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Opinions of Teachers and School Administrators on the Objective of "Restructuring the Professional Development of Teachers" in the 2023 Education Vision

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Abstract

This research aims to examine the views of teachers and school administrators on the 2023 Education Vision in Turkey. The research was carried out with the participation of a total of 19 people, 9 school administrators, and 10 teachers, working in primary and secondary public schools in Istanbul in the 2020-2021 academic year. A case study, which is one of the qualitative research methods, was used in the research. On the other hand, content analysis was used in the analysis of the data. As a data collection tool, a semi-structured interview form prepared by taking expert opinions was used. In the semi-structured interview form, teachers and school administrators were asked about their views on the objectives "*Professional development of teachers will be supported at the graduate level*", "*opening minor programs at the graduate level for teachers in the areas needed*", "*In education faculties, teacher training programs will be especially restructured by focusing on teaching practice*", and "*Teaching profession law will be introduced*" that are included in the 2023 Education Vision of Turkey. As a result of an examination of the views of teachers and school administrators on the objective of "*Professional development of teachers will be supported at the graduate level*", which is included in the 2023 Education Vision, two themes emerged as "Contribution to Professional Development" and "The Thought that Expectations Will Not Be Met". As a result of an examination of the opinions of the teachers and school administrators on the objective of "*Minor programs will be opened at the graduate level for teachers in the areas needed*", which is included in the 2023 Education Vision, three themes emerged as "Efficient Use of Human Resources", "Professional Satisfaction", and "Other Existing Problems". As a result of an examination of the views of teachers and school administrators on the objective of "*In education faculties, teacher training programs will be especially restructured by focusing on teaching practice*" included in the 2023 Education Vision, one theme emerged as "Expectations for Implementation". Finally, as a result of an examination of the opinions of the teachers and school administrators about the "*Teaching profession law will be introduced*", which is included in the 2023 Education Vision, two themes emerged as "Social, Economic, and Personal Rights" and "Contribution and Participation of Education Stakeholders". The views of teachers and school administrators were included to support each theme. As a result of the research, the opinions of teachers and

school administrators on the 2023 Education Vision were evaluated by comparing them with the related studies, and various suggestions were made.

Keywords: 2023 Education Vision, School Administrators, Teachers, Professional Development of Teachers

Introduction

Education is an indispensable phenomenon that has co-existed with humanity. Every nation has its education system. This system is established and developed depending on the social, cultural, political, and economic values of that society. In other words, every education system is responsible for reflecting the norms of the society it is related to and meeting the expectations of that society from education (Azar, 2011: 36). Many definitions have been made about education, which has a great role in the development of countries. According to Tezcan (1991), education is a process that supports the development of personality and enables the individual to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors in preparing for adult life (Tezcan 1991, as cited in Gül 2004: 229). According to another definition, education is the process of gaining the desired behavior in the attitudes of the individual through their own life. The purpose of education is to enable the individual to actualize himself/herself, become useful for himself/herself and society, and provide the individual with the ability to solve problems (Ercan 2003, as cited in Habacı, Karataş, Adıgüzelli, Ürker, Atıcı, 2013:264).

In a world where there is continuous change and development, it is possible only with education to raise individuals who can adapt to developments, meet the expectations of the age, research, question, have a developed sense of self-confidence, and actualize themselves (Anıl, 2009: 89). Countries have been carrying out some studies in recent years to make the necessary arrangements in their curricula and eliminate the deficiencies in their systems (Kesercioglu, Balım, Ceylan, and Moralı 2001, as cited in Çelen, Çelik, Seferoğlu, 2011:766). Turkey is taking remedial and developing initiatives for the education system to increase the quality of education, which is of great importance for humanity (Demirkaya and Ünal, 2018). However, due to reasons such as the inadequacy of the education applications, which have been used for a long time, in today's conditions or the inability of the recently implemented innovations to give the desired results in the application process, the relevant institutions continue to take initiatives to increase the quality of education (Köç, Ünal, 2018: 66).

One of the most comprehensive initiatives to improve the education-teaching process has been taken by the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MEB) under the name "2023 Education Vision". Within the framework of this vision, important decisions have been made regarding almost every level of education and necessary studies have been initiated to reach the predetermined objectives by 2023. Students, parents, teachers, and school administrators constitute the basic elements of the vision document. Teachers and school administrators, who are the main elements of education, are the people who take on the most important task to achieve the goals of the 2023 Education Vision. In the 2023 Education Vision, the important role of teachers and school administrators in the education system was mentioned as "the success of all kinds of education reform and improvement efforts depends largely on the professional competencies, perceptions, and dedication of teachers and school administrators" (2023 Education vision).

The teacher is one of the most important elements of education, which is the process that enables the individual and society to adapt to changes in social, economic, and political development (Taymaz, 1984, p.65). The success of the education system essentially depends on the fact that teachers who take the responsibility of running the system are qualified. Since teaching has been accepted as a profession, it has

been the profession that has the biggest share in the shaping and modernization of the individual characters of all societies and the establishment of civilized world order (Arabacı et al., 2012).

The teaching profession, which is the most important element of the education system, the importance of the teacher, the education of teachers, and the duties of teachers constitute a topic that is kept up-to-date in almost all societies. In the last 10 years, most developed countries, led by the USA, have started various reforms by reconsidering the teaching and teacher education system (Baskan, 2001:16). As stated above, the main reason for this is that the success of the education system basically depends on the fact that teachers who will run the system are qualified. In any education system, a service cannot be produced above the quality of the employee who has undertaken the responsibility of operating the structure. For this reason, it is possible to indicate that “A school is as good as its teachers” (Kavcar, 1998, as cited in Gül 2004:231). Getting good results from the education system largely depends on the quality of teachers. Bursalıoğlu (1994) sees teaching as “the most strategic part of the social system called the school” (Abazoğlu, Yıldırım, Yıldızhan, 2016: 144). The success of a school depends only on the success of the teacher (Day, 2002; Güven, 2005). Professional self-development is of great importance in the success of the teacher.

