

How Do Teachers Perceive Lifelong Learning and Adult Education?

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to explore the perspectives of middle school teachers on the concepts of lifelong learning and adult education. The qualitative research involved 25 middle school teachers, and their responses, gathered through semi-structured interviews, underwent content analysis. Thematic analysis was employed to derive the results. The findings underscore that teachers attribute value to lifelong learning and adult education for various purposes, such as personal development, adaptation to evolving times, sustained learning, quality time utilization, social integration, and meeting educational needs. A consensus within the study group indicates that individuals across professions should engage in lifelong learning beyond their initial undergraduate education. The research reveals that continuous lifelong learning among teachers positively impacts performance, fostering open-mindedness, cultivating versatile thinking, facilitating effective lesson delivery, and improving interaction with students. Identified factors hindering lifelong learning include physical and economic conditions, environmental factors, health issues, motivation, and the repercussions of disasters. Teachers have been found to perceive the lifelong learning and adult education activities offered in Turkey as inadequate. Additionally, teacher opinions shed light on shortcomings in lifelong learning and adult education within the Turkish context. Lastly, the study observes a general lack of adequate knowledge among teachers regarding global lifelong learning and adult education activities.

Key words: Lifelong learning, non-formal education, adult education, vocational and technical education, teacher perspectives.

Introduction

Educational systems are undergoing rapid changes in the face of a globalized world (Çalık & Sezgin, 2005). To keep pace with the dynamic changes in the world, individuals must commit to ongoing self-development throughout their entire lives (Laal et al., 2014). Alternatively, those aiming to acclimate to change ought to prioritize perpetual self-enhancement across their lifetimes, steering away from restricting themselves solely to formal educational avenues (Allmendinger et al., 2019). In this context, lifelong learning can be defined as individuals constantly renewing themselves as a result of developments in society and all social areas that constitute it (Jarvis, 2007). Individuals who follow innovations in their lives and continually develop themselves are believed to integrate better into new situations (Laal, 2012). However, in a globalized society, individuals must closely follow developments to contribute continuously to their own development (Miser, 2002).

Based on comprehensive and lifelong learning approaches, adult education is a process that aims to support and empower individuals and local communities, encompassing the entire lifespan of an individual or individuals (Golding et al., 2008). Adults must continually develop themselves to secure better opportunities in their professional lives, improve working conditions, or advance in their careers (Karakoç, 2021). In our era and in the future, individuals who continuously develop themselves and can pursue lifelong education are the most sought-after type of people. Lifelong learning is not just an activity for individuals to fill their leisure time effectively; it is an educational approach in which individuals continuously develop themselves from birth to the end of their lives (Aksoy, 2013). Within this framework, the significance of lifelong learning is growing steadily and is becoming more of a focus of interest for adults (Pata et al., 2021). The extent to which this focus, namely the concepts of lifelong

learning and adult education, is known and embraced by teachers is becoming increasingly significant. Therefore, this study is based on the concepts of lifelong learning and adult education.

Lifelong Learning (LLL)

Individuals are in a constant pursuit of learning from birth until the moment of death. This quest for learning gives rise to the concept of lifelong learning (LLL). Introduced by Yeaxlee (1929), LLL has rapidly evolved within educational systems up to the present day. LLL encompasses a series of cultural processes wherein an individual continuously develops their knowledge, skills, and experiences, learning new things throughout their life, thereby enhancing the quality of life (Shokhida, 2016). These cultural activities, occurring both formally within schools under the name of formal education and informally outside of school settings, contribute to the enrichment of Lifelong Learning (Erden, 2009). However, it should be noted that the shortcomings of formal education can be addressed by the widespread opportunities provided by LLL activities, thus strengthening formal education (Bolat, 2017). LLL, not only embraces the philosophy of continuous learning at every stage of individuals' lives but is also recognized as a crucial educational strategy for sustainable development in the era of globalization (Webb et al., 2017). LLL serves as a fundamental key for individuals to enhance themselves, renew their knowledge and skills, explore new areas of interest, and progress professionally. Innovations in technology and information have brought about changes in educational systems from the perspective of LLL (Balci, 2023). Recent technological developments have opened up new opportunities in the field of LLL (Şahin Kölemen, 2023). As a result, these learning activities have diversified, contributing to a more inclusive society.

The concept of LLL has been the subject of numerous discussions regarding its meaning, purpose, how it has become a prevalent concept in adult and continuous education, and its broader impact on the concepts of education and learning (Biesta, 2013). However, as the importance of the LLL concept continues to grow, it remains a supportive force in all areas of society, catering to individuals of all ages (Pata et al., 2021). People continue to learn even after formal education activities (Şahan & Yasa, 2017). In this context, the concept of adult education (AE) emerges as a solution to the ongoing need for learning. AE is one of the most important components related to the LLL concept.

