

# THE EFFECT OF THE ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE 2023 EDUCATION VISION DOCUMENT ON TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL IMAGE PERCEPTIONS

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## Abstract

*This research aimed to present the effect of the activities conducted within the context of the 2023 Education Vision Document on the perceived teacher image by determining teachers' perceptions in regards to the teacher image existing in today's society. The qualitative research was conducted with the phenomenology design. The research group was composed of teachers (n=57) who completed a non-thesis master's degree program in the field of Classroom Teaching at Amasya University, Institute of Social Sciences during 2016-2018 academic years. The research data were obtained from teachers' written statements provided for the open-ended questions in the question form developed by the researcher. Content analysis method was used in the analysis of the collected data. While the participating teachers generally emphasized the sanctity of the teaching profession in their answers, they also stated that the perceived image of the teaching profession in today's society was basically negative. The variables affecting the perception of the teaching profession in society were classified under the following themes: sociological changes, local practices, employee rights, policy makers, media, parents, students, teachers, teacher training and qualification of prospective teachers. Teachers' suggestions to contribute to the image of the teaching profession were gathered under the themes of teacher motivation, teacher training, employee rights, media, innovative practices and training support for teachers. In the context of the obtained data, it can be argued that some of the actions have been put forward so far in regards to 2023 Education Vision Document, and the practices expected to be implemented in the near future will positively contribute to the perceived image of the teaching profession in society.*

**Keywords:** teacher image, teacher' image perceptions, 2023 education vision document

## Introduction

Teachers are important in everyone's life during the education process and they act as role models. Independent of the level of training such as pre-school, primary school, secondary school and high school, teachers have a significant role in constructing the future of individuals who make up the society (Çiçek, 2015). The education system is composed of elements such as school administrators, teachers, students, parents and other stakeholders in the society around the school. All of these elements are equally important in ensuring quality education (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006). However, each element has a unique place and a unique role. Considering that the teachers are the implementers of the operative educational policies in the classroom, their imperative and indisputable significance takes center stage among these elements (Cheng, 1996; Senge, 1990).

Guskey (1994, p.10), who conducted research on teachers, expresses that teachers are the cornerstones of the education system in providing quality education by stating that "We cannot improve the quality of schools without improving the competence of the teachers in the schools." During the Teachers' Association Congress (1924), head teacher Atatürk emphasized

that the teaching profession is not limited only with professional knowledge and skills but also requires sacrifice and addressed the significance of teachers with the following comments: “Teachers, Republic’s altruistic teachers and educators, you will train the new generation; the new generation will be your masterpiece. The value of this masterpiece will be proportional to the degree of your skills and sacrifice” (Atatürk Research Center Presidency, 2006, p.330). According to the 43rd article of the Basic Law of National Education No. 1739, the teaching profession is defined as a unique specialized task that the state allocates for the education of students. Teachers are obliged to fulfill these duties in accordance with the aims and basic principles of Turkish National Education (MoNE, 1973).

Many variables can determine performance when teachers perform their profession. In terms of human relations, teaching differs from some professions since it is a profession performed in relation and interaction with a wide range of people. Teaching is a profession that is intertwined not only with students in the school and classroom environment, but also with parents and society outside the school (Çelikten et al., 2005). Teachers’ performances are affected by various attitudes and behaviors such as positive attitudes towards the teaching profession, interest in the profession, caring for children, positive beliefs in the importance of education and training, personal and professional development, enthusiasm and alacrity (Semerci & Semerci, 2004). Teachers’ self-image perceptions or the image of teachers perceived in the society are believed to be another variable that contributes to teachers’ performance during their professional careers.

Image may be explained as a constantly changing, dynamic and complex concept (Dichter, 1985). It can be positive or negative. Professional image is an important value for every profession. It is very important for teachers who provide education and training services to a large part of the society to have a positive image in the eyes of the society. When institutions that aim to fulfill their duties successfully have a good image in the society, they will achieve their aims more easily. According to Keklik (2012), image is the understanding and values that are consciously or unconsciously left in the minds of other people and institutions by a person or an institution. Polat and Arslan (2015) have defined image as the sum of positive or negative perceptions specific to the individual, which can occur consciously or unconsciously as a result of the direct or indirect interaction with the image source and which can change over time. Image may be good or bad or nondescript, however what distinguishes good image from bad image is that good image is acquired (Peltekoğlu, 2004).

The teaching profession is a respectable one due to its direct role in the training of new generations as qualified individuals who will contribute to the country’s prosperity and development. Historically, teachers have always been respected in the Turkish education system and teachers are regarded as behavior models in the society and as exemplary persons (Şişman, 2006). However, social changes and dynamics that emerged over time have affected the image of the teaching profession in the society. For example, with the increasing attractiveness of civil service due to the oscillations in the private sector, teaching has become a profession more in demand (Erden, 2017). As in the historical process, teachers believe that their profession is respectable and valuable today as well; however, the changing social structure affects the roles and responsibilities of the teaching profession. The change manifests itself in this research as well. Based on the theme of factors affecting the image of teachers, it was found that while once “don’t spare the rod” was a common notion by the parents, they now insist that “teachers cannot even raise their voices to their children”. Depending on the perceived changes in social life, changes are observed in the value and importance given to teachers by the society and parents.

