


Teachers' professional development: Opportunities and challenges in Türkiye

Çiğdem Şahin ^{1*} 

¹Çukurova Science and Arts Center, Ministry of National Education, Adana, TURKEY

*Corresponding Author: cigdem.cigdem@yahoo.com

Citation: Şahin, Ç. (2025). Teachers' professional development: Opportunities and challenges in Türkiye. *International Journal of Professional Development, Learners and Learning*, 7(2), e2511. <https://doi.org/10.30935/ijpdll/15834>

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to identify the competencies of teachers, challenges and provide for their improvement in opportunities in teachers' professional development. The research was carried out with 30 teachers from different branches in the 2022–2023 academic year. The data were analyzed via qualitative research methods using content analysis. The research results showed: inadequate pre-service and in-service education of teachers, lack of funding, lack of planning for teacher training, uncertainties because of varying depth and values in educational policy, and negative characteristics of school managers. Trips abroad, meeting innovative guiding mentors/professionals, helping teachers be more beneficial, developing digital/computer competency, motivating teachers to engage in personal and professional growth are demonstrated as the opportunities teachers have during professional development. Based on the results, the most important suggestions are increasing related regulations and improving teachers' pre- and in-service education and providing adequate financial support for their participation in professional development.

Keywords: teachers, professional development, opportunities, challenges, teacher education

Received: 21 Jun. 2024 ♦ Accepted: 11 Nov. 2024

INTRODUCTION

The effectiveness of educational and instructional processes is closely related to quality of teaching. It is of great importance to find the obstacles and challenges that teachers face in the classroom and develop solutions for preventing problems and difficulties. Additionally, providing opportunities for the teachers' professional development will increase quality in education. Professional development of teachers affects the quality of education and is seen as a tool for creating strong teaching and educational reforms all over the world.

Future educators are expected to be change mediators who make contributions outside of the classroom by participating in ongoing professional development and interacting professionally with peers, parents, and the community (Aliu & Kaçaniku, 2023). An essential factor in the success of educational institutions is the influence of teachers (Kurbanov & Sirojiddinova, 2021). The role of talented teachers and administrators is highlighted on the successes of schools that have succeeded in PISA (OECD, 2013). According to Tao et al. (2022), teacher support has a positive effect on academic success. In particular, students who experience teacher support are more likely to display resilient attitudes toward learning, adaptive goals for learning activities, and positive academic views. They also tend to put in more

effort to advance in their course work (Liu et al., 2023). Given the necessity to comprehend the motivations underlying teachers' actions on the job, examining teachers' personal and professional identities has been increasingly important recently (Saqipi & Vogrinc, 2021). Teachers with professional competencies support students' knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and beliefs. Teaching becomes more effective when competencies in cultural awareness, sensitivity to communication variations, and knowledge and understanding of the nuances in intellectual, pedagogical, and personal domains are demonstrated (Joseph, 2013). Ministry of National Education (MoNE, 2017) general competencies of the teaching profession are shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1 shows general competencies of the teaching profession – professional knowledge, professional skills, attitudes and values are gathered under the competency areas. It consists of 11 sub-competences related to these competencies and 65 indicators under these competencies.

It is too crucial to leave the creation of excellent teachers and instruction to chance. The Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC, 2013) creates national teacher standards, prescribes training for educators. There is a strong link between the quality of trained teachers and the quality of the education they provide. For this reason, teacher education institutions have concerns about

This research was presented at The Kosovo International Conference for Educational Research, June 2023.

Table 1. General competencies of the teaching profession

Professional knowledge	Professional skill	Attitude and value
A1. Field knowledge	B1. Planning education and teaching	C1. National, moral, and universal values
A2. Field education knowledge	B2. Providing learning environment	C2. Approach to the students
A3. Regulatory knowledge	B3. Managing teaching and learning process	C3. Communication and collaboration
	B4. Measurement and assessment	C4. Individual and professional development

training quality teachers. It should not be forgotten that the quality of education can never go beyond the quality of teachers (Schleicher, 2016). The quality of teacher education and its subsequent impact on teacher quality is a global concern (Narad, 2019). The primary factor influencing teacher quality is professional development (Hamdan & Lai, 2015). Furthermore, professional development has the potential to improve teachers' professional knowledge and skills (Lu et al., 2019) and increase student achievement (Lindvall, 2017). Well-qualified teachers organize their own attitudes and approaches by considering the needs and expectations of society (Gündüz & Tangut, 2014).

The most important way of bringing well-educated people into society is to increase the quality of teachers and teaching profession (Çalışıcı, 2019). Eroğlu and Özbek (2020) determined that successful teachers contribute significantly to professional success. Focusing on teacher quality should be considered a norm in a society that everyone wants and agrees with quality teachers for their children (Churchward & Willis, 2019).

The professional development of teachers is an important factor affecting teacher qualifications. Teacher quality is closely related to quality educational environments and successful teaching. It is, therefore, valuable to address the difficulties and obstacles faced by teachers during their professional development. Examining the opportunities that professional development can provide for teachers can lead to many important contributions to literature. The starting point and the aim of this research should be determining the competencies of teachers, identifying the difficulties they experience in teaching and during their professional development process, itemizing the obstacles they face in efforts to provide great education, and determining the professional development opportunities that will be the best for maximizing teaching quality.

The professional development of teachers contributes not only personally but also to the instructional process in the classroom and to school development. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), the features of an effective and successful professional development practice are content based on effective teaching strategies that support teachers' learning in the classroom, active learning based on teachers' direct participation and practices, supporting collaboration, using effective application models, providing coaching and effective feedback. Furthermore, it provides significant information for politicians and administrators in terms of student success and support for teachers (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). For this reason, in order to ensure the professional development of teachers, it is of great importance to identify the obstacles to the professional development of teachers, to identify and disseminate the opportunities created by professional development, and to encourage professional development. The purpose of this research is to determine teachers' professional development opportunities and challenges and to develop suggestions for teachers' professional development. For this purpose, the research aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the opportunities of teachers' professional development?
2. What are the challenges of teachers' professional development?

