


An Investigation of the Professional Values of Elementary Teachers Based on Parents Views *

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Abstract

The basic key to achieving success in education is the teacher. When studies and the literature about effective teacher qualities are investigated, it appears that personality traits, academic educational history and experiences of teachers are important. Current research revealed that teachers provide qualified education with their professional values and this elevates the quality of education. Class teachers, especially, have a duty in socialization of the child. The professional values of teachers in the primary school period appear to have a significant effect on the academic success and future of students. In this research, the professional values of primary school teachers were investigated according to the opinions of parents of primary school students. This research used qualitative methods and techniques for data collection and analysis. The results of the research revealed the importance of being a researcher teacher in the context of class teaching as a profession requiring continuity in primary school, parents of students had very high levels of awareness about the professional values of class teachers and had high expectations from class teachers. These results show the need to invest in class teacher education to cultivate versatile class teachers who are equipped with professional values to be able to cope with changing problems in the 21st century and to achieve success in education.

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INTRODUCTION

The basic key to achieving success in education is the teacher. Teachers have strong and permanent effects on students. Teachers display these effects both within school and in areas outside of school. Teachers are leaders in society cultivating the qualified labor and professional staff desired by society through school channels. In this context, teachers appear to be triggers for social development in every society. M. Kemal Atatürk saw teachers as equivalent to a strong future with the statement “teachers alone are those who save nations” (Sönmez, 2018, p. 151). Teachers are members of a profession which constructs a cultural heritage coming from the past in a country, and plan the future. While making these plans, teachers must fulfil their social duty. In this context, teachers can be said to have the most significant power in ensuring cultivation of individuals beneficial to the nation and humanity through the formal educational process.

In the teaching profession, the largest share within all teaching areas comprises class teachers in Türkiye. Class teachers have a duty for socialization of the child, different to all other teaching areas. The profession of class teaching carries great importance in terms of comprising the basis of qualified education for future generations who will be cultivated in accordance with the rapidly-changing features of the current age. In this context, the quality of teachers with professional values is displayed through education-teaching practice and they do not just develop knowledge in children, but also have direct effects on shaping their personalities, especially in the first years of education (European Parliament, 2008).

Research by Sanders and Rivers (1996) and Shukla (2014) revealed that teachers who worked to become more qualified, followed changes occurring in science and society and reflected these in class, were models for students in terms of undertaking responsibility, effectively use modern teaching methods, techniques and tools, who are more beneficial to students, and work to gain skills required in the 21st century were more committed to the teaching profession and this elevated the quality of education. In this context, the identity of class teachers and which professional values they should have should be an important focus. Class teaching is defined as being different and more difficult compared to other teaching areas, while also being a profession requiring diverse qualities (Richardson & Watt, 2006; Thornton, Bricheno & Reid, 2002). Class teachers employed in primary schools appear to be very important for qualified education. To cultivate children who will be able to cope with the changing problems of the 21st century, the information age has revealed in all dimensions that class teachers must be equipped with professional values and be versatile. Considering society leaders will demand very different skills in future generations, it is necessary that class teachers be equipped with this knowledge and these skills as they provide basic education to and direct this generation. As a result, the quality of education is equivalent to the quality of training of class teachers working in these institutions during preservice education. In the literature, the qualities of class teachers are collected under the headings of professional knowledge, professional skills and professional qualities (Bubb & Mortimore, 2013; Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007).

In Türkiye, the general framework for teacher qualities was determined by the National Education Basic Law number 1739 in 1973 and separate independent areas were set within the conceptual framework of general culture, education in special areas and pedagogic formation, and in practice. The Ministry of National Education (MEB) in Türkiye collected the values and standards for the teaching profession under the name “teacher competencies” (2008). Teacher competencies were defined as the knowledge, skills and attitudes required by teachers to be able to effectively and efficiently perform the teaching profession (MEB, 2008). Contrary to the use of the teaching competency concept in Türkiye, the term teacher professional standards is used instead of teacher competencies in the international literature (NBPTS, 2003; TED, 2009). Teacher standards determine the general framework of knowledge, skills and attitudes required by teachers, while teacher competencies generally define the level of behavior required by teachers (TED, 2009). The general

competencies for the teaching profession determined by MEB (2008) comprise 6 competencies and 31 sub-competencies. Each of the sub-competencies comprise performance markers, with a total of 233 performance indicators defined.

The researcher reached notable results by analyzing the MEB (2008) teacher competencies. Some of the performance markers included in the teacher competencies used knowledge, skills, values and competencies interchangeably, while some performance markers included repetitions and excessive level of detail, while markers representing sub-competencies appeared to be repeated and encompass each other. As a result, when structuring teacher competencies, it is necessary to ensure separation and expansion of performance indicators into knowledge, skills and values. In this context, teacher competencies may be divided into (1) competencies, (2) knowledge, (3) professional values and (4) performance indicators. Rather than the MEB (2008) teacher competencies displaying equivalence to practices in the international field, competencies were in the form of lists of areas of use for professional skills. The lack of definition of professional values of teachers under the performance indicators may be assessed as an important deficiency in terms of implementation. In the field, policy makers and researchers who will benefit from professional values of teachers require a framework that will ensure that the basic principles on which the values are based are known by the relevant stakeholders in order to ensure that the groups benefiting from education services, especially teachers, in teacher education, selection, evaluation and education services, perceive and understand the values of teachers as a whole.

