AN INVESTIGATION OF THE REASONS OF NEW TEACHERS FOR CHOOSING THE TEACHING PROFESSION

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Abstract: Motivation is key for future teachers to choose and stay on this career path. Therefore, it is important to examine teachers' reasons for choosing the profession. Taking the views of new teachers and pre-service teachers can contribute to a better future for the education system. This study was conducted to determine the reasons why new teachers choose the teaching profession and their expectations before they start teaching. The study was conducted using a phenomenological design from qualitative research methods. The participants consisted of 13 teachers in different branches from different schools affiliated to Ankara Provincial Directorate of National Education in the 2024-2025 academic year. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the teachers. Data were collected with an interview form. The interview form consists of research questions and demographic questions. The collected data were analyzed by content analysis technique and two themes were identified: "reasons for choosing the teaching profession" and "expectations from the teaching profession". The reasons for choosing the teaching profession were found to be "personal reasons" and "external reasons". Expectations from the teaching profession were found to be "professional expectations" and "individual expectations". Various suggestions were made in line with the results obtained.

Keywords: *Teaching, reasons for choosing teaching, expectations from teaching profession, qualitative study*

GÖREVE YENİ BAŞLAYAN ÖĞRETMENLERİN ÖĞRETMENLİK MESLEĞİNİ SEÇME NEDENLERİNİN İNCELENMESİ

Öz: Geleceğin öğretmenlerinin bu kariyer yolunu seçebilmeleri ve bu yolda kalabilmeleri için motivasyon kilit önem taşımaktadır. Bu nedenle öğretmenlerin mesleği seçme nedenlerinin incelenmesi önemlidir. Yeni öğretmenlerin ve öğretmen adaylarının görüşlerini almak, eğitim sisteminin daha iyi bir geleceğe doğru ilerlemesine katkıda bulunabilir. Bu araştırma, göreve yeni başlayan öğretmenlerin öğretmenlik mesleğini seçme nedenleri ile öğretmenliğe başlamadan önceki beklentilerini tespit etmek amacıyla yapılmıştır. Çalışma, nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden fenomenolojik desen kullanılarak yürütülmüştür. Katılımcılar, 2024-2025 Eğitim-Öğretim Yılı'nda Ankara İl Millî Eğitim Müdürlüğüne bağlı farklı okullardan farklı branşlarda toplam 13 öğretmenden oluşmaktadır. Öğretmenlerle yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Veriler, bir görüşme formuyla toplanmıştır. Görüşme formu, araştırma soruları ve demografik sorulardan oluşmaktadır. Toplanan veriler içerik analizi tekniğiyle çözümlenmiş ve "öğretmenlik mesleğini seçme nedenleri" ve "öğretmenlik mesleğinden beklentiler" olmak üzere iki tema tespit

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edilmiştir. Öğretmenlik mesleğini seçme nedenlerinin "bireysel nedenler" ve "dışsal nedenler" olduğu saptanmıştır. Öğretmenlik mesleğinden beklentilerin ise "mesleki beklentiler" ve "bireysel beklentiler" olduğu belirlenmiştir. Ulaşılan sonuçlar doğrultusunda çeşitli önerilerde bulunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Öğretmenlik, öğretmenliği seçme nedenleri, öğretmenlik mesleğinden beklentiler, nitel çalışma*

The aim of education is based on raising healthy, cultured and rich individuals and building an independent nation with these individuals. All changes depend on education. Therefore, renewal and development fall within the scope of education. Our economic, social, social, cultural and technological life develops and improves depending on the quality and continuity of education. The level of welfare and economic development in countries also increases depending on education. The education level of the society affects the whole life (Ergenekon, 2004). The most important factor in our change and development compared to other living beings in the world is the transfer of our culture from generation to generation through education. The development of societies, the provision of basic needs and the establishment of healthy relationships depend on education itself. Teachers are the main factor in achieving these goals through education.

Teachers are guides who accompany people of all age groups from all segments of the society to provide the development they need (Demirel et al., 2014). A teacher is a person who mediates the execution of educational activities in the education sector. According to Erdoğan (2003), the teaching profession includes economic, social, scientific and technical aspects arising from social demands. The author (2015) defines teaching as the profession of experts in the field who organize and carry out teaching activities in a planned and programmed manner in line with predetermined goals in educational institutions. The teaching profession can be defined as a profession in which the task of disseminating accurate and up-to-date information is fulfilled. In the light of changes and advances in the field of business and technology, the position of the teacher in society and business life has gained even greater importance. Today's society needs highly educated and motivated teachers. Fokkens-Bruinsma and Canrinus (2014) stated that what motivates the choice of a degree program is fundamental to teachers' commitment to their professional performance. Considering that motivation is one of the factors that best explain human behavior in different contexts (Burgueño et al., 2017), the motivation of student teachers is an important issue to be analyzed. An analysis focused on improving the selection and training of future teachers needs to be based on knowledge about teachers' motivations (Watt & Richardson, 2008; Gratacós & López-Jurado, 2016; Watt et al., 2017).