Observations reveal that the desired efficiency has not been achieved as a result of the practices related to the professional development of teachers in Turkey. Professional development, which was managed centrally from 1960 to 1982, has been carried out by the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MEB) Department of In-Service Training since 1982, and locally by the governorships in Turkey (Bümen et al., 2012). These activities, which are carried out in the form of seminars, have recently been eventualized with different applications (Yüksel and Adıgüzel, 2012). Although the adequacy and quality of the in-service training provided by the Turkish Ministry of National Education is an important subject of discussion, opinions that it is not sufficient to outweigh the counter opinions (Gönen and Kocakaya, 2010; Seferoğlu, 2004, Özoğlu, 2010a, as cited in Elçiçek 2016:15).

Another key person for quality education is the school administrator. Managerial skills have great importance in the educational development in the classroom and the overall success of a school. School administrators are the most important and influential individuals in schools because the learning climate in the school, the level of professionalism, teacher commitment, student success, and teacher morale depend on their leadership. The fact that a school is open to change, puts the student in the center, does the teaching completely, and gives the students the chance to show their talents in the best way depend primarily on the leadership success of the administrators (Anderson, 1991, as cited in Korkmaz 2005:239).

Gümüşeli (2014) stated the important role of school administrators in education and training with the following words: “Changes and developments in school environments in the twenty-first century impose new roles and responsibilities on school administrators. Identifying and putting these new roles into practice is one of the important issues that academics and practitioners lay stress on. The fact that the standards defined for school principals have changed, especially in the last thirty years, is the result of rapid changes and developments in social, political, economic, and technological fields that have changed the school environment. This change and development make education and school management complicated, and to cope with this complexity, the school administrator needs to gain leadership competence in many areas” (Gümüşeli, 2014:2).

From this point of view, how teachers and school administrators, who are two important elements of education, view the education system they are in, and their opinions and thoughts about the education-training process gain importance. Examining the views of teachers and school administrators on the subject of “*restructuring the professional development of teachers*”, which is targeted in the 2023 Education Vision published by the Turkish Ministry of National Education, is important in terms of revealing the views of

teachers and school administrators on this issue. Also, the study is important in terms of offering suggestions to policymakers, researchers, and practitioners in light of the findings and the results achieved.

In the study, answers were sought to the following questions to examine the views of teachers and school administrators on the objective of “*restructuring the professional development of teachers*”, which is included in the 2023 Education Vision of Turkey:

1. What are the views of teachers and school administrators on the “*professional development of teachers will be supported at the graduate level*” in the 2023 Education Vision of Turkey?
2. What are the views of teachers and school administrators on “*opening minor programs at the graduate level for teachers in the areas needed*” included in the 2023 Education Vision of Turkey?
3. What are the views of teachers and school administrators on “*in education faculties, teacher training programs will be especially restructured by focusing on teaching practice*” in the 2023 Education Vision of Turkey?
4. What are the views of teachers and school administrators on “*teaching profession law will be introduced*” included in the 2023 Education Vision of Turkey?

METHOD

In this section, information about the research model, study group, data collection tool, and data analysis are given respectively.

Research Model

This study aims to examine the views of teachers and school administrators on the 2023 Education Vision of Turkey and a case study, which is one of the qualitative research methods, was used in the study. According to Strauss and Corbin (1997; as cited in Erdemet 2017: 36), in qualitative studies, data are collected in more detail than statistical methods, questions are examined, and the obtained data is presented in more detail. In a qualitative case study, on the other hand, one or more cases are investigated in depth. Factors related to the case (environment, individuals, events, processes, etc.) are investigated with a holistic method and the focus is on how they affect the relevant case and how they are affected by the relevant case (Yıldırım, Şimşek, 2018: 73).

Study Group

The study group of the research consists of primary and secondary school teachers and school administrators working in public schools in Istanbul in the 2020-2021 academic year. A total of 19 people, including 10 teachers and 9 administrators, who were selected voluntarily by a simple random sampling method, participated in the research. Before the study, the teachers and school administrators in the study group were informed that their personal information would not be shared. In this context, the participants were coded with pseudonyms in the study. As per the principle of confidentiality, the names and institutions of the participants are kept confidential. Table 1 includes information about participant teachers and school administrators.

Table 1 – Information of Participating School Administrators and Teachers

School Name	Name of the Administrator or Teacher	Position in the Institution	Age	Gender
School A	Mustafa	Teacher	Less than 30	Male
School B	Arzu	Teacher	Between 41-50	Female
School A	Yılmaz	Administrator	Between 31-40	Male
School C	İlden	Teacher	Less than 30	Female
School D	Hüseyin	Administrator	Between 31-40	Male
School E	Fatma	Teacher	Between 31-40	Female
School E	Özlem	Teacher	Less than 30	Female
School F	Hatice	Teacher	Between 31-40	Female
School G	Şadettin	Administrator	Between 41-50	Male
School H	İbrahim	Administrator	Between 41-50	Male
School A	Elif	Teacher	Less than 30	Female
School C	Selim	Administrator	Between 31-40	Male
School M	Selçuk	Administrator	Between 31-40	Male
School K	Sabri	Teacher	Less than 30	Male
School F	Büşra	Teacher	Less than 30	Female
School F	Yunus	Teacher	Between 41-50	Male
School C	Meryem	Administrator	Between 31-40	Female
School K	Muammer	Administrator	Between 31-40	Male
School L	Faruk	Administrator	Between 31-40	Male

Data Collection Tools

Data were collected with the semi-structured interview technique, which is one of the qualitative data collection methods. Interview, one of the research techniques, is a controlled and purposeful verbal communication style between the researcher and the interviewee (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 1994 as cited in Aktürk, 2018:36). According to Karasar (2011), “Interviews can be divided into three: structured (formal), semi-structured (semi-formal) and unstructured (informal, free) according to the strictness of the

'rules' applied". In the structured (Formal) interviews, it is clear how these questions will be asked and what data should be obtained. The predetermined meeting plan is applied identically. The interviewer's freedom of movement is limited. Although the answers obtained are easily digitized, it may not be possible to extrapolate from the interview and provide sincerity in it. In the unstructured interview, unlike the structured interview, the freedom of action given to the interviewer is as much as possible, and the interviewee has the chance to express his/her feelings and thoughts easily. Although the questions to be asked are determined beforehand, it may be necessary to ask other questions during the interview. Evaluation of the obtained data may not be easy, so the interviewer should be a well-trained expert. Interviews between these two extreme interview techniques are semi-structured interviews (Karasar, 167-168:2011).

