoted by Kinoshita, 2023</u>). Due to these reasons, it was necessary to understand aspects of teachers' beliefs in order to improve educational practice (Connelly et al., 1997). Teachers' lectures were not only based on their subject knowledge but they also involved their personal practical knowledge of teaching (Ben-Peretz, 2011) which influenced all aspects of their classroom teaching. Given the importance of belief in all aspects of teaching, Sun (2011) emphasized recognizing teachers' beliefs as part of teacher training programs as teachers were not considered empty vessels willing to be filled with pedagogical skills. On the contrary, these individuals entered the field of teaching carrying past experiences and their own

values and beliefs that related to their knowledge of teaching and accordingly they shaped it in their classroom (Freeman & Johnson, 1998). It can be said that the educational process is based on teachers' conceptions, which arealmost subjected to their cultural traditions. Therefore, it can result in constraints in the transition towards new dimensions of teaching in a new cultural environment.

Beliefs of teachers about teaching Chinese as a foreign language

There have been studies conducted on the Chinese language in the search of investigating the beliefs that foreign learners and teachers hold about the language. However, the research work on Chinese teaching as a foreign language, Chinese language learning beliefs and teachers' beliefs about teaching Chinese as a foreign language have remained unexplored to a greater extent in the major parts of the world. Among the prevailing studies, some explored teachers' beliefs linked to teaching Chinese as a foreign language (Cui, 2014; Duff & Li, 2004; Moloney & Xu, 2015; Samimy & Lee, 1997; Wang, 2015; Yang, 2015; Zhong et al., 2021).

Wang and Du (2014) studied the professional identity and beliefs of immigrant Chinese where they highlighted the alteration of their beliefs according to a new context. They found that the transformation of teachers in accordance with new environments and pedagogies could possibly change but the process would be slow with the involvement of both external and internal factors. Important factors that contribute to belief include "their own experiences as L2 learners, teacher training, teaching experiences, official policies, and exposure to the views and beliefs of colleagues and superiors" (Wong, 2010, p. 5). The most influential factors for the change in teachers' beliefs aretheir professional contacts or involvement in international seminars and conferences (Richards et al., 2001). A study on beliefs related to Chinese pedagogy in the US by Wang (2015) showed that they prioritize accuracy over fluency in their teaching practices, with a major target to enable the students to master the grammatical structure of the target Chinese language before proceeding towards speaking competitive utterances. There was also a firm belief in a strong student-teacher relationship for making a language learning process successful. A study by Yang (2015) revealed that the teachers expected the learners to exert maximum effort in learning the tones and characters of the Chinese language. Similarly, Samimy and Lee (1997) revealed that most of the teachers accepted the difficulty faced by the leaners in the language learning process and rated Chinese as the most difficult language in terms of foreign language learning.

Literature on beliefs about foreign languages in Pakistan shows that most of the work has been conducted on English or regional languages (Akhtar & Kausar, 2011; Aziz & Qureshi, 2017; Badshah et al., 2015; Kausar, 2012). Keeping in mind the recent linguistic progress of Chinese in Pakistan, few researchers have explored the domain of Chinese as a foreign language learning in the local context from learners' perspectives (Aftab et al., 2022; Ali et al., 2023; Ameen and Khemlani, 2022; Iftikhar et al., 2024; Liu et al., 2022) However, there is no existing local literature that focuses on the beliefs of CFL teachers. The current study can be a gateway for the research work from teachers'

viewpoint by providing an insight into the beliefs of Chinese teachers regarding Chinese teaching as a foreign language to undergraduates in Pakistan. In this respect, the present study explored the beliefs of native Chinese teachers using the following research question:

What are the beliefs of Chinese language teachers teaching Chinese as a foreign language to undergraduate students at a public university in Karachi?

Method

In the present study, the beliefs of Chinese language teachers regarding their teaching experiences to undergraduate students at a public university in Karachi were investigated using a collective case study design. Collective case studies refer to comparative and detailed insights from the individuals to learn about their similarities and differences (Creswell, 2015). This qualitative case study approach facilitated a comprehensive, in-depth understanding of the teachers' beliefs by inductively understanding their teaching experiences of foreign language teaching in the Pakistani context.

Sample/ Participants

The present study was conducted at the largest public sector engineering university in Karachi with 29 departments spread across seven faculties. The main campus is complemented by additional locations, including a historic site in Karachi and a remote campus in Mithi-Tharparker. Chinese has been taught as a compulsory foreign language to undergraduates in their first and second years by native Chinese language teachers.

Table 1. *Chinese teachers' Profile*

Number of Chinese teachers	Male	Female	Age	Teaching experience in Pakistan
3	1	2	25-32 years	1 academic year (two semesters)

The purposeful sampling was used to select Chinese language teachers who were teaching Chinese compulsory courses to the second-year students. Creswell (2002) defines purposeful sampling as "researchers intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon" (p.206). As shown in table 1 above, three Chinese language teachers (2 females and 1 male) whose ages varied from 25 to 32 were selected to be part of the study according to their availability and convenience. These three Chinese language teachers were selected based on their maximum experience of at least two semesters of teaching undergraduate students in Karachi to fulfill the criteria for the research aiming at teachers' beliefs based on their teaching

experiences. The data was collected through the interviews. The interviews were not audio recorded as planned due to not getting permission from the participants. However, two researchers made field notes of the interviews and cross-checked later so that no information was missed, and the data was reliable and valid. Interview data was shared for respondent validation with the participants. Respondent validation involves research participants responding to the initial data in order to check its accuracy and interpretations (Torrance, 2012).

Instruments

Data for this study was collected using individual, one-to-one, semi-structured interviews. This study used interview questions from Horwitz's (1988) model of "systems of belief about language learning". The questions formulated for interviews were adapted from the BALLI questionnaire for teachers (Horwitz, 1985). The interview questions explored the teachers' teaching experiences, challenges, teaching practices, teaching strategies, Pakistani foreign language classroom, CFL curriculum, and future prospects of CFL in the context of Pakistan. Appendix A is attached for the reference of interview questions used as a part of the present study.

Data analysis procedure

The data was analyzed through thematic analysis using Saldana's (2009) procedure. The data was coded and categorized into four major themes and eight sub-themes.

Findings

Figure 1 below summarizes the four major themes with the sub-themes emerging from the data analysis. The themes are discussed in detail in the following section.

Figure 1. *Belief of Chinese language teachers*
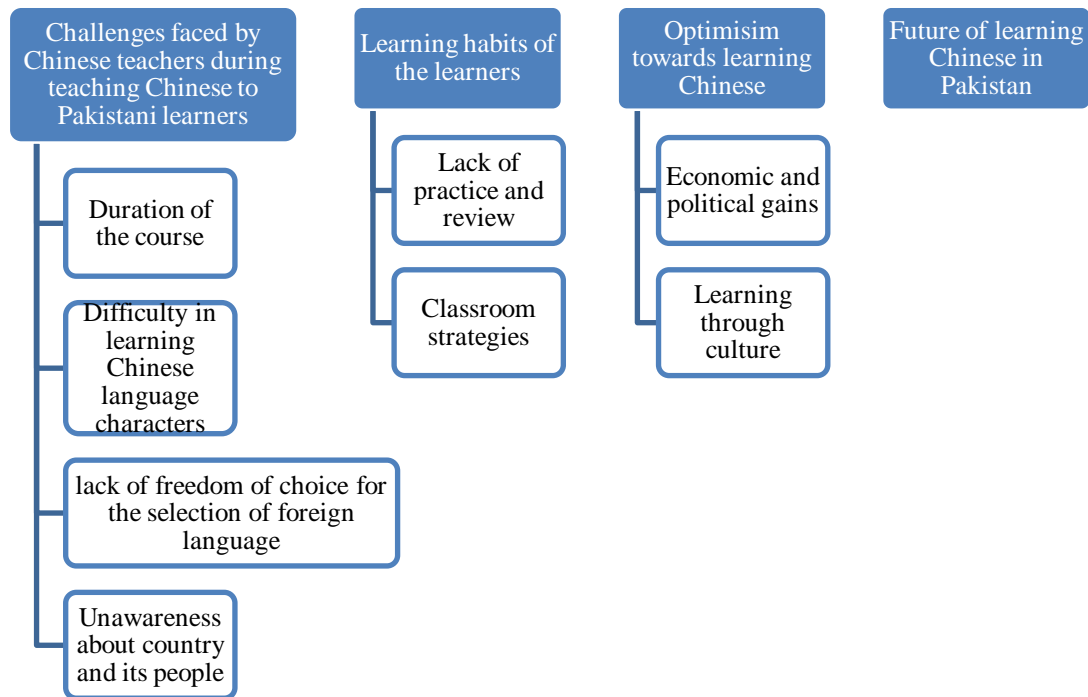
Factors responsible for the challenges faced by Chinese teachers in teaching Chinese to learners

According to the Chinese language teachers, the learners faced difficulties in learning Chinese as a foreign language due to factors discussed below.

Duration of the course

For learning any foreign language, the duration of the language course is of prime importance, as foreign language learning requires more time. Most of the participants believed that the limited duration of courses was one of the factors which restrained the learners from gaining proficiency in Chinese as a foreign language. Two of the teachers (T1 and T3) believed the short time to be the major barrier to the achievement of Chinese proficiency for the learners.

> T3: *"Chinese is introduced to them for the first time and on top of that there is no exposure to Chinese prior to their current experience which ultimately means that they (the learners) need more time to get familiar with the Chinese language."*

This limited duration for learning an unfamiliar foreign language such as Chinese left the learner with confusion and misconceptions, which affected their proficiency in Chinese.

Difficulty in learning Chinese language characters

The most challenging aspect of learning Chinese is considered to be Chinese characters. The Chinese teachers believed that learners were quite confused about recognizing and memorizing the characters. T1 responded to the query about the most challenging learning area for the learners: "They (learners) find characters most difficult to learn as they are identical to many forms." Another teacher (T3) commented "I usually find them demotivated for learning characters. The difficulties faced by the learners in learning characters made them reluctant to write and read the language."

Lack of freedom of choice for the selection of foreign language learning

Performance in any field is directly proportionate to the freedom of choice. The Chinese teachers highlighted the factor of lack of choice as responsible for the lack of performance of learners in Chinese. This means that the mandatory policy had a direct influence on the motivation and resulting performance of the students since not all students opted for learning Chinese on their own. T1 mentioned,

> *T1: "They are bound by the choice made by the university rather than them learning a foreign language. Their performance is affected by the lack of choice, as not all of them want to learn Chinese."*

> *T2: "They are quite young to understand the ultimate reasons behind it, and they have no freedom to select or not select the language. This lack of freedom for making the choice can be observed while teaching them (learners)."*

Therefore, the Chinese teachers believed that the lack of freedom in selecting the language for foreign language learning was similar to forcing the learners to learn something irrespective of their will. Moreover, this aspect also impacted the level of motivation among the learners in Chinese language classrooms. The participants believed that this issue had negatively affected the performance of the learners.

Unawareness about a country and its people

China has had close ties with Pakistan. Their close bond has been the epitome of true friendship. However, when it comes to the bond between the people of two nations, there is a major difference in comparison to political headship. In response to the importance of learning Chinese and the motivation to learn Chinese among the learners, the Chinese teachers was of the view that the bond between the people of Pakistan and China were not similar to the close bond shared by the political leaderships of both countries. One of the teachers (T2) replied,

> *T2: "The people are ignorant of to China and their language. They (learners) hardly know any cultural or historical background of China. It is likely that most of them are least concerned about learning a language of the country about which they hardly know anything."*

In short, the Chinese teachers viewed the learners' struggle with learning Chinese as a foreign language as a lack of knowledge about the respective country and its language.

Learning habits of the learners

The learning habits of learners in the classroom are reflected in their performance. The learners usually adopt the learning practices of their environment. These practices result in either good performance or vice versa. The Chinese teachers viewed some learning habits of Pakistani learners as an obstruction to a successful learning process. These are discussed below:

Lack of practice and reviews

Practice and review are considered the most important components of the learning stage for the learners, as they reinforce the content taught by the teacher. The Chinese teachers were of the view that, due to the limited duration of the course, the learners needed ample practice for the taught content from home too. According to the teachers, they were reluctant to do the home reviews. One of the teachers (T3) replied when asked about the reason for their lack of interest in the class,

> T3: *"Usually they (learners) return to the new class without any review which is why they are unable to recall what has been taught in the last class. I cannot teach the last class topic again. It takes time and there is no time."*

Therefore, the teachers thought that the major reason behind the unsatisfactory performance of the learners in the class was their unwillingness to review.

Classroom strategies

The custom of taking notes during lectures is considered a sign to recognize a diligent learner by the teachers particularly at the tertiary level in Pakistan. It is a common sight to be observed in the classroom that the learners are engaged in writing and taking notes on teachers' lectures. However, this stance did not seem to be appreciated by the Chinese teachers, as they included this practice as an obstacle to learning. T1 commented on the query related to learners' performance in the Chinese classroom,

> T1: *"Most of the students like to pick notes. It seems Pakistani students are habitually picking notes but if I am teaching you how to pronounce, listen to me rather than writing. Listen and practice that make you perfect not writing."*

The belief of Chinese teachers related to learners' habits revealed the difference in perspectives of the learning culture of Pakistan in comparison to Chinese or other parts of the world, where the teachers consider learners vigilant and smart if they listen to the lectures more than write them in their notebooks. It was perceived as a negative belief in terms of classroom strategies.