From past to present, occupational groups have diversified in line with inventions, the development of humanity and the needs arising as a result of these. The choice of profession varies depending on the family, gender, social stratum and the birth-family of the individual. On the other hand, there are also practices in which babies are surrounded by items belonging to occupational groups when they are born and the baby is directed to whichever occupation he/she chooses (Razon, 1983). When choosing a profession, individuals should act by taking into account their financial means, psychological and sociological effects, personal desires and skills. Choosing a profession that is compatible with one's own characteristics is very important for one's life. The occupational choice affects the psychological and physical health of the individual as well as his/her sociological and social position. According to Bordin (1994), an individual should choose a suitable profession by evaluating his/her personality traits. According to Super (1980), professions are the identity of individuals, the way they express themselves. For this reason, occupational choices are an expression of personality. According to Hoppock (1935), occupational choices also depend on the skills of individuals. These skills determine whether they will be successful or not and where they will end up in the future. According to research on career choice, in addition to personality traits, factors such as the environment in which the person lives, the social status of the family, the schools they attend,

their teachers and the encouragement of these factors can be effective in people's career choices (Dağ, 2010).

1.1. Personal and Social Motivations for Choosing the Teaching Profession

The teaching profession is an important career path that allows individuals to contribute not only to their personal development but also to society. Therefore, the motivation sources of individuals who prefer teaching profession are usually a combination of personal and social elements. Examining the motivations that influence individuals to choose the teaching profession is critical for understanding the attitudes and behaviors of those who choose this profession.

1.1.1. Personal Motivations

Personal motivations express the desire of individuals to choose a profession that suits their interests, skills and life values. Love for children, desire to be useful to society and interest in the field of education are among the main personal motivations of individuals who prefer teaching profession (Çeliköz & Çetin, 2004). Korkmaz, Saban, and Akbaşlı (2004) stated that the desire to interact with students is at the forefront of the professional motivation of new teachers. The desire to guide children and help them discover their potential is a motivation that is frequently seen in individuals who prefer the teaching profession. In addition, the individual's interest in the teaching profession and the meaning of this profession in his/her life play an important role in the preference process. Razon (1983) stated that the choice of profession reflects an individual's personality traits, abilities and interests. In this context, it is seen that individuals who choose the teaching profession are generally successful in human relations, patient and have strong empathy skills. Yüksel (2004) emphasized that individuals who prefer the teaching profession are motivated by the desire to contribute to the educational process and the satisfaction of the act of teaching.

Another personal motivator is the expectation of professional satisfaction. Teaching offers individuals the opportunity to continuously make a difference throughout their careers. Seeing the success of students, touching their lives in a positive way and the responsibility of shaping the individuals of the future increase the professional satisfaction levels of teachers (Kaçar, 2018). This situation increases teachers' commitment to their profession and job satisfaction, enabling them to practice their profession for a longer period.

1.1.2. Social Motivations

Social motivations refer to individuals' career choices in line with environmental and social influences. The influence of families on their children's education and career choices plays a significant role, especially for individuals who choose the teaching profession. Çeliköz and Çetin (2004) stated that families direct their children to this profession because they see the teaching profession as a source of security and prestige.

Social prestige is an important source of motivation for choosing the teaching profession. Teaching is generally seen as a sacred profession by society and teachers are attributed a high status. This may strengthen individuals' desire to have a respected position in society when choosing this profession. Ergenekon (2004) stated that teachers are aware of this prestige in society and this situation positively affects their professional motivation. In addition, the teaching profession offers individuals the opportunity to be a role model in society. Teachers are not only individuals who transfer knowledge but also guides who impart values to their students. This situation causes individuals who prefer the teaching profession to act with the desire to leave a positive impact on society (Sarı & Altun, 2015). Social responsibility awareness is a common source of motivation for individuals who prefer teaching profession.

Among social motivations, there is also the effect of the social environment in which individuals live on their career choices. Baltacı (2010) stated that individuals make career

choices in line with environmental factors and social support systems. In particular, individuals who choose the teaching profession tend to choose this profession with the support and encouragement from their social environment. This support increases individuals' self-confidence in choosing a profession and positively affects their decision-making processes.

1.1.3. Combination of Personal and Social Motivations

It is thought that personal and social motivations are effective together in choosing the teaching profession. While individuals' interests and abilities create an intrinsic motivation for the teaching profession, environmental and social factors play a supportive role in this preference. Super (1980) stated that both intrinsic and extrinsic factors should be evaluated together in individuals' choice of profession. In this context, there is a balance of personal satisfaction and social acceptance in the decisions of individuals who choose the teaching profession.

The teaching profession also responds to individuals' search for continuity and security in their careers. Bordin (1994) stated that individuals attach importance to factors such as career development and job security in their career choices. Since the teaching profession is considered as a public employment in Turkey, it is perceived as a secure career by individuals. This situation fulfills the search for economic security and social status of individuals who prefer teaching profession.

Personal and social motivations play a complementary role in individuals' career choice processes. While personal motivations such as love for children, desire to contribute to society and expectations of personal fulfillment create an intrinsic attachment to the teaching profession, extrinsic factors such as family guidance, social prestige and social support support this preference.