The first part of the data collection tool consists of the demographic part, which includes information about the participants such as gender, age, and position at the school. The second part is the part in which there are 4 open-ended questions asked to be answered by the participants.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

In this study, the researcher chose the method of interpreting the findings obtained by subjecting the data, which was collected through the interviews, to content analysis. Through content analysis, the researcher aimed to arrive at related concepts and relationships to explain the obtained data and interpret them by arranging them in a way that the reader can understand. According to Yıldırım and Şimşek (2016), "meaning" is brought to the forefront in data analysis. Bringing the meaning to the forefront is possible by interpreting the findings in their own environment. Together with her interpretations, the researcher presented the data she obtained and what the results she obtained from it looked like, and in this way tried to offer the reader an additional perspective on the answer to the research question. Qualitative research data are analyzed in four stages: (1) by coding the data, (2) by finding the themes, (3) by organizing the codes and themes, and (4) by defining and interpreting the findings (Yıldırım and Şimşek 2016, as cited in Aktürk 2018:40).

Before coding, the researcher read all the collected data in detail and obtained the codes based on the important words and sentences for the research (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). Then, the themes were found by paying attention to the internal consistency issue in a way that the emerging categories would form a meaningful whole. The created themes were rearranged within themselves, and sub-themes were formed and associated with sub-problems. Also, "short anecdotes" that draw attention to the opinions of the participants were included.

RESULTS

In this section, the findings obtained as a result of the answers given by the teachers and school administrators to the semi-structured interview form, which is one of the data collection methods, are included. Percentage and frequency values of the findings obtained from the four questions in the semi-structured interview form are shown with tables and sample participant views are included.

1. What are your views on the objective of "Professional development of teachers will be supported at the graduate level" in the 2023 Education Vision?

Under this title, the opinions of teachers and school administrators on the subject "*professional development of teachers will be supported at the graduate level*", which was included in the 2023 Education Vision, were examined. The frequency and % values of the opinions of teachers and school administrators are given in Table 2.

Table 2 – Frequency and % distribution of teachers’ and school administrators’ views on the objective of “professional development of teachers will be supported at postgraduate level” in the 2023 Education Vision

View	Frequency		%	
	School Administrators	Teachers	School Administrators	Teachers
Contribution to Professional Development	9	7	100	70
The Thought that the Expectations will not be Met	-	4	-	40

An examination of Table 2 reveals that all of the school administrators (100%) and one of the teachers expressed a positive or negative opinion, and the majority (70%) stated that postgraduate education would contribute to professional development. The opinions of some teachers and school administrators on this subject are given below.

“We live in a changing and developing world. Undoubtedly, these developments and changes also affect education. The need to create a professional employee potential in education emerges as a result of this conjuncture. Therefore, I think that this goal of the Ministry will be accurate. Increasing the professional development of teachers through graduate education means that a more equipped and productive employee profile will be formed in education, which will accelerate our education system” (Interview with Sabri, 18 March 2019 / Teacher).

“The fact that professional development of teachers will be supported at the graduate level in 2023 Education vision will provide a very good opportunity for teachers to update the education they have received in education faculties in the past and catch up with the requirements and needs of the age...” (Interview with Mustafa, 20 March 2019 / Teacher).

“I agree with the support of the professional development of teachers at the postgraduate level. I think it is important in terms of doing research about the latest developments in our fields and enabling these studies to contribute to our profession. At the same time, I think that it contributes to the development of our research skills, changing our perspective, and widening our horizon” (Interview with Meryem, 22 March 2019/ Administrator).

“In the 2023 Education Vision, I think that the goal of supporting the professional development of teachers at the graduate level is appropriate because the way to become a good educator by specializing in teaching is to teach personal and gain experience, besides, reading a lot in general, do studies that catch the agenda of children, make examinations and research about the field, make comparisons, analyses, and thus gain accumulation of knowledge and be up-to-date to give the best to their students...” (Interview with Şadettin, 13 March 2019 / Administrator).

While all of the 9 school administrators interviewed (100%) view postgraduate education positively, 4 out of 10 teachers (40%) have the opinion that existing problems cannot be solved or existing deficiencies cannot be made up with postgraduate education. The opinions of these participants are given below.

“I do not find it appropriate to support the professional development of teachers at the graduate level. ... While the responsibilities of the teacher in the school are already high enough, I think that it will be quite compelling for the teacher to be subject to such a requirement during the education period. As teachers, if a development program is considered, as a suggestion, I think that compulsory in-service training can be given to teachers during seminar periods. Seminar periods can be used for professional development purposes” (Interview with Fatma, March 15, 2019 / Teacher).

“As a teacher who is studying for a master’s degree, I do not agree with this goal. Everyone’s postgraduate education means that the current empty postgraduate theses and theses that are written by others for money will increase... It may be right to give academic support to teachers in their fields without having a master’s degree. Every teacher needs this, I think the government should first abolish the system of paid teaching...” (Interview with Büşra, 22 March 2019 / Teacher).

“...I think that teacher education in Turkey should be reconsidered and redesigned under the spirit of the time. That is to say, I do not think that the planned graduate education will solve the problems, ‘as a teacher who has a master’s degree in the field of Educational Administration and Supervision’. ... We need to think about how much the training we provide will serve our goal of raising high-quality teachers for undergraduate or graduate education. All the steps we will take without constructing these will not lead us to the right conclusion” (interview with Yunus, 21 March 2019 / Teacher).

“...Negatively, I can only say this... ...Honestly, I don’t think there will be a significant difference between the teacher with a bachelor’s degree and the teacher who will receive a graduate education. This is my opinion. Skills to be gained in master’s degree can also be given with quality undergraduate education” (Interview with Elif, 15 March 2019 / Teacher).