LLL has become a significant driving force in the development of countries (Balci, 2023). Education systems recognizing this force have started diversifying LLL opportunities for their citizens (Bolat, 2016). Realizing the importance and role of this process in development, the Turkish education system has accelerated the necessary efforts and initiated the implementation process. Despite the emphasis on formal education in Turkey, the importance of individuals continuing to learn throughout their lives, renewing themselves by following developments in their professions, and supporting adults in free and widespread learning has gained prominence. This situation has been substantiated in the legal dimension with a focus on LLL objectives in Article 40 of Law No. 1739 on National Education, laying the foundation for the concepts of "continuous education" and "education everywhere." In line with this legal dimension, LLL found its place in the Turkish education system with the establishment of the Directorate General for Lifelong Learning, providing a dedicated space for lifelong education in development plans (National Education Basic Law, 1973). Through the efforts of Public Education Centers, Vocational Training Centers, and Open Education Institutions, the number of courses offered is steadily increasing (Urhan, 2020; Karakuş Yıldız and Taş, 2023).

Municipalities encourage LLL within the education system by organizing vocational training courses, and adult education gains significant importance. These courses are popular among the community, with many individuals attending to obtain certificates and improve their professional skills, making them more employable. The knowledge and skills acquired through lifelong education play a crucial role in addressing employment and unemployment issues in the country. Furthermore, considering the Lifelong Learning Strategy Document and Action Plan for Turkey published by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in 2014, the increased awareness about LLL, the creation of a societal learning culture, the enhancement of access to learning, diversification of learning opportunities, and innovations in guidance, monitoring, and evaluation services indicate that policymakers have recognized the importance of this field.

In order to carry out LLL activities in the European Union, the European Commission has adopted a strategy encompassing learning activities and has set forth key messages. The focus of this strategy is to satisfy the requirements of the employment market and aim for the acquisition of essential skills. Technologically supported initiatives within this framework aim to facilitate access to education, enhance social cohesion, and develop citizenship awareness (European Commission, 2000). Simultaneously, the Council of Europe aims to enhance the quality of education systems to create a competitive and dynamic economy, reduce school dropout rates, and address gender imbalances. These efforts target prolonged

retention of employees in their jobs, the continuation of LLL activities, and an increase in investments in human resources (European Commission, 2005).

Adult Education (AE)

AE representing a significant variable in human life, stands as an essential element in the educational procedure. In addition to encompassing compulsory education, it includes widespread educational activities for individuals who have discontinued formal education for various reasons or have not received formal education (Vermeersch & Vandebroucke, 2009). In this context, AE addresses a target audience. Various variables such as age, gender, education level, and the desire for learning contribute to the diversification of the target audience in AE. Thus, both LLL and AE have become increasingly crucial for the advancement of vocational and technical skills, as well as for enhancing certain professional competencies (Tut & Bolat, 2022).

AE has a broad target audience as it is directed towards individuals with diverse needs. AE is a unique educational journey integrated with and tailored to adults. Variables such as age, gender, education level, and the desire for learning can be considered in classifying the target audience. On the other hand, the expectations and requirements of various segments in society cover a diverse range of activities. The enrichment of adults' lives and the positive transformation of their knowledge, skills, lifestyles, and living conditions are intricately tied to the pivotal role of AE (Chang, 2020). Particularly, vocational and technical training in the field of AE has become a crucial area in some education systems, opening the way for individuals to acquire different professional competencies (Andersson & Muhrman, 2020).

The importance of AE is increasingly recognized due to issues such as natural disasters, pandemics, and climate change. Population movements caused by migration and wars, alongside natural population increases in some countries, impact the education policies of these countries (Başkan & Bars, 2020). AE becomes crucial in implementing these policies and organizing chaotic situations. This is because AE has a vital purpose of educating the adults in society to be able to solve the problems of the country and the community (Park, 2002). Moreover, developments in technology and science, occupational changes, and situations arising from economic conditions further emphasize the importance of AE.

Countries may have variations in AE due to their historical and unique situations. AE is closely related to culture and society. AE plays a crucial role in enabling disadvantaged segments of society to enter the labor market. The definition of AE can vary among individuals, institutions, and countries (Yiğit, 2022). Duman (2005) defines AE as activities specifically designed for adults that do not include professionalism. According to the UNESCO *"Glossary of Terms on Adult Education,"* adult education includes regular educational activities geared towards elevating both knowledge and skills in adults, increasing their technical and vocational skills, and shaping their knowledge and skills in a modern way, without distinctions in level, content, and method. According to the OECD, AE encompasses programs and activities specifically arranged to address the learning requirements of individuals who are no longer attending school, having completed the compulsory school period, at any stage of their lives. AE aims to meet individuals' continuous learning needs and can help them adapt to the dynamics of modern societies and the business world (OECD, 2001).

In Turkey, AE programs can be classified by various institutions based on their functions. Private, civil, and public institutions in the country focus on AE and adult vocational and technical education as their primary functions (Tut & Bolat, 2022). The MoNE is one of the main institutions that forms the basis of formal education in the country. In addition to the MoNE AE can be carried out by various other institutions. Among these institutions are official, private, and voluntary organizations. Within the MoNE-affiliated institutions, the Directorate of Vocational and Technical Education, the Directorate of Lifelong Learning, and Public Education Centers are institutions that provide AE. Moreover, ministries, public institutions, municipalities, universities, voluntary organizations, ISMEK (Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Art and Vocational Training Courses), professional institutions, and various other organizations also offer AE (Bacakoglu, 2022).