1.2. Economic and Career Related Factors in Preferring Teaching Profession

Teaching is a profession that fulfills not only the desire of individuals to contribute to society, but also their desire for economic security and the realization of their career goals. Teaching is considered as a profession where economic security is at the forefront, especially since it is located in the public sector. In this context, the economic expectations and career goals of individuals who prefer the teaching profession are among the important factors affecting their choice of profession.

1.2.1. Economic Factors

Economic factors often have a significant influence on individuals' choice of occupation. Hoppock (1935) stated that there is a strong relationship between job satisfaction and economic security. The teaching profession stands out as an attractive option for individuals because it offers a fixed salary and state security.

Among the economic motivations of individuals, the desire to earn a regular income has an important place. Naturally, this is also the case for individuals who choose the teaching profession. Kuzgun (2001) emphasized that individuals tend to prefer a job that can meet their economic needs when choosing a profession. Especially for individuals from low-income families, teaching offers a valuable opportunity to both earn a regular income and contribute to society.

Another economic factor is the social rights provided by the profession. Soydan (2019) stated that the reliable position of the teaching profession in the public sector plays an important role in individuals' preference for this profession. In addition, the teaching profession is seen as a means of achieving economic prosperity for many individuals. Razon (1983) stated that individuals prefer certain professions to increase their economic and social status. Teaching is one of the professions that offer economic security together with social status.

1.2.2. Career Related Factors

Career-related factors play as influential a role in individuals' career choice as economic motivations. The teaching profession is seen as a career path that offers career development, professional satisfaction and social prestige to individuals. Super (1980) stated that individuals consider lifelong career goals and personal development in their career choices. Teaching enables individuals to achieve these goals by providing them with opportunities for continuous learning and self-improvement.

The teaching profession has a structure that allows individuals to advance in their careers. Kaçar (2018) stated that teachers' professional satisfaction is directly proportional to the opportunities offered for their career development. This situation is an important source of motivation for individuals who prefer the teaching profession to realize their career goals.

Another important factor related to career is professional stability. Teaching is considered as a profession that allows individuals to make a long-term career plan. Especially being in the public sector makes teaching a more stable career option. Bordin (1994) stated that individuals consider long-term career goals when choosing a profession. Teaching stands out as a profession that enables individuals to achieve these goals.

Social prestige is another important factor that makes the teaching profession attractive in terms of career. Teachers are seen as role models in society and stand out with their social status. Ergenekon (2004) stated that teachers' social status positively affects their professional satisfaction and career goals. This situation is an important source of motivation for individuals who prefer teaching profession to realize their career goals.

The teaching profession offers opportunities for individuals to develop themselves and specialize in different fields at every stage of their careers. Gömleksiz et al. (2010) stated that various educational reforms and programs have been implemented to support teachers' career development. These reforms allow teachers to reach a higher level in their careers by increasing their professional satisfaction.

1.2.3. Combination of Economy and Career Factors

It is seen that economic and career-related factors together influence the decisions of individuals who prefer the teaching profession. While economic security is an important source of motivation for individuals to choose a profession, career development and social prestige are among the factors that increase the attractiveness of the teaching profession. Hoppock (1935) stated that individuals consider both economic and career-related motivations in their career choices.

The teaching profession stands out as a profession that both meets the economic needs of individuals and allows them to realize their career goals. This situation enables individuals who prefer the teaching profession to balance economic and career-related factors in their career choices. Individuals' achievement of this balance increases their commitment to the teaching profession and their professional satisfaction (Soydan, 2019).

1.3. Purpose of the Study

Motivation is key for future teachers to choose and stay on this career path (Fokkens-Bruinsma & Canrinus, 2012). It is therefore important to examine teachers' reasons for choosing the profession. This helps to understand why teachers choose this sacred profession (Yakar & Yelpaze, 2019). These findings are important for improving the education system, motivating prospective teachers and preparing them for the profession. A better understanding of preferences for the teaching profession is necessary both to understand individuals' career choice processes and to develop educational policies. Moreover, teachers' reasons for choosing this profession can help to understand how passionately they will perform their profession and

what kind of support they will need. Therefore, taking the views of new teachers and prospective teachers can contribute to the educational system moving towards a better future.

The aim of this study is to examine the reasons why new teachers choose the profession. In this context, answers to the following questions were sought:

- What are the reasons for choosing teaching profession?
- What are the expectations from the teaching profession before starting to work?

1.4. Importance of the Research

Understanding teachers' reasons for choosing their professions can make important contributions not only to the evaluation of their individual preferences but also to the development of educational policies and strategies. Teachers' motivations can directly determine their success in the profession, their retention and their impact on students. Therefore, a detailed examination of these motivations plays a critical role in improving the quality of both the education system and teacher training processes. Examining the reasons why new teachers choose their profession and evaluating the effects of these preferences on the education system can form the basis of a stronger educational structure. Increasing teachers' professional satisfaction, supporting their motivation and minimizing the challenges they face will provide a better learning environment for both teachers and students. In this context, it is important to determine the reasons for new teachers to choose the teaching profession in order to ensure that they perform their profession more consciously and willingly.

2. Method

2.1. Research Design

In this study, phenomenological design, one of the qualitative research methods, was used. Phenomenology is a design that aims to understand individuals' perceptions and meanings of a particular phenomenon through their experiences (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). This method is particularly suitable for revealing the subjective experiences of individuals about the situations they live in. The study focused on the perspectives of teachers. Accordingly, the phenomenological design provided an in-depth look at the process of making sense of teachers' experiences.