2. What are your views on the objective of “Opening graduate-level minor programs for teachers in the areas needed” in the 2023 Education Vision?

Under this heading, frequency and % values are given in Table 3 as a result of examining the opinions of teachers and school administrators on “Opening graduate-level minor programs for teachers in the areas needed” in the 2023 Education Vision.

Table 3-Frequency and % distribution of teachers’ and school administrators’ views on “Opening graduate-level minor programs for teachers in the areas needed” in the 2023 Education Vision

View	Frequency		%	
	School Administrators	Teachers	School Administrators	Teachers
Efficient Use of Human Resources	9	6	100	60
Providing Job Satisfaction	9	6	100	60
Other Current Problems	-	4	-	40

Table 3 reveals that all of the school administrators (100%) and the majority of the teachers (60%) expressed a positive opinion towards this goal in terms of “Efficient Use of Human Resources” and

“*Providing Job Satisfaction*” regarding the opening of graduate-level minor programs for teachers in the areas needed. The opinions of some teachers and school administrators on this subject are given below.

“*One of the important principles in education is to use the existing human resources most effectively and efficiently. The fact that teachers can do minor education in the required fields through postgraduate education means that the need for the resources of trained educators in the needed fields will be met. This means both the efficient use of existing human resources and the opportunity for teachers to specialize in more than one field, which we can describe as versatility*” (Interview with Sabri, 18 March 2019 / Teacher).

“*It will be beneficial for a sustainable education to provide training to our teachers in the areas needed for the ‘Design and skill workshops’ to be established in schools to achieve their purpose, enable our children to develop towards their interests, talents, and temperaments, and keep up with technological developments*” (Interview with Hatice, 14 March 2019 / Teacher).

“*In today’s world, all subjects have interdisciplinary content. For this reason, I think that teachers should be aware of developments in other fields to develop their own fields. Knowing both in our own field and other fields allows us to have an innovative perspective and find permanent solutions to the problems we face*” (Interview with Meryem, 22 March 2019 / Administrator).

“*It will certainly be helpful. Knowledge is power. We raise people; the more we contribute to our students, the more we contribute to society*” (Interview with Muammer, 22 March 2019 / Administrator).

“*As far as I have researched, the opening of postgraduate minor programs will also allow our teachers to make field changes in the future. If such a situation is really going to happen, it will definitely be a step that will contribute positively to the professional and life motivation of our teachers...*” (Interview with Mustafa, 20 March 2019 / Teacher).

“*Minor program application will be an opportunity, especially for teachers who want to change their fields. In this way, some branches with increased intensity will also be relieved and meet the need for teachers in the branches that are needed...*” (Interview with Faruk, 25 March 2019 / Administrator).

“*...This minor program has increased the motivation of classroom teachers for being interested in different fields and improving themselves...*” (Interview with Yunus, 21 March 2019 / Teacher).

4 out of 10 teachers (40%) stated that other problems need to be solved before the goal “*Opening graduate-level minor programs for teachers in the areas needed*”, which is included in the 2023 Education Vision, is accomplished. Teachers’ views on this subject are given below.

“*Why don’t our educators, who want teachers to improve themselves and focus so much on this system, still not focus on the discrimination between teachers? I think this issue needs more attention. Instead of classifying teachers as permanent, contracted, and paid teachers, we can talk about postgraduate education after accepting them as a whole and equalizing the conditions for everyone...*” (Interview with İlden, 20 March 2019 / Teacher / Paid teacher).

“*...Because the school environments are not adequate at the moment, there are no art workshops, no indoor sports fields, no information technology rooms, no laboratory environment at all. In other words, most of the things that are needed are actually not available for our students. Before the teacher, I think that these places and environments should be prepared to meet such needs of our students*” (Interview with Özlem, 12 March 2019 / Teacher).

“I don't think it can completely be achieved in an academic sense. Someone who is involved in the sector knows the difficulties of school operation and sets goals for teachers accordingly. In addition to raising our teachers professionally, we also need to train parents. Education starts in the family first... It is not that important to educate ourselves only; since the person will be with us for 7 hours a day and 17 hours at home with their family, I find it right to educate the parents as well as to educate ourselves” (Interview with Büşra, 22 March 2019 / Teacher).

“This minor program application has increased the motivation of classroom teachers in a way for being interested in different fields and improving themselves. Unfortunately, this situation did not produce the desired result in practice. Teachers even used it to turn it into an opportunity to transfer from primary school to secondary school” (interview with Yunus, 21 March 2019 / teacher).

3. What are your views on the objective of “in education faculties, teacher training programs will be especially restructured by focusing on teaching practice” in the 2023 Education Vision?

Under this heading, the frequency and % values were determined as a result of the examination of the opinions of the teachers and school administrators on the subject of “in education faculties, teacher training programs will be especially restructured by focusing on teaching practice” in the 2023 Education Vision and presented in Table 4.

Table 4 – Frequency and % distribution of teachers’ and school administrators’ views on the subject of “in education faculties, teacher training programs will be especially restructured by focusing on teaching practice” in the 2023 Education Vision

View	Frequency		%	
	School Administrators	Teachers	School Administrators	Teachers
Expectations for Implementation	9	10	100	100

All of the participating 9 school administrators and 10 teachers mentioned the importance of the theoretical and practical relationship in teacher training programs in education faculties. The opinions of some teachers and school administrators on this subject are given below.

In the 2023 Education Vision, the aim of “in education faculties, teacher training programs will be especially restructured by focusing on teaching practice” will be very appropriate because theory and practice will meet and support each other, and deficiencies will be determined on-site and promptly, and what is desired to be gained will be given to a university student on time. If the three-day internship, two-day course training practiced in vocational high schools and some departments of the universities today is brought for university students who aim to become educators and can be applied correctly, a good educator and a good teacher will be raised” (Interview with Şadettin, 13 March 2019 / Executive).

School Administrator Hüseyin explained this situation by saying, “I think that education faculties cannot train teachers sufficiently. It will be a good decision” (Interview with Hüseyin, 15 March 2019 / Administrator).