Optimism towards learning Chinese as a foreign language

Despite the difficulty in learning Chinese as a foreign language faced by the learners from the experiences and beliefs of Chinese teachers, they pointed out a few positive beliefs among undergraduates towards learning Chinese. The reasons behind optimistic views are discussed below.

Economic and political gains

A strong economic gain works as a source of maximum impetus behind learning any foreign language for language learners. In the present time, Chinese has emerged as a powerful language for foreign language learners due to its economic and political dominance. The Chinese teachers pointed out that there were few undergraduates who accepted the economic worth of Chinese and they showed their eagerness to learn Chinese from a future perspective. One of the teachers (T2) answered on the motivated learners: "There are a smaller number of student groups who show willingness to learn Chinese on the basis of many in-progress projects in Pakistan under the CPEC agreement between the governments of bot countries." Although the number of such motivated learners was reported to be less, Chinese teachers were hopeful that the numbers would increase in the future due to the economic importance of Chinese in the business locality of Pakistan as T2 mentioned: "Four years ago we just had two classes but now there are many students engaged in learning Chinese. This will develop more in the future."

Learning through culture

Knowledge about the target language culture is of utmost importance as it facilitates communication for the learners. Language teachers place a strong emphasis on contextual learning in their foreign language teaching methodology. Two of the Chinese teachers (T3) replied to the question about the task in which learners were most eager to participate and gave positive feedback. *T3: "They prefer to learn through cultural references and context learning. They are very energetic when I teach in context with Chinese culture. Some of the university's students also went to China to attend the summer camp. It is all good when it comes to culture."*

One of the teachers (T2) shared an example from her class experience about cultural integration and its response from the learners. T2 responded,

> T2: "I arranged an activity for them (the learners) on the use of chopsticks. The use of chopsticks is significant in Chinese culture. They enjoyed learning it. I brought chopsticks in the classroom. They practiced and showed interest which was a positive sight for me."

The captivating interest of the learners in learning through the target language culture reflects the importance of contextual learning in teaching Chinese and sheds significance for other Chinese teachers on how to retain the interest of reluctant learners in learning

Chinese in an interesting manner which can have productive results in future teaching practices.

 The Future of learning Chinese as a foreign language in Pakistan

Chinese teachers had positive beliefs about the future of learning Chinese as a foreign language in Pakistan. They believed that it would take time for the people in Pakistan to realize the importance of Chinese as it would provide them with job opportunities. One of the teachers (T2) compares the past situation with the present.

> T2: *"Four years ago we just had two classes but now there are many students engaged in learning Chinese. This will develop more in the future. One of the others also showed optimism."* T3: *"I am positive that the Chinese language will make its' way in Pakistan and there will be improvement in learners with time."*

This major development in the increase of Chinese language learners nationwide predicts a successful venture into Chinese language among Pakistani learners in the future.

Discussion

Learning a language is relatively easy when it has similar features acquired from other famous global languages (Fan, 2018). Chinese is considered difficult to learn for foreign language learners because it has no connective roots with other famous global languages. However, in accordance to the present study findings, the Chinese teachers rated Chinese not a difficult language in general which contradicted with findings of Yang's (2015) study in which teachers believed that learning Chinese is difficult for foreign language learners. However, the teachers believed characters were a difficult area for students to learn along with reading and writing in comparison to speaking and understanding Chinese. This finding relates ro Yang (2015) who also concluded the same result. Moreover, Chinese teachers in the present study connected the difficulty faced by the students to the limited time allotted for the courses. They were of the view that the time duration for the courses should be increased to reduce the difficulties of the learners. Several research studies have suggested that a longer duration of at least two to five years is essential for learners to have good proficiency in the Chinese language (Khan et al., 2023; Yang, 2015; Wang, 2015; Zhong et al., 2021) as a few classroom hours for teachers were not enough to teach Chinese as there was no language exposure outside the class (Wang, 2015).

The traditional classroom practices observed in Pakistani language classrooms generally revolve around the teaching of grammar, vocabulary, memorization and note-taking. Nevertheless, the teaching of communicative skills is considered of vital importance in the language classroom to enable the learners to use the target language (Mazher et al., 2015). This study shows that Chinese language teachers believed that the learners were habitually learning language through the learning of vocabulary, grammar rules

and translation which contradicted their teaching practices. They focused more on learning communication skills. The teachers stressed the repetitive practice of the target language in the classroom through different communicative activities to strengthen their fluency in the Chinese language. Consequently, they were of the viewpoint that learners in Pakistan are scarcely exposed to Chinese outside the classroom, hence there must be extensive language practice in the classroom setting. Zhong et al (2021) claimed similar beliefs in their study where teachers wanted to engage learners in considerable language practices to enhance their spoken Chinese. In addition, the Chinese teachers were also against the note taking practice of the learners and stressed the need to focus on listening to the lecture and practicing the language rather than writing it down. Similar teachers' beliefs were found in studies by Le (2004) and Yang (2015) who found teachers were against the idea of traditional teaching through grammar drills and vocabulary. The views of teachers in this regard are of utmost importance. Samimy et al. (1998) endorsed the teachers' opinions with the belief that due to their vast experience, teaching expertise and knowledge their views must be prioritized. There are certain useful strategies which play a significant role in assisting the language learning process. These strategies usually act as a problem-solving aid for a complex language learning phenomenon (Ignacio, 1996). The findings of the present study seemed to depict the same notion as the beliefs of Chinese language teachers. The results indicate that teachers believed the learners should learn Chinese by practicing the language, reviewing through regular repetition and using cultural references in the target language. Le (2004) and Yang (2015) reported similar findings in their studies conducted on American and Canadian learners learning Chinese as a foreign language.

The existing trend of learning Chinese as a foreign language among the youth of Pakistan has its roots engraved in the economic agreement between Pakistan and China. The findings of the present study revealed the evidence for this construct. The participants of the present study were hopeful for future job opportunities. This development was manifested in the case study on foreign language orientation in Pakistan (Garcia 2014). The most common factor behind the impetus for learning foreign languages was future job opportunities and foreign scholarships. The findings of the present study revealed the beliefs of teachers who shared their beliefs about future job opportunities for the youth of Pakistan as a result of learning Chinese. The result of the present study concerned teachers' beliefs, which aligned with other relevant studies in which the teachers' beliefs were that learning Chinese would help the learners get better job opportunities (Le, 2004; Sun, 2011; Yang, 2015; Zhong et al., 2021). This further represents the bright prospects of the Chinese language in Pakistan particularly among the young generation.

Conclusion

Due to the importance of beliefs in the field of language teaching, the present study aimed to explore the beliefs of Chinese language teachers about their experience teaching Chinese as a foreign language to undergraduate students at one of the public universities in Karachi, Pakistan. The findings revealed that the positive beliefs of Chinese

teachers related to the aptitude of language learners and the prospects of Chinese language among youth in Pakistan. These Chinese teachers were optimistic about the learning abilities of the learners as well as about the positive future of the Chinese language in Pakistan. Nevertheless, the teachers negated the common belief among learners that Chinese is a difficult language to learn. They believed that the short duration was the major obstacle to learning the Chinese language rather than the language itself. These findings have significant implications for all stakeholders especially policymakers, curriculum developers and university administrations. The beliefs reported in this study invite the curriculum developers of the Chinese language to provide flexibility in the standardized curriculum for such contexts with a huge number of Chinese language learners taught by native Chinese teachers. Teachers should receive training in teaching methodologies that can be adjusted to the needs of learners in such contexts. Similarly, additional resources may also help teachers maintain student motivation and ensure effective learning outcomes. The findings are crucial for decisionmakers as Chinese teachers hinted that the learning and motivation of students are largely dependent on their own choice and in the case of a mandatory foreign language the performance of many students may be affected by such decisions.. There is a requisite urgency to address the issues highlighted by the Chinese teachers in their teaching to undergraduate students for a successful Chinese language learning process in the future. The result of the present was limited to the teachers' beliefs about Chinese as a foreign language that do not call for any generalizability for any other foreign language being taught in the Pakistani context. Also, the beliefs of teachers cannot be generalized to the entire population as the study was restricted to one research site. In order to expand the present study and gain more insight into the beliefs of Chinese teachers about teaching Chinese as a foreign language, a longitudinal study can be conducted, which will include classroom observations and interviews with learners to further add to the overall scenario of Chinese language teaching and learning in Pakistan. Moreover, a comparative study can be conducted, which may include participants from other provinces of Pakistan where Chinese is taught as a foreign language, to report the transitioning beliefs of teachers involved in CFL teaching.

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Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

Çince, dünyadaki güçlü ekonomik hakimiyeti nedeniyle, dünya çapında kabul gören etkili diller arasında yerini almayı başarmıştır. Dost bir komşu olarak Çin, her zaman Pakistan'la ilişkilerini geliştirmeye çalıştı. Çin-Pakistan Ekonomik Koridoru (CPEC), iki ülke arasındaki güçlü bağın son örneğidir. Pakistan halkına sayısız eğitim ve mesleki fırsat getirdi. CPEC genişlemesinin etkisi aynı zamanda Pakistan'da yabancı dil öğreniminin dinamiklerini de değiştirdi. Çincenin bölgesel öneminin artması nedeniyle bazı kamu ve özel sektör üniversiteleri lisans düzeyinde yabancı dil olarak Çince dersi sunmaktadır. Yerel gençler için yakında ortaya çıkacak fırsatların önemi nedeniyle, Pakistan'ın Karaçi kentindeki bir devlet üniversitesi, Çince'yi tüm lisans öğrencileri için zorunlu yabancı dil olarak uygulamaya koydu. Bu büyük ölçekli politika uygulamasının uygulanması, yerli Çinli öğretmenlerin lisans öğrencilerine yabancı dil olarak Çince öğretmelerini sağlayan Konfüçyüs Enstitüsü'nün genişletilmiş desteği sayesinde mümkün oldu. Yabancı dilin zorunlu ders olarak öğretilmesi, Pakistan'da yükseköğretim düzeyindeki eğitimin dinamiğinde yeni bir reformdur. Bu koşullar altında, yerli Çinli öğretmenlerin inançlarını, öğretme deneyimlerinden yola çıkarak keşfetmeye büyük bir ihtiyaç bulunmaktadır. Son dilsel ilerleme göz önüne alındığında, Pakistan'ın yerel bağlamında yabancı dil olarak Çince öğrenmeye ilişkin mevcut literatür, öğrencilerin bakış açısını keşfetmekle sınırlıdır (Aftab ve diğerleri, 2022; Ali ve diğerleri, 2023; Ameen ve Khemlani, 2022). ; Iftikhar ve diğerleri, 2024; Liu ve diğerleri, 2022) ve politika oluşturma ve uygulama (Khan ve diğerleri, 2023). Öğretmenlerin inançlarına ilişkin güncel bir literatüre rastlanmamıştır. Dil öğrenmeye ilişkin inançlar, dil öğrenme sürecinde büyük bir etkiye sahiptir (Cui, 2014). Öğretmenlerin inançlarını araştırmak, yabancı dil eğitimi bağlamında etkili öğretme ve öğrenmeyi doğaçlama yapmanın merkezinde yer alır. Bu çalışma, toplu bir vaka çalışması tasarımı kullanarak, kamu sektörü mühendislik üniversitesindeki öğretmenlik deneyimlerine dayanarak Çinli öğretmenlerin inançlarını araştırdı. Bu çalışmanın verileri, yerli Çinli üç öğretmenden yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yoluyla toplandı. Mülakat soruları öğretmenlerin öğretme deneyimlerini, zorluklarını, öğretme uygulamalarını, öğretme stratejilerini, Pakistan yabancı dil sınıfını, CFL müfredatını ve Pakistan bağlamında CFL'nin gelecekteki beklentilerini araştırdı. Saldana'nın (2009) prosedürünü kullanarak, Çinli öğretmenlerin Pakistanlı öğrencilere Çince öğretirken karşılaştıkları zorlukları, öğrencilerin öğrenme alışkanlıklarını, Çince öğrenmeye yönelik iyimserliği ve Pakistan'da Çince öğrenmenin geleceğini içeren dört ana tema görüşmelerden çıkarıldı. Bulgular, Çinli öğretmenlerin iş fırsatları nedeniyle Pakistan'da Çince öğreniminin gelecekteki beklentileri hakkında olumlu inançlara sahip olduklarını ortaya çıkardı. Ancak, sunulan Çince dil kursunun sınırlı süresine ilişkin çekinceleri var gibi görünüyordu. Öğretmenlerin, öğrencilerin dil öğrenmesinde engel olarak gördüğü, öğrencilerin geleneksel öğrenme uygulamalarıyla bağlantılı olumsuz inançlar da vardı. Bu bulgular, etkili Çince öğrenimi için Çinli öğretmenlerin vurguladığı konuların ele alınmasının gerekliliğini ortaya koymaktadır. Bu çalışmada bildirilen inançlar, Çince müfredat geliştiricilerini, anadili Çince olan öğretmenler tarafından öğretilen çok sayıda Çince öğrencisinin olduğu bu tür bağlamlar için standartlaştırılmış müfredatta esneklik sağlamaya davet etmektedir. Öğretmenlere,

bu tür bağlamlarda öğrencilerin ihtiyaçlarına göre ayarlanabilen öğretim metodolojileri konusunda eğitim verilmelidir. Benzer şekilde, ek kaynaklar öğretmenlerin öğrenci motivasyonunu korumalarına ve etkili öğrenme çıktıları sağlamalarına da yardımcı olabilir. Çinli öğretmenler öğrencilerin öğrenme ve motivasyonunun büyük ölçüde kendi tercihlerine bağlı olduğunu ve yabancı dilin zorunlu olması durumunda birçok öğrencinin performansının bu tür kararlardan etkilenebileceğini ima ettiğinden, bulgular karar vericiler için hayati öneme sahiptir. Çinli öğretmenlerin yabancı dil olarak Çince öğretmeye ilişkin inançlarını araştırmak için mevcut çalışmayı genişletmek amacıyla, Çince dili öğretimi ve öğreniminin genel senaryosuna daha fazla katkı sağlamak üzere sınıf gözlemlerini ve öğrencilerle yapılan görüşmeleri içeren boylamsal bir çalışma yapılabilir. Pakistan'da. Ayrıca, CFL öğretiminde görev alan öğretmenlerin geçiş inançlarını raporlamak amacıyla, Çince'nin yabancı dil olarak öğretildiği Pakistan'ın diğer illerinden katılımcıları da içerebilecek karşılaştırmalı bir çalışma yapılabilir.