2.2. Participants

The participant group of the study was selected from teachers working in different schools affiliated to Ankara Provincial Directorate of National Education. In the study, interviews were conducted with 13 teachers can be defined as newcomers to the profession. In this study, random sampling was used. In random sampling, every possible combination of items in the universe has an equal chance of being included in the sample (Kerlinger & Lee, 1999). In order to use this method, the information about the problems addressed must be homogeneous with respect to the population. In simple random sampling, a sampling frame that includes all the elements of the universe should be made first (Mertens, 2014). Accordingly, the researcher assigned a number to each item in the sampling frame created as a list. The researcher then generated random numbers equal to the number of items he/she wanted to include in the sample or used a random number list to randomly select items from the list (Neuman, 2014). The demographic characteristics of the participants are given in Table 1.

	Gender	Graduated University	Branch	Age	Term of Office	Education Status
P1	Female	Ankara University	Social Studies T.	27	1 year	Undergraduate
P2	Female	Giresun University	Classroom Teacher	28	1 year	Undergraduate
P3	Female	Kocaeli University	Turkish Teacher	25	6 months	Undergraduate
P4	Female	Gazi University	Classroom Teacher	24	1 year	Undergraduate
P5	Female	Istanbul University	Maths Teacher	23	8 months	Undergraduate

P6	Female	Necmettin Erbakan University	English Teacher	27	8 months	Undergraduate
P7	Female	Gazi University	Social Studies T.	27	8 months	Undergraduate
P8	Male	Mehmet Akif Ersoy University	Classroom Teacher	24	1 year	Undergraduate
P9	Female	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan University	Classroom Teacher	25	8 months	Undergraduate
P10	Female	Hacettepe University	Classroom Teacher	24	8 months	Undergraduate
P11	Female	Amasya University	Classroom Teacher	26	1 year	Undergraduate
P12	Female	Karadeniz Technical University	Preschool Teacher	24	6 months	Undergraduate
P13	Female	Harran University	Religious Culture and Ethics T.	30	1 year	Undergraduate

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

As can be seen in Table 1, there were 1 male and 12 female teachers in the study. Each teacher graduated from a different university. In terms of their branches, there were 6 classroom teachers, 2 social studies teachers, 1 maths teacher, 1 Turkish, 1 English, 1 preschool teacher and 1 religious culture and ethics teacher. In terms of age, the participant teachers were between 23-30 years old. In terms of tenure, teachers who have been working for at least 6 months and at most 1 year took part in the study. All 13 participant teachers were undergraduate graduates.

2.3. Data Collection

A semi-structured interview form was preferred as a data collection tool. This form was prepared to facilitate obtaining detailed information from the participants under the purpose of the research. The form was prepared in line with expert opinions. The interview form consists of two parts. In the first part, demographic information such as gender, age, marital status, education level, branch and professional seniority of the participants were obtained. The second part included open-ended questions aimed at understanding teachers' views on the reasons for starting their profession and the difficulties they face while practicing their profession. This approach allowed the participants to express their opinions freely.

The data were collected through face-to-face interviews with teachers in November and December of the 2024-2025 academic year. Before starting the interviews, the purpose of the study was explained to the participants and it was emphasized that the study was completely voluntary. It was also stated that the information collected during the interview would be kept confidential and would be used only for scientific research purposes. The interviews were conducted in a suitable environment so that the participants could share their thoughts comfortably and each interview lasted approximately twenty minutes.

2.4. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed through content analysis. Data analysis is part of the research process that systematically reviews and organizes collected data so that it can be meaningfully presented and understood by others (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Content analysis is an analysis technique used to make repeatable and valid inferences from texts or other meaningful items about their context of use (Krippendorff, 2004). Content analysis can reveal the facts hidden in the data (Gülbahar & Alper, 2009).

Thematic analysis was used in the study in which researchers identified and coded relevant statements, created themes, and assessed the reliability and credibility of the analysis. The participants' verbal responses were transcribed, and the transcripts were thoroughly reviewed and analyzed to identify codes and group codes into themes. Summaries of the responses were then prepared. In order to protect the confidentiality of the participants, each participant was assigned codes as P1, P2.

2.5. Validity and Reliability

In qualitative research, the concepts of internal and external reliability used in quantitative research are replaced by credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021). In this study, strategies such as in-depth data collection, triangulation, detailed descriptions and maximum variation sampling were used to ensure credibility and transferability. Consistency checks and confirmatory reviews were conducted to ensure reliability and confirmability. The data obtained for in-depth data collection were consistently compared and conceptualized to create identifiable patterns. Triangulation was achieved by using more than one researcher to compare findings from the data. Besides the primary researcher, another researcher reviewed the collected data and findings to enhance the robustness of the results. For detailed description, the raw data were reorganized according to the identified themes and categories. To ensure consistency, the raw data were first coded by the primary researcher. Then, these codes were reviewed by another researcher to assess the consistency and agreement rate between the coders. The degree of similarity between coders or inter-coder reliability is very important in qualitative research (Miles & Huberman, 2021). The formula "Reliability Coefficient = Number of Agreements / (Number of Agreements + Number of Disagreements) x 100" was used and a reliability rate of at least 90% is considered acceptable. In this study, the reliability of the data was calculated as 91%.