Professional values include all guiding rules, standards and principles directing behavior when an employed individual carries out their profession. Determining professional values and abiding by these professional values is a reflection of the importance given to the profession. In the literature, the professional values of the teaching profession are collected under the headings of general culture, content knowledge, development and learning of the student, differences between students, teaching strategies, learning environments, communication knowledge and skills, planning of teaching, assessment knowledge and skills, development by learning from experience, social relationships, cooperation with those around them and professional ethics, hard work and dedication, democracy culture and human rights, critical thinking, and environmental awareness and values (Association of American Educators [AAE], 2015; Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium [INTASC], 1992; National Board for Professional Teaching Standard [NBPTS], 2003; National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education [NCATE], 2006). The professional values of the teaching profession are the values that need to be abided by with students, colleagues, parents and society while members carry out the teaching profession (Palmer, 2015; Strike & Soltis, 2009; Vidovic & Velkovski, 2013).

In some countries, teacher training institutions have defined professional values for teachers (America, Australia, Canada, Germany, Great Britain, Finland, Hungary, Japan, Korea, Mexico, the Netherlands, Israel, Spain, Switzerland, etc.). However, these professional values are not yet valid in all countries. Yet the related literature reveals that professional values are vital in working life. In this regard, since values education in schools is provided by teachers, the professional values possessed by teachers are of great importance. Since the professional values of the teaching profession have not been defined in Turkey, personal values may hold sway over the values of the profession in institutional activities. For this reason, in a context in which personal values are reflected in the working environment, serious problems may be experienced by which behaviors occur that can harm the education institution and the students (Çelik & Saban, 2020; Erdoğan, & Sezgin, 2020; Gözütok, 1999; Tekel & Karadağ, 2017; Tezcan & Güvenç, 2020; Yücel & Kasapoğlu-Tankutay, 2023). In this context, it is seen that in institutional activities in Turkey, personal values can dominate over the values of the profession. In the USA and European countries, however, the standards and values of the teaching profession are set forth and updated. On the other hand, although a limited number of studies have been made on the standards and values of the teaching profession in Turkey, it cannot be said that these have been clearly revealed (Karabacak, Korkmaz & Küçük; 2015; MEB, 2002, 2008; Tunca, 2012).

Classroom teachers make up the biggest group in the teaching profession in Turkey. In contrast to all other teachers, classroom teachers have responsibility for the child's socialization. Execution of this duty is realized with the professional values of the teaching profession at all stages of teaching. Teachers acting in accordance with professional values when communicating and sharing information with parents of students is a requirement of the profession. Education has three tripod legs of the teacher, student and parent. In Türkiye, the greatest denominator comprises parents of students, one of the stakeholders in education and pillars of education. The understanding of parents that teachers are members of a profession involved in social development may be facilitated by teachers reflecting the professional values they hold. When teachers display behavior abiding by professional values, it may ensure that parents also pay attention to professional values when communicating with teachers. Parents may have awareness and expectations about the professional values of class teachers, who will cultivate and direct children in the information age, and contribute to teachers performing their profession in accordance with these professional values. In this context, investigation of the professional values of class teachers according to parent opinions carries separate importance. For this reason, the aim of the study was to contribute to the literature by investigating the professional values of class teachers based on the opinions of parents.

METHOD

RESEARCH MODEL

The research was designed as a case study with the qualitative paradigm. It was implemented using the semi-structured interview technique. In the research, the integrated single case pattern was used for analysis to reveal the professional values of class teachers in depth according to parents of students (Creswell, 2015; Merriam, 2013). In this research, based on a single problem case, the single analysis unit of professional values of class teachers was investigated (Yin, 2014).

STUDY GROUP

For the selection of the parents of students, the National Education Directorates of Rize was contacted, and information was given about the aim of the research. In the process of determining parents of students, school administrators and classroom teachers were asked to recommend parents who comply with the "registration for parents" to the researchers. This method a list of elementary teachers who met the determined criteria was created. The elementary teachers determined in the list were contacted by the researcher and given information about the aim of the research. The elementary teachers who agreed to take part in the study were included as participants in the research. The research was conducted on a voluntary basis.

The study group comprised 10 parents of students. In the process of identifying participants, criterion sampling was used from the purposeful sampling methods with the criteria of having at least one child attending primary school, being a university graduate, being in different professional groups, and being a member of the school-parent association or included in social responsibility work in the school (Neuman, 2013). Parents of students included 6 women and 4 men. Parents had 2 and 3 children. Ages varied from 37 to 50 years. Participants had several professions including agricultural engineer, doctor, private business owner, police officer, textile industry, chemist, lawyer, academic and mine engineer. One of the participants had a master's degree, one had a doctorate and the others had completed undergraduate education.

DATA COLLECTION TOOL

Collection of data in the research was completed with a semi-structured interview form. Literature screening was performed to create the conceptual basis related to professional values of class teachers.

The professional values of class teachers in the Turkish education system and acquirements related to values in the primary school program were synthesized by investigating the Turkish Ministry

of National Education (2008) literature about teacher competencies in depth. Linked to this synthesis, opinions were obtained from academics who were experts in the fields of values and class teaching to determine the professional values required by class teachers. These professional values comprised the basis of 7 questions on the semi-structured interview form. Opinions about the interview questions prepared as a pilot form were obtained from three experts about the topic and the number of questions was reduced to 6. The pilot interview form was applied in a pilot interview with the parent of a student. After the pilot application, the final form of the semi-structured interview form was prepared by clarifying the understandability of questions on the interview form.