METHODOLOGY

This research was designed and conducted in a qualitative research design. Qualitative research method uses rich, in-depth data to better understand the social and cultural context in which the study topic arises (Vivek, 2022). This research is in the case study model, which is one of the qualitative research designs. Convenience sampling was used to determine the participants. The participants (30 teachers) were based in different schools and different branches in Adana city center, Türkiye.

Data Collection

Descriptive analysis and content analysis techniques were used in the data analysis. The descriptive analysis includes to create a thematic framework, to process the data, to define the findings, to analyze and interpreting the findings (Creswell, 2014; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). These four stages are taken into consideration in the analysis of the data in the research.

The data collection form consists of two parts. In the first part, there are 3 questions about the gender, professional seniority and branches of training (e.g., math, science, etc.). The three structured questions in the second part were:

1. What are the professional competencies that teachers should have?
2. What are the obstacles/barriers to your professional development?
3. What are the opportunities for your professional development?

Study Group

There are 30 teachers from different kinds of schools in the study which was conducted in Adana-Türkiye. A Google form was distributed electronically. Participants were given information on the confidentiality of their opinions, then they completed the form on the voluntary basis. Participants were informed that all opinions and views would be kept confidential. All participants agreed to complete the form.

As seen in **Table 2**, there are more female teachers (20) than male (10) participants in the research. 14 participants' seniority is between 11–20 years, 14 participants' seniority is between 21–30 years, and 2 participants have 31 and above seniority years. The teachers' branches were English, science, primary level, history, counselling, and guidance.

Data Analysis

For the data analysis, descriptive and content analysis techniques were used. While preparing the interview form used in the research, the relevant literature was reviewed in detail. The teachers to be

Table 2. Participant profile

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Female	20	66.6
Male	10	33.3
Professional seniority (years)		
11–20	14	46.6
21–30	14	46.6
31 and above	2	6.6
Branch		
English	12	40.0
Science	6	20.0
Primary school teacher	6	20.0
History	2	6.6
Counselling and guidance	4	13.3
Total	30	100

interviewed were assured that the data were for scientific research purposes only, and official permissions were given. The interview form was reviewed and approved by two instructors at the measurement and evaluation department in the faculty of education in order to ensure content validity. In evaluating the research, content and document analysis was used.

First of all, the data were read line by line and the dimensions that were important in the research were determined. According to Lune and Berg (2017), content analysis is a careful, in-depth, systematic examination and interpretation of a text creating themes, and meanings. Based on these categories and codes determined while examining the documents, reports and documents containing statistical information were created and analyzed. The participants in the research were randomly numbered as P1, P2, P3, P4, etc. After the content analysis, themes were created, and frequency values were included. According to Yıldırım and Şimşek (2008), it is important to present the data as detailed and directly as possible in terms of the validity and reliability of the research results. In line with this view, direct quotations are frequently included.

Validity and Reliability

The validity and reliability in qualitative studies are different from quantitative studies. Validity and reliability enhance transparency (Singh, 2014). In order to ensure internal validity in the research. As Creswell (2015) stated the relevant situation of the data was considered in the presentation of the findings and the interpretations were made accordingly, and the criteria of internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity were taken as the basis in order to ensure internal consistency of the sub-themes. While coding the data, opinions of other researchers help clarify the themes and codes. As a general rule, similarity rate of the data coded by different coders is important (Fidan & Öztürk, 2015). The similarity ratio determines the reliability of the research. In Miles and Huberman's (1994a) research model, the consensus between the coders is called internal consistency. This similarity can be calculated using this formula: $\Delta = C \div (C + \partial) \times 100$ (Δ is reliability coefficient, C is number of topics/terms on which consensus is reached, ∂ is opinions on which consensus is not reached). Internal consistency is expected to be at least 80% (Miles & Huberman, 1994b; Patton, 2002). In current research, the data were coded by three researchers and then the codes were compared. The percentage of agreement was first calculated. It was found by calculating the ratio of the number of agreed codes to the total number of codes. Accordingly,

Table 3. Teachers' professional competences

Theme: Competence	Sub-theme	Frequency
Humanistic	Communication skills	25
	Motivation	18
	Love of children	15
	Patience	13
	Curiosity	12
	Humanistic approach	8
	Creativity	6
	Understanding/sympathetic	6
	Following technological developments	15
	To be open to development	10
Occupational	Academic knowledge	8
	Transferring the knowledge to students	6
	Psychological resilience	5
	Teamwork	5
	Classroom management	4
	Innovativeness	3
	Flexibility	2

the compatibility between codes was calculated as 80%. When there was a difference in the coding, a consensus was achieved by discussing the code. Validity was ensured by analyzing the data in depth using content analysis and by giving quotations frequently. It was essential to describe the participant characteristics, the research limitations, the data collection and analysis procedures in order to ensure external reliability (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013).

FINDINGS

Based on the opinions and evaluations of teachers, the teacher competencies, professional development challenges, and opportunities were defined. Findings were presented as a result of the content analysis.

As seen in **Table 3**, teachers' professional competences are categorized as humanistic and occupational competences. The participants explained what characteristics the teachers should have. The highest frequency belongs to communication (25), and flexibility sub themes have the lowest frequency (2). The teachers stated that communication skills, motivation, love of children, patience, curiosity, a humanistic/holistic approach, creativity, and being understanding and sympathetic are important qualities and traits to have. In the occupational competencies sub theme/category, following technological developments, being open to development, having academic knowledge, transferring knowledge to students, having psychological resilience, encouraging teamwork, showing effective classroom management, being innovative and flexible were the codes.

These are some statements of the participants:

P6: "Professional competences, human affairs, devotion."