3. Findings

As a result of the analysis, the findings were grouped under two themes: "reasons for choosing the teaching profession" and "expectations from the teaching profession".

3.1. Participants' reasons for choosing the teaching profession

In the interviews with the teachers, the question *"What is your reason for choosing the teaching profession?"* was asked to determine the reasons for choosing this profession. The findings obtained from the analysis of the data obtained from the participants are shown in Table 2.

Themes	Codes	f
Individual reasons	Interest in the profession	3
	Desire for leadership	1
	Love for children	1
	Suitability of personality	1
	Interest in learning/teaching	1
	Perception of the sanctity of the profession	1
External causes	University Entrance exam results	2
	Teacher influence	2
	Family influence	1

Table 2. Reasons for choosing teaching profession

Participants' reasons for choosing the teaching profession were categorized under two themes: individual and external reasons. Some of the participants stated that they chose teaching for individual reasons and some for external reasons. The individual reasons are "interest in the profession", "desire for leadership", "love for children", "suitability for personality", "interest in learning/teaching" and "perception of the sanctity of the profession". Some participant statements about individual reasons are as follows:

"It was my dream to become a teacher. It has always been attractive for me to be a guide for people at some point in their lives. Touching a little heart and seeing a little improvement in it makes me feel happy." (P3)

"I wanted to be a different kind of teacher in my own way. I wanted my students to see me as a leader and I wanted them to gain new ideas." (P2)

"Although there are many reasons for choosing this profession, the most important and most valuable for me is the love of children." (P12)

"First of all, I chose this profession because I thought that guidance counseling was the most suitable profession for my personal characteristics. Also, being able to touch people's lives in this way made this profession interesting for me." (P5)

"I have always been interested in learning foreign languages. I chose this profession because I am as interested in teaching English as learning it." (P6)

Under the theme of external reasons, three codings were made. These are "university entrance exam results", "teacher effect" and "family effect". Some of the participant views on external reasons are as follows:

"When choosing a profession, I could not make a conscious decision both because of age and because I had not yet discovered my interests. I made a choice by calculating where I could get the highest score." (P1)

"The reason I chose this profession was primarily because I loved my own class teacher very much. I became a teacher after I realized that I liked to teach something like him." (P9)

"First of all, my family guided me a lot when I chose this profession." (P10)

3.2. Participants' Expectations from the Teaching Profession

In the interviews with the teachers, the question *"What are your expectations from the teaching profession?"* was asked to determine the expectations of the teachers before starting the profession. The findings regarding the expectations of the participants are given in Table 3.

Themes	Codes	*f*
Professional expectations	Being knowledgeable and equipped	2
	Development	1
	Ideal education	1
	Qualified students	1
	Ideal professional conditions	1
Individual expectations	Self-actualization	2
	Usefulness	1
	Economic freedom	1
	Respectability	1
	Happy life	1

Table 3. Expectations from the Teaching Profession

Participants' expectations from the teaching profession were divided into two themes: professional expectations and personal expectations. Professional expectations are "being knowledgeable and equipped", "development", "ideal education", "qualified students" and "ideal professional conditions". Individual expectations are "self-actualization", "usefulness", "economic freedom", "respectability" and "happy life". Some of the participants' views on the expectations of teachers before starting their profession are given below:

"Before I started my career, I thought that the ideal classroom example we had studied at the university existed in real life. I expected a classroom where children were eager to learn, inquisitive, or where behavioral disorders were at a minimum level. The most challenging thing for me in the classrooms was behavioral disorders." (P7)

"The fact that the target group I want to work with is different from the students I am currently working with, the students' readiness, social economic status, indifferent families, violence in their families and environment. Unfortunately, it caused me to be unable to give my students the education and training I dreamed of." (P2)

"Before I started my career, I aimed to teach English not as a subject but in line with children's wishes and abilities. However, the current situation did not allow for this." (P11)

"Not lowering my morale and motivation level (emotional expectation), professional development expectations, economic expectations and social expectations." (P13)

"I wanted to have a respectable profession, but when I started working, I realized that there was no respectability." (P8)

"Before I started working, I hoped that I would work in the places I wanted and under better financial conditions, but the financial conditions are barely enough for a teacher to support himself/herself. Social activities, domestic vacation opportunities are limited; there are no vacation opportunities abroad. I used to see teaching as a sacred profession, but when I started working, I realized that I was seen as a babysitter." (P3)

"I was aiming to conduct activities and practices in schools and to teach lessons according to students' readiness. But I did not fully achieve my goals because the classes were crowded." (P5)

"My expectations from my profession are to be rewarded for my efforts, to be respected by my environment, to earn my own money and live a happy life. My financial expectations were not met." (P4)

4. Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

4.1. Conclusion and Discussion

This study was conducted to determine the reasons why new teachers choose the teaching profession and their expectations before they start teaching. The study was conducted using phenomenological design, one of the qualitative research methods. The participants consisted of 13 teachers from different branches from different schools affiliated to Ankara Provincial Directorate of National Education in the 2024-2025 academic year. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the teachers. The collected data were analyzed by content analysis technique and two themes were identified: "reasons for choosing the teaching profession" and "expectations from the teaching profession".