Based on the important role of teachers in building the society, it is desired that both teachers’ self-images and the images that symbolize how the society perceives them are positive. For this reason, it is necessary for high-level bureaucrats in the Ministry of National Education to develop and implement policies that will positively affect the image of teachers

in the society and be good models in the implementation process. The recent 2023 Education Vision Document in Turkey may be considered as an important work in meeting this need because the 2023 Education Vision claims to represent the concerns and hope voiced by every segment for the common future in regards to expectations for high quality education (MoNE, 2018).

This research aimed to address the effect of the activities conducted within the context of the 2023 Education Vision Document on the perceived teacher image by determining teachers' perceptions in regards to the teacher image existing in today's society. Within the framework of this general purpose, answers were sought to the following questions.

- (1) What kind of perception does the society hold regarding the teaching profession?
- (2) What are the factors that create the positive or negative perceptions towards the image of teaching profession based on your opinion to the first question?
- (3) If you were an authorized person at the ministerial level, what practices would you implement, or which suggestions would you develop to positively contribute to the image of the teaching profession?

## Research Methodology

### *General Background*

This qualitative research was carried out with the phenomenology design, which aimed to obtain perspectives on the life-worlds of the participants taking part in the research and to reveal the personal meanings they construct with their "first-hand experiences" (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). The research was conducted at Amasya University during the period of 2016-2018. The research data were obtained through the open-ended question form developed by the researcher and via document review method focusing on MoNE 2023 Education Vision Document.

### *Research Group*

The research group was composed of teachers ( $n=57$ ) who completed a non-thesis master's degree program in the field of Classroom Teaching at Amasya University, Institute of Social Sciences during 2016-2018 academic years. Based on the demographic characteristics of the participants in the research group, 34 of the teachers were male and 23 were female. In terms of seniority in the profession, 21 teachers had 1-5 years of experience, 14 teachers had 6- years of experience, 12 teachers had 11-15 years of experience, 4 teachers had 16-20 years of experience, 3 teachers had 20-25 years of experience and 3 teachers had over 25 years of professional seniority. During the research process, basic ethical procedures were shared with the participants. Teachers who volunteered to take part in the research were informed about the research purpose and were told that they could leave the research at any stage. In addition, it was confirmed by the researcher that no information such as names and place of work would be shared about the participants and codes would be used during the reporting process to ensure privacy.

### *Data Collection*

The research data were obtained from teachers' written statements provided for the open-ended questions in the question form developed by the researcher. The question form was presented to teachers to fill out on a voluntary basis. The question form included questions about how teachers perceived the image of the teaching profession in society, what factors contributed

to the emergence of this image and what the practices and suggestions they would provide to positively contribute to the image of teaching profession if they were in authorized positions to do so. In addition, 2023 Education Vision Document and the statements and explanations provided on the Ministry of National Education official website were used via document review method to determine the effects of the activities carried out in the context of the 2023 Education Vision Document on the perceived image. Document analysis can be used as a stand-alone technique through the evaluation and review of printed or electronic materials in addition to complementing other research methods (Bowen, 2009).

### *Data Analysis*

Content analysis method was used to analyze participating teachers' written responses to the open-ended question form. Based on this method, conventional content analysis was used in which coding categories were directly derived from the data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Teachers were coded as T1, T2 ... T57 during data analysis to ensure participants' privacy. After all participant views were listed as items, they were coded according to their similarity levels and codes that were close to one another were grouped under themes. Teacher views which were organized under themes were presented by assigning them frequencies based on their similarities. The research data were submitted to a faculty member who is an expert in the field of educational sciences assessment and evaluation for review to check whether the obtained views were consistent with the themes. Out of the 317 views expressed by the teachers in the research, 292 were placed on similar themes by the field expert who has conducted previous research in the field of assessment and evaluation. Since obtaining a value of 70% and above from the agreement percentage formula for qualitative studies shows reliability (Miles & Huberman, 1994), it was determined that this research presented sufficient reliability.

## **Research Results**

Examination of the responses provided to the question "In your views as a teacher, what kind of perception does the society hold regarding the teaching profession?" showed that 50 teachers had negative responses while 7 had positive comments. Teachers generally emphasized the moral and spiritual aspects of teaching stating that the teaching profession has preserved its place at all times even though its roles have changed and that it is an important agent in the development of society and shaping the new generation.

Table 1 presents the themes elicited from teacher views provided for the question "What are the factors that create the positive or negative perceptions towards the image of teaching profession based on your views to the first question?" Teachers were found to believe that compared to positive factors, there were more negative factors that affected the image of the teaching profession in society.

**Table 1**

*Themes Related to the Factors that Affect the Perceived Image of the Teaching Profession in Society*

Themes	Frequency
Policy makers	51
Sociological changes	43
Teachers	36
Employee rights	21
Qualification of prospective teachers	11
Teacher training	11
Parents	8
Media	6
Students	5
Local practices	3

Table 1 shows that teacher views were collected under ten themes: local practices, sociological changes, employee rights, policy makers, media, parents, students, teachers, teacher training and qualification of prospective teacher. The highest number of views expressed by teachers in regards to the perceived teacher image in the society were under the following themes: policy makers, sociological changes and teachers. The themes with the least frequency were local practices, students and media.