A. Appendix A

Interview Guide for Chinese teachers

1. How long have you been teaching Chinese in Pakistan? How long is your teaching experience over all?
2. Have you taught in any other country other than Pakistan where Chinese is taught as a foreign language? If yes, what is the difference which you observe?
3. Which area is the most challenging to teach? How do you deal with it?
4. What kind of strategies do you imply in your classroom to keep the interest of students towards Chinese language learning?
5. Which teaching strategies do you think the undergraduates prefer in the classroom for Chinese language learning?
6. What is the role of practice in learning Chinese?
7. Do you think there is a need to evolve the curriculum of Chinese language learning for undergraduates according to their needs?
8. What difficulties have been faced by undergraduates according to your observation while learning Chinese in the classroom?
9. What are your thoughts about the foreign language learning capabilities of the undergraduates?
10. Do you think it is important to relate the target language culture while teaching undergraduates a foreign language?
11. Do you think teaching Chinese at undergraduate level is challenging or would it be easier to teach the language at school level?
12. How do you foresee the future of Chinese language among the youth of Pakistan in the light of current Chinese language learning progress at undergraduate level?

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Work Engagement: A Descriptive Qualitative Study on the perception of teachers

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Abstract: Work engagement is a state of mental motivation that allows workers to achieve success in the workplace. However, due to high work demands and exhaustion, teachers might find it difficult to engage in work. Teachers can develop work engagement if they intervene in the barriers that prevent them from doing their work by providing facilitators. The aim of this study was to describe teachers' perceptions of work engagement at different stages of education. A descriptive qualitative study was designed. Four focus groups were conducted with a total of 26 Spanish teachers. Three main themes and six sub-themes emerged from the analysis of the data: (1) Causes of the generation of work engagement: personal facilitators and facilitators of the environment; (2) Barriers to generating work engagement: individual and environmental; (3) Effects of work engagement: positive consequences and negative consequences. These findings indicate that there are several facilitators and barriers that promote and/or hinder the generation of work engagement in Spanish teachers. However, it should be noted that the study presents transferable results for other countries dealing with similar issues. In conclusion, training teachers in certain skills would improve their ability to solve complex situations and increase their levels of work engagement.

Keywords: Work engagement, teacher education, focus group, qualitative research, teachers.

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Introduction

Work engagement is a construct that integrates behavioral, emotional and cognitive dimensions, corroborating the multidimensional nature of this construct (Fredericks, Blumenfeld & Paris, 2004; Lam et al., 2014). Work engagement is defined as a state of mental satisfaction, interest, positivity and motivation that allows workers to achieve success in the workplace (Bakker, 2017; Schaufeli et al., 2002). If attention is paid to the educational field, Martínez et al. (2019) suggest that work engagement is one of the pillars of education because it presents a relationship with the prevention of failure and abandonment of work, as well as increased job satisfaction and motivation (Froiland, 2021; Tarabini et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2016; Zaff et al., 2017). Therefore, the present study has taken this idea as a starting point, making work engagement the main construct of this study. It has often been connected to the expertise, professional development and interaction of teachers with students (Lauderdale, 2011; Kangas et al., 2017) and to self-efficacy, a quality that can produce greater achievement and engagement (Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2003). In this qualitative descriptive study, the engagement of teachers irefers to the behavioral, emotional and cognitive engagement of teachers with the teaching process and the interest of the teacher in helping their students learn.

Conceptualising the teachers' work engagement

Engagement is conceptualised in a variety of ways. Some authors define work engagement as a two-dimensional variable integrated by behavioral and emotional dimensions (Finn, 1989; Newman, Wehlage & Lamborn, 1992; Marks, 2000; Willms, 2003). However, according to later research by Fredericks et al. (2004) and Lam et al. (2014), work engagement has been defined by behavioral, emotional and cognitive dimensions. The behavioral dimension is based on the idea of active participation in activities (academic, curricular or extracurricular, family, sports, work, social, etc.), including the ability to reflect, raise doubts and be able to resolve them, in order to achieve positive results, as well as to avoid abandonment or avoidance of the task (Soria & Stebleton, 2012). The emotional dimension encompasses both positive and negative, motivation, emotional regulation, anxiety, self-esteem, etc. (Fredricks, Filsecker & Lawson2016; Sharek & Wiebe, 2014). And with respect to the last dimension, cognitive, engagement is based on the variables of constancy and effort needed to master complex skills (Ennis, Hess & Smith, 2013).

Engagement can also be considered a process consisting of three interconnected stages : motivation, interest and engagement (Renninger & Bachrach, 2015; Renninger & Hidi, 2011). Motivation allows teachers to assess task challenges against their own abilities. Interest can be triggered by a situation, challenge or person and then become a lasting interest to learn more about the phenomena (Järvelä & Renninger, 2014; Renninger & Bachrach, 2015). This interest is influenced by the environment. Teachers can therefore change any environment to make it more pleasant for students and themselves; however, the ability to change environments requires teachers to have a range of skills. Hence the

importance of teacher education to improve their work engagement (Hyvönen, 2008; Kangas et al., 2017).

Globally, it is estimated that an increasing percentage of teachers present high levels of exhaustion, irritability, lack of energy and concentration and job desertion caused by high work demands, which is a public health problem that may be indicative of the appearance of the exhaustion syndrome (Avalos & Valenzuela, 2016; Gutentag, Horenczyk & Tártaro, 2017; OECD, 2018; Torenbeek & Peters, 2017). Some authors have shown that disruptive behaviors of students and unfavorable treatment with their families are two factors that affect the engagement of teachers, since they contribute to work stress (Authors, 2019; Rodríguez-Mantilla & Fernández-Díaz, 2017; Otero-López et al., 2015). Therefore, the study of work engagement is relevant if we want to reduce the high percentage of teachers who suffer high levels of exhaustion and abandonment of work.

Despite this percentage of teachers and certain disagreements in understanding the construct of work engagement, OECD (2018) and Toll, Drefs & Lock(2016) defend that teachers can develop this mental state if they intervene in the barriers that prevent them from carrying out their work, providing facilitating elements such as motivation, satisfaction, social and family support, favourable social relations, etc. Work engagement of teachers is related to active participation in work-related activities, good results, favorable social relations, high levels of motivation, resilience, satisfaction and effort. So a teacher engaged in their work presents high levels of motivation, performance, satisfaction, interest, good results, etc. (Hardré et al., 2013; Mérida-López et al., 2022; Shoshani & Eldor, 2016; Van Wingerden & Poell, 2019; Zhang, He & Fu, 2021). On the contrary, the lack of engagement of teachers has been linked to decreased collaboration, a lack of emotional intelligence and high levels of stress, irritability and dissatisfaction, negatively affecting the teaching-learning process and exercising the professional work of teachers. It is therefore essential to develop training and intervention programmes adapted to the needs of teachers (Cejudo & López-Delgado, 2017; McCarthy et al., 2016; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2016).

The present study

Work engagement that involves the time that teachers dedicate to their work and the quality of their teaching efforts is a relevant predictor of the prevention of failure, exhaustion, stress and dropout from work (Hoigaard, Giske & Sundsli, 2012; Pfitzner-Eden, 2016). Although it is known the influence of certain variables such as motivation, satisfaction, stress, etc. on work engagement (McCarthy et al., 2016; Timms & Brough, 2013), there is little research based on focus groups on teachers' perceptions, who are one of the essential agents of education, on work engagement of the same (Zamora, Meza & Cox, 2018). Hence the relevance of this study whose objective was to understand and explore teachers' perceptions of work engagement at all stages of education through a descriptive qualitative study, in order to rigorously explore teachers' perceptions of work engagement. In this sense, this study is expected to clarify teachers' perceptions of

work engagement, in addition to contributing to the knowledge of the work engagement of teachers to promote teacher training in certain competencies that improve their ability to solve complex situations and increase their levels of work engagement (Kangas et al., 2017).

In this sense, this study shows a clarification of teachers' perceptions about work engagement. Thus, this study can contribute to the knowledge of work engagement of teachers to understand work engagement from the perspective of participants, explore teachers' perceptions of work engagement at all stages of education and examine the complexities teachers may encounter in generating work engagement, promoting teacher education in certain competencies that improve their ability to solve complex situations and increase their levels of work engagement (Kangas et al., 2017).

Method

Research Design

This research is a descriptive qualitative study that allows us to describe in depth, from a naturalistic perspective, a phenomenon little known from the exploration of the experiences and perceptions of the protagonists, in this case, teachers of all educational stages (Hernández, Fernández & Baptista,2014). This approach is appropriate because it starts with the previous narrative to understand a construction thanks to the experiences, perceived emotions and meanings of the participants. In research with qualitative descriptive scope, it is sought to carry out phenomenological or constructivist narrative studies, which seek to describe the subjective representations that emerge in a human group about a given phenomenon. Therefore, it is appropriate to explore and collect information on experiences and perceptions in educational environments from the point of view of teachers at all stages of education (Miller et al., 2018).. Consolidated criteria for qualitative research reporting in terms of research equipment and reflectability, study design, analysis and results (COREQ) were followed (Tong, Sainsbury & Craig,2007).

The Participants of the Study and Environment

The study was carried out in three educational centers in the province of Almería (Spain). The selection of the sample was made through an intentional sampling technique, meeting the following inclusion criteria: teachers of Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary Education, experience in rural or urban centres throughout Spain and having given informed consent. The only exclusion criterion was to refuse to collaborate in the study. The interest in teachers of different educational levels lies in their heterogeneity and differences in years of work experience, which may show some influence on the perceptions of the participants. For the recruitment of participants, no financial compensation was necessary, as it was not too difficult to gather enough participants. In this type of research, as far as the investigator is concerned, his position is impartial, that

is, he tries to ensure rigorous procedures and objectives of data collection and analysis, as well as to prevent their biases and trends from influencing the results. One of the researchers (X) invited thirty professionals to participate through phone calls, thus arranging appointments. However, four of them declined due to a lack of time. A total of 26 teachers from rural and urban schools in the province of Almería (Spain) participated. Of these, 77% were women and 23% were men. The average age of the participants was 45.27 (*DT* 14.09) and they had been working as teachers for an average of 18.42 years (*DT* 11.35). The sociodemographic characteristics of the participants are shown in Table 1.

Data Collection

The data were collected between January and February 2022 through four focus groups led by researchers trained in qualitative research (X, X). The focus groups took place in the educational centers where the teachers work and had a duration of 1:30 h. Before the sessions began, sociodemographic data were collected through the guidelines of focus groups, the protocol was explained, data confidentiality was guaranteed and consent was signed. The following question was then asked: "What aspects make you feel engaged in your work ?". After the introductory question, new questions arose during the session. For example: "What barriers have you encountered to engage?" "What is necessary to overcome these difficulties?" "What are the advantages/drawbacks of being engaged?" And finally, "how do you feel when you engage?"

All participants' responses were recorded in audio and transcribed word-for-word. Subsequently, participants had the opportunity to read the transcripts to verify the content. After this, the transcripts were analyzed by grouping them into categories. Data collection ceased when the point of information saturation was reached, that is, when no new categories or additional information on the subject emerged.

Table 1. *Sociodemographic Characteristics of Participants (N = 26)*

	Participant	Gender	Year	Country	Years of experience
Focus group 1. Early Childhood	1	Female	25	Spain	1
	2	Female	24	Spain	3
	3	Female	42	Spain	18
	4	Female	40	Spain	15
	5	Female	26	Spain	3
	6	Female	33	Spain	9
Focus group 2. Primary	1	Female	43	Spain	19
	2	Female	29	Spain	4
	3	Female	44	Spain	20
	4	Female	43	Spain	20
	5	Female	28	Spain	3
	1	Male	60	Spain	29

	2	Male	57	Spain	24
	3	Male	26	Spain	2
Focus group 3. Secondary	1	Female	49	Spain	25
	2	Female	59	Spain	30
	3	Female	55	Spain	27
	4	Female	55	Spain	24
	5	Female	40	Spain	13
	6	Female	30	Spain	4
Focus group 4. Mixed with more years of experience	1	Female	63	Spain	30
	2	Female	62	Spain	32
	3	Female	61	Spain	30
	1	Male	60	Spain	30
	2	Male	62	Spain	31
	3	Male	61	Spain	33

Data Analysis

The focus group responses were transcribed and analyzed with the qualitative analysis software Atlas.ti version 22 (Scientific Software Development GmbH, Berlin, Germany), by three researchers (X, X, X), along with the researchers' annotations. The analysis was carried out by means of a bottom-up strategy, which starts from the textual data and moves towards its classification into topics of analysis. The phases described by Braun & Clarke (2021) were taken into account: (1) First, transcripts were read for the familiarization of data and re-reading for the taking of ideas notes and prior knowledge of experiences; (2) Then, the main codes were generated, that is, a systematic codification of the data groups was carried out; (3) Then an inductive data analysis was performed, that is, a search by themes: the codes were associated and grouped in themes with patterns of meaning shared with the main theme; (4) The themes were then revised to ensure consistency of the codes and their subsequent outcomes on themes and sub-themes; (5) The themes were subsequently defined: the details of each theme were refined; and (6) Finally, the report was prepared: selected examples of topics and sub-themes, the analysis was related to the research objective and the final report was prepared (Table 2).