Participants' reasons for choosing the teaching profession were categorized under two themes: individual and external reasons. Razon (1983) stated that career choice reflects an individual's personality traits, abilities and interests. When the individual reasons identified in the study are analyzed, it is possible to make inferences about the personality traits and interests of new teachers. The individual reasons identified are "interest in the profession", "desire for leadership", "love for children", "suitability for personality", "interest in learning/teaching" and "perception of the sanctity of the profession". In the literature, there are claims and research results that support these findings. According to Çeliköz and Çetin (2004), love for children, desire to be useful to society and interest in education are among the main personal motivations of individuals who prefer teaching profession. Korkmaz, Saban, and Akbaşlı (2004) stated that the desire to interact with students is at the forefront in the professional motivation of new teachers. Yüksel (2004) emphasized that individuals who prefer the teaching profession are motivated by the desire to contribute to the educational process and the satisfaction of the act of teaching.

The extrinsic reasons identified in this study for choosing the teaching profession were found to be "university entrance exam results", "teacher effect" and "family effect". There is also information in the literature that supports these results. According to Kuzgun (2001), factors such as family guidance, environmental influence and prestige in society are important sources of motivation for individuals who prefer the teaching profession. Çeliköz and Çetin (2004) stated that families direct their children to this profession because they see the teaching profession as a source of security and prestige. Social motivations refer to individuals' choice of profession in line with environmental and social influences. The influence of families is especially decisive for individuals who choose the teaching profession.

When the studies on the reasons for choosing the teaching profession were examined, results that can be associated with the propositions of this study were found. In the study conducted by Şaban (2003), it was revealed that 68% of the prospective primary school teachers

stated that they turned to the faculty of education with the desire to be useful to children who are the future of society. In the study conducted by Çevik, Perkmen, and Alkan (2012), it was determined that the main reasons for the preference of prospective music teachers were the modeling of music teachers and the interest and love for the teaching profession and dealing with students. In the study conducted by Eskicumalı, Yaman, and Yaman (2001), reasons such as interest and love for children, the desire to give direction to the society and the low working hours of the teaching profession were determined. In the study conducted by Hacıömeroğlu and Şahin Taşkın (2010), the main reasons for pre-service teachers to prefer the teaching profession were interest and love for children and working conditions of the profession. In the study conducted by Kılıç (2022), it was found that the reasons for choosing the teaching profession were external reasons, altruistic reasons and internal reasons. Bergmark et al. (2018) determined that intrinsic, altruistic and extrinsic motives are effective in students' career choices. Çermik, Doğan, and Şahin (2010) stated that the reasons for choosing the teaching profession are influenced by altruistic, intrinsic, extrinsic and self-interested motives. In the study conducted by Low, Lim, Ch'ng, and Goh (2011), pre-service teachers' reasons for choosing teaching profession were categorized as altruistic, intrinsic, extrinsic and other reasons.

Individuals start to form expectations about a certain profession from the moment they choose to study that profession. As they get to know the profession, the levels of hope for the realization of these expectations also differ. Expectations formed during the student years and the level of hope for the realization of these expectations greatly affect the morale and motivation level of the individual, especially in the first years of the profession. It is thought that the unrealization of expectations, which are of high importance and which the individual has a high level of hope that they will be realized, will decrease the level of morale and motivation, and this will negatively affect professional success and efficiency (Uras & Kunt, 2006). In this respect, it is of great importance to meet the expectations of new teachers from the profession. In this study, it was determined that the expectations of the participants from the teaching profession before they started teaching were professional expectations and personal expectations. Professional expectations are "being knowledgeable and equipped", "development", "ideal education", "qualified students" and "ideal professional conditions". Individual expectations are "self-actualization", "usefulness", "economic freedom", "respectability" and "happy life". When related studies were examined, results that can be related to the results of this study were found. In the study conducted by Kılıç (2022), it was determined that the expectations from the teaching profession were professional, social expectations and economic expectations. Koşar (2018) categorized prospective teachers' expectations as economic, social, task-related, individual and negative expectations. In the study conducted by Uras and Kunt (2006), prospective teachers' expectations of teaching were examined in four areas as social, economic, professional development and legal expectations. In the study conducted by İncikabı, Biber, and Mercimek (2016), prospective teachers' expectations were evaluated under the themes of professional development, academic development and social development.

4.2. Recommendations

4.2.1. Recommendations for Practitioners

Supportive Policies for Prospective Teachers' Professional Selection Process
- Professional introduction programs should be organized for prospective teachers so that they can make informed decisions in the process of choosing a profession.
- In faculties of education, prospective teachers should be provided with comprehensive information about the challenges and advantages of the profession.
- Career guidance services should be strengthened and teacher candidates should be guided in line with their individual interests and abilities.

Practices Supporting Teachers' Professional and Personal Development

• **Professional development:** Continuous professional development programs should be offered in line with teachers' expectations of being "knowledgeable and equipped".

• **Ideal educational environment**: Class sizes should be reduced and material and technological infrastructure should be strengthened to meet teachers' expectations for quality in education.