**Table 2**  
*Views and Frequency in Regards to Local Practices Theme*

Views	Frequency
The effect of bureaucratic pressures and favoritism on poor job performance	1
The fact that teachers are not supported by the school administration and the Directorate of Education when something goes wrong	1
Teachers' problems with the school administration	1

The views presented in Table 2 in detail reflect that local practices that affect the teacher image such as problems experienced with the school administration, feelings of loneliness when teachers experience problems at school and bureaucratic pressures and favoritism experienced in the educational organization are negatively reflected on job performance.

**Table 3**  
*Views in Regards to Sociological Changes Theme*

Views	Frequency
Teaching is a profession with plenty of vacations, teachers are comfortable, and they make money by doing nothing	12
The fact that the society considers the professions that earn a lot to be more valuable/respected	7
The thought that "one can be a teacher if he/she cannot succeed in anything else"	7
The perception that teaching is a profession that everyone can manage	6
The fact that teachers are pitied and regarded as babysitters, voluntary help	4
The evolution of parents' understanding of "don't spare the rod" notion to "teachers cannot even raise their voices to children"	2
Today's technological changes, change of lifestyles and decrease in family ties,	1
The thought that "whatever you study at the university, the worst is that you can be a teacher"	1
The fact that teachers' job is regarded to be the equivalent of other government officials	1
the fact that teaching is regarded as the ideal profession for women since it allows them more time to spend with their spouses and families	1
Changes in students and their families	1

Teachers stated the following views mostly in regards to the perceived teacher image in the society under the sociological changes theme: "Teaching is a profession with plenty of vacations, teachers are comfortable and they make money by doing nothing", "the perception that teaching is a profession that everyone can manage" and "the thought that "one can be a teacher if he/she cannot succeed in anything else". Teacher also emphasized the changes in students and their families these days which is signified by the prominence of information technologies, the changes in parents' attitudes that evolved from "don't spare the rod" notion to "teachers cannot even raise their voices to children" and changes in parents' response to

teacher-student interactions and especially the societal belief that professional esteem is related to higher financial income. It was also found that society's focus on childcare activities at schools which is an integral part of education is related to the perceptions of teachers in the society.

**Table 4**  
*Views in Regards to Employee Rights Theme*

Views	Frequency
Discussions about the salary and economic conditions of teachers, the fact that they are insufficient	18
The fact that teachers do not retire due to economic losses	3

One of the most powerful images perceived by the society in regards to teaching profession is related to insufficient salaries and economic conditions. Another view that was expressed by teachers was related to teachers' unwillingness to retire due to economic losses during retirement.

**Table 5**  
*Views in Regards to Policy Makers Theme*

Views	Frequency
The fact that teachers are subjected to penalties for unfounded complaints made to Alo 147 complaint line by parents, students and stakeholders	12
Negative statements of the Ministers of MoNE about teachers and their derogatory practices in regards to teaching and teachers	5
Assigning individuals who are not teachers by profession to teaching position	4
Lack of a professional development system that will encourage teachers to develop themselves	4
Preferred practices such as meeting teacher needs from different channels instead of taking graduates of Faculties of Education (formation etc.)	4
Holding teachers responsible for the decline in the quality of education	3
The fact that teachers start working in unfavorable working conditions	2
The image of unkempt teachers after the decision not to enforce the dress code at schools	2
The fact that teaching profession now has a wide range of options such as teachers who are paid by the number of lessons, teachers who are on the permanent staff, substitute teachers and teachers who work on a contractual basis	2
Practices that enslave teachers after the widespread of private schools	2
The fact that representatives of the education system do not embrace teachers	1
The fact that individuals who are not suitable for teaching profession have become teachers	1
Difficulty of failing the students in the regulations for passing a grade level	1
Forcing teachers to attend in-service training whose effectiveness is questionable	1
Insufficient punitive elements against violence towards teachers	1
Constant changes and inconsistencies in education policies	1
Generalizing the perceptions created by incompetent teachers to all teachers	1
Rise of the perception that teachers do not know anything after teachers who did not have sufficient number classes to teach in their own schools due to school norms were assigned to teach sub-branches due to 4+4+4 school system	1
Comparing state schools with private schools and accusing teachers for failure	1
Teaching subject matters other than their fields	1
The fact that teachers work in other fields when they cannot be assigned to teaching jobs	1

One theme stated by teachers about the images perceived by the society in regards to teaching profession is related to policy makers. The sub themes under this common theme can be listed as constantly changing policies, teacher employment and derogatory statements about teachers. The existence of Alo 147 complaint line and the complaints made by using this hotline were mentioned by the teachers as a factor that negatively affected the society's perception of teachers. Another view with a high frequency is related to derogatory practices and negative statements of MoNE Ministers or senior executives. Decrease in the quality of education and blaming teachers for lack of achievement in international exams were among the views reflected in relation to policy makers and these were regarded as factors that negatively affected the image of teachers. Another factor cited by the teachers was related to assigning individuals with no teaching experience or training to teaching posts.

**Table 6**  
*Views in Regards to Media Theme*

Views	Frequency
The use of figures with physical deficiencies and with obsessive traits as teachers in TV series and movies, to be portrayed as a figure to be ridiculed	2
Bringing teachers with negative characteristics to the forefront in print and visual media	2
Exposing teachers as the cause of student failure in international exams and creating the perception of incompetence	1
Sharing all teacher behaviors in social media in the digital age	1

Under the media theme, teachers stated that they were exhibited as models to be mocked by their physical appearances and behaviors as depicted in movies and TV series. The fact that some of the negative behaviors exhibited by teachers are displayed with the help of social media and the fact that the media regards the negative examples as newsworthy pave the way for the development of these notions.