“...My personal opinion is that in addition to his/her theoretical knowledge, a teacher needs to know how to convey this information to the masses and act accordingly... It would be more beneficial for our

teachers, who are studying at faculties, to spend most of their time in the schools where they will teach, rather than in university buildings” (Interview with Mustafa, 20 March 2019 / Teacher).

“...it would be much more beneficial. In fact, it will be very beneficial for the 3rd and 4th grades of the last two years of the university to be taught mostly practically” (Interview with Selim, 22 March 2019 / Administrator).

“...Because our field is a little wider. We go to schools, we can work in prisons, we can work in social services, and we can work in schools for gifted children, like Bilsem. I had the opportunity to go to a university because I had time but for example, there were friends of mine who could not study at a university; even the time I spent at the university was not enough. The idea or purpose of this teaching practice should better be applied as a government policy and especially restructured will definitely support those who have difficulties in this field...” “Again, we come with very serious deficiencies in undergraduate education related to individuals who need special education in my field. Although I am a little close to this field it is an issue that I tried to learn and make up for in my education life, in my business life, with very big shortcomings, and many of my colleague teacher friends are faced with this situation. That’s why it brings great risks for us to learn this while we come and practice the profession directly in the field. These are serious risks. I think this will be very positive in terms of preventing these risks and providing more serious professional support to the teacher” (Interview with Elif 15 March 2019 / Teacher / Advisory teacher).

“I am one of those who think that the teacher training program should be restructured. Universities train teachers far from practice. I think that the internship courses in the current program are insufficient. Internship applications are required every year. Teachers cannot be trained far from school” (Interview with Faruk, 25 March 2019 / Administrator).

“I strongly agree that teaching practices in faculties should be a central policy. Teacher training programs in education faculties remain at the theoretical level. The teaching profession is learned after starting teaching. Classroom management and lecturing are experienced in professional life” (Interview with Meryem, 22 March 2019 / Administrator).

“Teacher training programs should be restructured in line with the requirements of the age regarding this issue, which has been discussed before, and the questions ‘Which way and how will we train teachers?’ and ‘What should be the qualifications of the teachers we will train?’ should be answered. For this reason, the programs of education faculties should be reviewed, the problems in teaching practice should be resolved, and an arrangement should be made that will respond to the conditions and needs of the age” (Interview with Sabri, 18 March 2019 / Teacher).

4. What are your views on the objective of “introducing a teaching profession law” in the 2023 Education Vision?

Under this heading, frequency and % values are given in Table 5 as a result of the examination of the opinions of the teachers and school administrators regarding the goal of “introducing a teaching profession law” in the 2023 Education Vision.

Table 5 – Frequency and % distribution of teachers’ and school administrators’ views on the issue of “introducing a teaching profession law” in the 2023 Education Vision

View	Frequency		%	
	School Administrators	Teachers	School Administrators	Teachers
Social, Economic, and Personal Rights	9	10	100	100
Contribution and Participation of Education Stakeholders	-	2	-	20

The teaching profession law is considered important by all 9 school administrators and 10 teachers in terms of bringing improvements in teachers’ financial, social, and personal rights. The opinions of some teachers and school administrators on this subject are given below.

“...With the law, these problems will be eliminated. At least this will not happen: ‘what rights do I have? What rights don’t I have? These will disappear. It will be our assurance because we are in a professionally insecure situation. This will provide professional security...” (Interview with Elif, 15 March 2019 / Teacher).

“Teaching profession law is the biggest deficiency in the country... Teaching should be considered as a separate profession... Therefore, such a law is a late practice” (Interview with Büşra, 22 March 2019 / Teacher).

“It would be correct to say that teachers are a special group because they deal with the being called human, and they have a distinguished position because they build human beings. The absence of a professional code and legal regulation belonging to this special group is a major shortcoming. In the 2023 Education Vision, the goal of “introducing a teaching profession law” will also be an appropriate target because their profession is different from other civil servants. Their job is also different. This law is needed for issues such as their leave, working hours, wages, retirement, solutions to various situations they are exposed to in working conditions, etc... Therefore, it is not correct to look at teachers as ordinary civil servants within the framework of Law No. 657 – the law of civil servants in Turkey – and evaluate the teacher as such. It would be very appropriate to have a professional law befitting the quality of teachers” (Interview with Şadettin, 13 March 2019 / Teacher).

“As perceptible information on this subject is not stated, the comments will be purely my personal views. First of all, the professional law should make people whom do this profession feel safe and have a more hopeful outlook on the future. It should contain articles that will help our teachers gain their lost values in society in recent years. The law should enable teachers, who shape the whole society, to meet all individuals in certain periods of their lives, regardless of their profession, and tell people about life and gain them their current positions, to have a more respected position in society. Also, this law to be enacted should regulate the job security, personal rights, and career advancement of teachers fairly” (Interview with Mustafa, 20 March 2019 / Teacher).

“I find it important to enact the professional law to ensure that teachers have personal rights. I think that it is important to give teachers the right to participate in professional development programs suitable

for them free of charge, ensure equality of working conditions, and advance in the career ladder” (Interview with Meryem, 22 March 2019 / Administrator).

“If the Teaching Profession Law is enacted, teachers’ belonging to their institution and the status of the teaching profession will be strengthened, and the boundaries of the qualifications and quantities of the teaching profession will be clearly drawn. I think that this situation will reflect positively on education and make a meaningful contribution to the expectations of those working in education, namely teachers, in terms of professional pleasure and job satisfaction” (Interview with Sabri, 18 March 2019 / Teacher).

“You know, teaching is regarded as a sub-level, a sub-branch in the civil servants’ law no. 657. However, the enactment of the law numbered 657 in the form of law will bring the protection of the personal rights of teachers and their promotion; I think it will also bring great benefits in terms of being promoted as a teacher, specialist teacher, and head teacher...” “...This is also a weight given to our teachers because, you know, education is a situation that is shaped by our teachers. In this field, I think it is of greater importance for our teachers” (Interview with Selcuk, 14 March 2019 / Administrator).

“...It will be beneficial for our teachers, especially if they feel comfortable and safe and have a career field in which they will improve themselves (Interview with Selim, 22 March 2019 / Administrator).