• **Education appropriate for student diversity:** Teachers should be trained in differentiated instructional strategies for students from different socioeconomic backgrounds.

• **Behavior management:** Psychological counseling and classroom management trainings should be increased for teachers to deal with student behavior disorders.

Policies to Meet Teachers' Social and Economic Expectations

• **Economic improvements:** Improving teacher salaries, creating additional sources of income (benefits, incentives, scholarships, etc.).

• **Social status:** Media and state-sponsored awareness campaigns should be organized to increase the prestige of the teaching profession in society.

• **Working conditions:** Opportunities should be provided to support teachers' social lives (social facilities, educational vacations, etc.).

4.2. 2. Recommendations for Researchers

Investigation of the Relationship between Teachers' Choice of Profession and Occupational Satisfaction

• **First choice or compulsory choice?** It should be investigated whether there is a difference in occupational satisfaction between those who choose the teaching profession based on university exam results and those who consciously choose it.

• **The effect of role models:** The adaptation of individuals who turn to the profession due to the influence of their families or teachers should be examined.

Reasons for the Difference between Teachers' Expectations and Actual Situation

• **Why are expectations not met?** The root causes of the gap between teachers' expectations of the "ideal classroom environment" and reality should be investigated.

• **Managing prospective teachers' expectations:** The extent to which the teaching education given in faculties of education is in line with the realities of the profession should be examined.

The Effects of Education Policies on Teacher Satisfaction

• **Evaluation of education policies:** The effectiveness of existing education policies in meeting teachers' expectations should be investigated.

• **International comparisons:** Teacher expectations and their fulfillment in Turkey should be analyzed in comparison with other countries.

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Geniş Özet

Eğitim, bireylerin yalnızca bilgi ve beceri edinmelerini değil; aynı zamanda kültürel, sosyal ve ekonomik düzeyde bütüncül bir gelişim süreci yaşamalarını sağlayan temel bir araçtır. Bireylerin gelişimi desteklendikçe toplumların refah düzeyi artmakta, sosyal adalet ve ekonomik kalkınma sağlanabilmektedir (Ergenekon, 2004). Eğitim, aynı zamanda kültürün nesiller arasında aktarılmasını ve toplumların dinamik bir biçimde değişim ve dönüşümünü mümkün kılan en önemli mekanizmadır. Bu kapsamda, eğitim sisteminin başarısında belirleyici rol üstlenen temel aktörler öğretmenlerdir (Demirel, Kozikoğlu ve Özkan, 2014).

Öğretmenler, yalnızca bilgi aktaran bireyler değil; aynı zamanda değerler kazandıran, toplumsal bilinç oluşturan ve bireylerin kişilik gelişiminde önemli rol oynayan rehberlerdir. Dolayısıyla öğretmenlerin meslek seçim motivasyonlarının ve mesleki beklentilerinin anlaşılması, hem bireysel mesleki doyumlarının artırılması hem de eğitim sisteminin kalitesinin yükseltilmesi açısından kritik bir öneme sahiptir (Fokkens-Bruinsma & Canrinus, 2014; Watt & Richardson, 2008). Özellikle öğretmenlik mesleğini seçen bireylerin hangi etkenlerle bu kararı verdiklerinin ve mesleğe ilişkin hangi beklentilere sahip olduklarının ortaya konulması, eğitim politikalarının ve öğretmen yetiştirme programlarının daha etkin bir şekilde tasarlanmasına katkı sunacaktır. Bu bağlamda gerçekleştirilen bu araştırmada, göreve yeni başlayan öğretmenlerin öğretmenlik mesleğini seçme nedenleri ile meslekten beklentileri incelenmiştir. Çalışmada, bireysel ve dışsal faktörlerin meslek seçimindeki etkileri ile öğretmenlerin mesleğe başlamadan önce sahip oldukları profesyonel ve kişisel beklentiler detaylı bir şekilde analiz edilmiştir.

Araştırmada, bireylerin deneyimlerinden hareketle bir olguyu anlamayı amaçlayan nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden fenomenolojik desen kullanılmıştır (Yıldırım ve Şimşek, 2021). Çalışma grubunu, 2024-2025 Eğitim-Öğretim Yılı'nda Ankara İl Millî Eğitim Müdürlüğüne bağlı okullarda görev yapan ve meslekte 6 ay ile 1 yıl arasında kıdemi olan 13 yeni öğretmen oluşturmuştur. Katılımcılar basit rastgele örnekleme yöntemiyle seçilmiştir (Kerlinger & Lee, 1999). Veriler, uzman görüşü alınarak oluşturulan yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu ile toplanmıştır. Görüşmeler yüz yüze gerçekleştirilmiş ve her bir görüşme yaklaşık 20 dakika sürmüştür. Verilerin analizinde içerik analizi yöntemi kullanılmış, elde edilen veriler kodlanarak temalar oluşturulmuştur (Krippendorff, 2004). Araştırmanın güvenilirliği için iki araştırmacı tarafından kodlama yapılmış ve kodlayıcılar arası uyum oranı %91 olarak hesaplanmıştır (Miles & Huberman, 2021).