**Table 7**  
*Views in Regards to Parents Theme*

Views	Frequency
Threats from families that reflect pressure and denigration	4
Parents' intervention in teachers' work	2
Parents' bigotry in regards to teachers, their obsessive beliefs about teachers' behaviors towards their children or their need to reach the teachers at all times (I call and the teacher does not respond to me etc.)	1
Differences in the viewed society towards the classroom teachers and subject matter teachers	1

As previously specified in the sociological changes theme in regards to parents, feeling pressured and humiliated by families towards was again regarded as a factor that negatively affected the image of teachers in this theme as well. The views presented under this theme mostly pointed to the problems related to communication between teachers and parents.

**Table 8**  
*Views in Regards to Students Theme*

Views	Frequency
The lack of discipline created by the absence of grade repetition in schools	2
Problem behaviors in students	1
Students' lack of motivation and indifference	1
The fact that teachers are questioned and held responsible when students receive a low grade	1

This theme generated issues such as students' lack of motivation, problem behaviors, the undisciplined learning environment created by the absence of class repetition and questioning teacher when students have issues in learning.

**Table 9**  
*Views in Regards to Teachers Theme*

Views	Frequency
Teachers do not feel the need to renew themselves and to improve	10
Teachers' incompetence in using information technologies	5
The fact that teachers display some behaviors that are not appropriate in their profession	4
The existence of teachers who only care for the income and only undertake the minimum requirements with thoughts such as "why would I do more for this payment?"	3
The fact that teachers do additional work for money	3
The belief that teachers do not have the habit of extensive reading	2
Insufficient pre-service training of teachers	2
The fact that teachers do not show the required respect for their professions	2
The fact that teachers some of the teachers do not perform their profession with love and enthusiasm	2
The image of teachers who do not retire although they have lost most of their competence	1
The fact that teachers have their teaching posts as a second profession	1
The fact that teachers carry out their duties with the mentality of civil servants	1

Teachers stated that some of the factors that affected the image of teachers in the society were related to their colleagues. In this context, teachers cited the following views: teachers do not feel the need to develop and improve themselves, they take on additional jobs, they are not competent especially in using information technologies in teaching, and teachers demonstrate low performance by thinking that they earn very little, and they do enough for this kind of payment.

**Table 10**  
*Views in Regards to Teacher Training Theme*

Views	Frequency
Using traditional methods rather than theory-oriented practical applications in the process of teacher training	4
The fact that faculties have a very high student quota	3
The fact that teachers are not trained with high quality	2
Graduating teacher candidates from faculties before they acquire the required professional competencies	1
The fact that teachers are trained in a manner that they do not really know about their professions	1



Under this theme, teachers stated that teaching programs in the faculties of education did not really apply to practical teaching situations and they were mostly theoretical. Teachers believed that this practice resulted in questioning the quality of teachers when they started their profession since teachers were graduated with no hands-on knowledge about teaching. Very high student quota in faculties of education was also regarded as an important factor that affected the image of teachers in the society.

**Table 11**  
*Views in Regards to Qualification of Prospective Teachers Theme*

Views	Frequency
Increases in the number of teachers who graduate but cannot assign to teaching posts	4
Low entry scores in teaching faculties	3
The fact that the only criteria in acceptance to teaching departments is the exam scores	2
Lack of sufficient guidance and informed choices in selecting the teaching profession	1
Lack of qualified input related to the preference of students from medium and low socio-economic families who prefer the profession	1

Another factor that affected the image of teachers in the society was presented under the theme of qualification of prospective teachers. Teachers believed that the increase in the number of teachers who graduated from faculties of education but who were not assigned to teaching posts created a negative image in the society. Views that were related to each other in this respect were listed as low entry scores to teaching faculties and the fact that entry scores were the only criteria to accept students in these faculties.

Table 12 presents the teacher views to the following question: "If you were an authorized person at the ministerial level, what practices would you implement, or which suggestions would you develop to positively contribute to the image of the teaching profession?"

**Table 12**  
*Practices that May Contribute to the Image of Teachers*

Themes	Frequency
Employee rights	51
Teacher training	27
Training support for teachers	16
Teachers' motivation	14
Recommendations in regards to innovative practices	12
Media	5

Teachers' responses to the question "If you were an authorized person at the ministerial level, what practices would you implement or which suggestions would you develop to positively contribute to the image of the teaching profession?" elicited 6 common themes: Teachers' motivation, teacher training, employee rights, media, recommendations in regards to innovative practices and training support for teachers.

Among these themes, teachers mostly expressed views on employee rights and teacher training while the least number of views were related to the media theme.