Rigour

The rigour of the present study was assured by the criteria proposed by Guba and Lincoln (1994): credibility, reliability and confirmability and transferability. First, for credibility, three qualitative methodology researchers analyzed the data independently. Subsequently, the results were triangulated between the entire research team and the participants. For reliability and confirmability, the researchers made the transcripts, which were reviewed by the participants. In addition, the use of extracts from participants corroborates the confirmability. Finally, for transferability, information on participants, context and method was detailed and saturation of data was verified along the narratives

of participants. Finally, the transcripts of the experiences were incorporated into the results through citations verified by the participants and this contributed to the rigour of the present study.

Ethical Considerations

All applications for ethical approval are made in compliance with the provisions established in the current legislation on the protection of personal data contained in Organic Law 3/2018, of December 5, on the protection of personal data and guarantee of digital rights. Before the research, the required permits were obtained from the ethics committee (UALBIO2020/046), the school administration, and the participants. Prior to data collection, participants received verbal and written information about the objective of the study. Their participation was voluntary, they could withdraw from the studio if they wished, and informed consent was obtained prior to the audio recording. During the data analysis, the anonymity of the participants and the total confidentiality of the data were guaranteed.

Findings

Inductive data analysis led to three main themes and six sub-themes (Table 2, Figure 1). All of these have enabled the objective of describing and exploring teachers' perceptions of work engagement at all stages of education to be achieved. The following results section presents the themes and sub-themes along with a selection of the most representative citations.

Figure 1. *Conceptual Map of Themes and Sub-themes*
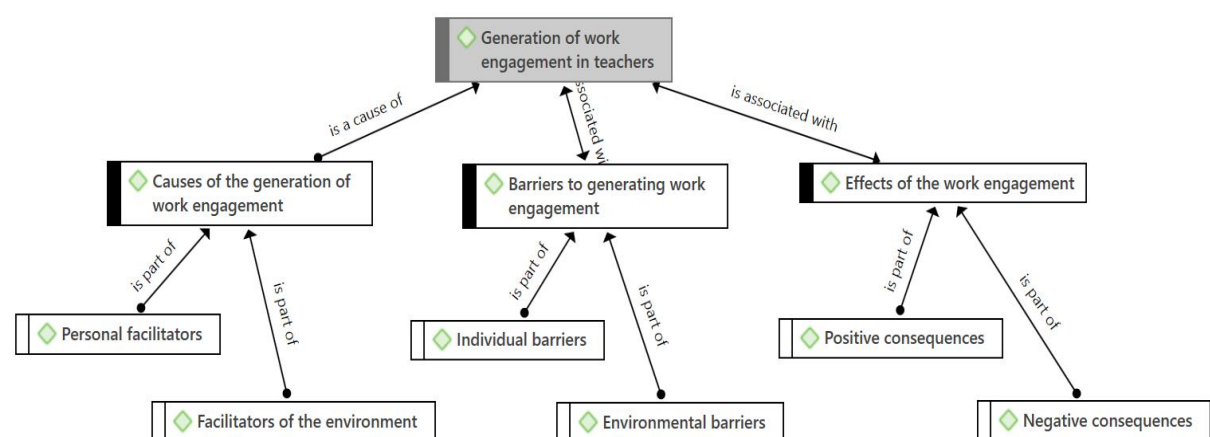
Theme 1: Causes of employment engagement

The generation of work engagement in teachers depends on the close relationship between the teachers, their families and the surrounding environment (co-workers, management team, students' families, etc.). This theme reveals the causes perceived by

teachers that promote the generation of work engagement. Two sub-themes emerged under this theme: (a) personal facilitators and (b) facilitators of the environment.

Sub-theme 1.1: Personal Facilitators

More than half of the participants (*n*= 16) stressed that setting goals and rewards when you engage, whether personal, economic or social, play an important role in engaging. The rewards refer to the incentives teachers receive during or after their professional work. This reward was associated with an economic award or a personal or social stimulus. That is, teachers engage themselves to work because they earn a salary or because they receive a stimulus that gives them benefits, such as feeling good about themselves or, simply, the obligation to cover some need:

"And also for a need. We all have a need to engage, a reward, even if it is your personal esteem" (Group 4-Woman 1).

"And set a goal. Because in our work it is very important to achieve a goal with our students. I think that also engages us a lot and leads us on the right path" (Group 1-Woman 3).

Other causes that, according to twelve teachers, promote the generation of engagement are the satisfaction and motivation felt when working and, consequently, the vocation to professional work, which generates a sense of usefulness for society and responsibility:

"The motivation, usefulness and personal reward one receives are worth it" (Group 3-Woman 6).

"But that motivation, especially when we reach a certain age, we have to look for it in our day to day" (Group 4-Woman 1).

However, according to twenty teachers, the causes that promote the generation of engagement are not always intrinsic to the person, but also depend on other external facilitators.

Sub-theme 1.2: Facilitators of the Environment

According to the point of view of twenty-one teachers, a favorable environment and good relations with the closest people (family members, co-workers, students, etc.) are key facilitators when generating work engagement. Favorable environment means an environment of tolerance and respect that helps the teacher exercise professional work in a positive way and, in turn, good social relations refers to social interactions based on work involvement, engagement with the well-being of others and fostering a sense of belonging to a group. Therefore, teachers also indicated that social and environmental influences must be taken into account when generating engagement:

"When the companions are very involved, there is a high degree of engagement of the people in the activity that is, because that causes a degree of contagion" (Group 3-Woman 4).

"If the environment is better, you engage more. If you see that in the environment you are not valued or whatever, then you dedicate yourself to something else" (Group 3-Woman 2).

On the other hand, according to fourteen participants, social recognition is essential to achieve this objective. That is, people in the environment value what you do and recognize the importance of the profession:

"I would add the value that is given to the work that you are doing by colleagues, families and the management team as well. Because when you have been for many years and families do not value the work that you are doing, in the end, you feel unmotivated" (Group 1-Woman 1).

"We are workers and we are people and if you want us to work well, that support and recognition are necessary" (Group 1-Women 2).

Theme 2: Barriers to generating work engagement

Generating engagement is not an easy task, as teachers face a number of barriers to achieving this goal on a daily basis, fighting against all the adverse factors that make it difficult for them to perform their professional work. This theme reveals the barriers perceived by teachers that hinder the generation of work engagement in them. Two sub-themes emerged under this theme: (a) individual barriers and (b) environmental barriers.

Sub-theme 2.1: Individual Barriers

Twenty-one teachers stressed that the biggest barrier they have to face is the lack of planning and organization of time, because this poor time management prevents them from engaging in the various work activities that encompass professional work, since they also have to face other responsibilities. Most teachers pointed out that due to this poor time management, family reconciliation is another barrier to be highly engaged in their work:

"For lack of time. Because of my work engagement and the schedule I have, I donot have time to dedicate myself to other social activities. And that often influences the performance of my work. Family reconciliation affects work and personal engagement" (Group 3-Women 2).

"I consider that I have a fairly high level of engagement in both the personal and the work environment, which causes the level of family engagement to decrease slightly due to a lack of time" (Group 3-Women 6).

On the other hand, thirteen teachers believe that low levels of resilience, emotional management and constancy make it difficult to engage with professional work. Because of this, several of the teachers recognized that these barriers cause demotivation and accommodation when exercising the work:

"For me, the barriers have been personal rather than social. Lack of desire, motivation or time. When I lack motivation it is difficult to maintain constancy and in the end, I end up abandoning the task or project" (Group 3-Woman 6).

"Depending on how your emotional intelligence helps you deal with failures, you may or may not be able to continue the engagement. For me it is very important because emotional intelligence is very present in any attitude you have towards life. There may be people whose emotional intelligence is not so rich and who knows, maybe they can decline that engagement" (Group 2-Woman 1).

As teachers have said, the generation of teacher engagement is also hindered by emotional needs. Hence the importance of emotional support for less engaged teachers. However, half the teachers emphasized that the barriers that hinder their work engagement cause them high levels of fatigue and stress and, due to poor emotional management, these barriers can trigger burnout syndrome:

"It is possible to operate what is called the "burnout" syndrome, the "burn out". I particularly believe that I always maintained the same attitude of engagement, although with some ups and downs in my work as a teacher" (Group 4-Man 3).

"Now that I am older, the main obstacle is the will, which sometimes fails because one is already tired" (Group 4-Woman 3).

Sub-theme 2.2: Environmental Barriers

However, according to the opinion of ten teachers, there are factors inherent in professional education that hinder the generation of engagement. A large number of teachers revealed that toxic environments, poor social relations and perceived social pressure to cope with the various responsibilities they faced affected their engagement with their work. Some teachers did not even feel supported by their family or peers, affecting their work engagement levels:

 "Not only a physically pleasant environment, but an environment in which positive energy, tolerance and respect prevail. The psychologically healthy thing is to flee from toxic environments that poison the soul" (Group 4-Woman 3).

"If the environment helps you, well. But I saw that the environment was so bad that it could not even flow" (Group 1-Woman 2).

Ten teachers mentioned the existence of engagements imposed or forced by society or families, which they called 'false engagements', which cause emotional difficulties, depend on the education received and hinder work engagement. Relevant quotes that

abala were:

"Because those people aren't happy. They're not doing what they want. They're not really engaged. It's a false engagement" (Group 1-Woman 2).

"When engagement is an obligation, it is different there. There, it is something mandatory and you feel good because it is what is expected of you, but you do not commit the same as when it is more voluntary" (Group 3-Woman 4).

On the other hand, four teachers expressed their discomfort with the lack of humanization, that is, they indicated that teachers are treated without taking into account their human condition and without empathy. Increasingly, individualism hinders the generation of work engagement. Well, individualism hinders positive social relationships and makes people not feel socially supported, with selfishness prevailing:

"Most people increasingly tend to be locked in their bubble and make a life focused solely on instant pleasure [...] Unfortunately, individualism is increasingly prevalent" (Group 4-Woman 3).

Theme 3: Effects of work engagement

The fact that teachers feel engaged in work causes a series of effects, both positive and negative, on their people and these, in turn, influence the generation of work engagement. This topic describes the personal effects that provoke work engagement in teachers. Two sub-themes emerged under this theme: (a) positive consequences and (b) negative consequences.

Sub-theme 3.1: Positive consequences

The results of this study showed that the teachers involved in the work presented a series of positive personal consequences such as satisfaction and motivation towards the work performed, general well-being and a feeling of being active, useful for society and valued by society. More than half of teachers ($n= 19$) pointed out that these positive consequences improve levels of self-esteem, positively impacting engagement with the professional work performed:

"Engaging with something motivates me, excites me, teaches me and gives me well-being and pride towards oneself when achieving the goal" (Group 3-Woman 6).

"Engaging with something lets me know that I have been helpful to others" (Group 3-Woman 1).

Sub-theme 3.2: Negative consequences

Despite the positive consequences of being engaged in work, teachers ($n= 16$) say that when they encounter many of the difficulties mentioned above or do not achieve the stated goal, they suffer negative emotional consequences such as anxiety, stress, frustration, fears, insecurity, nervousness, stress and tiredness. According to teachers,

these consequences negatively impact work engagement and may cause the opposite effect: burnout syndrome:

"When you engage with someone and realize that you can't engage well, it causes you stress or anxiety. When you see that you have many obstacles, they cause a stressful situation" (Group 1-Woman 6).

"Sometimes tired and a little overwhelmed, but usually happy and satisfied" (Group 4-Woman 3.