LLL and AE for Teachers

Education is a lifelong process, and the role of teachers in this process is critically important (Shokhida, 2016). In this long-life cycle of educational processes, LLL and AE constitute an important part. LLL refers to the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for individuals to sustain their personal, professional, and social development (Mystakidis et al., 2019; Pata et al., 2021). In this context, teachers are not only individuals who impart knowledge to students but also lifelong learners who continuously develop themselves and acquire new knowledge and skills. AE involves educational activities

organized to support the personal development of adult individuals, enhance their participation in social life, and contribute to their efficiency in professional life (Park, 2002). In this educational process, teachers' knowledge and experience, as well as their ability to use current educational approaches and technologies, are of great importance. AE enables individuals to advance in their careers, develop their personal interests, and fulfill their social responsibilities (Başkan & Bars, 2022).

AE and LLL enable individuals to become successful and fulfilled in both their personal and professional lives. In a rapidly changing world, staying competitive requires continually acquiring new knowledge and skills. Various methods and tools that support these processes can help individuals succeed on their lifelong learning journey. LLL and AE are not only important for students and adults but also for teachers. Teachers practice a profession that requires continuous self-improvement. Throughout their careers, teachers need to constantly acquire new knowledge and skills. Educational methods, technologies, and pedagogical approaches are rapidly changing. The digital revolution, representing the most significant educational transformation ever, underscores the essential need for digital competence in AE and LLL (Halemm et al., 2023). For teachers to keep up with these changes, they must adopt a LLL mindset. AE also encompasses an area where teachers can be involved both as instructors and as learners. Teachers can gain new knowledge within adult education and also provide education to adult learners. LLL and AE are crucial for teachers' personal and professional development.

Research Purpose

The significance of LLL and AE concepts is increasing day by day. In order to adapt to the changing and evolving world, it is crucial for all individuals to continuously improve themselves. Especially in shaping the future generation, it is essential for the educators, who mold the students, to constantly enhance their own skills. This research examines teachers' attitudes towards LLL and AE, the challenges they face, and the opportunities in this field. The aim of the study is to better understand the professional development processes of teachers and their contributions to AE and to provide recommendations for improvements in these areas. Enhancing the quality of education will positively impact the overall well-being of society and individuals' self-actualization levels. In this context, evaluating teachers' approaches to lifelong learning and adult education is also crucial for shaping educational policies. Thus, the research aims to explore the perspectives of teachers on the concepts of LLL and AE. Additionally, by formulating sub-aims, the research intends to contribute to shaping the research process.

1. Investigating participants' views on the necessity of AE and LLL.
2. Assessing the capacity of every profession or individual to continue LLL processes.
3. Investigating views on the sufficiency of undergraduate education for the teaching profession.
4. Determining the participants' involvement in continuous learning activities.
5. Examining the potential effects of teachers' participation in lifelong learning processes on their in-class performance.
6. Identifying and elaborating on the factors that hinder AE and LLL.
7. Investigating views on the sufficiency of AE and LLL activities conducted in Turkey.
8. Evaluating the participants' knowledge of AE and LLL activities worldwide.

Method

Research model

For this study, an approach rooted in qualitative research has been utilized, allowing for a detailed exploration of the subject at hand. Qualitative research involves the realistic portrayal of events in their natural environment, utilizing methods such as observation, interviews, and document analysis during the data collection process (Creswell, 2017). The research methodology employed in this study takes the form of a qualitative case study design, offering a nuanced exploration of the subject matter. Case studies aim to systematically gather information about how a limited system operates and functions, allowing for data collection through various methods to comprehensively examine different dimensions of the system (Chmiliar, 2010). This approach is designed to offer an in-depth examination of the existing conditions related to LLL and AE, bringing forth the comprehensive perspectives of participants.

The Study Group

The study group consists of 25 teachers working in middle school institutions affiliated with the MoNE in the Reyhanlı district of Hatay province. In the selection of the study group, a purposive sampling method was employed. According to this sampling, the researcher determines whom to interview based on their knowledge and experience. Purposive sampling allows the researcher to choose individuals or units with specific qualities or characteristics. Thus, the researcher can create a sample that is most suitable and informative for the objectives of the study. Purposive sampling is often preferred to gain in-depth understanding or examine the characteristics of a specific subgroup. It is used in situations where detailed investigation is required for topics with rich content. This type of sampling is frequently employed in qualitative research with small sample sizes, as researchers can obtain in-depth information by working closely with individuals who have expertise in a specific subject or belong to a specific subgroup (Yin, 2017).

The participants included in the research consist of 11 males and 14 females, with 5 in the age range of (20-25), 12 in the age range of (26-30), 5 in the age range of (31-35), and 3 in the age range of (36-40). Among the participating teachers, 2 are from the social studies department, 5 from Turkish, 3 from English, 2 from information technologies, 2 from religious culture and moral knowledge, 4 from mathematics, 2 from science, 1 guidance counselor, 1 from Arabic, 2 from preschool, and 1 from the music department. Detailed information about the study group is provided in Table 1.