COLLECTION OF DATA

Through official communications, research permission was obtained from the relevant institutions. Participants were reached linked to the research permission. Selection of the study group from Rize province was supported by class teachers working in different classes in primary school and employed in different schools. Individuals in the participant group were reached by telephone and given information about the aim and content of the study. Preliminary interviews were held with parents identified as participants and consent was obtained. In this way 12 participants were selected. In the context of participation in the research being based on volunteering, one person refused the interview and one person refused the voice recording. Appointments were made with participants, allowing one hour for the interview, by determining the most appropriate time and day for the interview. Semi-structured interviews were completed face-to-face with participants in a study rooms. Interviews with participants were completed from September-October. At the start of the interview, participants were reminded of information about the interview and provided written and verbal consent for voice recording. Participants were asked the six semi-structured interview questions. These questions were:

- 1) What are the professional values related to “student and learning” of class teachers?
- 2) What are the professional values related to “learning and teaching environment” of class teachers?
- 3) What are the professional values related to “teaching assessment and monitoring” of class teachers?
- 4) What are the professional values related to “professional development and responsibility” of class teachers?
- 5) What are the professional values related to “school, family and social cooperation” of class teachers?
- 6) What are the professional values related to “school development, the school system and its development” of class teachers?

Participants saw and read the study questions one time, They were given one-two minutes duration and the interview began. Interviews lasted nearly 40-50 minutes. The data collection process was supported by note-taking in addition to voice recordings.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Analysis of data used the NVivo 12 program for computer-supported qualitative data preparation. Interview data were transcribed to written format. To confirm the accuracy and validity of the transcription, the researcher listened to the recordings twice. Data underwent content analysis. Coding was made by the researcher according to the concepts extracted from the data obtained with the content analysis. In order to extract the concepts underlying the data and relationships between these concepts, inductive content analysis was used. The steps involved in the content analysis process were 1) coding of data, 2) finding themes, 3) organization of codes and themes, and 4) defining and interpreting findings (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Moustakas, 1994). The codes of the study were generated directly from the data. The themes/categories were created by bringing together related codes having common characteristics. The framework of the themes was defined based on the related

literature, the aim of the research, the interview questions and the statements appearing in the interviews. In the creation of the themes, inductive content analysis was taken as the basis. The coding for the data was made separately by the coders of the research (the researcher and thesis supervisors). Content analysis was performed by coding data after organizing the collected data. To reveal the relationships between the themes obtained from the data, data were organized and defined according to codes and themes. Following this coding procedure, the researcher and supervisors convened and the fit between the codes of the data analysis was tested. Expert opinion was obtained about the obtained codes and themes. After expert opinion, compatibility of the coding in data analysis was tested. Accordingly, the codes were created in line with the common views of the researcher and supervisors. The data obtained were classified according to these themes and analyses were performed in the "Nodes" section of the NVivo 12 software program. In the creation of the themes, subthemes were created based on the main themes. The themes and the subthemes based on these themes that emerged as a result of the analyses were visualized by association with the "Maps" section of the program.

VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE RESEARCH

Internal validity of the research was provided for the conceptual framework of the study by performing broad-scope literature screening related to the topic. The information related to the qualitative pattern used in the research, how the data collection tool was developed, selection of the participant group comprising the research sample, number of participants and information about participants are explained in detail. In this research, care was taken during selection of the participant group. To increase the credibility of the research, deep-focus data collection and participant confirmation were implemented (Lincoln & Guba, 1995). The methods of making comparison and correlation among the findings resulting from the data analysis were applied. In this regard, the findings were revealed to be internally consistent and to be consistent with the theoretical framework. In this case, it can be said that the internal validity of the research was achieved.

External validity of the research in the method section, the analysis of the data based on the model of the research, the selection process of the study group, the data collection tool, interviews made are explained in depth. External validity of the research was provided by the direct opinions of the participants. Themes are supported by direct quotations from data in necessary places. If the selected quotation was long, the most important dimensions representing the quotation were communicated by preserving the participant's own words and expressions. Personal information about the participant who made the quotation given in the research is provided immediately after the quotation. Due to the principle of confidentiality, participants were not coded with their real names. Data obtained in the research and codings were stored in the electronic environment to allow later investigation. In the study, the research process, the analysis and interpretation of the data, are given simply and clearly. So readers could understand them easily. In case studies, it is very important that the research results be readable (Yin, 2014).

Internal reliability of the research was ensured by the researcher repeatedly reading the research questions and interview transcripts and coding according to the concepts emerging from the data (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). Codes were tabulated and codes obtained in the research were brought together. Repeated studies of the codes were performed by carefully reading the dataset. After the data coding process was completed, the process of creating themes began. In this stage, the codes were brought together and common aspects were determined. Thus, the initial themes forming the main lines of the research findings were obtained. The theme procedure in the research tabulated the initial themes and subthemes. In the context of ensuring reliability of the content analysis, data were coded by three specialists in the field for intercoder consistency. The experts investigated the initial theme, subthemes and codes and coded the data. After intercoder consensus, data were finalized by reduction to codes and themes for the dataset. To determine the reliability of the study, the formula $Reliability = \text{Number of agreements} / (\text{Total number of agreements})$

plus Disagreements) X 100 was applied (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Intercoder reliability was calculated as $88 / (88 + 8) \times 100 = 92.00$. In the reliability study carried out for this research, a reliability rate of 92% was obtained. Codes obtained from content analysis were inserted under the relevant themes and the process of presenting the findings began (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Lincon & Guba, 1995).