Table 2. *Coding Strategy*

Date	Initial code	Sub-theme	Main theme
"I am a happy person because I love and that generates engagement. Do what you like and if you can not do what you like, like what you do" (Group 4-Woman 2).	Feeling of belonging to a group, motivation, rewards, goal setting, vocation, usefulness, satisfaction, obligation, responsibility	Personal facilitators	
"Not just a physically pleasant environment, but an environment where positive energy, tolerance and respect prevail. The psychologically healthy thing is to flee from toxic environments that poison the soul, so to go ahead with something depends on it not harming us, either biologically or spiritually" (Group 4-Woman 3).	Enabling environment, social influence, social and family support, social recognition, positive responses	Facilitators of the environment	Causes of the generation of work engagement
"For example, for me, the barriers themselves have been personal rather than social. Lack of desire, lack of motivation or lack of time. What has almost always prevented me from engaging has been a lack of motivation. When I am lacking it is difficult to maintain consistency and in the end the task or project is abandoned" (Group 3-Woman 6).	Lack of planning and organization of time, low resilience, lack of constancy, demotivation, accommodation, emotional mismanagement, fatigue, lack of humanization	Individual barriers	Barriers to generating work engagement
"Because those people aren't happy. They're not doing what they want. They're not really engaged. It is a false engagement" (Group 1-Woman 2).	'False engagement' or imposed engagement, lack of social and family support, social pressure, toxic environments, poor social relations, too many responsibilities, education received	Environmental barriers	
"To know that we have been useful to others" (Group 3-Woman 1).	Satisfaction, well-being, motivation, feeling useful,	Positive consequences	

	valued and active, greater involvement, high self-esteem		
"When you engage with someone and see that you do not arrive, it causes stress or anxiety. When you see that you have many obstacles, they cause a stress situation" (Group 1-Woman 6).	Anxiety, stress, frustration, fear, insecurity, nervousness, fatigue	Negative consequences	Effects of the work engagement

Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations

The aim of this study was to describe and explore teachers' perceptions of work engagement at all stages of education. Previous studies show that work engagement can prevent failure and job desertion (Hoigaard et al., 2012; Pfitzner-Eden, 2016). However, the lack of knowledge regarding teachers' perceptions of work engagement makes it difficult to understand, which may be indicative of the evidence that teachers are increasingly suffering from burnout syndrome (Avalos & Valenzuela, 2016; Gutentag et al., 2017; Mérida-López et al., 2022; Authors, 2019; Rodríguez-Mantilla & Fernández-Díaz, 2017; Salmela-Aro, Hietajärvi & Lonka, 2019; Zamora et al., 2018). Describing and exploring the perceptions of teachers at all stages of education can improve knowledge about work engagement in this group, expanding needs and knowledge or teacher education in this subject, in order to move away from the levels of dropout suffered by teachers (Ávalos & Valenzuela, 2016; Mérida-López et al., 2022; Otero-López et al., 2015; Torenbeek & Peters, 2017).

According to Bakker (2017), Mérida-López et al. (2022) and Schaufeli et al. (2002), work engagement is a state of mental satisfaction, interest, positivity and motivation that allows workers to achieve success in their work. Teachers can improve their work engagement by providing facilitators to help them get on with their work (Toll et al., 2016). The results of this study show that motivation, satisfaction and favorable social relations and environment are some facilitators of the generation of work engagement (Hardré et al., 2013; Hoigaard et al., 2012; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2016; Shoshani & Eldor, 2016; Van Wingerden & Poell, 2019; Zhang et al., 2021).

However, according to the results of this study, some of the barriers that make it difficult for teachers to engage with professional work are low scores in emotional intelligence and high levels of demotivation, stress and tiredness, concurring with the studies of Avalos & Valenzuela (2016), Otero-López et al. (2015), Rodríguez-Mantilla & Fernández-Díaz (2017), Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2016). These barriers indicate the deficit of certain competences that must be present in teachers and this has been confirmed in the study. Skills such as emotional management, resilience and time management should be part of educational training programmes (Cejudo & López-Delgado, 2017; McCarthy et al., 2016), existing specific educational programmes based on mindfulness that train emotional intelligence and reduce stress (Coo & Salanova, 2017; Leroy et al.,

2013). In this way, teachers will be prepared to deal with the complex situations that arise in their work and will be more involved in the exercise of their professional work. In addition, it would be necessary to analyze whether the management team, students and families could help improve the emotional well-being that affects the personal, family and working lives of teachers.

According to other studies, the results show that professionally engaged teachers present a series of positive personal consequences such as satisfaction and motivation towards the work done (Hoigaard et al., 2012). However, when they encounter many of the difficulties mentioned above, they suffer negative emotional consequences such as stress, tiredness and anxiety (Gutentag et al., 2017; McCarthy et al., 2016; Authors, 2019; Salmela-Aro et al., 2019; Torenbeek & Peters, 2017).

The findings highlight the personal, social and environmental implications that surround teachers, exerting a clear influence on the generation of teachers' engagement and must be taken into account in the teaching-learning process. A multi-level approach can contribute to improving this process. It is therefore essential to develop training and intervention programmes adapted to the needs of teachers.

Strengths and Limitations

The use of focus groups brings remarkable strengths, since they have allowed us to analyze the differences in discourse between teachers of different educational stages, This is an area which needs to be deepened in order to be able to design teacher training programmes for specific groups. However, this study is not without limitations. A limitation is the circumscription of the sample to teachers of the stages of Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary Education. Although the study, due to its qualitative nature, focuses on providing evidence on the depth of the phenomenon, it would be interesting to note whether the correlates reported could be considered common among teachers of these stages in general, regardless of their specialization. Therefore, it would be advisable to include the perspectives of other teachers, comparable to each other, to arrive at shared meanings and a set of common categories that can contribute to the understanding of this construct. On the other hand, another limitation is that most of the participants are very experienced teachers, and relatively few had less than 5 years of experience in teaching, which can affect their perceptions. Therefore, for future research, it would be advisable to take this into account to make the focus groups more heterogeneous. In addition, the study could be planned by incorporating other important educational agents such as students and their families, as well as other education professionals involved in the teaching process-learning to check if the categories that arise are similar for other agents of education.

Conclusions

The results of this study indicate that there are several facilitators and barriers that promote and/or hinder the generation of work engagement in teachers, causing a number of consequences for teachers that may be positive or negative. On the one hand, motivation, satisfaction and social relations and a favorable environment facilitate teachers' work engagement. On the other hand, low scores in emotional intelligence and high levels of demotivation, stress and anxiety complicate the generation of work engagement in teachers and, consequently, the teachers involved in the work have positive consequences for their work such as satisfaction and motivation and negative consequences such as stress, fatigue and anxiety. Our findings emphasize the need for educational programmes, teacher education and intervention educational programnes in order to train teachers to deal with complex situations that arise in the world of work and to be able to engage more in the exercise of their professional work.

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Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

İşe katılım, işçilerin işyerinde başarı elde etmelerini sağlayan memnuniyet, motivasyon, ilgi ve pozitifliktir. Bununla birlikte, yüksek iş talepleri ve tükenme nedeniyle, öğretmenler liseye katılmak ve okulu bırakmakta zorluk çekebilirler. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma bu yapıyı bir başlangıç noktası olarak aldı, çünkü giderek artan işgücü talepleri nedeniyle yüksek düzeyde tükenme ve terk edilme gösteren öğretmenlerin yüzdesi daha yüksek, halk sağlığı sorunu olmak. Bu yüzdeye ve bu yapıyı anlamadaki bazı anlaşmazlıklara rağmen, öğretmenler işlerini yapmalarını engelleyen engellere müdahale ederlerse çalışmaya katılım geliştirebilirler, onlara kolaylaştırıcı unsurlar sağlamak. Bu çalışmanın amacı, öğretmenlerin eğitimin farklı aşamalarında çalışmaya katılım algılarını tanımlamak ve araştırmaktı (Erken Çocukluk, İlköğretim ve Ortaöğretim). Odak gruplarına dayanan nitel bir tanımlayıcı çalışma, doğalcı bir perspektiften, kahramanların deneyimlerinin keşfinden çok az bilinen bir fenomeni derinlemesine tanımlamak için tasarlanmıştır. Almería (İspanya) ilinden toplam 26 öğretmenle dört odak grubu gerçekleştirildi. Bununla birlikte, İspanyol öğretmenlere odaklanmasına rağmen, bu çalışma benzer sorunlarla karşılaşan diğer ülkeler için aktarılabilir mesajlar içermektedir. Numune seçimi kasıtlı bir örnekleme tekniği ile gerçekleştirilmiştir. Veriler, Ocak ve Şubat 2022 arasında, nitel araştırma konusunda eğitim almış araştırmacılar tarafından yönetilen dört odak grubu aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Odak grupları öğretmenlerin çalıştığı eğitim merkezlerinde ve saat 1:30 civarında gerçekleşti. Tüm katılımcıların yanıtları sesli olarak kaydedildi ve kelimeye göre kopyalandı. Daha sonra katılımcılar içeriği doğrulamak için transkriptleri okuma fırsatı buldular. Odak grup yanıtları, nitel analiz yazılımı Atlas.ti sürüm 22 (Scientific Software Development GmbH, Berlin, Almanya) ile kopyalanmış ve analiz edilmiştir. Endüktif veri analizinden üç ana tema ve altı alt tema ortaya çıktı. Hepsi, tüm eğitim aşamalarında öğretmenlerin iş katılımı ile ilgili algılarını tanımlama ve keşfetme hedefine ulaşmayı mümkün kılmıştır: (1) Alt temalarla iş taahhütleri oluşturma nedenleri: kişisel kolaylaştırıcılar ve çevresel kolaylaştırıcılar; (2) Alt konularla iş taahhütleri oluşturmanın önündeki engeller: bireysel engeller ve çevresel engeller; (3) İş katılımının alt temalarla etkileri: olumlu sonuçlar ve olumsuz sonuçlar. Bu bulgular, (ödülleri ve hedef belirleme) ve çevrenin (çevre ile iyi ilişkiler, uygun çevre, sosyal tanıma) ve bireysel engeller (zayıf organizasyon ve zaman planlaması, düşük esneklik seviyeleri, duygusal zeka eksikliği) ve çevre (toksik ortamlar, zayıf sosyal ilişkiler, İspanyol öğretmenlerde bir iş taahhüdü oluşturulmasını teşvik eden ve / veya engelleyen ve bir dizi olumlu veya olumsuz sonuca yol açan algılanan sosyal baskı). Bununla birlikte, çalışmanın benzer sorunlarla karşılaşan diğer ülkeler için aktarılabilir sonuçlar sağladığı unutulmamalıdır. Sonuç olarak, bulgularımız, öğretmenleri iş dünyasında ortaya çıkan karmaşık durumlarla başa çıkmaları ve egzersize daha fazla katılmaları için eğitmek amacıyla eğitim ve müdahale eğitim programlarına duyulan ihtiyacı vurgulamaktadır iş profesyonellerinin.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İş katılımı, öğretmen eğitimi, odak grubu, nitel araştırma, öğretmenler.

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Alternative E-Assessment in Language Classes: Recent Experiences and Future Directions

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Abstract

This study aimed to explore English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers' perceptions regarding alternative e-assessments in the Turkish tertiary level context. The study utilized semi-structured interviews with a sample of EFL instructors from 17 higher education institutions in Türkiye. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify emerging themes. The results revealed varying perceptions about alternative e-assessments, with six primary themes emerging: impact on learning, workload, academic integrity, digital technology, grading and feedback, and assessment competence. Overall, this qualitative study provides valuable insights into the perceptions of EFL teachers regarding alternative e-assessments, highlighting key areas of concern. The study emphasizes the need to address these concerns in professional development programs that provide teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively implement alternative e-assessments. The results also have implications for the development of effective assessment policies and procedures, optimizing educational practices in the digital age.

Keywords: Alternative assessments, e-assessments, EFL, higher education, qualitative study

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Introduction

In contemporary language education, the transformative impact of globalization on societal and professional domains has prompted a fundamental reevaluation of pedagogical strategies. Traditional language teaching methodologies, which often prioritized grammatical accuracy and linguistic knowledge in isolation, are being replaced by more dynamic and communicatively oriented approaches. This paradigmatic shift reflects an acknowledgment of the critical need to provide learners with the practical skills necessary to engage with a variety of language contexts in an increasingly interconnected world. As educators attempt to develop learners' communicative competence, the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) have emerged as a guiding framework, emphasizing authentic language use and interaction as the cornerstone of instruction. Parallel to these pedagogical developments, assessment practices in language education are undergoing a transformation, which acknowledges the need to assess not only linguistic proficiency but also the ability to effectively engage in real-world communicative tasks.

To prepare students for practical language use in an increasingly globally interconnected world (Johnson, 2009), foreign language teaching has moved towards communicative outcomes, which may ultimately lead to a change in assessment methods. In the past two decades, there has been a shift from traditional high-stakes summative assessments to process and performance-based alternative assessments. As MacNamara (2001) clearly expressed, alternative assessment is a movement "away from the use of standardized multiple-choice tests in favor of more complex performance-based assessments" (p. 329). Briefly stated, Communicative Language Teaching principles are being increasingly incorporated into classroom teaching; therefore, it is clear that assessment should also take into account language use scenarios that students would experience when using the language for communication.

The term 'alternative assessment', which rose in popularity during the mid-1980s, is used interchangeably with 'performance-based assessment' and 'authentic assessment' (Yusop et al., 2022). Alternative assessment emphasizes the ability to use language in real-life situations, creativity, and personal expression, and offers a more comprehensive and realistic evaluation of language proficiency, although it may not provide an objective or standardized measure. Hancock (1994) defined alternative assessment as "an ongoing process involving the student and teacher in making judgements about the student's progress in language using non-conventional strategies." (p. 2). As Gaytan and McEwen (2007) stated, students should be provided with a variety of evaluation methods and assignments to promote multiple perspectives as evidence of learning. Alternative assessments involve objectives that require students to solve problems, apply their knowledge to real-world situations, and be closely linked to their regular class activities (Burkšaitienė & Teresevičienė, 2008). Among the most common types of such techniques in ELT are portfolio assessment, personal response assessments such as journals, reading logs, videos of role plays and presentations, asynchronous

online discussions, self-evaluation questionnaires, self and peer assessment questionnaires, and performance assessments, such as role plays, debates, oral presentations (McNamara, 2001).