“There is a need for such a law to have a systematic arrangement covering all aspects of the teaching profession, to raise the status of the teaching profession and to improve its qualifications, to consider teaching as a career profession, and to attain professional standards” (Interview with Hatice, 14 March 2019 / Teacher).

Two of the participants (20%) stated that while preparing the teaching profession law, the opinions, suggestions, and demands of teachers and other education stakeholders should be taken into consideration. Opinions on this subject are given below.

“... That’s why I think the views of unions, the views of associations, the various organizations made with non-governmental organizations, the reactions and the mass movements put forward should be taken seriously while creating something, setting goals, or taking steps towards the law” (Interview with Elif, 15 March 2019 / Teacher)”. “... Is a law necessary, yes. However, while doing this, the opinions of teachers and educational organizations should also be taken. All stakeholders should be informed about the process” (Interview with Yunus, 21 March 2019 / Manager).

CONCLUSION - DISCUSSION

This study aims to get the opinions of teachers and school administrators on the goal of “restructuring the professional development of teachers”, which is included in the 2023 education vision. The results obtained as a result of the examination of the opinions of the teachers and school administrators participated in the study are given below.

According to the results obtained in line with the opinions of teachers and school administrators on “professional development of teachers will be supported at the graduate level” in the 2023 Education Vision, “School Administrators’ and Teachers’ Perceptions of Postgraduate Education” emerged as a theme. In the theme of “School Administrators’ and Teachers’ Perceptions of Postgraduate Education”, results were obtained from teachers’ perspectives as “Contribution to Professional Development” and “The Thought that the Expectations Will Not Be Met”. 7 out of 10 participating teachers and all 9 school administrators stated that graduate education would contribute to their professional development with expressions such as specializing in the profession, adding value to the profession, updating the teaching, equipping the teacher, enabling the teacher to follow the developments, broadening the horizon, and gaining a different perspective.

Similarly, **Turhan and Yaraş (2013)** carried out a study with teachers, administrators, and inspectors who received graduate education in the field of Educational Administration, Inspection, Planning, and Economics (EAIPE) to investigate the contribution of a master's degree in this field to professional development. As a result of the study, the reasons of the participants for choosing this program were found to be specialization in the profession, having an academic career, and developing leadership behavior, respectively.

In the study by **Er and Ünal (2017)**, in which the views of social studies teacher candidates studying at education faculties of different universities on postgraduate education were taken, the participants stated that this process would be beneficial for them and help them to actualize themselves individually and professionally. Raising more qualified individuals is only possible with a qualified education. In this regard, it is important for teachers, practitioners of education, to develop and update themselves in the developing and changing world. Especially in this respect, the importance of postgraduate education is increasing and postgraduate education is becoming more and more widespread. In the study conducted by **Güven (2009)**, the professional competences that the secondary education field teaching non-thesis master's program gained to teacher candidates were investigated. The research findings revealed a significant increase in the perceptions of the students about planning the education, determining the learning-teaching process, development and guidance sub-competencies at the end of the non-thesis master's program covering three semesters and no significant change in their perceptions of classroom management, communication, and measurement and evaluation sub-competence areas.

The findings of the study conducted by **Alabaş, Kamer, Polat (2012)** to determine the factors that affect the decisions of primary and secondary school teachers, who have completed their graduate education in educational sciences, to take a master degree and the problems they encounter during their graduate education are as follows: the teachers stated that they took a master degree for “their personal development, a convenient professional seniority, and becoming academic staff”, while they preferred their program to “gain advanced knowledge in their field and understand current teaching methods and techniques”.

Knowledge is the most important and greatest power in our age. In our age, where rapid developments are experienced in every field, knowledge has a great impact on the progress of societies. It is especially important that individuals, who are our future, are raised in a way that will meet the needs of the society and the age. In his study, Aküzüm (2016) examined the perspectives of school administrators and teachers applying to Educational Administration graduate education programs and the study revealed the following: the most important reason for students to prefer graduate education is “*following the developments in their fields*”, their expectations from graduate education are “*building an academic career*” and opinions about the behaviors desired to be gained through graduate education are “*increasing student success*” and “*contributing to the field*”.

In the interviews with the participants, it was concluded that they viewed the goals positively but had doubts about their achievement. It is possible to indicate that the fact that decisions had been made before but could not be implemented has been effective in this. We see that similar decisions about professional development are also included in the Turkish National Education Council meetings. In the 15th National Education Council held in 1996, professional development was discussed under the agenda title of “The Restructuring of Secondary Education” as follows: **Article 21 – Teachers should be directed to postgraduate and doctorate, a national education academy should be established so that it can organize and rationalize in-service training and support research and development related to teaching*”. Based on the findings of this study and other studies, it is possible to indicate that decisions were made in the council to direct teachers to graduate education, but the necessary support (workload at the school, inability to arrange courses, etc.) is still not given to them in this regard. The first decision regarding the establishment

of the National Education Academy was made in the 15th Council, and then it came to the agenda again in the 16th, 17th, and 19th Councils. This shows that the idea of the National Education Academy has not been implemented despite the years passed since the first council that this was an issue. Another point that draws attention to the National Education Councils is that some decisions are brought to the agenda again in the councils convened in different years. The reason for this is that although the decisions are considered important, they are not implemented.

Contrary to the positive opinions about graduate education, some participants think that expectations will not be fully met with graduate education. According to the participants, successful and talented students should be directed to teaching for qualified teachers to be raised. Another participant suggested that in-service training is sufficient for professional development. In this view, there is the prevailing opinion that postgraduate education will not make much difference compared to the previous situation (undergraduate education). At the same time, the lack of necessary time and desire and the excessive workload of the teacher at school were seen as obstacles to postgraduate education. Or even if it is done, it is thought that it will be backbreaking and efficiency will not be obtained in line with the desired expectations. In their study, **Toprak and Taşğın (2017)** investigated the reasons why teachers do not do master's degrees and the most important reason was determined to be the fact that graduate education is seen as an intense and wearing process and, respectively, the other reasons are that it is a financial burden, the courses in the school are not organized, negative feedback is received from those who do graduate education, unavailability of the desired program, failure to meet the entry requirements, not knowing how to do it, and not believing that it would contribute professionally.