**Table 13**  
*Views in Regards to Teachers' Motivation Theme*

Views	Frequency
Providing opportunities for teachers to participate in decision-making processes	4
Ensuring visibility for successful teachers by identifying teachers who make a difference with their work	2
Providing settings for successful teachers who are known for their achievements to talk and communicate with their colleagues	2
Highlighting the activities/work and projects of successful teachers who stand out with their work	2
Publishing journals for teachers utilizing the MoNE publishing house	1
Awarding teachers for the in-service training activities and seminars that they attend	1
Designing spacious and pleasant teacher rooms	1
Implementing economic measures that will contribute to transportation for teachers working in disadvantaged areas such as villages	1

Under this theme, teachers recommended to provide opportunities to participate in decision-making processes, to provide settings to interact with successful teachers who are known for their achievements in teaching, to present the projects and activities of successful teachers and to ensure visibility of successful teachers by identifying them.

**Table 14**  
*Views in Regards to Teacher Training Theme*

Views	Frequency
Ensuring that the exam scores alone are not used as the only selection criteria for teacher candidates' recruitment to faculties and identifying the criteria for the selection of teacher candidates	10
Reducing the number of faculties that train teachers and ensuring that teachers are trained in sufficient numbers as needed	8
Training high quality teachers	3
Ensuring that university entrance scores are higher to attend faculties of education	2
Preventing the assignment of the Faculty of Science and Letters graduates to teaching posts by only getting formation	1
Decreasing the number of candidate teachers in university classrooms	1
Eliminating the belief that everyone who attends faculties of education graduates	1
Reconstructing teacher training high schools	1

Teachers recommended that it is imperative to ensure that the exam scores alone are not used as the only selection criteria for teacher candidates' recruitment to faculties and criteria for the selection of teacher candidates should be identified again to improve the image of teachers in the eyes of society. Teachers also suggested decreasing the number of faculties that train teachers and they stated that teachers should be trained in sufficient numbers as needed. Another view focused on training high quality teachers for teaching posts.

**Table 15**  
*Views in Regards to Employee Rights Theme*

Views	Frequency
Improving teachers' salaries	28
Updating the career advancement practice to motivate teachers	7
Creating space for young teachers by making arrangements to encourage retirement	6
Decreasing teachers' teaching workload	2
Contributing to the tuition fees of teachers who do their postgraduate and doctoral degrees	2
Encouraging rewards for the motivation of teachers	2
Equalization of the extra courses taught by the branch and classroom teachers	1
Providing transportation support for teachers such as using a school transportation vehicle	1
The fact that free dress code is out of hand	1
Providing low-rate credit support for teachers to purchase homes and cars	1

Improving teachers' salaries and updating the career advancement practice to motivate teachers were among the views with the most frequency under the employee rights theme. Another prominent view was related to creating space for young teachers by making arrangements to encourage retirement. Teachers also expressed views that it is important to contribute to the tuition fees of teachers who do their postgraduate and doctoral degrees, to decrease teachers' workload and to establish a rewarding system to contribute to teachers' motivation in order to improve the teacher image.

**Table 16**  
*Views in Regards to Media Theme*

Views	Frequency
Blocking publications that represent negative teacher models with the help of Radio and Television Supreme Council Corporation	1
Ensuring that teachers are not depicted in the media as they are not doing their jobs, as if they are free all the time	1
Displaying good examples and activities of teachers	1
Sharing on TV programs the activities of the teacher of the year	1
Preparing a TV program about recollections on teaching	1

While the frequency of the themes were relatively low in this theme, it was found that teachers focused on blocking programs that depict teachers as negative models, sharing good examples and activities of teachers and preparing a TV program about recollections on teaching.

**Table 17**  
*Views in Regards to Innovative Practices Theme*

Views	Frequency
Implementing objective criteria for the appointment of school administrators	4
Providing opportunities to compete with private schools by allocating a budget for public schools	2
Establishing MoNE TV and giving teachers the opportunity to broadcast their own activities	1
Managing parent-teacher meetings in the context of each school	1
Ensuring that a pass-fail system is reestablished in the education system	1
Ensuring structural transformation in the understanding of exam and success-oriented education system	1
Providing psycho-social support for teachers who need psychological support	1
Providing ease of transition to teachers who teach subject matters other than their own	1

Under this theme, teachers stated that in order to improve the teacher image in the society, objective criteria should be identified for the appointment of school administrators, a budget should be allocated for public school so that they can compete with private schools, a structural transformation should be established in the understanding of exam and success-oriented education system, teachers who are form a different field areas should be provided ease of transition and psycho-social support should be provided for teachers who need psychological support. They also suggested establishing MoNE TV to give teachers the opportunity to broadcast their own activities. In addition, they recommended reestablishing a pass-fail system in the education system and managing parent-teacher meetings in the context of each school.

**Table 18**  
*Views in Regards to Training Support for Teachers Theme*

Views	Frequency
Developing teachers' competences through in-service training programs	9
Encouraging teachers to pursue master's and doctoral degrees	5
Supporting teachers to participate in scientific events such as congresses and symposiums in their fields	2
Improving the quality of in-service training programs	1

The theme of training support for teachers to improve their competences was cited among the suggestions to improve the teacher image in the society. Under this theme, teachers expressed their expectations to improve their competences via in-service training programs. They suggested encouraging teachers to pursue master's and doctoral degrees and supporting them to participate in scientific events such as congresses and symposiums in their fields.