Discussion Forums: Discussion forums serve as a valuable alternative for e-assessment in language teaching. These online platforms replicate traditional classroom discussions, enabling learners to engage in written conversations on language-related topics. Participants are able to express their thoughts, insights, and analyses, showcasing their language proficiency and critical thinking skills. The asynchronous nature of forums accommodates diverse learning schedules and thus encourages active participation (Vonderwell et al., 2007). Through these interactions, students can enhance their written communication skills, and receive valuable feedback from peers and instructors. Discussion forums are effective tools for assessing language comprehension, application, and collaborative abilities, providing teachers with insights into individual progress and areas for improvement. With the help of a predefined set of criteria or rubric, teachers can assess students' written language and communication skills. In order for discussion forums to perform this function, they must be well structured with clear guidelines on the content, frequency and length of posts.

Blogs: A blog is an online site that allows learners to improve their written communication skills as they can draft their work, edit, and conduct updates. Blogs provide a space for students to practice language created for a real audience (Pinkman, 2005) and encourage substantial language production and stimulate motivation for learning (Sun, 2009). Some LMSs include blogs as a tool and enable teachers to set up blogs for individual or collaborative group tasks. Like discussion forums, blogs can be used as an e-assessment tool and a rubric for assessment can be utilized for grading (Radia & Stapleton, 2008).

E-Portfolio: An e-portfolio contains digital artifacts such as evidence, reflections, and feedback, and can be used to store evidence of students' achievement and learning (Wang & He, 2021). The advantages of e-Portfolios include their space-efficient nature, ease of retrieval, and the potential for permanence when files are backed up. E-Portfolios have the potential to harmonize pedagogical methods and assessment strategies, likely producing a positive washback effect on language teaching and learning (Fox, 2017; Lam, 2023).

Videos: Beyond their use in teaching, digital video recordings have also been integrated into the assessment of speaking skills as an alternative e-assessment technique. These are usually video files of learners speaking in English on a given topic for a pre-determined period and uploaded to a designated online repository (Göktürk, 2016). By employing alternative e-assessments involving video recordings of speaking performance, students can track their skill development more comprehensively compared with traditional achievement exams (Safari & Koosha, 2016). Research shows

that assessment practices involving video recordings of oral performance increase students' confidence in speaking and risk-taking behaviors (Kim, 2014; Göktürk, 2016).

Self/Peer assessment: Self and peer assessment refers to the use of digital tools and platforms to facilitate students' active involvement in evaluating their own and their peers' language skills. These assessment techniques leverage technology to enhance assessment, and promote a more interactive and learner-centered approach to evaluation. Alderson (2005) regarded self-assessment as a vital element in language acquisition, emphasizing that self-awareness plays a key role in this process. . Self-awareness is essential for recognizing one's current proficiency level, and identifying personal strengths and areas for improvement (Ünaldı, 2016). Likewise, peer assessment has a potential impact on language learning, and creates opportunities for learner interaction; however, its effectiveness appears contingent on multiple student factors, such as attitudes, language proficiency levels, familiarity with assessment criteria, and the potential influence of biases, e.g., interpersonal relationships (Azamoosh, 2013).

The expanding availability of digital resources has opened a range of opportunities for alternative language assessments. These assessments could be used for both formative and summative purposes and have become increasingly important in the educational system. However, rigorous attention to particular design principles is required in order to ensure their effectiveness.

Research shows that both language learners and teachers hold positive perceptions towards alternative e-assessments (e.g., Baturay, 2015; Cirit, 2015, Assulaimani, 2021; Alavi et al., 2022; Issa, 2020). Nevertheless, carrying out alternative e-assessments brings some difficulties such as an increased workload for teachers. In addition, research studies have explored specific factors affecting students' performance on e-assessments, such as insufficient technology experience and the reliability of assessments (Gardner et al. 2009; Tarhini et al., 2013; Park, 2009; Phongsirikul, 2018; Alenezi, 2022).

Building on the foundation of the literature review, the current study was conducted with the aim of understanding the perceptions of tertiary level Turkish EFL instructors regarding alternative e-assessments. Recent research showed that teachers' e-assessment and feedback practices appear to have been affected by contextual and experiential factors (Zhang et al., 2021; Zou et al., 2021). Therefore, in order to develop frameworks across contexts, it would be valuable to seek insights into the perceptions of individuals from particular contexts, as well as their experiences with alternative e-assessments, and the challenges they face. The study particularly aims to seek answers to the following research question: What are the EFL teachers' perceptions regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the alternative e-assessments in the Turkish tertiary level EFL context?

Method

Context

Türkiye's current tertiary education policy encourages English language learning and English-medium instruction, and to support this aim, higher education institutions offer a one-year preparatory/foundation intensive English program. The Testing and Assessment Unit within English Language Preparatory Programs is a fundamental component, responsible for designing, administering, and evaluating language assessments. Teachers can become members of these units either voluntarily or as assigned by their directors. Testing and Assessment Unit members are tasked with formulating test specifications for all assessments in alignment with curriculum objectives. Their roles involve establishing an item repository for these assessments, coordinating editing, administration, standardization, grading, and feedback sessions. Additionally, their work involves analyzing assessment results, adapting items and tasks as needed based on the results. However, such responsibilities can vary depending on the institution, because Turkish institutions have no standardized program or regulations for testing unit members. As a result, it is common to encounter diverse practices among institutions.

As for technology integration, in Türkiye, as elsewhere, the global pandemic's emergency remote teaching has further expedited the integration of technology into language assessment. A variety of web-based learning management systems currently facilitate technology-enhanced teaching and learning, and these systems offer a suite of tools designed to enrich course content and streamline the assessment process. Notable features include glossaries, assignments, tests, and self/peer assessments, blogs and discussion boards, all contributing to a comprehensive educational experience.

In light of these contextual factors, this research aims to investigate teachers' perceptions of alternative e-assessments within the English Language Preparatory Programs in Türkiye, shedding light on the landscape of language assessment in higher education.

Research Design

The study focused on exploring instructors' perceptions and experiences regarding alternative e-assessments. To achieve this, a qualitative research design was employed, guided by the philosophical framework of phenomenology. According to Creswell (2009), in qualitative inquiry, the intent is not to generalize to a population, but to develop an in-depth exploration of a central phenomenon. In this study, the central phenomenon under investigation is the intricate interplay between instructors' perceptions, experiences, and interpretations of alternative e-assessments within English Language Preparatory Programs. Phenomenology, as a qualitative approach, prioritizes the subjective nature of experiences and individual interpretations (Patton, 2015; Creswell, 2009).

Participants

Phenomenological research draws its data from individuals who possess direct experience and the capacity to articulate the central phenomenon being studied. The crucial aspect of participation in qualitative research emphasizes the "depth" rather than the frequency of data, and in this regard, the participants were deemed representative of the research topic, as highlighted by O'Reilly and Parker (2012). The sample of this qualitative research was selected through purposeful sampling and the criteria for inclusion were (a) being a member of the testing and assessment unit in the preparatory/foundation program of an English-medium university in Türkiye and (b) having a minimum of 5 years of teaching experience. The participants consisted of 17 EFL instructors and each was affiliated with a different university, providing insights into a range of assessment practices within varying contexts.

Table 1. *Demographic Characteristics of the Participants*

Participant	Gender	Age	Teaching Experience	Degree	Status of University Employed
P1	Female	28	5	MA in ELT	Private
P2	Female	42	17	MA in non-ELT	Public
P3	Male	31	8	MA in ELT	Public
P4	Male	34	11	MA in ELT	Private
P5	Female	41	19	MA in non-ELT	Public
P6	Female	34	13	PhD in ELT	Public
P7	Female	40	17	MA in ELT	Private
P8	Female	44	11	MA in non-ELT	Private
P9	Female	36	12	MA in non-ELT	Private
P10	Female	44	23	MA in ELT	Private
P11	Female	40	17	PhD in ELT	Public
P12	Male	37	15	MA in ELT	Private
P13	Female	40	18	MA in non-ELT	Public
P14	Female	42	21	MA in ELT	Private
P15	Female	38	15	MA in ELT	Private
P16	Male	34	11	PhD in ELT	Public
P17	Male	35	10	MA in ELT	Public

As shown in Table 1, the great majority, 71%, of the participants were female. Half of the participants have an MA degree in ELT and 3 out of 17 have a PhD degree. Of the participants, 53% work at private foundation universities and 47% are employed at public universities.

Research Instruments and Data Collection Procedures

In this qualitative study, data were collected through semi-structured interviews in which the participants were engaged in reflective conversations, delving into their unique

viewpoints, challenges, and insights concerning the integration of alternative e-assessments. A two-part interview protocol was used to guide the interviews. The first part included questions about demographic information and the second inquired about opinions and experiences on the use of alternative e-assessments. Before the main study, the interview schedule underwent a pilot test with two English language teachers employed at the researchers' university. During this pilot stage, participants were invited to provide feedback on the clarity, comprehensibility, and basic wording of the questions. In response to their comments, one question was excluded due to its redundancy with another question in the initial interview schedule. The semi-structured interview centered around the following questions:

- What has been your experience with alternative e-assessments in the English foundation program?

- What forms of alternative e-assessments, if any, are used in the English foundation program?

- Can you describe a specific instance where alternative e-assessments have influenced your understanding of your students' progress?

- How would you describe your own attitudes towards using alternative forms of assessment in your school?

- What do you perceive as the most significant challenges in integrating alternative e-assessments into the English foundation program?

Each interview was conducted online through a web-conferencing tool and lasted around 20-30 minutes. All interviews were recorded with the permission of the participants and transcribed verbatim. To ensure rigor, the researcher consistently restated and mirrored participants' significant ideas to validate accurate interpretation throughout the interviews. The methodological rigor was also maintained by adhering to "bracketing" to minimize potential biases. Bracketing refers to the process of setting aside one's preconceived beliefs, biases, and assumptions about a topic or phenomenon being studied (Tufford & Newman, 2012). This methodological approach aimed to ensure that interpretations remained true to teachers' lived experiences. In short, this research approach allowed the exploration of teachers' views, challenges, and insights regarding alternative e-assessments, leading to a better grasp of this central phenomenon in English preparatory programs.

Data Analysis

Due to the research's exploratory nature, thematic analysis was applied to the interview transcripts, a technique outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). This technique is well suited for investigating participants' perspectives and generating insights in unexplored domains.

Figure 1. *Six-Phase Thematic Analytic process (adapted from Braun & Clarke, 2006)*

Throughout the data analysis process, the six-step procedure was applied as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). This involved the researcher's immersion in the transcripts, the generation of initial codes, the identification of thematic patterns within and across transcripts, the review and adjustment of data patterns, the definition of themes so as to capture their essence, consideration of inter-relationships among themes, and finally, the presentation of results. In order to assign suitable codes to each message, the data was carefully reviewed multiple times and analyzed iteratively. To enhance the credibility of the analysis, peer debriefing was conducted. The researcher shared the data with an experienced and impartial researcher, who independently verified its accuracy. The technique of double coding, suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994), was employed to mitigate any personal biases arising during data coding, thus enhancing the overall reliability of the research. Thematic analysis allows the identification of recurring patterns and emerging themes within the teachers' narratives, to capture the essence of their experiences.

Findings

The current study provided valuable insights into the instructors' perspectives on the research topic. As a result of an attentive and rigorous analysis of the data, the following main themes emerged: academic integrity, impact on learning, grading and feedback, workload, digital technology, and assessment competence. Table 2 shows the frequency of the themes identified and the respective codes.

Table 2. *Emerging themes, coding, and frequencies*

Themes	Content coding	No. of participants	%
Impact on learning	Individualized feedback, Engagement, Motivation, Awareness	8	47%
Grading and feedback	Rubric, Criteria, Ease of giving and organizing feedback, Effective feedback	15	88%
Academic integrity	Cheating, Plagiarism, Reliability	14	82%
Workload	Time management, Class size, Extra time, Flexibility	12	70%
Digital technology	Internet connectivity, Digital literacy, Digital platform, Resistance, Learner training	7	41%
Assessment competence	Teacher training, Professional development, Pre-Service education	10	59%

Impact on learning

The interviews revealed some insights regarding the impact of alternative e-assessments on students' language skills. The findings show that alternative e-assessments are not as widespread as the traditional assessments in the English preparatory programs. However, one teacher highlighted the positive influence of incorporating discussion forums and blogs as an alternative assessment method:

[P14] "In our school, we've been using discussion forums and blogs as part of our teaching and assessment methods. It's been really good for getting students involved and active. Like, in our B1 and B2 level writing classes, students share their essays as blog entries on the LMS and give each other feedback. It's nice because it feels like a small community; they learn from each other."

Portfolio assessment and student videos are more frequently used than other types, such as forums, blogs, self or peer assessments. According to the participants, e-portfolios offer many benefits.

[P4] "Well, portfolio assessment, we've taken it a step further by going digital. Students compile their work, like essays, presentations, and recordings of speaking tasks in an online portfolio. It's so convenient. They can see how they've improved over time. So, I believe e-portfolio assessment has made our assessment more dynamic and effective."

[P12] "Everyone learns a language differently. With the e-portfolio, we help students become more aware of their progress as we give feedback regularly, especially on their writing skills. Also, students share and reflect on their own interests while working on e-portfolio tasks."

[P9] "We ask students to record their own videos and add them to their digital portfolios. I can identify general problems in pronunciation for example and give more practice in class. Also, grammar mistakes… Although I give individual feedback, I also highlight the most common mistakes in class. I check whether they see my feedback and it makes me happy when they correct their mistakes."

On the other hand, helping students adapt to these alternative e-assessments seems to bring challenges, as described by the following participant:

[P5] "Some students were hesitant to share their comments on the forum openly, and it was due to cultural and personality differences. It took some time to get them used to it, but later, they got more comfortable. But not all teachers are that much encouraging and patient."

