| Research Article / Araştırma Makalesi |

Prospective Teachers' Metaphoric Perceptions of "*Student, Teacher* and *School*"

Öğretmen Adaylarının *"Öğrenci, Öğretmen* ve *Okul"* Kavramlarına İlişkin Metaforik Algıları

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Abstract

This study aimed to determine pedagogic formation students' metaphorical images of "*students, teachers, and schools.*" The study sample consisted of 101 pedagogical formation students of the University of Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal in the 2019-2020 academic year. Participants were recruited using convenience sampling. Metaphors were used as a means of qualitative data collection. Data were collected using a semi-structured metaphor form and analyzed using content and descriptive analysis. Participants generated 48 different (80 in total), 45 different (86 in total), and 42 different (82 in total) metaphors for "*students, teachers,* and *schools*" respectively. Conceptual categories concerning *students, teachers,* and *schools* were developed based on literature and participants' justifications for their metaphors. Conceptual categories were ranked based on their frequency. The categories for students were *"Students as individuals who are molded, Students as information providers/receivers, Students as developing individuals, Students as obedient individuals, Students as unique individuals, Students as inhibited individuals, Students as individuals who are on their way/looking for a way,* and *Students as selfless individuals."* The categories for teachers were *"Teachers as guides, Teachers as sources and transmitters of knowledge, Teachers as sources of love and trust, Teachers as sources of authority, Teachers as role models, Teachers as molders, Teachers as self-sacrificing individuals,* and *Teachers as sources of improvement."* The categories for schools were *"Schools as sources of information, Schools as part of life, Schools as places of change, development, and maturation, Schools as places of trust and happiness, Schools as places of inclusion, Schools as places of inhibition, Schools as places of molding, Schools as places of guiding and leading, Schools as indispensable places, Schools as complex places, Schools as places of socialization,* and *Schools as places that have lost their purpose."* The following are suggestions based on the results: *Prospective teachers' metaphoric perceptions of students, teachers, and school should be used to develop better teacher training policies. Possible causes of negative metaphors should be addressed to reform education policies. Future studies should use different research methods and recruit larger groups of participants from different cities to analyze the concepts of student, teacher, and school.*

Öz

Bu araştırmanın amacı, pedagojik formasyon programına katılan öğrencilerin *"öğrenci, öğretmen* ve *okul"* kavramlarına yönelik sahip oldukları zihinsel imgeleri metaforlar aracılığı ile ortaya koymaktır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubu, 2019-2020 eğitim ve öğretim yılında Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal Üniversitesi'nde pedagojik formasyon programına katılan ve kolay ulaşılabilir durum örneklemesi yoluyla belirlenen 101 pedagojik formasyon öğrencisinden oluşmaktadır. Nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden biri olan mecazlar yoluyla nitel veri toplama deseninde yürütülen araştırmada yarı yapılandırılmış metafor formu aracılığıyla toplanan veriler, içerik ve betimsel analiz yöntemleriyle analiz edilmiştir. Yapılan analizler sonucunda, katılımcıların *öğrenci* kavramına ilişkin 48'i farklı olmak üzere 80 metafor ürettikleri; *öğretmen* kavramına ilişkin 45'i farklı olmak üzere 86 metafor ürettikleri; *okul* kavramına ilişkin 42'si farklı olmak üzere 82 metafor ürettikleri tespit edilmiştir. Bu sonuçların yanı sıra katılımcıların metaforları oluştururken ifade ettikleri gerekçelerden yola çıkılarak alanyazındaki çalışmalar doğrultusunda *"öğrenci, öğretmen* ve *okul"* kavramlarına ilişkin kavramsal kategoriler ortaya çıkarılmaya çalışılmıştır. Yapılan analizler sonucunda ortaya çıkarılan kavramsal kategoriler sıklık derecesine göre sıralanmıştır. Öğrenci kavramına ilişkin ortaya çıkarılan kavramsal kategoriler *"Şekillendirilen bir birey olarak öğrenci, Bilgi yükleyen/yüklenilen bir birey olarak öğrenci, Gelişen bir birey olarak öğrenci, İtaatkâr bir birey olarak öğrenci, Kendine özgü bir birey olarak öğrenci, Kısıtlanan bir birey olarak öğrenci, Yola çıkan/yolunu arayan bir birey olarak öğrenci, Özverili bir birey olarak öğrenci"*; öğretmen kavramına ilişkin ortaya çıkarılan kavramsal kategoriler *"Yol/yön gösterici olarak öğretmen, Bilgi kaynağı ve aktarıcısı olarak öğretmen, Sevgi ve güven kaynağı olarak öğretmen, Otorite kaynağı olarak öğretmen, Rol model olarak öğretmen, Şekillendirici olarak öğretmen, Fedakârlık örneği olarak öğretmen, Gelişim kaynağı olarak öğretmen"*; okul kavramına ilişkin ortaya çıkarılan kavramsal kategoriler ise *"Bilgi kaynağı olarak okul, Yaşamın bir parçası olarak okul, Değişim, gelişim ve olgunlaşma yeri olarak okul, Güven ve mutluluk veren bir yer olarak okul, Kapsayıcı bir yer olarak okul, Kısıtlayıcı bir yer olarak okul, Şekillendiren bir yer olarak okul, Yol gösterici ve yönlendirici bir yer olarak okul, Vazgeçilmez bir yer olarak okul, Karmaşık bir yer olarak okul, Sosyalleşme yeri olarak okul, Amacını yitirmiş bir yer olarak okul"* biçiminde adlandırılmıştır. Araştırma sonuçlarına dayalı olarak geliştirilen öneriler şöyledir: *Öğretmen adaylarının öğrencilere, öğretmenlere ve okula yönelik metaforik algıları öğretmen yetiştirme politikalarının geliştirilmesi süreçlerinde göz önüne alınabilir. Olumsuz metaforların nedenleri ortaya çıkararak eğitim politikalarına ilişkin reform çalışmalarında değerlendirilebilir. Gelecekteki çalışmalarda, farklı araştırma yöntemleri kullanılabilir; öğrenci, öğretmen ve okul kavramlarını analiz etmek için farklı şehirlerden daha büyük katılımcı gruplarının algıları incelenebilir.*