External reliability of the research was provided by storing all notes, data and coding for the research in the electronic environment to allow later investigation to ensure confirmability (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Silverman, 2005).

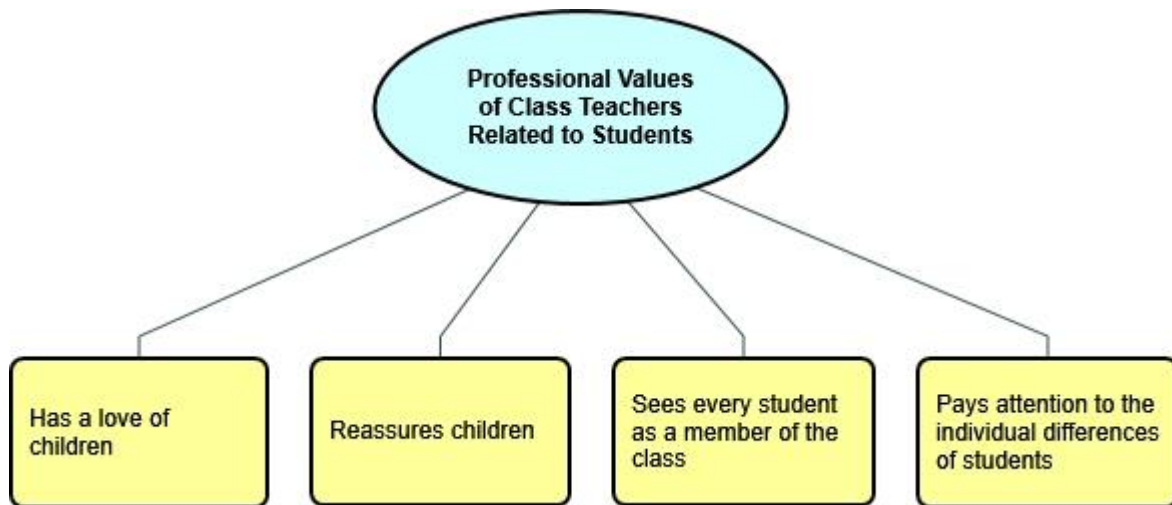
FINDINGS/RESULTS

In this research, data obtained from the responses to questions directed to the education stakeholders of parents of primary school students about what the professional values should be for class teachers in the current information age was analyzed. The parents described thoughts and experiences with a holistic interpretation about their perspectives and experiences of professional values of teachers, which were collected under four themes. The findings are given in depth thematically according to the procedure steps.

PROFESSIONAL VALUES OF CLASS TEACHERS RELATED TO STUDENTS

Details of the theme is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Professional Values of Class Teachers Related to Students



According to parents, the professional values related to the student of class teachers include accepting every student as a member of the class, ensuring the students love the teacher by reassuring the children with their love and paying attention to individual differences by knowing the development areas of students. According to parents, the first condition to be a class teacher is to love children. Teachers loving children is a value. In this context, it may be emphasized that when teachers love children, the teacher is loved by the student along with the family. *“We are faced with a very wonderful educator. We love our teacher very much...”* (K₂). Parents drew attention to the fact that class teachers who approach students with love provide a feeling of reassurance to the child. *“My daughter wanted to tell her teacher about an event at home. When I said to my daughter why do you want to explain everything to the teacher, some things should stay in the family, she stated that I see her like my mother. She trusts her teacher a lot...”* (K₃). A class teacher who loves children was concluded to see every student as a member of the class. *“The child should say I’m here, I exist, I am an individual.*

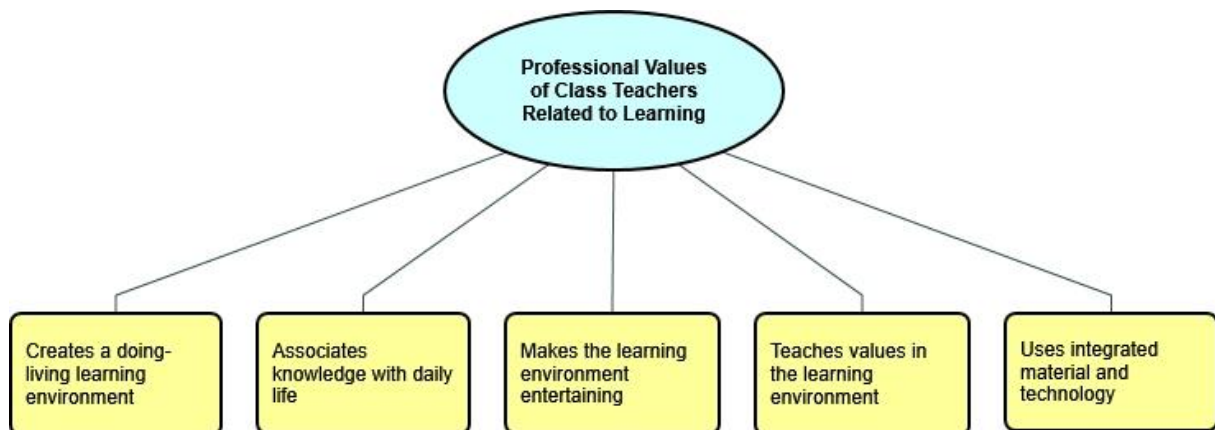
Children should be raised this way. Lessons are not important; first it is important to raise individuals...” (K₅).