Grading and Feedback

Alternative e-assessments such as blogs, discussion forums and video products necessitate personalized feedback. Some of the participating instructors in this study highlighted that conducting assessments online facilitates the feedback process:

[P2] "Ion online platforms I can watch the students' video recordings again and again, so this allows me to give more effective and healthier feedback".

On the other hand, instructors' perceptions regarding the practicality of feedback online depend on the way they are accustomed to going about this.

[P9] "Feedback sessions take a lot of time because I have to spend hours watching videos, preparing feedback and spending time with each student after class. When we do speaking assessments in the traditional way, I give overall feedback to the class."

For the reliability of alternative e-assessments, as in any constructed response or performance-based assessment, it is essential to create clearly defined grading rubrics to help learners understand the desired outcomes and reflect on their products. Some participants particularly highlighted the problem of developing rubrics:

[P6] "Creating rubrics for alternative e-assessment tasks is a challenge. The criteria and descriptors should be clear for both the teachers and students. While assessing students, you need to be fair. Especially in collaborative tasks, I would like to know which student contributed more so that I can assess their performance in a fair and objective way."

Academic Integrity

Issues involving breaches of academic integrity, i.e., academic misconduct, have always been a focus of attention; however, the shift to online learning and e-assessments has created greater challenges in this area. The increase in academic misconduct, such as cheating, submitting plagiarized work, and collaborating inappropriately on assignments is a prevalent concern in the participants' perceptions regarding e-assessments. As one participant stated:

[P2] "We can't be sure whether the essays students produced are original and it is an extra burden to check the originality. I have seen many cases of plagiarism."

Another participant also expressed their concern regarding assessing speaking skills online.

[P13] "I may say they memorized, or they just put a card in front of the camera and were reading, it was detectable. Their eyes were moving. So, I don't think we can get away from the traditional assessments unless such cheating problems are solved."

Workload

As alternative e-assessments require personalized feedback and close progress monitoring, this translates into an increased workload. This issue becomes even more critical in large enrollment classes. The participants in the current study agreed that large class sizes hinder the feedback process, preventing effective personalized feedback. The following quote from a participant highlights this factor:

[P4] "In some classes we have 30 students and our teachers have more than one class. This doesn't allow enough time to focus on feedback because it takes a lot of time. Students need to be given feedback and because of time issues and not enough teachers; we are not able to apply alternative e-assessments."

However, according to one of the participants, grading performance and giving feedback on learners' progress is an essential element of the teaching process and doing that online does not, in fact, increase the workload.

[P15] "Some of my colleagues complain that their workload increases with e-assessments. But I must disagree with that idea because I think being a teacher means bringing work home. I mean, it's indispensable, so you can't escape from that. But what makes it easy online, or with these alternative e-assessments, is that you can decide when to deal with them. So, it's a big advantage, I mean I disagree with the idea that it's an extra burden on teachers."

Digital Technology

Another prevailing theme that emerged during the interviews was the use of digital tools and platforms for alternative e-assessments. The decision to conduct e-assessments is considered to be significantly influenced by the availability of digital tools and a robust LMS. The challenges regarding alternative e-assessments are not simply limited to hardware, software, or internet connectivity issues; but rather, competency and literacy in digital platform use seem to be important and motivating factors. The participating instructors in this study also mentioned technological barriers to the implementation of alternative e-assessments, highlighting the challenges that students encounter in utilizing digital platforms for academic purposes.

[P3] "One of the challenges we have is that not every student is tech savvy. You design a task and notice that some students have difficulty accessing it or completing it. You have to handle those problems."

The participants also acknowledged that, implementation of alternative e-assessments also requires teachers to be competent in using digital platforms.

[P13] "I have some colleagues who are like 60 plus years old and I know their complaints. They wanted to print out writing submissions to be able to assess and give feedback using a pen."

[P12] "Some teachers are not confident enough to use these digital platforms and what is more, they resist improving their digital skills. I personally trust my own digital skills and find it hard to understand why some are not willing to develop themselves. Also, I think our students need to develop their digital skills too. Although they were born into the age of technology, they have difficulty managing the online platforms or uploading their assignments online. We should consider learner training programs for that purpose."

With the advent of digital technologies and the adoption of technology-enhanced teaching and learning approaches, digital skills have become even more important.

Assessment Competence

Teacher training and development are critical components of any quality instruction and school improvement initiative. Some of the participants in the current study also reported that they were not fully aware of the nature of alternative e-assessment methods and that they needed training in this area. The following three excerpts highlight the participants' opinions on this theme:

[P7] "I graduated from the ELT department, but we only had one course on language assessment. We did not have any practice designing assessments. It was just the theory, you know, what validity means, reliability, washback and so on. And I have colleagues who graduated from non-ELT departments, like Translation. So, we definitely need intensive training on assessment. But I know, not every teacher is interested in assessment. They find it difficult."

[P13] "I can say that I received no formal training on alternative e-assessments but during the pandemic we had to integrate some into our assessment procedures. In our professional development sessions, I learned about blogs and discussion forums as means of assessment."

[P16] "When teachers are asked to do something which they are not comfortable with or familiar with, it adds to the workload that they already have. So probably there should be some training scheme in place for teachers and then for the students. This may make such initiatives successful."

Discussion and Recommendations

This study aimed to explore tertiary level Turkish EFL teachers' perceptions regarding alternative e-assessments through a phenomenological perspective. The findings provide valuable insights into EFL instructors' perceptions of alternative e-assessments and their implications for teaching and learning in higher education contexts. The results of the study revealed that tertiary level Turkish EFL teachers held varying perceptions about alternative e-assessments, with six primary themes emerging: impact on student **learning**, **grading and feedback practices**, academic **integrity** concerns, **workload** implications, the **role** of digital technology, and the **need for assessment competence** among instructors.

The impact of alternative e-assessments on student learning emerged as a key theme in this study. Alternative e-assessments were found to have a positive impact on student learning, with methods such as discussion forums, blogs, and e-portfolios being highlighted for their ability to enhance engagement and motivation. Similarly, Chugai et al. (2021) found that Ukrainian English teachers were positive about the impact of portfolios as alternative assessments on motivation. Alternative e-assessment has the capacity to cater to the varying needs of each student, and their highly differentiated abilities, making it an essential component in transforming assessment practices from their current position within the confines of the curriculum, to accommodating a much wider spectrum of student learning. In addition, utilizing alternative e-assessments can stimulate critical thinking and creativity among students as they engage in collaborative efforts, both within and beyond the classroom. The assessment process evaluates students not solely based on task completion, but also considers their collaboration and performance throughout the process.

An important factor in the effectiveness of alternative e-assessments is the feedback element. Effective feedback has emerged as a crucial component of alternative e-assessments, with online platforms offering opportunities for personalized feedback. Alternative assessment serves as a crucial link between instruction and assessment, forming a feedback loop that aids teachers in adjusting instruction based on student assessment outcomes (Vogt & Tsagari, 2014). For an assessment to be considered valid, it must be prompt, continuous, formatively beneficial, and simple to grasp (Gaytan & McEwen, 2007). Creating assessments with the sole intention of serving formative

purposes does not increase their validity; rather, assessment must aim specifically to promote the desired learning. Hargreaves (2007) stated, "The validity of an assessment for learning depends on how far the interpretation and use of the assessment actually lead to further learning" (p. 186). The availability of features on online platforms can improve the speed and precision of feedback, thus encouraging learner engagement and contentment. Several research studies have explored how online feedback affects the writing skills of non-native English speakers, and they generally show that online feedback helps improve their writing abilities (e.g., Link et al., 2020; Noroozi & Hatami, 2019)

However, instructors highlighted challenges such as time constraints and the need for clear grading rubrics to ensure reliability and fairness. Instructors face challenges in providing timely and personalized feedback, particularly in large classes. Clear guidelines and grading rubrics were emphasized as essential for enhancing the authenticity and reliability of assessments, aligning with previous studies.

Following the transparency principle in assessment design, teachers should discuss the grading rubrics with learners along with the assessment guidelines for mutual understanding of the expected performance or product. This will promote learner responsibility, the negotiation of meaning in the feedback process, and teachers' self-reflection on their classroom practices.

Academic integrity emerges as a significant concern in the shift to e-assessment. Instructors reported challenges in detecting and preventing cheating and plagiarism, highlighting the need for strategies to ensure the authenticity and reliability of assessments. This finding is parallel to Yulianto and Mujtahin's (2021) study, which highlighted ELT teachers' negative perceptions of e-assessments, especially regarding their validity and reliability due to possible misconduct. Due to the problems in detecting cheating, e-assessments were less favored than the traditional proctored assessments (King et al., 2009; Watson & Sottile, 2010; Yilmaz, 2017). However, this is perhaps due to the general (mis)understanding that e-assessment is limited to summative assessments; indeed, one way of eliminating possible academic misconduct is by designing alternative e-assessments with personalized elements, ensuring that   students' own products or performances are evaluated.

The authenticity of performance tasks has the potential to reduce academic dishonesty because scoring rubrics and sample outputs accompanying the assessments provide clearer guidance for learners' work (Oosterhof et al., 2008). In addition, it is important to create and use clearly defined grading rubrics to increase the reliability of alternative e-assessments, which help students become aware of what is expected of their work, and of the target outcomes. Clear guidelines, transparent assessment design, and ongoing monitoring are essential for upholding academic integrity standards in e-assessment practices.

The transition to e-assessment has implications for instructors' workload, with many reporting increased time and effort required for designing, administering, and grading online assessments. Large class sizes exacerbate these challenges, limiting instructors' ability to provide personalized feedback and support to students. Institutional support and strategies to manage workload effectively are crucial for supporting instructors in implementing e-assessments successfully. Research showed that the shift from traditional pen-and-paper to e-assessment increased instructors' workload (e.g., Meccawy et al., 2021; Abduh, 2021). Apparently, conducting e-assessments, whether summative or formative, requires more time and effort as these have to be designed, developed and implemented online, along with sufficient guidance and support. In a study conducted with Moroccan EFL teachers, it was found that the major cause of time constraints was class size (Ghaicha and Omarkaly, 2018). Hung (2012) also found that, due to the class size, the teachers were unable to provide the students with regular feedback on e- portfolios. Several researchers also presented time and class size as main factors increasing workload in incorporating alternative e-assessments (e.g., DeLuca et al., 2012; Abbas, 2012; Demir et al. 2018; Moqbel, 2020).

The use of digital tools and platforms for e-assessment presents both opportunities and challenges, with technological barriers and a lack of digital literacy hindering effective implementation. Ongoing training and support for instructors and students are essential to maximize the benefits of digital assessment methods such as e-portfolios. Baturay (2015) suggested that the use of e-portfolio assessment was better received by those students who were comfortable using the Internet and had at least a modest level of self-regulated learning skills.

Many instructors expressed a need for training in alternative e-assessment methods, indicating gaps in assessment literacy and digital skills. In some earlier research, teacher educators cited their supervised teachers' limitations regarding the use of technology in their classrooms and regarding their technological competencies (Karagiorgi & Nicolaidou, 2013; Teo, 2011). Apparently, for alternative e-assessments to be conducted effectively, not only detailed guidelines but also continuous teacher and learner support are required as suggested by the participants.

Assessment competence emerges as a key factor influencing instructors' perceptions and practices regarding e-assessments. Many instructors expressed a need for training in alternative assessment methods and digital platforms, highlighting gaps in assessment literacy and digital skills. This finding aligns with Yang and Cornelious' (2005) emphasis on the significance of teachers' engaging in professional development activities related to online teaching and assessment. Similar findings were evident in a study conducted by Brumen and Cagran (2011) across the Czech Republic, Slovenia, and Croatia. Their research revealed that a substantial majority of teachers lacked additional training in assessment techniques; however, they expressed a strong inclination towards further opportunities to enhance their competence in effectively assessing learners. Similarly,

Chugai et al., (2021) concluded that both Indian and Ukrainian teachers acknowledged the importance of receiving training in assessment and facilitation of learning.

The majority of EFL teachers appear to have an insufficient understanding of language assessment principles and methods, according to a substantial body of research (Berry et al., 2019; Deygers & Malone, 2019; Koh et al., 2018; Kremmel & Harding, 2020). According to Mertler (2009), this is because assessment classes are not essential or required for pre-service teachers, and teacher education programs are partially responsible for teachers' incapacity to understand practical classroom assessment procedures. This is also true in the Turkish context, where pre-service teacher education programs only cover theoretical components of assessment, rather than comprehensive practical instruction. The research conducted by Mede and Atay (2017) revealed that English language instructors in Turkish universities have inadequate language assessment expertise, and there is a substantial insufficiency of knowledge concerning assessment concepts. Similarly, a significant finding in a recent study by Ölmezer-Öztürk (2021) is that the present undergraduate teacher training may not adequately provide teacher candidates with the essential competencies. It is evident that teachers require more structured assistance to utilize alternative e-assessment methods with greater frequency and efficiency. Teacher education programs should prioritize assessment literacy and provide practical training to equip instructors with the necessary competencies for effective assessment practices.

To meet the needs of new generations, teachers should regularly revisit their teaching approaches and methods. Moreover, as current studies contend, several factors emphasize the importance of language assessment, as well as the crucial role played by assessment literacy (Malone, 2013; Vogt & Tsagari, 2014). Language assessment literacy is crucial because it equips teachers to understand, evaluate, and analyze students' performance data and thus, to enhance and improve instruction. Hence, even if not all EFL teachers engage in assessment design activities, as practitioners, all need to be knowledgeable about assessment to support their students and improve the learning environment.