Tablo 1. Participants

Participant	Age	Gender	Field
M1	27	Male	Social Studies
M2	37	Male	Turkish
M3	38	Male	Turkish
M4	28	Male	English
M5	32	Male	Information Technologies
M6	30	Male	English
M7	40	Male	Turkish
M8	32	Male	Social Studies
M9	25	Male	Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge
M10	29	Male	Mathematics
M11	35	Male	Information Technologies
F1	28	Female	Mathematics
F2	24	Female	Science
F3	25	Female	Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge
F4	27	Female	Guidance and Psychological Counseling
F5	30	Female	Arabic
F6	26	Female	Preschool
F7	26	Female	Mathematics
F8	30	Female	Turkish
F9	34	Female	English
F10	28	Female	Turkish
F11	32	Female	Music
F12	30	Female	Mathematics
F13	24	Female	Science
F14	25	Female	Preschool

Data Collection

The research process initially began with a comprehensive literature review. The researcher examined existing information on the topic, identified gaps in the literature, and reviewed findings from previous studies. Subsequently, to understand the perspectives of teachers on LLL and AE in middle school institutions affiliated with the MoNE, interviews were conducted with experts in the field. The insights

from these expert opinions assisted the researcher in determining the focal points of the research. Based on the information gathered, the researcher developed a semi-structured interview form to be used during discussions with middle school teachers. This form was shaped for use in interviews, conducted at a time convenient for each teacher and in an environment of their preference, providing a comfortable setting for the participants. During the interviews, teachers' statements were recorded using audio recording devices. This allowed for the direct recording of teachers' expressions, which were later used for analysis. Data were collected through face-to-face interviews with the participants. Before starting the interviews, participants' consent was obtained to ensure their voluntary participation. They were informed that they could withdraw from the interview at any time. Participants were assured that their information would only be used for scientific research and that the confidentiality of their data would be protected. The collected data was organized around the conducted interviews, leading to the overall findings of the research. This stage laid a solid foundation for understanding teachers' perspectives on LLL and AE. For his purpose, the following questions have been asked to the participants.

1. What are your thoughts on the necessity of AE and LLL?
2. Can every profession or individual continue LLL processes?
3. Do you consider the undergraduate education sufficient for the teaching profession?
4. Are you currently engaged in continuous learning? (e.g., pursuing a master's degree, attending courses, etc.)
5. What could be the impact of a teacher participating in LLL processes on their in-class performance?
6. Are there factors that hinder AE and LLL? Please elaborate.
7. Do you find the activities related to AE and LLL in Turkey sufficient?
8. Are you knowledgeable about the activities related to AE and LLL worldwide?

Data Analysis

In the data analysis phase, primary themes were identified based on the interview form questions. Content analysis was utilized to generate codes from data collected from diverse sources. This method facilitated the classification, correlation, and comparison of the data (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000). Content analysis, frequently used in qualitative research, is defined as a research method approach that contributes to the formation of common research criteria for qualitative studies (Mayring, 2015). The data collected from participants were transferred to a computer environment for data mining after a preliminary control process, and then specific codes were created for each question and organized accordingly. These codes were subsequently grouped to form themes by bringing together those with similar topics. The content analysis processes used in scientific research are based on the stages proposed by Hsieh and Shannon (2005). These stages are as follows:

Coding of the Data: The data in the interview records were initially coded by identifying meaningful components and creating unique codes for each. In this stage, significant elements within the data were identified, and specific codes were assigned to each.

Identification of Themes: The created codes were grouped based on similarities to obtain themes. This stage was conducted to understand relationships between codes and determine overarching themes.

Placement and Definition of Codes in Themes: Codes and themes were used to organize and explain the data. In other words, it was determined which theme each code represented, and the data were organized accordingly. This step aimed to add more meaning to the analysis process.

Interpretation of Findings: Themes and codes obtained were interpreted and conclusions were drawn based on the research questions and objectives. This stage aimed to add meaning to the analysis results and outline the overall framework of the research. The application of these processes allowed for the systematic examination and interpretation of data obtained from the research. The themes and codes obtained were used to understand the main findings of the research and provide a scientific content analysis.

Validity and Reliability

The process of ensuring the validity and reliability of the research involved a carefully planned series of steps. Initially, the significance and purpose of the study were clearly defined. Sub-objectives were identified in line with the main objective, and these sub-objectives were designed to be consistent with the research topic. During the data collection phase, a focus on the principles of validity and reliability led to a thorough review of relevant sources. Previous studies that determined the scope of this research were examined in detail. Detailed explanations related to the subject were presented, and the obtained data were gradually presented to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the research process for readers. The data collected for the research were thoroughly examined using open coding and content analysis methods. Analyses were conducted considering the criteria for descriptive, interpretive, and theoretical validity proposed by Sandelowski and Barroso (2007). In order to establish the research's validity, the analysis process began with accurate definition of the study, and analyses were conducted to ensure the researcher's common interpretation of the data. To further ensure validity and reliability, triangulation methods were employed, involving multiple data sources and methods to cross-verify findings. Additionally, peer debriefing sessions and member checks were conducted to confirm the accuracy and consistency of the interpretations. These steps were taken to minimize biases and enhance the credibility of the research findings.