P15: "Competent knowledge in the field, pedagogy, high-level communication skills, flexible thinking ability in accordance with the mental structure of the group he trains, being open to innovations, willingness to constantly update knowledge and skills with new ones, consistent, fair and solution-oriented."

P22: "Proficiency in classroom management, professional (branch-based) proficiency, effective communication skills."

Table 4. Challenges on the way of professional development

Theme: Obstacle	Sub-theme	Frequency
Ethical	Not merit implementations	13
	Injustice	9
Concrete	Economic reasons	10
	Inadequate number of the training	10
	Inadequacy of education programs' quality	8
	Uncertainty of educational policy	6
	Personal traits of school managers	6
	Overcrowded classrooms	4

Table 5. Opportunities of teachers' professional development

Theme	Sub-theme	Frequency
Interaction	Trips abroad	11
	Meeting innovative people	9
	Being more beneficial	8
Development	Digital competence	18
	Personal growth	18
	Having better working conditions	17
	Gaining experience	10

P25: "Adaptation to innovation."

P29: "Having a command in the field, improving her/himself, following and applying innovations, having strong communication skills, having human values, etc."

As seen in **Table 4**, there were conflicting ideas because of the way teachers' professional development was divided into two parts: Ethical and concrete difficulties. The majority of the participants (13) stated that implementations which have no merit are the difficulties. And some teachers (9) think injustice is another difficulty. Economic reasons, inadequate number of training options, low quality of education programs, negative personal traits of school managers, and overcrowded classrooms were the other obstacles stated by the participants. Participants shared these views on the issues:

P3: "Insufficient seminar training, lack of expert teacher educator in the branch."

P16: "Educational environments do not have sufficient equipment for high-level education, economic inadequacies on the basis of students and institutions, managers with stereotypical perspectives."

P18: "Managers prevent teachers to implement what is learnt in the courses, being kept in the background, not being motivated."

P23: "Being dependent on the curriculum, crowded classrooms."

P28: "The current system, excessive political influence in education and the school environment without discipline, visionless managers."

As seen in **Table 5**, professional development opportunities are categorized as interactive and developmental. The participants explained professional development opportunities as: trips abroad, meeting innovative people, being of more benefit to students,

improving digital/computer competency skills, personal holistic growth, how to improve working conditions, and ways to gain new educational experience. Participants' views in this category are as follows:

P1: "International projects."

P11: "Digital competence, to be able to review and read the related literature."

P14: "Professional experience, working with students from different cultures, working in different schools, reviewing resources and mastering different question styles."

P8: "Interactive education."

P5: "Learning advanced technology."

DISCUSSION

The present study provides evidence for teachers' professional competencies, challenges and opportunities of teachers' professional development. The findings reveal the competencies of teachers. Communication skills are very important for effective competent teaching. According to Kiadese (2011), efficient communication is seen as a vital tool in the teaching profession. Good classroom management, personality development, updated material, and strong communication are all necessary for effective teaching. Furthermore, Mayhew (2018) believes that a teacher's capacity to communicate efficiently with students, parents, and coworkers is critical to their performance. One of the factors affecting the teacher-child relationship is teachers' love for children (İman, 2014). Research shows that people who do not like children are unlikely to succeed in the teaching profession. It shows that loving and caring for children contributes positively to solving disciplinary problems with methods other than punishment. To be a successful educator, features such as being able to establish close relationships with children, being patient, calm and gentle are important (Duyan & Gelbal, 2008). Another important focus in the research was on teacher motivation. Teachers' motivation generally determines their level of engagement in teaching activities. It is assumed that a motivated teacher works harder, tries new techniques and activities, and generally does more for learners (Gokce, 2010). When teachers are highly motivated and given adequate attention, this enhances the quality of education by increasing the quality of the teaching-learning process (Ayeni, 2015). Based on the literature, it is possible to say that one of the important personal characteristics that teachers should have is "patience", in other words, the teaching profession requires patience (Büyüksahin & Şahin, 2017; Duman & Taş, 2021). In business life and in the teaching profession, it is important to be patient. In the study, it was determined that one of the competencies that teachers should have is curiosity. Curiosity is a tool to close the knowledge gap (Hidi & Renninger, 2020). There is some theoretical support that focuses on the fact that curiosity is related to the structure of intrinsic motivation, and that fostering autonomy, feelings of competence, and relatedness can promote intrinsic motivation and increase curiosity, but curiosity should also be supported externally (Shah et al., 2018). Creativity in education benefits teachers and students by making learning more exciting and meaningful (Rinkevich,

2011). Teacher creativity is required to implement 21st century learning strategies in student-centered learning, student creativity, creating an enjoyable, and meaningful learning environment, emphasizing exploration, discovery, and creating new learning, and differentiated learning (Hanover Research, 2019). It can be confirmed that positive emotions of teachers have positive effects on their students (Rodrigo-Ruiz, 2016). Morris et al. (2013) examine the effects of preschool teachers' emotions on their students' emotional competence and conclude that teachers' emotions do indeed influence children's emotional understanding.

As a result of the research, it was determined that teachers should keep up to date on technological advancements and developments. Teachers are expected to integrate computer literacy and technology into instruction. Within the framework of new curriculum expectations, teachers are needed to prepare learning environments by using technology (MoNE, 2009). Teachers' self-efficacy on technological leadership varies according to their professional development (Görgülü & Küçükali, 2018). According to Öçal and Şimşek (2017), the use of technology in learning processes provides significant advantages like facilitating learning, concretizing abstract experiences, reducing costs, and preparing a rich learning experience. A teacher who lacks the integration of technology into learning processes cannot manage an effective learning process alone with an effective learning environment design for distance education (Policy Brief UN, 2020). Being open to improvement is another result of research. According to OECD (2009), teacher professional development includes activities which develop skills, knowledge, and expertise. The importance of academic knowledge is highlighted in the research. The requirements include more policy activity and improvement at the state level. This academization policy requires teachers to have academic knowledge (Bergmark & Erixon, 2019). According to Hamza et al. (2018), if research and teaching are viewed as two equal practices, then there is potential to narrow and bridge the gap between theory/practice and teachers/researchers. Providing information transfer to students is the other result of the current research. Teachers transfer knowledge from those who have it to those who need it (Jusinki, 2021). The result of the research emphasizes the importance of psychological resilience. Psychological resilience is defined as a capacity that enables individuals to cope with difficulty, negativity, and stress (Rutter, 2012). Furthermore, overcrowded classes and extra responsibilities are positive predictors for teacher stress (Kavenuke et al., 2022). In order for teachers to exhibit this determination, they must be able to cope with the challenges they face, which specifically requires higher levels of psychological resilience as their psychological resilience can both protect them from and against psychological distress in the event of stressful life events (Ran et al., 2020).