Traditional and alternative assessments are often regarded as opposing approaches. However, combining both traditional and alternative assessment techniques would be the most effective approach for schools looking to balance teaching and assessment practices and create a conducive learning environment that facilitates students' learning. This requires a paradigm shift in ELT assessment practices and teacher training, in terms of approaches to assessment, as well as digital literacy and skills. Teachers encounter various challenges and should be provided with training in the use of digital tools for assessment purposes, and on the effective incorporation of technology in assessment task design. The recent review of the Turkish education system based on the 2019 OECD report emphasized the necessity for multiple means of assessment, and diversifying techniques beyond traditional methods (Kitchen et al., 2019). This highlights the importance for sufficient knowledge and competence in implementing a range of

assessment techniques, which can be achieved through hands-on teacher training and continuous professional development.

Overall, the findings suggest that institutions should provide support and resources to help teachers navigate the challenges associated with alternative e-assessments. This includes providing training programs, easy access to digital tools and platforms, and ongoing support for the enhancement of digital literacy and assessment competence. Administrators and policy-makers should prioritize professional development, while also addressing workload and class size to support the seamless adoption of alternative e-assessments. The study also emphasizes the importance of promoting academic integrity among students. Institutions should implement strategies to discourage cheating and plagiarism, such as establishing a culture of integrity and providing clear guidelines for academic honesty.

As a limitation, this study involved a small sample size; therefore, using larger sample sizes may also provide more insights into the perceptions and experiences of EFL teachers regarding alternative e-assessments. Secondly, the participants included in this study were limited to the Turkish language instructors in the preparatory programs in higher education institutions in Türkiye. Similar studies in other contexts will expand the literature on alternative e-assessment practices. In addition, quantitative data can be collected to triangulate the findings of this study.

The current study aimed to potentially contribute to the field of language assessment in the tertiary level EFL context by providing insight into EFL teachers' perceptions. In such contexts, these findings highlight areas and aspects of alternative assessments that require further research, thus stimulating discussions focusing on the rising trend towards more widespread use of learner-centered assessment. Although alternative e-assessments offer numerous advantages, their effectiveness relies on careful planning and implementation, and it is essential to remember that successful utilization is contingent on thoughtful mediation throughout the process.

In conclusion, successful utilization of alternative e-assessments requires collaborative efforts to ensure meaningful and equitable assessment practices that support student learning and engagement. Recommendations include providing institutional support, ongoing professional development, and strategies to promote academic integrity. Future research should explore these themes in larger sample sizes and diverse contexts, while also considering quantitative data to triangulate findings and enhance the understanding of e-assessment practices in tertiary level EFL education.

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Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

Ölçme-değerlendirme, öğretim süreçlerinin ayrılmaz bir parçasıdır ve öğrenme deneyimlerini şekillendirmede kilit bir rol oynar. Öğrencilerin ihtiyaçlarını, güçlü ve zayıf yönlerini belirlemeye, müfredat ve materyaller hakkında karar vermeye, gelişimi izlemeye, performans kanıtı toplamaya ve öğretim yöntem ve stratejilerini değerlendirmeye yardımcı olur. İletişimsel Dil Öğretimi metodolojisine (Communicative Language Teaching) ve dijital çağa geçişle birlikte, süreç ve performansa dayalı alternatif değerlendirmeler yaygınlaşmaya başlamıştır.

Dijital teknolojiler, eğitimin yürütülme biçimine önemli ölçüde katkıda bulunmuş ve değiştirmiş, e-öğrenme ve teknoloji destekli öğrenmeye kapı açmış, bu da e-değerlendirmelerin önünü açmıştır. Çeşitli web tabanlı öğrenme yönetim sistemleri yükseköğretime dâhil edilmiştir. Bu öğrenme yönetim sistemleri, yalnızca standart testlerin çevrimiçi olarak yapılmasına değil, aynı zamanda daha işbirlikli ve/veya etkileşimli görevlerin tamamlanmasına da olanak tanıyan çeşitli işlevler barındırmaktadır. Kullanıcılar arasında işbirliğini ve etkileşimi artırma amacına hizmet eden bu araçlar arasında tartışma forumları, bloglar ve wikiler bulunmaktadır. Öz ve akran değerlendirmeleri ve e-portfolyolar, öğrencilerin dil performanslarını çevrimiçi olarak değerlendirmede yaygın olarak kullanılan diğer iki alternatif tekniktir. Yabancı dil eğitimi bağlamında, alternatif değerlendirme yöntemlerinin uygulanması, öğrenme çıktılarını geliştirme kapasitesi açısından kabul görmüştür.

Araştırmalar hem dil öğrenenlerin hem de öğretmenlerin alternatif e-değerlendirmelere yönelik olumlu algılara sahip olduğunu göstermektedir (Baturay, 2015; Cirit, 2015, Assulaimani, 2021; Alavi et al., 2022; Issa, 2020). Ancak, alternatif e-değerlendirmelerin uygulanması, öğretmenler üzerinde artan iş yükü gibi zorlukları beraberinde getirebilir. Yetersiz dijital beceriler ve değerlendirmelerin güvenilirliği gibi faktörler öğrencilerin e-değerlendirmelerdeki performansını etkileyebilmektedir.

Bu çalışma, Türkiye'de üniversitelerin hazırlık programlarında görevli İngilizce öğretmenlerinin alternatif e-değerlendirmelere ilişkin algılarını araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma nitel araştırma kapsamında fenomenoloji desene uygun olarak tasarlanmıştır. Fenomenoloji, bireylerin bir kavram veya fenomene yönelik deneyimlerini ortaya çıkarır (Cresswell, 2007). Bireylerin fenomeni nasıl algıladıkları, nasıl betimledikleri, fenomen hakkında ne hissettikleri, fenomeni nasıl yargıladıkları, nasıl anımsadıkları, nasıl anlamlandırdıkları fenomenolojinin temel odak noktasını oluşturmaktadır (Patton, 2018). Türkiye'de farklı üniversitelerin İngilizce hazırlık programlarında görevli 17 İngilizce öğretmeniyle çevrimiçi görüşmeler yapılmış ve alternatif e-değerlendirmelerle ilgili görüş ve deneyimlerine odaklanılmıştır. Katılımcıların seçiminde amaçlı örnekleme süreçleri izlenmiştir. Seçim kriteri olarak, a) Üniversitelerin hazırlık programlarında en az beş yıl çalışmış olmak b) bu programlarda ölçme-değerlendirme ekip üyesi olmak belirlenmiştir. Görüşmeler çevrimiçi bir ortamda gerçekleştirilmiş ve görüşme için hazırlanmış olan protokol takip edilmiştir. Katılımcıların rıza beyanına istinaden görüşmeler kaydedilmiş ve akabinde yazıya dökülmüştür.

Öğretmenlerin anlatılarındaki örüntüleri ve temaları ortaya çıkarmak için tematik analiz kullanılmıştır ve veri analizinde Braun and Clarke (2006) tarafından önerilmiş olan süreçler takip edilmiştir.

Bulgular, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin alternatif e-değerlendirmeler hakkında farklı algılara sahip olduğunu ve altı ana temanın ortaya çıktığını ortaya koymuştur: öğrenci öğrenimine etkisi, iş yükü, akademik dürüstlük, dijital teknoloji, not verme ve geri bildirim ve ölçme-değerlendirme becerileri.

Alternatif e-değerlendirmeler kişiselleştirilmiş ve dinamik öğrenme deneyimleri sunar. Tartışma forumları, bloglar ve e-portfolyolar gibi araçlar öğrencilerin aktif katılımını ve özdeğerlendirmelerini kolaylaştırmaktadır. Ancak katılımcılara göre öğrencileri yeni değerlendirme formatlarına alıştırma sürecinin yönetimi ve kültürel farklılıklar zorluklar olarak belirtilmiştir.

Dijital araçların ve öğrenme yönetim sistemlerinin mevcudiyeti, alternatif e-değerlendirmelerin benimsenmesini kolaylaştırmaktadır. Ancak öğrencilerin farklı dijital okuryazarlık seviyeleri ve öğretmenlerin dijital platformları kullanma yetkinlikleri nedeniyle zorluklar ortaya çıkmaktadır. Hem öğretmenlerin hem de öğrencilerin dijital araçları etkin bir şekilde kullanabilmeleri için sürekli destek ve eğitim çok önemlidir.

Geri bildirim, alternatif e-değerlendirmelerde çok önemli bir rol oynar. Ancak bu süreç, özellikle kalabalık sınıflarda eğitmenler için zaman alıcı olabilir. Tanımlanmış dereceli puanlama anahtarları güvenilirliği ve özgünlüğü artırarak hem öğrenciler hem de öğretmenler arasında şeffaflığı ve özdüşünümü teşvik eder. Katılımcılar, özellikle sınırlı kaynaklara ve çok sayıda öğrenciye sahip bağlamlarda alternatif e-değerlendirmelerle ilişkili artan iş yükünü ortaya koymaktadır. Bu zorluklara rağmen, bazı katılımcılar alternatif e-değerlendirmeleri esneklikleri ve kişiselleştirilmiş geri bildirim potansiyelleri nedeniyle bir avantaj olarak görmektedir. Alternatif e-değerlendirmelerin uygulanması, özellikle kalabalık sınıflarda öğretmenlerin iş yükünü artırmaktadır. Katılımcılar, daha fazla zaman ve çaba gerektiren çevrimiçi e-değerlendirmelerin tasarlanması, geliştirilmesi ve uygulanması nedeniyle artan iş yükünü vurgulamışlardır. Kişiselleştirilmiş geri bildirim sağlamak ve öğrenci ilerlemesini çevrimiçi olarak yakından izlemek önemli ölçüde zaman ve çaba gerektirir. Bazı eğitmenler bunu öğretmenin doğal bir yönü olarak görürken, diğerleri zaman yönetiminin önemini vurgulamaktadır. Sınıfların kalabalık olması geri bildirim sürecini aksatabilmekte ve etkili kişiselleştirilmiş geri bildirimin önünde bir engel haline gelebilmektedir.

Katılımcılar e-değerlendirmelerin çevrimiçi doğası gereği, akademik suistimalle ilgili endişelerini vurgulamışlardır. İntihal ve kopya, öğrenci çalışmalarının orijinalliğini sağlamak için yöntemler gerektiren zorluklardır. Alternatif performans değerlendirmeleri, kopya çekme vakalarını azaltabilir ve değerlendirme ölçütleri geliştirilip değerlendirmede sağlıklı bir şekilde kullanımıyla ölçme-değerlendirmenin güvenirliği artırılabilir.

Ölçme-değerlendirme yetkinliği, kaliteli öğretim için çok önemlidir. Araştırmalar, pek çok öğretmenin dil ölçme-değerlendirme ilkeleri ve yöntemleri konusunda yeterli bilgi

ve deneyime sahip olmadığını göstermektedir. Türkiye bağlamında bu eksiklik kısmen öğretmen eğitimi programlarının ölçme-değerlendirmenin yalnızca teorik yönlerini kapsamasından kaynaklanmaktadır. Öğretmenler, çevrimiçi öğretim ve değerlendirme ile ilgili mesleki gelişim faaliyetlerine katılmalı ve değerlendirme teknikleri konusunda eğitim almalıdır. Araştırmada katılımcılar bu konunun önemini vurgulamışlardır. Öğretmenlerin alternatif e-değerlendirme yöntemlerini etkili bir şekilde kullanabilmeleri için daha fazla mesleki gelişim programlarına ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır. Değerlendirme okuryazarlığını ele alan mesleki gelişim programları, öğretmenlerin yeterliliğini artırmak için gereklidir.

Sonuç olarak, alternatif e-değerlendirmeler kişiselleştirilmiş öğrenme deneyimleri sunmakta ve eleştirel düşünmeyi teşvik ederek geleneksel standart değerlendirmeler ile öğrenci merkezli yaklaşımlar arasında bir denge sağlamaktadır. Bulgular, alternatif e-değerlendirmelerle ilgili zorlukları ele almak için öğretmen eğitimine, sürekli desteğe ve kaynaklara duyulan ihtiyacı vurgulamaktadır. Öğretmenlerin iş yükünün dengelenmesi, sınıf mevcutlarının azaltılması ve akademik dürüstlüğün geliştirilmesi, bu değerlendirmelerin başarılı bir şekilde benimsenmesinde kilit faktörlerdir.

Çalışmanın sınırlılıkları, örneklemin küçük olması ve Türkiye'deki yükseköğretim kurumlarının hazırlık programlarında görevli öğretmenlerle kısıtlı olmasıdır. Gelecekteki araştırmalar daha büyük ve daha çeşitli örneklemle gerçekleştirilebilir, ayrıca nicel verilerin dâhil edilmesi bulguları daha da geçerli kılabilir.

Çalışma, öğretmenlerin algılarına ışık tutarak alternatif e-değerlendirme uygulamalarının faydalarını ve zorluklarını ortaya koymaktadır. Ölçme-değerlendirmeye dengeli bir yaklaşımı vurgulayarak kurumlar, öğrenci öğrenme çıktılarını geliştirmek ve etkili dil eğitimi uygulamalarını teşvik etmek için alternatif e-değerlendirmelerin potansiyelinden yararlanabilir. Eğitim geliştikçe ölçme-değerlendirme uygulamalarının da anlamlı ve etkili öğrenme sonuçlarını sağlamak için geliştirilmesi gerekmektedir.

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