As a result, it is possible to mention that teachers and school administrators mostly have positive views and impressions in line with their views and expectations about postgraduate education.

According to the results of the teachers' and school administrators' views on "***Opening graduate-level minor programs for teachers in the areas needed***" in the 2023 Education Vision, the theme of "School Administrators' and Teachers' Perceptions of Postgraduate Education" emerged. Under this theme, sub-themes such as "Efficient Use of Human Resources", "Providing Job Satisfaction", and "The Thought That It Will Not Contribute" were obtained.

Within the scope of the research, teachers and school administrators evaluated the "***opening of graduate-level minor programs for teachers in the areas needed***" as positive in terms of efficient use of human resources. 6 of the 10 participating teachers and all of the 9 school administrators stated that postgraduate minor education would help teachers gain expertise in more than one field, be versatile, and as a result respond to individual differences and different needs (efficient use of human resources). Human resources are the most dynamic resources in all organizations. **Söylemez (2013)** expressed that the functionality of human resources in the service sector is directly proportional to sustainable education activities and that all kinds of education and training activities are important for people to rediscover themselves, therefore, activities for the development of human resources are dynamics that can overcome social problems.

6 out of 10 participating teachers and all 9 school administrators stated that the minor program will make a positive contribution such as providing the opportunity to change branches, enabling interdisciplinary development, empowering the individual with knowledge and expertise in different fields, and as a result, contributing positively by increasing motivation and providing job satisfaction. Minor can also be considered as an opportunity for professional development. The study conducted by **Hamamcı, Göktepe, and İnanç** to "examine the relationship between the professional development of psychological

counselors and their job satisfaction” concluded that there was a moderate and significant relationship between the professional development and job satisfaction of psychological counselors.

4 out of 10 participating teachers stated that if there is a need, it can be met with undergraduate education, the minor branch issue may cause an arbitrary branch change, or other problems are waiting to be solved, such as the graduate minor program will not give the desired result in line with the determined target.

The theme that emerged in line with the opinions of teachers and school administrators on the subject of “*In education faculties, teacher training programs will be especially restructured by focusing on teaching practice*” in the 2023 Education Vision is “*Teacher Training Competencies of Universities*”. In line with the data revealed in the analysis of the theme, a sub-theme was obtained named “Expectations for Implementation”.

All of the participating 10 teachers and 9 school administrators stated that teacher training programs in education faculties mostly included theoretical knowledge and the application part remained in the background. Almost all of the participants stated that they learned teaching while practicing their profession and as a result, they faced many different problems. Moreover, school counselor Elif, one of the interviewed participants, stated that they have to do an internship in schools affiliated with the Turkish Ministry of National Education – MEB (preschool, primary school, secondary school, high school), special education institutions (preschool, primary school, secondary school, high school), MEB counseling and research centers, special education and rehabilitation centers, branches of the directorate of probation and prisons, and kindergartens, playschools, dormitories and community centers affiliated to the social services institution, all of which are included in their work area. Participating counselor Elif indicated that she could not find the chance to practice in all fields at the university and that she had the chance to practice in schools affiliated with the Turkish Ministry of National Education (preschool, primary school, secondary school, high school), albeit very little. But she stated that this was also very insufficient and that some of her friends were appointed to schools without any school experience. This is, so to say, gaining experience while teaching at schools through trial and error. But while gaining this experience, you may have a high probability of making mistakes, and mistakes about our children, who are our future, may even cause unrecoverable problems.

In the documents of “Measures for Teaching Practice Project” (1997:16 as cited in Aydın, 1998: 6) it is stated that the emphasis will be on practical education rather than theoretical education in teacher training. It is possible to indicate that the application in teacher training programs is insufficient by looking at the data obtained as a result of the academic studies and the opinions of the participants in these studies. The “problem of raising teachers far from practice”, which the participants agreed, was also included in the previous national education council decisions.

In the XII. national education council, the measures to be taken about the education that the teacher candidates will receive in the practice schools are included. **(XII. National Education Council: Meeting Date: 18-22 June 1988) Subject: III. Teacher Training: Decision 19.** “*Taking the necessary precautions for the teaching practices of teacher candidates to be a longer period in practice schools or in practice schools to be selected as a result of the cooperation of the Turkish Ministry of National Education, Youth and Sports and the relevant university*” (ps://ttkb.meb.gov.tr/meb_iys_dosyalar/2017_09/29165252_12_sura.pdf).

After 18 years, we see that the same issue was discussed again in the 17th Council in 2006. In the 17th National Education Council held on 13-17 November 2006, this issue was addressed under article C.

Quality in Education and Article 56 as follows: “*Pre-service teacher training should be brought closer to real life, and the process should be enriched in this direction. Professional adaptation and orientation processes of candidate teachers should be conducted as stipulated in the regulation (in central schools with adequate staff and equipment), and cooperation should be made with universities in this process...*” This decision taken at the 12th National Education Council in 1988 was also discussed at the 17th National Education Council in 2006. Interestingly, a similar decision was included in the 2023 Education Vision in 2019 “*In education faculties, teacher training programs will be especially restructured by focusing on teaching practice*” (MEB, 2023 Education Vision, 2018). When the date of the council where the decision was first taken (1988) and the current date (2020) are considered, we see that 32 years have passed and it continues to be a topic of agenda because it has not been solved. Also, this situation reveals that such an important practice in teacher training has been neglected for a long time. We hope that after 2023, this issue will be resolved in such a way that it will not need to be included in decisions about education because it is worth noting that there are decisions that have been mentioned many times in the council decisions and that could not be resolved.