In the research, it was found that teamwork is an important competency. Teamwork is the capacity to collaborate and communicate with others in order to accomplish shared goals (Ballangrud et al., 2017). Different forms of teacher teamwork are associated with greater student readiness to learn and also teach, teacher engagement, teacher entrepreneurship, and higher student achievement in math and reading (Ronfeldt et al., 2015). In the study, it was found that one of the teacher's competencies should be classroom management. Classroom management addresses disruptive behaviors of students in the classroom and helps the classroom teacher to provide better instruction in the classroom so that effective learning can occur (Parveen et al.,

2022). The innovative aspect of teachers is another finding highlighted in the results of this research. Teachers' adoption of innovation, their attitudes toward innovation, and their skills, willingness to develop new pedagogical methods and use of educational technologies are essential for educational innovation to thrive (Erden & Erden, 2020). When teachers and students are open to innovation, it becomes easier for a society to innovate (Atalay, 2021). Flexibility is also necessary for teachers to adapt learning objectives, content, and methods to changing contexts and expectations (Pepin et al., 2017). It is extremely important that teachers are able to understand and pursue new educational goals by adapting curriculum materials in their daily instructions rather than outsourcing them to accommodate rapid change (Brown, 2009).

It has been determined that one of the important difficulties experienced by teachers in the professional development process is incompetence. Bozbayındır (2019) found that the most important factors that negatively affect the status of the teaching profession are the inability to achieve success in education and the lack of appointments according to merit. In Gunyel (2022), the importance of merit in management is emphasized. Another challenge to professional development is injustice. Justice is among the principles to be taken as a basis in the process of teacher candidate and experienced teacher performance evaluation (MoNE, 2018). As Akkol (2016) emphasizes, this performance evaluation process should be operated in accordance with the principles of justice and should be instrumental in raising awareness of justice in society. Özsemerci (2003) states that the reason why organizations cannot develop in line with their current possibilities and cannot carry out activities in line with their scientific and ethical practices is advancements are not based on merit.

Another difficulty experienced in professional development is economic hardship. Teachers with PhD degrees want to participate in congresses and conferences for professional development but are often unable to do so due to high participation fees (Çelik Şahin, 2022). The economic reasons, which are among the professional development barriers revealed in the research, are supported by the findings of Uştu et al. (2016) regarding the insufficient financial support being among the professional development barriers of teachers. According to Demir and Arı (2013), the problems that teachers care about the most are low income, decrease in prestige and respect in their societies, and frequently changing education and training programs because of legislation. Karaman and Bakırcı (2010) state that teachers, who are at the middle and lower levels of income in Turkey, have problems in paying for: the costs of books, stationery, teaching fees, travel costs to acquire a postgraduate education, and fees for participation in congresses and symposiums. In-service training opportunities do not meet the learning needs of teachers because they are not well planned, and they are insufficient in terms of quantity and quality (Eroğlu & Özbek, 2020). In the study, which supports the conclusion that the quality of the training programs is insufficient, the participants perceived the contents of the in-service trainings organized by the MoNE to be too simple and easy (Çelik Şahin, 2022). According to the findings of Elçiçek and Yaşar (2016), İzci and Eroğlu (2016), many professional development activities organized for teachers (courses and seminars) by the MoNE are far from meeting the needs, are unqualified, unplanned and inefficient. The result of uncertainty in education policies is seen in many studies. There are frequent job changes in the MoNE and past experiences and good examples and practices are not taken into practical ongoing account or saved and used again. They are considered to be factors that make it difficult to carry out a sustainable

policy in the field of in-service training (Günel & Tanrıverdi, 2014). Although the lifelong learning needs of teachers are partially met with in-service training, there are findings regarding the inadequacy of in-service training in meeting the needs (Kulaz, 2013). This situation indicates the necessity of developing policies and strategies that include the needs of those in the profession. By its nature, teaching requires continuous professional development, in the lifelong education process (Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi [Hacettepe University Faculty of Education], 2017). Teachers experience difficulties arising from the personality traits of school managers during the professional development process. Teachers need educational leaders who: value equality and justice, who are providers and nurturers of personal internal motivation, who are supportive and guiding (Baloglu et al., 2008). Crowded classrooms are another obstacle to professional development. According to teachers' comments, another factor that hinders professional development is crowded classrooms (Altun & Yengin Sarpkaya, 2021). According to the findings of Can's (2019) research, negative managerial attitudes are among the obstacles to the professional development of teachers. According to the findings of Turhan and Yaraş (2013), many school managers do not help teachers develop professionally. These findings, in parallel with the research findings, confirm that the attitudes and behaviors of the managers have an important effect on the professional development of teachers. Although school support from and cooperation with school managers are very important for teachers' professional development (Kwakman, 2003; Liu et al., 2014), the negative attitudes of the managers often become most prominent in creating problems (Eroglu, 2019; Eroglu & Özbek, 2018). The factors that motivate teachers for their professional development (Drage, 2010, pp. 33–34) need to be implemented in a positive way as they affect: individual attitudes and needs, the support of colleagues and the environment, commitment to lifelong learning, the reward system at the school, the support of the school principal, and the encouragement of family and friends. Teachers pointed out the best opportunities that professional development provides them are traveling abroad, meeting innovative people, providing digital/computer literacy and competence, and personal development. Pre-service teachers want to participate in mobility abroad provided that the appropriate environment and conditions are provided. They believe that they can contribute more as individual effective teachers by participating in international mobility (Kılavuz & Yanpar Yelken, 2022). An effective professional development program is defined by Sparks (2002) as a developmental movement process in which all participants agree to continuously learn new methods and techniques, support, planning and processes in order to actively increase the success of their students. According to Tømte et al. (2013), most teacher education programs lack the resources necessary to help students build professional digital competencies, and the development of these abilities is only weakly included into program management. In addition, they noted the academic profiles of teacher education institutions on this subject are insufficiently developed. On the one hand, they provide for their personal development by expanding their teaching skills, share new knowledge of subjects and their relationship with students, but also on the other hand, they provide for the development of the school leaders, and thus the school (Bell & Gilbert, 2005).