The analysis procedure was conducted within the framework of accordance with the main purpose to establish the theoretical validity of the research. In order to protect the identities of participants, interview records were coded with "F" for females and "M" for males, and measures were taken during the analysis process to prevent identity disclosure. Given that both researchers and participants were earthquake survivors, an independent supervisory expert reviewed the analyses to ensure reliability. Participants were not pressured with questions to ensure their comfort, and interviews were concluded at the participants' request. Special attention was given to avoid data loss throughout the analysis process, and the data were collected with meticulous care. Tables were used in the presentation of findings to support numerical data.

Findings

Regarding the necessity of AE and LLL

The 25 teachers interviewed were asked about the necessity of AE and LLL. The analysis of the responses obtained is presented in Table 2, summarizing the findings.

Table 2. Reasons for the necessity of AE and LLL

Code	Participants	%	f
Personal development	M4, M9, F2, F5, F6, F8	24	6
Continuous learning	M2, M5, M7, F3, F7	20	5
Adaptation to society	M1, M6, M8, M11	16	4
Adapting to the changing and evolving era	F1, F4, F12, F14	16	4
Educational need	M3, M10, F10	8	3
Quality time	F9, F11	8	2
Developing social relationships	F13	4	1

When Table 2 is examined, firstly, 6 individuals find adult education and lifelong learning necessary for personal development, 4 individuals for adapting to the changing and evolving era, 5 individuals for demonstrating continuous learning, 2 individuals for spending quality time, 3 individuals for educational need, 4 individuals for adaptation to society, and 1 individual for developing social relationships. Among the teachers who find AE and LLL necessary for personal development, one of them is at the forefront;

"While one teacher says, 'I believe lifelong learning is necessary because humans are open to learning and development throughout their lives' (F5), the other says; 'Learning something is of great importance for individuals to improve themselves' (F6).

In the second place, the purpose of adapting to the changing and evolving era is mentioned. In this regard, a teacher expressed; *“Expressing the viewpoint, ‘It is important to adapt to the changing and evolving era’ (F4), another opinion is stated as continuous learning. In another perspective, learning is expressed as showing continuity.*

A teacher stated, *“According to our belief, knowledge is obligatory for every believer from the cradle to the grave. Education starts from the mother’s womb and continues until adulthood and even until death. The cornerstone is that learning should be intertwined with education throughout our lives.” (M2).*

Another teacher stated, *“Education and lifelong learning should be among the top priorities in the list of needs that a person requires from birth to death. Without education, being morally upright is not possible without knowledge” (M7).*

In another deduction, it is mentioned as a quality time, and a teacher expressed his opinion by saying, *“I think it is necessary. However, these educations need to be of high quality. They should not waste the teacher’s time” (F9).* One of the teachers expressing the view of adapting to society stated, *“LLL is crucial for individuals to adapt to society and control their lives.” (M6).*

In the last deduction, a teacher stated, *“AE is necessary for people in all stages of life. Education is a mandatory need for all individuals from the moment they are born. People learn to live through education. If they continue to receive education in their later lives, their lives become better and easier.” (F10).*

A teacher who says it develops social relationships stated, *“AE and LLL are extremely important. Because here, adults can develop their social relationships by using the skills they will acquire. They can collaborate, manage conflicts, and solve problems.” (F13).*

When the thoughts of teachers about the necessity of adult education and lifelong learning are generally evaluated, it is understood that teachers' opinions are related to personal development, adapting to the changing and developing era, the continuity of learning, spending quality time, adapting to society, meeting the need for education, and developing social relationships.

The continuation of LLL processes for every profession or individual

Table 3. The continuation of LLL processes for every profession or individual

Impact	Participants	%	f
Can continue	F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F7, F8, F9, F10, F11, M1, M2, M3, M6, M8, M9, M10, M11, M12, M11, M14	88	22
Can't continue	M4, M5, M7	12	3

When examining the data in Table 3, it is stated that 22 teachers responded as *“can continue,”* while 3 teachers responded as *“cannot continue.”* A teacher who believes that every profession or individual can continue lifelong learning states, *“Since new developments occur over time in human life and in every profession, individuals can continue LLL to adapt to these developments” (M1).*

Another teacher expresses a similar view, saying, *“Yes. The evolving world and changing societal needs make the continuity of education mandatory. Those who think they have had enough education and do not keep up with developments fall behind” (F5).*

Another teacher remarks, *“School is not a framework for LLL. It can occur at every stage of life. Therefore, LLL continues in any field or any profession where people are together with society, regardless of age or location” (F13).*

Another teacher states, *“Absolutely, they can continue. Because a teacher has no age, time, or place. A person should be able to learn any kind of novelty that interests them in any field at any time without being bound by a rule or time” (F9).* Another teacher expresses, *“Yes, they can continue. Nothing in the world remains unchanged. Every person cannot fully learn everything, and our brains sometimes even forget what we have learned. With advancing technology, every profession must develop itself in this direction. For example, advancing automotive technology requires even automotive repairs to know languages and be able to use computers due to globalization” (F10).*

Although their numbers are few, a teacher who believes that not every profession or individual can continue LLL states, *“I think it could be difficult for those who dislike changes and love routine” (M4).* Another teacher says, *“I do not think every occupational group can continue LLL. As one gets older, some things may not be possible, and the resulting health problems will be a barrier” (M7).*

When examining the findings regarding the continuation of LLL for every profession or individual, it can be observed that generally, all teachers stated they can continue, while 3 teachers expressed that they cannot continue.