## Discussion

This research aimed to present and discuss the effect of the activities conducted within the context of the 2023 Education Vision Document on the perceived teacher image by determining teachers' perceptions in regards to the teacher image existing in today's society. It was found that teachers mostly expressed negative views about the image of teachers as perceived in society. In their research, Özdemir and Orhan (2009) asked 40 teachers to compare their present

and past professional images and determined that only three teachers believed that their present professional images were the same as before while 37 of the participants believed their present professional images were worse compared to the past. The research conducted by Kıran et al., (2019) with 73 teachers determined that the rate of teachers who believed that teachers had a negative image was 80%. In their research, Erzen and Erçapan (2018) stated that according to the opinion of the participating teachers, 30% believed that the prestige level of the teacher profession in the society was low and 70% believed that it was moderate. Doğan and Bayrak (2019) reported that teachers generally had negative views regarding the general image of the profession. In this research, teacher views which were generally negative about the factors that affected the teacher image were collected under 10 themes. When the findings were examined, it was observed that these views were mostly related to the policy makers' theme. The most reactive opinion was in regards to the Alo 147 hotline which was abused to direct complaints about teachers who were then formally investigated and sanctioned. The Ministry of National Education announced the service definition of Alo 147 as follows: to resolve effectively and quickly all types of questions regarding requests, complaints, opinions-suggestions, notices and information about the duties and responsibilities of the Ministry; It is possible to obtain information about all services offered by the ministry, especially education and training; information can be obtained regarding all services offered by the ministry, especially education and training, by calling the communication center (MoNE, 2013). While the Ministry of National Education explains the purposes of the center as above, public opinion showed that there are different perceptions about the use of this communication line and especially its use as a "complaint line about teachers". Tunç and Gökçe's (2018) research on Alo 147 hotline reported that this line was used for whistle blowing, as well as for different purposes such as personal hostility and political games. It was determined that while the obtained information had positive effects such as providing self-control to school administrators, it also had negative effects such as pressure, low motivation, insensitivity, overwork, burnout and loss of prestige. The research conducted by Özer (2014) on this line found that this practice damaged the teaching profession and reduced the quality of education. In the aforementioned research, it was found that teachers regarded this line as a complaint line, it was used by parents and students for threats, it was a practice that disturbed teachers' peace and it reduced professional productivity and teachers' dignity. For this reason, suggestions were made to stop the use of the hotline as it did not serve its purpose. Similarly, the research conducted by Aksoy et al., (2014) concluded that the practice negatively affected teachers' relationships, it was regarded as a tool to control teachers and it functioned as a means of obedience and coercion. Ersan (2014) reported that this practice disrupted the school climate and negatively affected the communication of parents, students, teachers and administrators. Examinations and investigations showed that the majority of the complaints reported to schools consisted of unfounded allegations. Consistent with the data obtained from the research, it can be argued that the negative effects of the Alo 147 communication line in the education system have come to the forefront because it reduces the energy of the organization by going beyond its purpose. Based on the belief that "a system that does not touch the hearts and souls of our teachers will not be successful, the first act of Ziya Selçuk, who was appointed as the Minister of National Education, was the closure of Alo 147 hotline which was stated to have disturbed the community of one million teachers and school administrators. This action has been positively reflected on the image of teaching profession (Kamuajans, 2018).

The statements of the Ministers of Education and senior bureaucrats were expressed by teachers as another factor that negatively affects the image of teachers in the society. Similarly, in their research, Demir and Almalı (2018) reported that the negative statements made by high-level bureaucrats working within the Ministry and the policies implemented in the field of education negatively affected this image. The research pointed that while the

discourses reflected on social media hurt teachers, the opinion that their professional reputation was damaged in the eyes of students, parents and the society. In the context of these data, the examination of 2023 Education Vision Document clearly states that the main actor of the vision is “teachers” although students, parents, teachers and school vision document are listed as four basic elements. In this regard, the document takes teachers at the focal point of the transformations that are planned to be realized in the vision document, with the statement that “We must not forget that all education systems rise on the shoulders of teachers and that no education system can overshadow the qualities of that nation’s teachers”. Also, after the publication of the vision document, there have been practices that will strengthen the bonds to support the perceived teacher image in the society such as “Education Meetings with Teacher Ziya” announced with the portrait of Minister of National Education captioned as Teacher Ziya, the discourse of “teacher's reputation is my reputation” and slogans such as “Strong Teachers, Strong Future” used in the projects put forward by the Ministry.

Another factor put forward under the Policy Makers theme and which was believed to have a negative effect on the image of teachers is related to the following: the appointment of individuals who are not graduates of education faculties by taking formation, the appointment of non-teacher individuals as teachers, working under various concepts such as paid, permanent, substitute, contracted teachers and lack of performance by teachers who teach in different subject matters other than their own as a result of lack of norm in the 4+4+4 system. Teachers believe that teaching is a professional field that requires expertise and these practices have created a setting for debate about the competencies of teachers which is reflected negatively on the teacher image. According to Şişman (2009), teacher training and teacher competencies have always been an area of interest and the subject of current debate because the restructuring of the learning and teaching process through updating the school and the curriculum has brought up the issues of redefining the roles and functions of teachers, students, school and school administrators. In parallel with these views, which are thought to negatively affect the image of teachers, the pedagogical formation certificate training carried out by higher education institutions was revoked with the decision nr. 12 of the Education Board of the Ministry of Education dated 29 June 2020. The abolition of the pedagogical formation program was a decision that met expectations because there is a growing deficit between the number of teacher candidates and the number of teachers needed in Turkey, due to the formation certification programs used in the appointment of graduate teachers (Yayla, 2015).