Based on the research results, the following recommendations have been developed:

- While planning teacher training programs and training, a needs analysis can be done to identify the areas that teachers need.
- Collaboration can be made with local, national or international competent institutions for teacher training. While determining the participants for these training sessions, choices should be made based on fairness and merit.
- Support from academics can be obtained by planning in-service education programs that prevent negative attitudes from school managers.
- Financial support needs to increase so it is easier for more teachers to attend training related sessions in their fields of expertise and competencies.

CONCLUSIONS

The study shows teachers' professional competencies, challenges in education, and areas for creating opportunities for teachers' professional development. The participants presented their views that teacher competencies should be in the important areas of communication skills, motivation, love of children, patience, curiosity, humanistic approaches, creativity, and being understanding and sympathetic. In the occupational competency category, they presented these areas: following and improving skills in technological areas, being open to personal development, keeping up to date on academic knowledge, transferring the knowledge effectively to students, maintaining psychological resilience, encouraging teamwork, classroom management, being innovative and flexible. Implementations that have no merit are obstacles. According to the teachers, injustice is another obstacle. Economic reasons, inadequate number of training opportunities, poor quality of existing educational programs, negative personal traits of school managers, and overcrowded classrooms are the other obstacles stated by the participants. The opportunities for teachers' professional development are trips abroad, meeting innovative people, being of more benefit to students, improving digital/computer skills, personal growth, improving work conditions, gaining new experiences.

Funding: The author received no financial support for the research and/or authorship of this article.

Ethics declaration: The author declared that this study was approved by the Ministry of National Education, and it adhered to the highest ethical standards. The author further declared that the consent declaration was approved by the participants at the beginning of the study and privacy and confidentiality of the participants were preserved.

Declaration of interest: The author declares no competing interest.

Data availability: Data generated or analyzed during this study are available from the author on request.

REFERENCES

- Akkol, M. L. (2016). Müzik eğitiminde toplumsal adalet kavramı [The concept of social justice in music education]. *Abant İzzet Baysal Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 16(İpekyolu Özel Sayısı), 2153–2164.