The adequacy of undergraduate education for the teaching profession

Table 4. Adequacy of undergraduate education for the teaching profession

Impact	Participants	%	f
Inadequate	M1, M2, M3, M4, M5, M6, M7, M8, M10, M11, F1, F2, F4, F5, F6, F7, F8, F11, F12, F13, F14	84	21
Adequate	F3, F9	4	2
Undecided	F10, M9	4	2

When examining Table 4, it is stated that 2 individuals find it “adequate”, 21 individuals find it “inadequate”, and 2 individuals are “undecided” regarding the adequacy of undergraduate education for the teaching profession.

One teacher who considers undergraduate education adequate expresses, “Those who want to improve themselves never lose their passion for education. In my opinion, undergraduate education is sufficient for teaching” (F3). Another teacher who finds undergraduate education inadequate states, “I do not consider undergraduate education sufficient for the teaching profession. In countries where education is highly developed, such as Finland, teachers are at least graduates with a master’s degree and are people who love their job” (M3).

Another teacher on this matter mentions, “Definitely not adequate. Having knowledge at the undergraduate level in one field is like a drop in the ocean. Especially, knowledge in psychology, sociology, and history is necessary. Psychology is the field that will most facilitate the teacher’s work” (M7).

Another teacher comments, “Undergraduate education is a requirement for teaching but not sufficient. Because the classroom environment, individual differences, and experiences contribute different things to the teaching profession. Education and instruction done by doing and experiencing are included in this” (F13).

Another teacher says, “I do not find it sufficient. In my opinion, every teacher should continue to take training that enhances both academically and socially after undergraduate education to improve themselves” (F1).

A teacher who remains undecided when it comes to discussing undergraduate education remarks, “I cannot say whether undergraduate education is adequate or inadequate. Because I never think that education is ever sufficient for any individual. Because conditions and situations are different in our country, postgraduate education should not be mandatory. Because most teachers live in places where transportation is difficult or far from the universities they really want to attend” (F10).

When examining the views of teachers on whether undergraduate education is sufficient for the teaching profession, it is noted that 2 individuals find it adequate, 16 individuals find it inadequate, and 2 individuals are undecided.

The participation status of teachers in LLL processes

Table 5. Participation status in LLL processes

Status	Participants	%	f
Yes	M1, M2, M3, M4, M5, M6, M7, M8, M9, M10, M11, F1, F2, F5, F6, F7, F8, F9, F10, F13, F14	84	21
No	F3, F4, F11, F12	16	4

When Table 5 is examined, it is stated that 21 teachers answered yes, while 4 teachers answered no. The teachers who answered yes mentioned that they continue their learning through master’s programs, doctoral studies, or various courses (public education, hobby courses, arts and sports training, etc.)

The impact of a teacher's participation in LLL processes on in-class performance

Table 6. The impact of LLL processes on a teacher's in-class performance

	Participants	%	f
Performance improvement	M1, M3, M9, F1, F3, F4, F9, F10, F12, F13	40	10
Efficient lesson delivery	F5, F6, F7, F8, F11, M6, M11	28	7
Teacher success	M2, M5, M10, F14	16	4
Student interaction	M7, F2	8	2
Multifaceted thinking	M8	4	1
Openness to innovations	M4	4	1

When we look at Table 6, we observe that 10 teachers stated an “increase in performance”, 4 teachers believed it influenced “their success”, 1 teacher contributed to “openness to innovations”, 1 teacher directed towards “multifaceted thinking”, 7 teachers claimed “more efficient lesson delivery”, and 2 teachers strengthened “student interaction”.

A teacher who believes that LLL contributes to performance improvement expressed, “I think a teacher who continues lifelong learning will make more informed decisions and inferences about emerging topics and events.” (M1).

Another teacher mentioned, ‘I believe their motivation will be high. Due to updating and refreshing their knowledge, I think their in-class performance will be high’ (F4).

A teacher expressing the impact on teacher success stated, ‘Regardless of the profession, a person who constantly updates themselves will always be successful in their work’ (M2).

Regarding openness to innovations, a teacher said, “It makes them open to new technologies and information.” (M4). A teacher claiming an impact on multifaceted thinking mentioned, “It enables them to look from different perspectives and think in a multifaceted way.” (M8).

A teacher predicting more efficient lessons stated, “They can handle the lesson more efficiently and ensure active participation.” (F6).

Another one stated, “They can conduct the lesson more efficiently. They can increase the success level by involving students actively in the lesson.” (F8).

Lastly, a teacher emphasizing student interaction mentioned, “This way, teachers increase interaction with students. Communication becomes easier.” (F2).

In general, when examining the impact of a teacher's participation in lifelong learning processes on in-class performance, it can be concluded that it leads to performance improvement, influences teacher success, and shapes teachers who are open to innovations and capable of multifaceted thinking. Additionally, it was noted that lessons become more efficient, and communication with students strengthens.