Gaining experience before starting the profession is of great importance in every profession for obtaining positive results in the profession to be performed. According to Azar (2011), good training of teachers in pre-service training and working in their own branches under the education received are important factors in fulfilling the duties of teachers. In developed countries (Garmon, 1993, Doyle, 1986, as cited in Aydın, 6:1998), a practical approach rather than theoretical education is dominant in teacher training. In their study in 2006, Atanur Baskan, Aydın, and Madden determined that the dimensions of general culture, teaching profession knowledge, and school practices were not concentrated on in the teaching programs. Education is not a “telling” or “listening” process but an active “adding meaning” process (Wasserman 1993, as cited in Gürşimşek, 26:1998). According to Gürşimşek (1998), experienced teachers are always active in “adding meaning” to the experiences in the classroom. It is an enriching element for teacher candidates to prepare for every situation they will encounter in the classroom environment for their future profession and to gain various experiences (Gürşimşek, 26:1998).

In line with the opinions of teachers and school administrators on the issue of “*Introducing the Teaching Profession Law*” in the 2023 Education Vision, a theme and two sub-themes emerged under this theme. The emerging theme is “Expectations from the Teaching Profession Law” and the sub-themes are “Social, Economic, and Personal Rights” and “Contribution and Participation of Education Stakeholders”.

The teaching profession law is deemed necessary by the participating teachers and school administrators to improve the financial and social rights of teachers and their personal affairs. All of the participating 10 teachers and 9 school administrators expressed the importance of the professional law as follows: the profession will gain social value, personal rights will be improved, it will provide professional security, it will be considered a career profession, it will reach professional standards, it will motivate the teacher, it will be a hope for the future, the lost value will be gained, it will bring professional prestige, equality in working conditions will be ensured, the boundaries of teaching quality and quantity will be clarified, and it will provide job satisfaction. Also, they considered the absence of a professional law for teachers until now as a major deficiency.

The teaching profession law was included in the National Education Council decisions in 1988 (Decision 38. “*Introduction of the Teaching Profession Law*”) (**XII. National Education Council 1st Meeting Date: 18-22 June 1988 - Subject: III. Teacher Training**). (ttkb.meb.gov.tr/meb_iys_dosyalar/2017_09/29165252_12_sura.pdf) The same decision was reconsidered at the XV. National Education Council (“*57- ‘*Teaching Profession Law*’ should be introduced immediately”). Today, the fact that there is no such law for teachers is an indicator of the value of education

and teachers in a country. Teachers have a decisive feature in the future of countries. Most countries see teachers as the key to development or progress for this reason and value them for the future of their country. Participants also see professional law as an indicator of their value.

Another view of the participants about the professional law is that the ‘Teaching Profession Law’ is prepared based on the ideas, expectations, and demands of the teachers who practice their profession. The unions, which are the voice of millions of teachers on this issue, have carefully emphasized their opinion that the professional law should not be written independently of the teachers and other relevant persons who practice this profession and that their demands should be taken into account. **Education and Science Workers Union (EĞİTİM- SEN-** <http://egitimsen.org.tr/ogretmenlik-meslek-kanunu-ogretmenlerin-iradeyle-hazirlanmali/>) expresses its concerns on this issue with the following words:

“Some circles writing and publishing the ‘Teaching Profession Law Recommendation Text’ ignoring the Turkish Ministry of National Education and the institutions dealing with the subject, unions, scientific circles, and most importantly, teachers, who are the building blocks of the society practicing this profession, has an important place in these preparations”. “It is clearly evident that a law cannot be accepted by teachers after being written without considering teachers’ wishes and expectations”. **“The Education and Science Workers Union (EĞİTİM SEN)** called the Turkish Ministry of National Education that the ‘Teaching Profession Law’ should be prepared by taking into account the opinions, suggestions, and demands of teachers practicing the profession... Otherwise, a law that is claimed to solve teachers’ personal, democratic, economic, and social problems may lead to new problems (<http://egitimsen.org.tr/ogretmenlik-meslek-kanunu-ogretmenlerin-iradeyle-hazirlanmalidir/>).

The **Education and Science Employees’ Union** (<http://www.egitimis.org.tr/guncel/sendika-haberleri>) similarly expressed their views and concerns on this issue as follows: “...*the government is in preparation for a professional law. Although it is of great importance, the way these preparations are carried out, acting with drafts prepared somewhere in advance, and not getting the right opinion from all stakeholders in education has already made us think about this law, which will be of vital importance for educators*”.

SUGGESTIONS

In the light of the findings and results of the study, some suggestions to policymakers, researchers, and practitioners are listed below.

7.1. Suggestions to Policy Makers

1. Most of the educational practices in Turkey do not give the desired results. The reason for this is that decisions are made too often and quickly or that the decisions taken have no basis. It would be healthier to consult expert opinions for decisions to be taken or practices to be made in this regard, to consider the country’s conditions, and to take steps accordingly. Only in this way can the decisions made and the applications to be made reach their target. Otherwise, every step taken will bring other problems instead of solutions.

2. The findings reveal that the participants want the opinions of education workers, the unions representing them, and the professional organizations in the field about the preparation of the teaching profession law and the determination of its content. Otherwise, it is seen the law cannot be accepted by the teachers. The relevant parties must participate in the process while preparing the Profession Law.

3. As a result of the examination of the views of teachers and school administrators, it is thought that there are some uncertainties in the 2023 Education Vision. Efforts should be made by the relevant institutions to eliminate these uncertainties.
4. During the interviews, it was observed that some administrators and most teachers had almost no information about the 2023 Education Vision. In this regard, the awareness of all stakeholders of education, especially teachers and school administrators, should be raised about the 2023 Education Vision.
5. It is important for institutions that train and employ teachers in Turkey to cooperate in necessary matters, especially at the level of practice (faculties of education and practice schools).
6. Improving the social and economic conditions of the teaching profession may be effective in directing successful and talented young people to these institutions.
7. Professional development opportunities that will meet the needs and produce solutions to the problems should be offered in Turkey.
8. Teachers should be supported in postgraduate education, taking into account the course load and work intensities at the school.

7.2. Suggestions to Researchers

1. Quantitative studies can be prepared that examine the views of teachers and school administrators on the 2023 Education Vision.

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“2023 Eğitim Vizyonu” Metni / “2023 Education Vision” Text

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<http://egitimsen.org.tr/ogretmenlik-meslek-kanunu-ogretmenlerin-iradesiyle-hazirlanmalidir/>

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