Parents emphasized the need for class teachers to accept each child as their own child, not to discriminate between children and to see them as members of the class. The values of reassuring the child and seeing each student as a member of the class with individual differences is linked to the class teachers’ love of children. For this reason, class teachers should give each student the feeling that they are valued individuals from the first years of education. This is because every individual is a person and every individual is valued because they are a person. A class teacher who values students will support learning according to individual differences and include students in class by noting their individual differences. For this reason, teachers should focus on knowing all the development areas of students. According to Durkheim, class teachers have a duty to socialize children. A child may be included in society and acquire a feeling of belonging by developing that feeling of belonging in class and in school. In this context, a class teacher must believe that every student can learn to the best of their own potential, and convert this belief into behavior. *“Every child is different; the teacher should approach them accordingly. There is an inclusion (special needs) student in our class. Our teacher has even taught them to read. The teacher helps them during lunch break.” (K₄).*

PROFESSIONAL VALUES OF CLASS TEACHERS RELATED TO LEARNING

Details of the theme is presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Professional Values of Class Teachers Related to Learning



According to parents, the professional values of class teachers related to learning include creating a doing-living learning environment, associating knowledge with daily life, using integrated materials and technology to make learning a need, making the learning environment entertaining and teaching values in this environment. Consensus between parents emphasized the need for class teachers to teach children by doing and experiencing at young ages. For children to be able to take their place in society as productive individuals, it is notable that class teachers need to adopt doing-experiencing learning values as a learning philosophy. For doing-experiencing learning, learning within class should be supported by learning in education outside the program and is reflected by associating knowledge with daily life. *“Our teacher brings the learning environment outside the classroom. Last year, every 15 days, at weekends, they would meet the students in the public library. With the library meetings, children felt the need to go to the library and became members. We continuously exchanged books; they loved the library a lot. This year, as a class, they became a member of the TEMA foundation...” (K₇).* The teacher combined the learning environment with activities outside the program in education and emphasized the development of the researcher identity of students based on experiential learning.

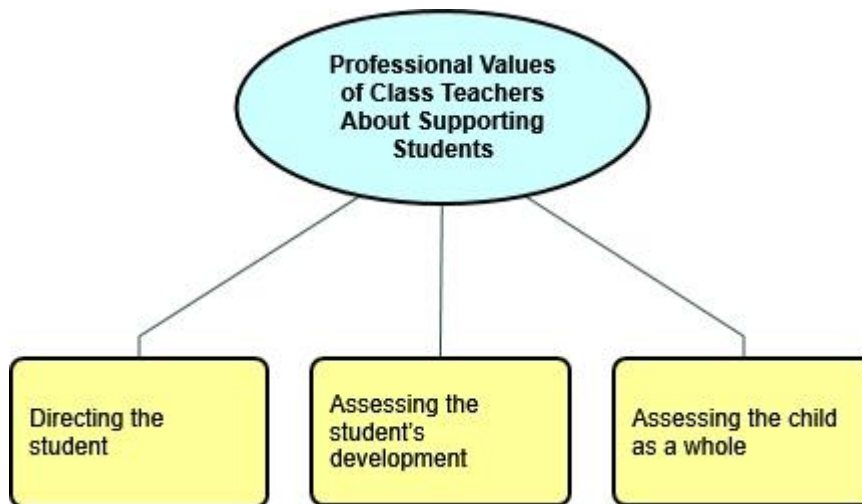
If a class teacher can associate information with daily life to create experiential learning, it may make the learning environment more entertaining. Currently, children can access information everywhere. As a result, teachers raising children in the information age need to be able to provide education according to the abilities and passions of the children. In this context, for students in basic education, the learning environment should be designed according to children with tablets and smartphones in their hands. The important thing is to be able to transform this information into an entertaining practice in a free environment which meets the learning needs of students. For teachers to be able to prepare such a learning environment, it is mandatory that they know the use of materials along with integration with technology very well. The importance of teachers making good plans to develop themselves and their lesson materials by integrating with technology based on the developing and changing learning environments was emphasized to be a professional value by parents. *“For students, it is necessary to make good plans firstly to ensure learning. Children should be made to use technology as much as possible. Children have great interest in investigating with tablets, computers, microscopes, binoculars. As a result, teachers should be able to change the materials developed according to the facilities in the class or be able to develop themselves...”* (K₁).

It was stated that it was a necessity that while a class teacher integrates information communication technologies with student learning, they should simultaneously ensure students acquire personal and social values and instill a love of humans, nature and animals among students. *“A class teacher is the next parent after us. They should especially teach respect and love; in other words, they should see personal values as important. They should first teach how we should behave when socializing with each other, how we should behave toward street animals. Firstly, this value culture should be created in the sense of school”* (K₆).