Factors hindering AE and LLL processes

Table 7. Factors hindering AE and LLL processes

Factors	Participants	%	f
Environment	F6, F8, F9, F10, F11, F13, F14 M2, M5, M6, M10, M11	48	12
Physical and economic conditions	F1, F3, F4, F5, F12, M3, M7, M8	32	8
Health problems	F2, F7	8	2
Motivation	M4, F5	8	2
Natural disasters	M1	4	1

When Table 7 is examined, it is stated that 8 individuals identified “physical and economic conditions” as the primary obstacle, 11 individuals cited the “impact of the environment”, 8 individuals “physical and economic conditions”, 2 individuals mentioned “health problems”, 2 individuals identified “motivation” as a barrier, 1 individual attributed hindrance to “natural disasters.”

A teacher who identified physical and economic conditions as the primary obstacle stated, “I think time, transportation, and economic reasons will lead to a scarcity of accessible education options” (F4).

Another teacher mentioned, “Intense work life, economic difficulties, and livelihood concerns are obstacles to lifelong learning” (M7).

In the second place, the environment was identified as an obstacle. On this matter, a teacher stated, ‘The environment people live in, family structure, and social circle can hinder lifelong learning’ (K8), while another said, “The conditions of the place where one lives are influential. The events that happen to individuals can also have an impact. Additionally, family problems can be effective” (K10).

A teacher who believes that health problems create obstacles mentioned, “I think health problems that arise with age can be an obstacle” (K7).

Another teacher who believes that natural disasters create obstacles stated, “I think natural disasters and pandemics can disrupt adult education and lifelong learning” (E1).

Regarding hindrances arising from personal choice and willpower, a teacher stated, “The most important factor hindering learning is the individual themselves. Sometimes, people can ignore the opportunities presented to them. They may hinder their development by not looking positively at opportunities that will benefit them or by postponing them” (K14).

Looking at the general findings of what teachers said about factors hindering Entrepreneurship Education (EE) and Lifelong Learning Processes (LLP), it is indicated that physical and economic

conditions, the environment, health problems, motivation, natural disasters, and personal choice are among the identified obstacles.

The adequacy of activities in Turkey for AE and LLL

Table 8. Competence status of activities for AE and LLL in Turkey

Code	Participants	%	f
Insufficient	M2, M4, M5, M6, M7, M8, M9, M10, M11, F2, F3, F4, F7, F8, F9, F10, F11, F12, F13, F14	80	20
Sufficient	M1, M2, F1, F5, F6	20	5

When examining the data obtained in Table 8, it is stated that in the first place, 5 teachers find the activities for LLL and AE in Turkey to be “sufficient”. In the second place, it is mentioned that 20 teachers find the activities for LLL and AE in Turkey to be “insufficient”.

A teacher who finds the activities sufficient stated, *"Although I find them sufficient, I believe that continuing these activities by increasing them will have a more positive impact on human life regarding the emerging new situations"* (M1).

Another teacher expressed a similar sentiment: *"I find them sufficient. I think the courses offered in public education centers are beneficial. However, these courses are not promoted enough. Many people do not participate in these courses because they are not aware of them"* (F1).

A teacher who finds the activities insufficient commented, *"No. Public education and private courses are available, but they are presented as a way to gain profit rather than providing education to individuals, as they are based on financial concerns"* (M5).

Another teacher said, *"I do not find it sufficient. The governorship, district governorship, and municipalities should also play a role in this"* (M7). Another expressed, *"Most of the education in our country is focused on obtaining certificates, working on certificates, so I do not find it sufficient. Instead, practical-oriented studies would be more effective"* (M8).

Similarly, another teacher stated, *"We know that there are widespread education programs (public education, distance education). However, I do not think it is sufficient. The existence of opportunities abroad but not providing sufficient financial means is a problem"* (F7). In general evaluation of the adequacy of activities for LLL and AE in Turkey, it is noted that the majority of teachers find them insufficient.

Teachers' knowledge status regarding activities for LLL and AE Worldwide

Table 9. Information on activities for LLL and AE Worldwide

Answer	Participants	%	f
No	M2, M4, M6, M8, M9, M10, M11, F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F8, F10, F11, F12, F13, F14	76	19
Yes	M1, M3, M5, M7, F7, F9	24	6

When Table 9 is examined, it is indicated that 6 teachers have knowledge about activities for LLL and AE worldwide, while the other 19 teachers do not have knowledge on this subject.

A teacher who claims to have knowledge about activities for LLL and AE worldwide stated, *"I know that governments inform people, especially through non-governmental organizations, about emerging situations and support LLL"* (M1).

Another teacher mentioned, *"I am aware of Japan and Finland, where education is of high quality, and how these two countries make efforts to turn both students in schools and adults outside of schools into more conscious and higher quality individuals through comprehensive activities and systems. I can even say that this situation has become a cultural norm in these countries"* (M5).

A teacher admitting a lack of knowledge expressed, *"If I were to self-criticize, unfortunately, I have no knowledge on this matter"* (M3).

Another teacher stated, *"I don't know, but I think it is more practical compared to Turkey"* (M10). It can be concluded that the majority of teachers lack knowledge about activities for LLL and AE worldwide.