Teachers participating in the research suggested that the selection criteria for teachers' recruitment should not be the exam scores alone, that the number of teachers training faculties should be reduced and that teachers should be trained in certain numbers according to the needs of schools. The 2023 Education Vision Document aims to replace the certificate-based pedagogical formation by a Teaching Profession Specialization Program at the postgraduate level, but this aim is not concrete yet. Considering how the lack of a career development system to encourage teachers to improve themselves creates an obstacle, the step to be taken in this direction is considered as a suggestion that will contribute to the education system.

The belief that teachers were responsible for the decline in educational quality and that state schools were depicted as the source of failure compared to private schools was found to influence teachers' image in society. Similarly, Ünsal and Bağçeci (2016) reported the same in their research. Another factor affecting the image of teachers was found to be the practices created by free dress code and the image of relatively neglected unkempt teachers who followed the free dress code. In their studies, Ölçüm and Polat (2016) and Erzen and Erçapan (2018) reported that appearance is an important factor associated with the prestige of teachers. In this process, the Ministry of National Education designed a school uniform for teachers although they are not obligated to use it and the Minister himself shared the uniforms with the public with the statement of “A uniform is not just an outfit. It is a symbol of mastery”. It is believed that this practice will contribute positively to the perceived image of teachers.

The factors affecting the image of the profession of teachers included the theme of teachers as well. The view that drew attention under this theme was the view that “teachers don't have to renew themselves; they don't need to improve themselves”. In addition, the presence of teachers who just care for their income and do the basic minimum in their class and at the same time defend this action by saying “why would I do more for this payment?” was found to affect the image of teaching profession negatively. As a matter of fact, the requirements of this era and online teaching processes especially during the Covid-19 pandemic process has revealed the need for teachers to be more competent in using information technologies. Similarly, according to Demir and Almalı's (2018) research, teachers claimed that some of their colleagues were behind the times by not improving themselves that each teacher should be a role model and that teachers who do not do their job at the desired quality discredit the profession by bringing all teachers under suspicion. In this context, the participants suggested to improve teachers' competencies through in-service trainings and to support teachers to pursue postgraduate education under the theme of teaching support. Under the title of human resources development and management, the 2023 Education Vision Document states that the professional development of teachers and school administrators will be restructured. At this stage, some of the in-service training activities for teachers and school administrators will be converted from the practice of a participation certification to that of an accredited certification program to be run by universities. In line with these objectives, the research conducted that at the official address of the General Directorate of Teacher Training shows that that national and international accredited certificates are issued via trainings where teachers -the focal point of the vision document- are offered professional development opportunities to improve themselves. In this context, the smart technologies and software development professional development program organized in cooperation with CISCO Network Academy, instructor training between the Department of Chemistry and Chemical Biology at Harvard University, digital transformation program in cooperation with Google, software development expertise program with Microsoft, professional development program for teachers of German in cooperation with the Goethe Institute, program to support four language skills for teachers of English in cooperation with the British Council, the state artists Güher and Süher Pekinel's Anatolian Music Education, the “Village Teachers” program implemented with the support of Sabancı Foundation and cooperation protocols such as “Museum Education Certificate Program with Ankara University can be given as examples (MoNE Teacher Training and Development General Directorate, 2020). In addition to these professional development studies, establishing “teacher support points” in 81 provinces and in all districts is regarded as an activity that will meet the expectations of teachers.

Some of the factors related to teacher image presented by teachers were grouped under the themes of teacher training and qualification of prospective teachers. Teachers believed that receiving sufficient scores from the university entrance exams was not enough to become a teacher, that teacher candidates did not consciously select their profession, that teaching as a profession was preferred mostly by the children of middle and low-income socio-economic families and that the low university entrance scores to faculties of education negatively affected the image of teaching profession in society. It was also stated that the use of theory-oriented traditional methods in the teaching process of teacher candidates also paved the way for the problem of quality in the training of teachers. Today, the only criterion based on academic success in the selection of teacher candidates is the Examination of Transition to Higher Education (YGS). Apart from this criterion, personal characteristics required by teachers are ignored. Selection methods such as personality tests and psychological tests are recommended (Topsakal, 2015).

As of the variables that negatively affected the image of teachers in the society, teachers reflected on the salary and economic conditions of teachers under the theme of employee rights and stated that the teachers' wages were insufficient. Similar views were shared by Ulutaş,

(2017) and Demir and Almalı (2020). In their research, Semerci et al., (2012) reported that only 8% of teachers considered their current salaries as sufficient. The research by Çüm and Doğan (2016) titled “Determining the order of importance of factors that increase teachers’ motivation in working life” found that “increasing salaries and wages” was the second factor that would increase teachers’ motivation in working life. Özdemir and Orhan (2019) stated that the high frequency of views expressed by teachers in regards to improving their economic conditions in order to contribute to their professional image was related to their perception that good economic conditions would provide a good image. The participating teachers suggested under the theme of employee rights that teachers’ salaries should be improved. The 2023 Education Vision Document states that the preparatory work is underway for the adoption of the Teaching Profession Law, which is thought to support the image of teachers. While the Ministry’s work in this context is said to be completed, it has not yet come into force.