- Aliu, J., & Kačaniku, F. (2023). An exploration of teacher leadership: Are future teachers ready to lead? *Center for Educational Policy Studies Journal*, 13(4), 37–62. <https://doi.org/10.26529/cepsj.1634>
- Altun, B., & Yengin Sarpkaya, P. (2021). Öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimi üzerine bir durum çalışması [A case study on teachers' professional development]. *Uluslararası Toplum Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 18(Eğitim Bilimleri Özel Sayısı). <https://doi.org/10.26466/opus.932403>
- Atalay, A. M. (2021). İngilizce öğretmenlerinin eleştirel düşünme eğilimleri ile bireysel yenilikçilik düzeylerinin incelenmesi [Examining English language teachers' critical thinking tendencies and individual innovativeness levels] [Master's thesis, Pamukkale University].
- Ayeni, A. J. (2015). Teachers' motivation as strategy for sustenance of instructional task quality and standards in secondary schools in Ondo state, Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Human Development*, 4(4), 91–101.
- Ballangrud, R., Husebo, S. E., & Hall-Lord, M. L. (2017). Cross-cultural validation and psychometric testing of the Norwegian version of the TeamSTEPPS® teamwork perceptions questionnaire. *BMC Health Services Research*, 17(1), 799–809. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-017-2733-y>
- Baloğlu, N., Karadağ, E., & Doğan, E. A. (2008). İlköğretim okulu yöneticilerinin mesleki etik davranışları [Professional ethical behaviors of primary school principals]. *İş Ahlakı Dergisi*, 1(2), 7–26.
- Bell, B., & Gilbert, J. (2005). *Teacher development: A model from science education*. Taylor & Francis e-Library. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203975145>
- Bergmark, U., & Erixon, P. (2019). Professional and academic knowledge in teachers' research: An empowering oscillation. *European Educational Research Journal*, 19(6), 587–608. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1474904119890158>
- Bozbayındır, F. (2019). Öğretmenlik mesleğinin statüsünü etkileyen unsurların öğretmen görüşleri temelinde incelenmesi [Examining the factors affecting the status of the teaching profession based on teachers' opinions]. *Electronic Journal of Social Sciences*, 18(72). <https://doi.org/10.17755/esosder.583274>
- Brown, M. W. (2009). The teacher-tool relationship. In J. T. Remillard, B. A. Herbel-Eisenmann, & G. M. Lloyd (Eds.), *Mathematics teachers at work connecting curriculum material* (pp. 17–36). Routledge.
- Büyükşahin, Y., & Şahin, A. E. (2017). Öğretmenlerin gözünden eğitimde kalite sorunsalı [The problem of quality in education from the perspective of teachers]. *Bartın Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 6(3), 1134–1152. <https://doi.org/10.14686/buefad.290859>
- Çalışıcı, B. (2019). 2006-2018 yılları arasında Türkiye'de öğretmen yetiştirme politikalarına ilişkin bir değerlendirme [An evaluation of teacher training policies in Turkey between 2006-2018] [Master's thesis, Hacettepe University].
- Can, E. (2019). Öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimleri: Engeller ve öneriler [Professional development of teachers: Barriers and recommendations]. *Eğitimde Nitel Araştırmalar Dergisi-Journal of Qualitative Research in Education*, 7(4), 1618–1650. <https://doi.org/10.14689/Issn.2148-2624.1.7c.4s.14m>
- Çelik Şahin, Ç. (2022). Doktoralı öğretmenlerin karşılaştığı zorlukların stratejik insan kaynakları ve yetenek yönetimi bağlamında incelenmesi [Examining the challenges faced by doctoral teachers in the context of strategic human resources and talent management]. *Turkish Studies-Educational Sciences*, 17(6), 1367–1393. <https://doi.org/10.7827/TurkishStudies.57950>
- Churchward, P., & Willis, J. (2019). The pursuit of teacher quality: Identifying some of the multiple discourses of quality that impact the work of teacher educators. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 47(3), 251–264. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1359866X.2018.1555792>
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Araştırma deseni* [Research design]. S. B. Demir (Trans.). Eğiten.
- Creswell, J. W. (2015). *Nitel araştırma yöntemleri* [Qualitative research methods]. M. Bütün, & S. B. Demir (Trans.). Siyasal.
- Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M. E., & Gardner, M. (2017). *Effective teacher professional development*. Learning Policy Institute. <https://doi.org/10.54300/122.311>
- Demir, M. K., & Arı, E. (2013). Öğretmen sorunları-Çanakkale İli örneği [Teacher problems-Çanakkale Province example]. *Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 32(1), 107–126.
- Drage, K. (2010). Professional development: Implications for Illinois career technical education teachers. *Journal of Career and Technical Education*, 25(2), 27–37. <https://doi.org/10.21061/jcte.v25i2.477>
- Duman, S. N., & Taş, İ. D. (2021). Eğitim fakültesi olmak (Kırıkkale Üniversitesi örneği) [Being a faculty member of the faculty of education (Kırıkkale University example)]. *Ulusal Eğitim Akademisi Dergisi*, 5(1), 112–130. <https://doi.org/10.32960/uead.898199>
- Duyan V., & Gelbal S. (2008). Barnett çocuk sevmeye ölçeği'nin Türkçeye uyarlama çalışması [Adaptation study of the Barnett child loving scale into Turkish]. *Eğitim ve Bilim Dergisi*, 33(148), 40–48.
- Elçiçek, Z., & Yaşar, M. (2016). Türkiye'de ve dünya'da öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimi [Professional development of teachers in Turkey and the world]. *Elektronik Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi*, 5(9), 12–19.
- Erden, A., & Erden, H. (2020). The relationship between individual innovation and social entrepreneurship characteristics of teacher candidates. *International Journal of Curriculum and Instruction*, 12(SI), 185–206.
- Eroğlu, M. (2019). Öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişime katılımlarıyla, mesleki gelişime yönelik tutumları, kendi kendine öğrenmeye hazır bulunuşlukları ve destekleyici okul özellikleri arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesi [Examining the relationship between teachers' participation in professional development, their attitudes towards professional development, their readiness for self-directed learning, and supportive school characteristics] [Unpublished PhD thesis]. İnönü University. <https://doi.org/10.26450/jshsr.883>
- Eroğlu, M., & Özbek, R. (2018). Zümre öğretmenler kurulu toplantılarının mesleki gelişim bağlamında incelenmesi [Examining the group teachers' board meetings in the context of professional development]. *Researcher: Social Science Studies*, 6(3), 255–271. <https://doi.org/10.18301/rss.727>
- Eroğlu, M., & Özbek, R. (2020). Etkili öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimi [Professional development of effective teachers]. *Dicle Üniversitesi Ziya Gökalp Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 1(37), 73–92. <https://doi.org/10.14582/DUZGEF.2020.143>