Results and Conclusions

In this study aimed at obtaining teachers' views on LLL and AE concepts, the majority of participants stated that they found LLL and AE necessary. They interpreted this necessity as contributing to personal

development, adapting to the changing and evolving era, ensuring continuity in learning, spending quality time, adapting to society, meeting educational needs, and developing social relationships. In a study conducted in the literature, it is understood that continuing postgraduate education, i.e., LLL, contributes to academic development and also contributes to individuals in the social field (Aydemir & Çam, 2015). Moreover, LLL not only involves the process of acquiring education but also equips individuals with competencies that allow them to participate more efficiently in the economic activities required by society, thus not being merely a process of receiving education (Samancı & Ocakçı, 2017). It can be said that the participants in this study recognized the continuous renewal of individuals in various social areas due to the developments in society and the competencies gained through LLL.

While 11 participants expressed that anyone, regardless of profession or individual, can pursue LLL, some mentioned that not everyone can. This situation is somewhat related to individuals exploring their opportunities in their surroundings. In a study by Knapper and Cropley (2000), it is assumed that the concept of LLL is supportive of individuals noticing their current competencies and experience, realizing educational opportunities in their environment, and continuously renewing themselves. Various types of vocational-technical education related to LLL and AE have become significant in some education systems, allowing individuals to acquire different vocational competencies (Andersson & Muhrman, 2020). This has led to increased interest in various types and content of activities offered through LLL and AE educational processes.

While most teachers find undergraduate education insufficient for the teaching profession, some consider it sufficient. Some teachers are indecisive in this regard. Although teachers find their undergraduate education adequate for their profession, it was found that some participants consider this education insufficient, while others remain undecided. This situation can be said to lead teachers to engage in LLL and AE programs. A study conducted by Kara and Demir (2021) with the participation of teachers shows a similarity with this study, as it found that newly appointed teachers find their pre-service undergraduate education inadequate.

The majority of teachers continue their postgraduate education, which is crucial for their professional development. It is essential for teachers to participate in LLL to keep up with current developments, develop a positive attitude toward their profession, and adapt to changes (Ünal & Akay, 2017). In addition, it is necessary to support LLL studies, increase their quantity, and integrate them with technology (Yıldız Durak & Şahin, 2018). Moreover, in today's world, LLL and AE play a crucial role in influencing the prosperity of countries (The World Bank, 2003). Future educators need to be more proactive and conscious in this regard.

Some participants in the teacher group stated that a teacher who continues LLL would contribute to increased performance and success. Others mentioned that it would make teachers more open to innovations within lessons, capable of thinking multidimensionally, efficient in teaching, and enhancing interaction with students. In a scientific study conducted with the participation of teachers by Doğan and Çalışkan (2020), it is emphasized that integrating LLL competencies into the culture of the school is essential, which corresponds to the importance given to LLL and AE concepts by the participants in this study.

The study concluded that the participating teachers emphasized the importance of the continuation of LLL for every profession and individual. This can be interpreted as the teachers being willing to continue LLL processes for their professional development. Considering the results of Yılmaz's (2016) study, which examined teachers' tendencies towards LLL, it is evident that there is a similarity with the findings of this study. Yılmaz (2016) concluded that teachers' tendencies towards participating in LLL processes are positive.

It has been found that teachers' LLL processes positively contribute to classroom performance. The study concludes that teachers' LLL processes primarily impact performance improvement, efficient lesson delivery, and teacher effectiveness within the classroom. This aligns with findings from Çilek et al. (2023), where it was observed that teachers believe LLL activities contribute to their professional development, providing relative support for the findings of this study.

The majority of participants believe that there are factors that hinder LLL and AE. Most teachers mentioned that physical and economic conditions and the environment create obstacles. Some stated that health problems, motivation, disasters, and personal preferences could pose obstacles. In research on factors affecting LLL, it was determined that economics, motivation, age, cultural structure, attitude, skills, experiences, teachers, and literacy have effects (Günüç et al., 2012). While activities related to LLL and AE in Turkey are considered insufficient by most teachers, some find them sufficient. Teachers have been found to perceive the LLL and AE activities offered in Turkey as inadequate. Turkey's ranking at the bottom with a rate of 2.3% in lifelong learning activities among EU countries could be cited as a reason for teachers' perception of LLL and AE activities as insufficient in Turkey (Kaya, 2014). Moreover, the

teachers participating in the research were found to lack knowledge about LLL and AE activities conducted worldwide. This situation may contribute to the perceived inadequacy described earlier.

Recommendations

The importance of encouraging LLL and advanced education among educators and other professional groups cannot be overstated. Teachers, in particular, should be enlightened about the benefits of pursuing further studies, as this has a direct impact on their professional development and the quality of education they provide. To this end, undergraduate teacher education programs should place a stronger emphasis on practical experiences, ensuring that future educators are well-prepared for the realities of teaching.

Furthermore, individuals interested in lifelong learning and AE should receive economic support to facilitate their educational pursuits. The MoNE should consider implementing regulations that provide additional financial incentives for teachers who acquire advanced certifications, such as postgraduate or doctoral degrees, and complete various professional development courses.

To promote LLL and AE effectively, it is essential to raise awareness of available educational activities both within Turkey and globally. Creating accessible and suitable environments for these educational opportunities will ensure that a wider range of people can benefit. Moreover, teachers should be kept up to date on contemporary practices and resources related to LLL and AE, allowing them to enhance their professional skills and remain engaged with global educational advancements.

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