PROFESSIONAL VALUES OF CLASS TEACHERS ABOUT SUPPORTING STUDENTS

Details of the theme is presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Professional Values of Class Teachers About Supporting Students



According to parents, the professional values of class teachers related to supporting the student include directing the student, assessing the student’s development and assessing the child as a whole. Parents emphasized by consensus that a class teacher should direct students due to being able to see the behavior, abilities and interests of the students as a good observer who is in long-term interaction with the child. *“The class teacher spends more time with the child than we do. A parent many not understand a child’s ability but an observant teacher will. Successful people are always discovered by teachers. A good teacher may be able to better analyze where children will obtain professional and*

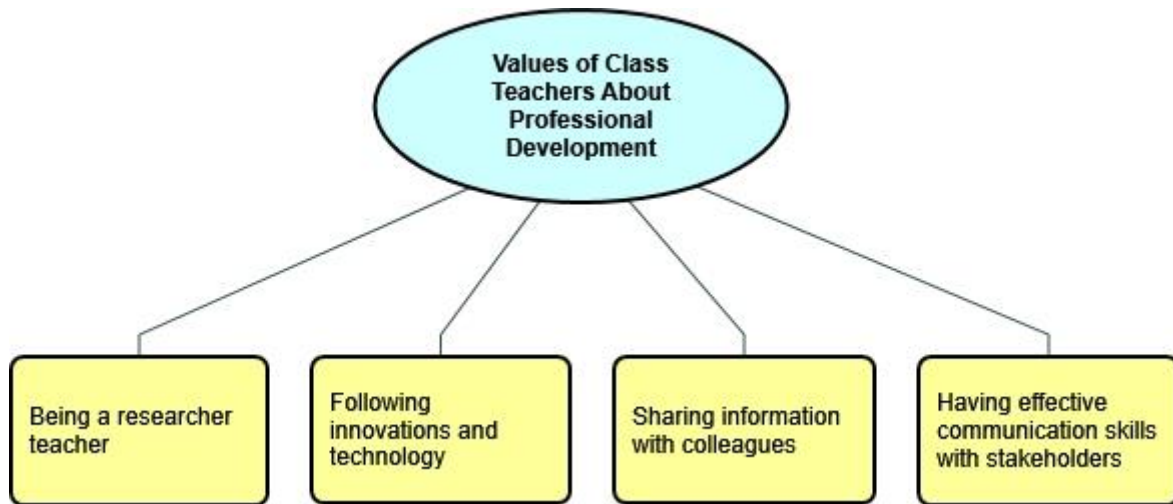
personal success” (K₈). Parents appeared to have very high awareness of professional values and expectations about assessment, support and direction of students by class teachers.

The participating parents noted the need for teachers to know the student to be able to assess the student and to be able to come to their level. *“Our teacher really is an adequate teacher in terms of assessment. In class they know each student differently, the approach to each student is different, they can come to the level of each student”* (K₃). The need for assessment according to the child as a whole and at the level of the individual was notably emphasized by parents. *“A bird cannot fly on one wing. The social aspect is needed. Development of every aspect is needed for the child, but every child may not be the same. Here the teacher’s duty is to be a little more helpful to those who cannot fly...”* (K₆). In order to develop all aspects of the student, participants reflected that a professional value of classroom teachers was to be able to implement and evaluate learning plans according to the environment and the level of the student.

VALUES OF CLASS TEACHERS ABOUT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Details of the theme is presented in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Values of Class Teachers About Professional Development



According to parents, values related to professional development of class teachers included following innovations and technology linked to being a researcher teacher, sharing information with colleagues linked to effective communication skills and communicating with stakeholders. The expectations of families from teachers have changed linked to technological developments in the information age. Parents appear to have expectations at very high levels that class teachers will continuously follow publications and innovations and be open to changes linked to the reading and interrogation skills of teachers. *“Teachers should be able to continuously follow innovations, should be open to change, be teachers who read a lot and question things. I think they should follow continuous publications and publications in the field”* (K₈). Class teachers cultivating the 21st century generations were determined to require development of technological pedagogic content knowledge in a notable way by participating parents. Due to the interdisciplinary approach of class teaching, there is a need to acquire values to increase teacher qualifications during teacher training so teachers are able to develop and produce material integrated with technology, to find very different and creative responses to questions asked suddenly by children and to expand the horizons of these topics. Supporting and strengthening the professional development of one of the most important stakeholders in education of class teachers may occur if teachers follow innovations and technology through technology integration. Through guidance provided by technology integration, the role of teachers should be to direct students. When 21st century skills are mentioned, the skills may be listed; however, can these

skills be used by the teacher within the class? As a result, it will be beneficial to design teacher training with the aim of gaining skills about producing content suitable for digital education and developing technological skills.

Following innovations and technology is also a necessity of being a researcher teacher. Teachers should be role models for cultivating productive individuals in the information age. As their imagination is very broad, for children in this age group the role of teachers in directing research in out-of-school learning environments is more important than the physical environment and technological infrastructure of schools for success in learning experiences. This is because teachers have a key place for children to be researchers and produce information. Teachers with researcher values may convert the class to a social cultural space involving socialization in this context. For teachers to be researchers, participants reflected the values of having master's degrees in their professional career, the need for research of new developments, and being able to direct parents and students in relation to this topic. *"For professional development, teachers should have a master's degree. They should research all new developments; from games to toys to electronics. I see young people newly graduated from university are more productive. Innovations found by teachers should be communicated to children, they should be able to direct us. How should I behave to be more beneficial to my child? The teacher should be able to direct me about this topic"* (K₄).

The teaching profession should also ensure the sustainability of gains from valuable experiences by sharing knowledge and skills with colleagues and other stakeholders. In this context, sharing of information and experiences may ensure the emergence of more qualified studies in the name of education. The value of sharing information with colleagues is also a necessity of being a researcher teacher. Teachers who share the results of their research with colleagues, school administrations, families and other stakeholders may reach a larger target audience. In this context, teachers cooperatively sharing with colleagues and experts in different institutions will contribute to the school being a cultural and learning center. *"Our teacher cooperates with colleagues and experts in different institutions. They do activities with this group. This brings success. Expanding the surrounding circle brings success to the school"* (K₉).