- Fidan, T., & Öztürk, I. (2015b). The relationship of the creativity of public and private school teachers to their intrinsic motivation and the school climate for innovation. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 195, 905–914. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.06.370>
- Gokce, F. (2010). Assessment of teacher motivation. *School Leadership and Management*, 30(5), 487–499. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2010.525228>
- Görgülü, D., & Küçükali, R. (2018). Öğretmenlerin teknolojik liderlik öz yeterliklerinin incelenmesi [Examining teachers' technological leadership self-efficacy]. *Uluslararası Liderlik Çalışmaları Dergisi: Kuram ve Uygulama*, 1(1), 1–12.
- Gündüz, H., & Tangut, E. (2014). Performans değerlendirmeye ilişkin öğretmen ve yönetici görüşleri. *Sakarya Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 0(9), 1–21.
- Günel, M., & Tanrıverdi, K. (2014). Dünya'da ve Türkiye'de hizmetçi eğitimler: Kurumsal ve akademik hafıza(kayıpları)mız [In-service training in the world and in Turkey: Our institutional and academic memory (losses)]. *Eğitim ve Bilim*, 39(175), 73–94. <https://doi.org/10.15390/EB.2014.2949>
- Günyel, H. (2022). Öğretmenlerin eğitim araştırmalarına yönelik tutum ve görüşlerinin incelenmesi: Bir karma araştırma [Examining teachers' attitudes and views towards educational research: A mixed study] [Master's thesis, İstanbul Sabahattin Zaim University].
- Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi [Hacettepe University Faculty of Education]. (2017). Türkiye'de öğretmen eğitimi ve istihdamı: Mevcut durum ve öneriler [Teacher education and employment in Turkey: Current status and recommendations]. *Hacettepe University*. http://www.egitim.hacettepe.edu.tr/belge/OgretmenEgitimiistihdam_Raporu.pdf
- Hamdan, A. R., & Lai, C. (2015). The relationship between teachers' factors and effective teaching. *Asian Social Science*, 11. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v11n12p274>
- Hamza, K., Palm, O., Palmqvist, J., Piqueras, J., & Wickman, P.-O. (2018). Hybridization of practices in teacher-researcher collaboration. *European Educational Research Journal*, 17(1), 170–186. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1474904117693850>
- Hanover Research. (2019). Differentiated instruction—A best practices report. *Utah State Board of Education*. <https://schools.utah.gov/ulead/uleadfiles/reports/bestpractice/Best%20Practices%20in%20Differentiated%20Instruction.pdf>
- Hidi, S. E., & Renninger, K. A. (2020). On educating curiosity and interest development. *Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences*, 35, 99–103. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cobeha.2020.08.002>
- İman, D. E. (2014). Okul öncesi öğretmen adaylarının çocuk sevgisi ve öğretmenlik mesleğine ilişkin motivasyonlarının incelenmesi [Examining preschool teacher candidates' love for children and motivation for the teaching profession]. *Kuramsal Eğitim Bilim Dergisi*, 7(4), 482–504. <https://doi.org/10.5578/keg.6950>
- InTASC. (2013). *Interstate teacher assessment and support consortium InTASC model core teaching standards and learning progressions for teachers 1.0: A resource for ongoing teacher development*. Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium.
- İzci, E., & Eroğlu, M. (2016). Eğitimde teknoloji kullanımı kursu hizmet içi eğitim programının değerlendirilmesi [Evaluation of the in-service training program of the technology use course in education]. *International Journal of Human Sciences*, 13(1), 1666–1688. <https://doi.org/10.14687/ijhs.v13i1.3584>
- Joseph, B. (2013). *Teacher effectiveness and professional competency among higher secondary school teachers in Kottayam District, Kerala* [PhD dissertation, Andhra University].
- Jusinki, M. M. (2021). Knowledge broker teacher and professional development. *International Journal of Teachers Professional Development*, 25(2), 231–237. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13664530.2021.1879922>
- Karaman, S., & Bakırcı, F. (2010). Türkiye'de lisansüstü eğitim: Sorunlar ve çözüm önerileri [Postgraduate education in Turkey: Problems and solutions]. *Sosyal Bilimler Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 5(2), 94–114. <https://doi.org/10.19129/sbad.171>
- Kavenuke, P. S., Kayombo, J. J., & Kinyota, M. (2022). Are they stress-free? Examining stress among primary school teachers in Tanzania. *Center for Educational Policy Studies Journal*, 12(3), 59–80. <https://doi.org/10.26529/cepsj.1058>
- Kiadese, A. L. (2011). An assessment of the teaching effectiveness of pre-vocational subjects teachers in Ogun State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Vocational and Technical Education*, 3(1), 5–8.
- Kılavuz, F., & Yanpar Yelken, T. (2022). Öğretmen adaylarının yurt dışı hareketlilik hakkındaki görüşleri [Opinions of prospective teachers about international mobility]. *Üniversite Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 5(2), 174–181. <https://doi.org/10.32329/uad.1070290>
- Kulaz, E. (2013). İlkokul öğretmenlerinin kendilerine yönelik hizmet içi eğitim uygulamalarının koşulları ve verimliliği hakkındaki görüşleri (İstanbul İli Tuzla İlçesi örneği) [Primary school teachers' views on the conditions and efficiency of in-service training practices for them (Istanbul Province Tuzla District example)] [Unpublished master's thesis]. Yeditepe University.
- Kurbanov, M. U., & Sirojiddinova, M. S. (2021). Mechanisms for effective management of the teaching staff in improving the quality of education. *Euro-Asia Conferences*, 3(1), 222–225.
- Kwakman, K. (2003). Factors affecting teachers' participation in professional learning activities. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 19(2), 149–170. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X\(02\)00101-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X(02)00101-4)
- Lindvall, J. (2017). Two large-scale professional development programs for mathematics teachers and their impact on student achievement. *International Journal of Science and Mathematics Education*, 15(7), 1281–1301. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10763-016-9750-x>
- Liu, H. W., Jehng, J. C. J., Chen, C. H. V., & Fang, M. (2014). What factors affect teachers in Taiwan in becoming more involved in professional development? A hierarchical linear analysis. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 25(3), 381–400. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrdq.21195>
- Liu, Q., Du X., & Lu H. (2023). Teacher support and learning engagement of EFL learners: The mediating role of self-efficacy and achievement goal orientation. *Current Psychology*, 42, 2619–2635. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-022-04043-5>