Some of the teacher views about the factors that affected the image of the teachers were collected under the parents’ theme. These views may be associated with some of the views previously mentioned under the sociological changes theme. That is, changes in social life also affect the behavior patterns of individuals living in the society. It is thought that the pressure of families on teachers is increasing day by day. Interaction between parents and teachers can take the form of threats from time to time by phone and nowadays via communication lines such as Messenger and WhatsApp to show parental reaction to teachers when teachers acted in anger towards their children. The transfer of these negative communication processes to the media also creates a climate that allows teachers to be judged by the society as well.

Media has the effect of “creating and guiding perception” in forming professional images. The programs and news in the media about teachers’ income and their negative behaviors affect the society (Doğan & Bayrak, 2019). Under the media theme, one of the variables that was selected by the teachers as a negative factor, teachers reported the use of obsessive, mocking and negative teacher models in TV series and movies. This finding is similar to the conclusion of Simpson (1997), Altun (2014) and Demir and Almalı (2020) who found that the media has an effect on the teachers’ profession and reduces their prestige. Altun (2014) stated that the media mostly published negative news about the teaching profession and this kind of news created negative perceptions in the public opinion. Referring to the effect of media on the teaching profession, Simpson (1997) argued that negative posts in the sharing reduced professional prestige. Based on the findings of the research in which they examined the image of teachers in Turkish films on education in the historical process, Akcan and Polat (2016) reported that teachers had a very good visual image, they were perceived as idealistic characters that progressed in line with certain goals and devoted themselves to these goals. On the other hand, scenes that depicted teachers while smoking, by giving punishment, by being helpless in the face of events and by speaking in a manner that deteriorated over time were presented as examples of negative images.

Providing opportunities for teachers to participate in the decision-making processes and highlighting the exemplary work and projects of successful teachers were the most common suggestions under the theme of teachers’ motivation recommended as a method to contribute to the image of teachers. The digital platform which was created for the Ministry to provide direct access to the Ministry via “birmilyonfikir.meb.gov.tr” so that teachers can share their ideas can meet these expectations in a manner. Altaş and Yılmaz (2018) referred to this activity by the Ministry of National Education to hear the voice of teachers regarding the education process within the framework of one million teachers and one million ideas research in the 2018-2019 academic year as a very important step in terms of involving teachers in the decision-making process in the education process.

Another suggestion by teachers under the theme of innovative practices to contribute to the image of teachers was related to the determination and implementation of objective



criteria for the appointment of school administrators. In this context, the 2023 Education Vision Document foresees the use of an exam based on proficiency and other objective criteria to be used in the appointment of teachers as school administrators and that school administration will be a professional field of specialization (MoNE, 2018). One of the most important factors underlying school achievement is the school administrator (Gurr & Drysdale, 2007). This is why the issue of how to choose school administrators has been an area of constant interest in our educational process. The relevant articles of the regulations prepared for the appointment of school administrators in the historical process show that the regulations were applied in the appointment of school administrators by considering the qualifications of success in the selection exam, management experience, conduct score, not having received disciplinary punishment and seniority (Recepoğlu & Kılınç, 2014). As of 2019, the appointment of school administrators is decided according to the exam score (60 and above) received from the administrator selection exam conducted by the MoNE- Student Selection and Placement Center and the ratio of an interview score. Most educators support central exam-based assignment. However, Aktepe (2014) stated that exam alone was not enough, and the leadership qualities of the manager candidate should be included in the process. In the context of the criticisms made especially on the subjectivity of the interviews as reflected in the public, it is thought that the practice of assigning the exam score of the school administrator candidates also as their interview score is a positive step. The vision document foresees small-scale pilot applications to be carried out in relation to the goal of structuring the professional development of school administrators and as of 2020-2021 monitoring and evaluation will be carried out through medium-scale applications throughout the country.

## Conclusions

The findings obtained from this research demonstrate that teachers' images in society have changed negatively by time in Turkey in the historical process. The factor affecting teachers' images in the society mostly was found to be related to the change in perceptions towards teachers based on the sociological changes brought about by the age we live in. The image of the teacher, who was associated with sanctity, is now highly negative due to the teachers' low economic income and insufficient employee rights. Training higher numbers of candidate teachers than the need of schools and the succeeding problems in their assignment to teaching posts has been influential in the formation of this negative image in society. One of the most significant variables negatively affecting this image was found to be related to teacher qualifications that are in questions following the process of recruitment and training of teacher candidates. Some activities and actions carried out in the context of the 2023 Education Vision support were found to support positive teacher images. Revoking the Alo 147 hotline, which was perceived as a teacher complaint line by teachers, creation of highly positive synergy with teachers by the Minister of National Education, Ziya Selçuk himself and offering in-service training programs that meet the needs and interests of teachers have been regarded as steps that can positively contribute to teachers' images. However, the adoption of the Teaching Profession Law which is included in the 2023 Education Vision Document is still expected in the field of education as a practice that would eliminate many variables that negatively affect the image of teachers. In summary, suggestions provided by participating teachers to improve the teacher image included the following: identifying the criteria for teacher selection in Turkey (desire to teach, having good communication skills, obtaining high scores in the central examination etc.), qualified instruction in teacher training process, comprehensive planning about the number of teachers needed in the country based on the present and the future projections and improvement in the economic conditions of teachers.

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