Veri analizi sonucunda iki ana tema belirlenmiştir: **Öğretmenlik Mesleğini Seçme Nedenleri** ve **Öğretmenlik Mesleğinden Beklentiler**.

1. Öğretmenlik Mesleğini Seçme Nedenleri

Katılımcıların öğretmenlik mesleğini seçme nedenleri bireysel ve dışsal olmak üzere iki gruba ayrılmıştır.

- **Bireysel nedenler:** Mesleğe ilgi, liderlik arzusu, çocuk sevgisi, kişilik özelliklerine uygunluk, öğrenme ve öğretme ilgisi ile mesleğin kutsallığı algısı olarak sıralanmıştır. Bu bulgular, bireysel faktörlerin kariyer seçiminde etkili olduğunu savunan literatürle uyumludur (Çeliköz & Çetin, 2004; Korkmaz, Saban & Akbaşlı, 2004; Razon, 1983).
- **Dışsal nedenler:** Üniversite sınavı sonuçları, öğretmenlerin rol modeli olması ve aile yönlendirmesi gibi faktörler olarak öne çıkmıştır. Ailenin ve öğretmenlerin meslek seçiminde yönlendirici rol oynadığına dair bulgular, daha önceki araştırmalarla da desteklenmektedir (Çeliköz & Çetin, 2004; Kuzgun, 2001).

2. Öğretmenlik Mesleğinden Beklentiler

Katılımcıların mesleğe başlamadan önceki beklentileri profesyonel ve bireysel beklentiler olmak üzere ikiye ayrılmıştır:

- **Profesyonel beklentiler:** Bilgi ve donanım kazanmak, mesleki gelişim sağlamak, ideal bir eğitim ortamında çalışmak, nitelikli öğrenci yetiştirmek ve uygun mesleki koşullara sahip olmak. Bu beklentiler, mesleki tatminin temel unsurları arasında yer almaktadır (Yüksel, 2004; Kaçar, 2018).
- **Bireysel beklentiler:** Kendini gerçekleştirme, topluma faydalı olma, ekonomik özgürlük, saygınlık kazanma ve mutlu bir hayat sürme gibi beklentileri kapsamaktadır (Bordin, 1994; Hoppock, 1935).

Ancak katılımcılar, sınıfların kalabalıklığı, ekonomik koşulların yetersizliği ve mesleki saygınlık beklentilerinin karşılanmaması gibi nedenlerle mesleki gerçeklikle beklentileri arasında önemli farklar

bulunduğunu ifade etmişlerdir. Bu durum literatürde de vurgulandığı gibi, öğretmenlerin mesleki motivasyonları üzerinde olumsuz etki yaratabilmektedir (Uras & Kunt, 2006; Koşar, 2018).

Araştırma sonuçları, öğretmenlerin meslek seçiminde hem bireysel motivasyonların hem de çevresel etkilerin önemli rol oynadığını göstermiştir. Bireysel motivasyonlar arasında çocuk sevgisi, liderlik arzusu ve eğitim sürecine olan ilgi ön plana çıkarken; dışsal etkiler olarak aile desteği ve sınav sonuçları öne çıkmıştır. Bu sonuçlar, önceki çalışmalarda elde edilen bulgularla örtüşmektedir (Şaban, 2003; Çermik, Doğan & Şahin, 2010; Bergmark vd., 2018).

Öğretmenlerin mesleğe yönelik beklentilerinin genellikle yüksek olduğu, ancak uygulamada bu beklentilerin önemli ölçüde karşılanmadığı görülmüştür. Bu durum, öğretmenlerin iş doyumu ve mesleki bağlılık düzeylerini olumsuz yönde etkileyebilir (Uras & Kunt, 2006; Kılıç, 2022). Eğitim politikalarının öğretmen adaylarının beklentileri doğrultusunda şekillendirilmesi, öğretmen motivasyonunun ve mesleki başarının artırılması açısından önem arz etmektedir.

Çalışmanın sonuçlarına bağlı olarak şu öneriler geliştirilmiştir:

Uygulayıcılara Öneriler

- Eğitim fakültelerinde öğretmen adaylarına mesleğin zorlukları ve gerçekleri hakkında daha kapsamlı bilgilendirme yapılmalıdır.
- Sınıf mevcutları azaltılmalı, eğitim ortamlarının fiziksel ve teknolojik altyapıları güçlendirilmelidir.
- Öğretmen maaşları iyileştirilmeli ve sosyal haklar artırılmalıdır.
- Öğretmenlik mesleğinin toplumsal prestiji artırılacak kampanyalar düzenlenmelidir.

Araştırmacılara Öneriler

- Bilinçli meslek seçimi ile zorunlu meslek seçimi yapan öğretmenlerin mesleki doyum düzeyleri karşılaştırılmalıdır.
- Öğretmenlerin meslek seçimi sürecinde rol model etkisi ve bu etkinin mesleğe uyum üzerindeki rolü derinlemesine incelenmelidir.
- Eğitim fakültelerinin sunduğu meslek eğitiminin iş yaşamındaki gerçeklikle uyumu araştırılmalıdır.
- Türkiye'deki öğretmenlerin beklentileri, uluslararası karşılaştırmalarla analiz edilmelidir.