- Lu, M., Loyalka, P., Shi, Y., Chang, F., Liu, C., & Rozelle, S. (2019). The impact of teacher professional development programs on student achievement in rural China: Evidence from Shaanxi Province. *Journal of Development Effectiveness*, 11(2), 105–131. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19439342.2019.1624594>
- Lune, H., & Berg, B. (2017). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences*. Pearson.
- Mayhew, R. (2018). Why important for teachers to have good communication skills. *The Classroom*. <https://www.theclassroom.com>
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994b). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed). SAGE.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, M. A. (1994a). *An expanded sourcebook qualitative data analysis*. SAGE.
- MoNE. (2009). *İlköğretim matematik dersi (1-5. sınıflar) öğretim programı* [Primary school mathematics course (grades 1-5) curriculum]. MEB Basımevi.
- MoNE. (2017). Öğretmenlik mesleği genel yeterlikleri [General competencies of the teaching profession]. *Ministry of Education*. https://oygm.meb.gov.tr/meb_iys_dosyalar/2017_12/11115355_YYRETMENLYK_MESLEYY_GENEL_YETERLYKLERY.pdf
- MoNE. (2018). *Öğretmen performans değerlendirme ve aday öğretmenlik iş ve işlemleri yönetmeliği* [Regulation on teacher performance evaluation and candidate teacher work and procedures]. MEB Basımevi.
- Morris, C. A. S., Denham, S. A., Bassett, H. H., & Curby, T. W. (2013). Relations among teachers' emotion socialization beliefs and practices, and preschoolers' emotional competence. *Early Education and Development*, 24(7), 979–999. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10409289.2013.825186>
- Narad, A. (2019). Teacher education accreditation practices and procedures: Comparison of USA, England, Australia and India. *International Journal of Recent Technology and Engineering*, 7(6S5), 1828–1836.
- OECD. (2009). *Creating effective teaching and learning environments: First results from TALIS*. OECD Publishing.
- OECD. (2013). *PISA 2012 results: What makes schools successful? Resources, policies and practices (volume IV)*. OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264201156-en>
- Öçal, M. F., & Şimşek, M. (2017). Matematik öğretmen adaylarının FATİH projesi ve matematik eğitiminde teknoloji kullanımına yönelik görüşleri [Opinions of prospective mathematics teachers on the FATİH project and the use of technology in mathematics education]. *Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry*, 8(1), 91–121. <https://doi.org/10.17569/tojqi.288857>
- Özsemerci, K. (2003). *Türk kamu yönetiminde yolsuzluklar, nedenleri, zararları ve çözüm önerileri* [Corruption in Turkish public administration, its causes, damages and solution suggestions]. Sayıştay Yayın İşleri Müdürlüğü.
- Parveen, K., Tran, P. Q. B., Alghamdi, A. A., Namaziandost, E., Aslam, S., & Xiaowei, T. (2022). Identifying the leadership challenges of K-12 public schools during COVID-19 disruption: A systematic literature review. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.875646>
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd Ed.). SAGE.
- Pepin, B., Gueudet, G., & Trouche, L. (2017). Refining teacher design capacity: Mathematics teachers' interactions with digital curriculum resources. *ZDM—Mathematics Education*, 49, 799–812. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11858-017-0870-8>
- Policy Brief UN. (2020). Policy Brief: Education during COVID-19 and beyond. *United Nations*. https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wpcontent/uploads/sites/22/2020/08/sg_policy_brief_covid-19_and_education_august_2020.pdf
- Ran, L., Wang, W., Ai, M., Kong, Y., Chen, J., & Kuang, L. (2020). Psychological resilience, depression, anxiety, and somatization symptoms in response to COVID-19: A study of the general population in China at the peak of its epidemic. *Social Science & Medicine*, 262, Article 113261. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2020.113261>
- Rinkevich, J. L. (2011). Creative teaching: Why it matters and where to begin. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas*, 84(5), 219–223. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00098655.2011.575416>
- Rodrigo-Ruiz, D. (2016). Effect of teachers' emotions on their students: Some evidence. *Journal of Education & Social Policy*, 3, 73–79.
- Ronfeldt, M., Farmer, S., McQueen, K., & Grissom, J. (2015). Teacher collaboration in instructional teams and student achievement. *American Educational Research Journal*, 52, 475–514. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831215585562>
- Rutter, M. (2012). Resilience as a dynamic concept. *Development and Psychopathology*, 24, 335–344. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954579412000028>
- Saqipi, B., & Vogrinc, J. (2021). The contexts and processes of shaping teacher identity. *Center for Educational Policy Studies Journal*, 11(3), 5–7. <https://doi.org/10.26529/cepsj.1274>
- Schleicher, A. (2016). *Teaching excellence through professional learning and policy reform: Lessons from around the world*. OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264252059-en>
- Shah, P. E., Weeks, H. M., Richards, B., & Kaciroti, N. (2018). Early childhood curiosity and kindergarten reading and math academic achievement. *Pediatric Research*, 84(3), 380–386. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41390-018-0039-3>
- Singh, A. S. (2014). Conducting case study research in non-profit organisations. *Qualitative Market Research*, 17(1), 77–84. <https://doi.org/10.1108/QMR-04-2013-0024>
- Sparks, D. (2002). *Designing powerful professional development for teachers and principals*. National Staff Development Council.
- Sünbül, A. M. (2003). *Öğretmenlik mesleğine giriş* [Entry to the teaching profession]. Pegem Yayıncılık.
- Tao Y., Meng Y., Gao Z., & Yang X. (2022). Perceived teacher support, student engagement, and academic achievement: A meta-analysis. *Educational Psychology*, 42, 401–420. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410.2022.2033168>
- Tømte, C., Kårstein, A., & Olsen, D.S. (2013). *IKT i lærerutdanningen. På vei mot profesjonsfaglig digital kompetanse?* [ICT in teacher education. On the way to professional digital competence?] NIFU.

- Turhan, M., & Yaraş, Z. (2013). Öğretmen ve öğrencilerin öğretmen, disiplin, müdür, sınıf kuralları, ödül ve ceza kavramlarına ilişkin metafor algıları [Metaphorical perceptions of teachers and students regarding the concepts of teacher, discipline, principal, classroom rules, reward and punishment]. *Fırat Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 23(1), 129–145.
- Uştu, H., Mentiş Taş, A., & Sever, B. (2016). Öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişime yönelik algılarına ilişkin nitel bir araştırma [A qualitative study on teachers' perceptions of professional development]. *Elektronik Mesleki Gelişim ve Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 4(1).
- Vivek, R. (2022). Systematic review of modern techniques in qualitative research. *Management and Entrepreneurship: Trends of Development*, 4(22). 34-49. <https://doi.org/10.26661/2522-1566/2022-4/22-03>
- Yıldırım, A., & Şimşek, H. (2008). *Sosyal bilimlerde nitel araştırma yöntemleri* [Qualitative research methods in social sciences] (7th ed.). Seçkin Yayıncılık.
- Yıldırım, A., & Şimşek, H. (2013). *Sosyal bilimlerde nitel araştırma yöntemleri* [Qualitative research methods in social sciences]. Seçkin Yayıncılık.