Parents focused on one of the most important values of class teachers being effective communication skills with stakeholders. Parents expected that class teachers will positively create communication with families, just as much as they do with students. Parents reflected the effective communication aspect between teachers and stakeholders as sharing the learning environment with families by voluntary participation in procedures organized with the aim of parents supporting work by school administrations and teachers, being able to reach teachers and receiving feedback about any special situation related to their child, and the use of technology when undertaking the role of class parent (WhatsApp group). As a reflection of communication with stakeholders, the positive aspects of sharing the learning environment with parents on a rotating basis was also emphasized. *"For children to learn professions, I came as a police officer to class. My child was very happy to see me in class. Parents perform activities for one lesson per week with children according to their area of expertise. I find it very good that parents enter the class in this way. Children see the difficulty and the good sides of a profession"* (K₇).

Participating parents revealed that teachers share their professional experience and values with families during home visits. *"Information is communicated by our teacher to us during meetings and home visits. Our teacher pays attention the birthdays of all students and celebrates them in class"* (K₁₀). Parents noted that for communication by the teacher to be functional, this communication should be supported by families and that there should be studies about children's futures by sharing this responsibility. *"There was a tripod in the chemistry laboratory. As one foot was missing, any time we placed a beaker on it, it spilled. I think the teacher's communication is like a tripod. For this reason, the teacher, school and parent all need to be in continuous communication. It doesn't happen with just the*

teacher's effort or the parent's efforts. Parent and teacher should be in continuous communication" (K₉).

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION and IMPLICATIONS

Although there is no direct research on the Professional Values of Elementary Teachers based on Parents Views in Turkey, it has been possible to reach a limited number of research results on the Professional Values of Elementary Teachers. For this reason, these research results in the literature were used to contribute to the discussion part of the research. It is aimed to provide a new contribution to the field by examining and discussing the results obtained from the research in terms of Turkey.

In this research attempting to determine the professional values of class teachers according to parents, parents of students had very high awareness levels of the professional values of class teachers and appeared to have great expectations from class teachers. The high expectations from professional values of class teachers held by parents of students, the greatest stakeholder in education, is important for this group of teachers in terms of trying to elevate themselves to these professional standards by knowing what parents expect from them and enabling self-improvement. Hayes (2010) stated that society had great expectations from teachers. Research about class teachers in the literature revealed that families had very high expectations from class teachers and the qualities expected were higher than branch teachers (Karabacak, Küçük & Korkmaz, 2015; Uygur & Kanadlı, 2020). Research by Bozca (2015) identified that attitudes of class teachers about their profession were more positive compared to branch teachers. Mustan (2002) revealed the need for teacher training programs and individuals preparing for the profession to be trained with professional values in order for the teaching profession not to lag behind the needs of the age in the 21st century and to continuously develop and renew the understanding and approaches related to the profession. Based on the understanding that the quality of an education system cannot surpass the quality of the teachers, there is a need for class teachers equipped with professional values within the system (TED, 2015). The high impact of teachers having these professional values on learning of students was revealed in research by Sanders and Rivers (1996). In this context, the importance of teachers having the professional values required by the profession can be stated.

Research results revealed that the profession of class teaching is a selfless profession involving a love of children (Babayiğit, 2018; Hayes, 2010). The most emphasized value in the research of the value of loving children is a notable result. Downing, Ryndak and Clark (2000) stated that loving children was a professional value for teachers. Ergün and Özdaş (1999) emphasized that loving children was the first precondition for the teaching profession. Research by Çelik and Hotaman (2018), Uygur ve Kanadlı (2020) and Yıldırım and Öner (2016) identified that students, teachers and parents expected that high levels of loving children was required by class teachers. Research revealed that if teachers love children, the emotional closeness between teacher and student will positively affect the student's learning and students learn more easily and effectively from teachers they love, which cultivates active and successful students (Gordon, 2001; Veenman, 1984). In this context, the warmth and love of a class teacher toward children with young ages can be said to play an important role in students trusting the teacher.

Teachers who love children and value them as individuals see every student as a member of the class. Batelaan (2001) stated that when teachers believe students are not judged linked to physical features, the group they are a member of and their beliefs, and that every person has equal rights, they see the student as an individual. Research by Klis and Kossewska (1996) found that professional values of teachers were being able to understand students by closely recognizing their emotions and feelings and being able to act sensitively toward the student. The teacher should believe that every student is worth respecting. Research by Lehr (2003) and Vidovic & Velkovski (2013) included teachers respecting the differences between students, paying attention to individual differences and accepting

them as they are as professional values. In this context, good communication between teacher and student is important. In the study by Sezer (2016), communication skills led the list of ideal teacher qualities.

Seeing the teacher only as a communicator of information may cause the illusion of learning being a monopoly. Research by Uygur and Kanadlı (2020) identified that parents expected that class teachers need to be equipped with teaching knowledge and skills. As class teaching is an interdisciplinary profession, they must be versatile. As a result, the profession of class teaching differs from other teaching groups and the difficulty of the profession emerges in this respect. With the changing technology and scientific developments in the information age, the duties and values of teachers have begun to change. The research results revealed that creating a doing-experiencing learning environment, associating information with daily life, making the learning environment entertaining by integrating non-school learning into the class environment, instilling values in the learning environment and being able to use material and technology integration were professional values of class teachers. There results of the research support studies in the literature directly (MEB, 2008; NBPTS, 2003; NCEES, 2005; Uygur & Kanadlı, 2020; Vidovic & Velkovski, 2013). Research by Karabacak et al. (2015) stated that preparing individuals for life, and assisting problem-solving in daily life were professional values of class teachers.

When the learning and teaching environment is well managed by the teacher according to the basic skills of students, it may be said that students will be educated through experiential learning. Research by Palmer (2015) and Vidovic & Velkovski (2013) determined that creating an attractive learning environment, creating a happy class environment, making the learning environment entertaining by centering the student, and creating a multi-learning environment using technologies that can rapidly access and disperse information for development of students were professional values of teachers. A class teacher should be able to prepare the learning environment according to the determined qualities for participation of students in the learning process (Lehr, 2003). In this environment, class teachers make plans to instill values to students with formal and informal planning. In this context, programs prepared by teachers about experiential learning for students to acquire values are important. The correlation between teachers having professional values with quality education and students acquiring values was revealed in research by Brown (2006), Boyd and Arnold (2010) and Lovat and Toomey (2009). Research by Çelik and Hotaman (2018) identified that for students to develop positive character, class teachers had the expected values at high levels. Gündoğdu, Bay and Mert (2022) identified that class teachers implemented character acquirement and character education for students in most schools and that character education required integration with an interdisciplinary approach according to the opinions of American, German and Turkish class teachers.

The research results revealed that directing students, and assessing the development of students and the student as a whole were professional values of class teachers. Research by Hayes (2010), Örenel (2005) and Vidovic and Velkovski (2013) revealed that assessing the student's progression by monitoring their physical, mental and affective development as a whole and developing their potential were professional values of class teachers. According to Covey (2005), an educational understanding focusing on mind, body and emotions ensures holistic development of the individual. In this context, performing the process of defining, instilling and directing the development areas for the child holistically can be said to be a professional value of class teachers. Aspy and Roebuck (1975) emphasized the importance of encouraging learning in cooperation to develop the social and affective aspects of students, providing opportunities for discussion, being sensitive to the emotions of the students and paying attention to their opinions. According to the results of this research in the literature, class teachers should include work about the cognitive and affective aspects of students.

The research results revealed that being a researcher teacher, following innovations and technology, being able to integrate information communication technologies, sharing information with

colleagues and having effective communication skills with stakeholders were professional values of class teachers in the information age. Research by Palmer (2015) included active use of technologies rapidly accessing and dispersing information and being innovative among the professional values of teachers in the 21st century. The research results include having a master's degree to be able to follow professional developments and innovations for class teachers. One of the notable results of the research is that parents reached this conclusion. Research in the literature revealed the need for teachers to follow publications in the field to be able to follow professional developments and innovations, benefiting from the experience of more senior colleagues, doing postgraduate education, and participating in in-service training, seminars, symposiums and congresses (Gökmenoğlu, Beyazova & Kılıçoğlu, 2015; Uştu, Taş-Mentiş & Sever, 2016). Bozan (2012) emphasized that the identity of researcher teachers obtained through postgraduate education was necessary to ensure qualified human resources that could produce original ideas by accessing information and raise creative individuals for society. Research by Knudsen et al. (2013) revealed that in situations where the professional development of teachers was supported, it contributed to development of the educational system and increased student success.

The research results revealed that class teachers shared the class environment with families for values related to cooperating with stakeholders. This result is one of the notable results of the research. NEA (2018) includes the statement that the efficacy of the teaching methods implemented by teachers is linked to cooperation with families. The school, family and society cooperation value in the literature, with the statement that teachers encourage families to participate more in the education process, is reflected as a teaching professional value. Research by Çubukçu et al. (2012) determined that teachers are seen by parents as assurance for future generations. In this context, teachers having the expected professional values and the process of teachers transferring culture carries value in the eyes of parents. Cooperating with colleagues to support and contribute to professional development and sharing developments in the field with colleagues were included as professional values in research by NEA (2018) and Vidovic and Velkovski (2013). AAE (2015) stated that teachers ensuring active and positive contributions to school, family and social relationships was a professional value.

CONCLUSION/ LIMITATIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

In the context of the results revealed by the research, future studies are required to comprehensively investigate and assess the professional values of class teachers in particular and teachers in general in line with the opinions of parents and other stakeholders in education. In the 21st century, the importance of professional values for class teachers, who have a special place among all teaching areas, has come to the fore. Due to the duty of socializing children, if class teachers especially in the 21st century have the values required by the profession they will be able to fulfill their duties in cultivating generations for the information age and the future. Due to cultivating students at all school stages during education, class teachers are the basic key to achieving success. In this context, it is important to assess which professional values are required by class teachers, who direct the cultivation of individuals who will shape society in the eyes of parents. Among educational stakeholders from housewives to doctors, engineers to academics, parents with professions throughout society were able to assess teachers from the outside and can contribute positively to the professional development of teachers. As a result, this research may be seen as a tool assisting the restructuring of professional values of class teachers, in the context of being the first research performed in Türkiye about determining the professional values of class teachers through the eyes of parents. In the context of the results revealed by the research, preservice and in-service training should be strengthened and supported in the name of science and serving society in order for class teachers to be able to acquire professional values.

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