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INTRODUCTION

Every society needs policies to plan its future. Those policies depend on the area, place, and time. Education policies are determined and implemented to turn students into the macro-and micro-level workforce of the future. Educational policies are expert-based decisions and activities implemented to meet political, social, and financial needs and expectations (Bakioğlu & Korumaz, 2019). Education policies are implemented by teachers in schools for students, who are the workforce of the future. Human is the most important wealth of nations shaped mostly by educational institutions (Can, 2018; Sezgin, 2013). It is necessary to regularly determine stakeholders' (*students, teachers, administrators, and parents*) perceptions, emotions, and views of educational aspects for the sustainable effectiveness of educational organizations. Possible problems in educational processes may sometimes be difficult, and even sometimes impossible to compensate. Metaphors are, therefore, instruments that can be used to understand stakeholders' emotions and opinions better and help to find solutions to possible problems (Berliner, 1990; Botha, 2009; Tulunay Ateş, 2016).

The Turkish Language Association (TLA, 2020) defines a metaphor as "a figure of speech in which a word is used in place of a different kind of object or action to suggest a likeness or analogy or as a word or a phrase used to mean something other than what it originally means" while Arslan & Bayrakçı (2006) defines it as a figure of speech used to describe a phenomenon or a concept with more common terms. Metaphors are powerful instruments that strengthen expression, enrich the language, and turn opinions into linguistic actions (Sezgin, Koşar, Koşar & Er, 2017; Thayer-Bacon, 2000; Yob, 2003). Metaphors make thoughts more vivid, clear, and intelligible (Çelikten, 2006). Therefore, metaphors draw a clear picture of facts, events, and situations in organizational research (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016) and help us had better understand the structure and functioning of organizational processes (Hamilton, 2016; Örücü, 2014). In recent years, metaphors have become popular instruments employed to analyze various organizational phenomena (Akan, Yalçın & Yıldırım, 2014; Akbaba Altun & Apaydın, 2013; Çırak Kurt, 2017; Çobanoğlu & Gökalp, 2015; Çocuk, Yokuş & Tanrıseven, 2015; Eroğlu & Özbek, 2018; Kalyoncu, 2012; Korkmaz & Çevik, 2018; Lala, Yazar & Çolak, 2017; Memişoğlu & Kaya, 2016; Memişoğlu & Yılmaz, 2019; Özdemir, 2018b; Saban, 2008; Tekin & Yılmaz, 2012; Yıldız & Ertürk, 2019). This study employed metaphors to determine prospective teachers' perceptions of "schools, teachers, and students."

Schools are the most important organization of education systems, and teachers are the most visible employees of schools, and students are the raison d'être of schools (Can, 2018). Students are individuals who are provided with opportunities to acquire learning outcomes in a certain period of time based on an education program organized according to education policies (Balcı, 2016). Özdemir and Erol (2015) argue that although teachers see students as raw stones with an insatiable desire for knowledge and ready to be fashioned into special jewelry, their potential can only be unlocked by attention, compassion, and affection. It can, therefore, be stated that teachers' views of students are important and that they play a key role in promoting positive behavior development in students (Thomson, 2015).

Teachers are the strategic and key elements of school, which is a social system (Bursalıoğlu, 2010a). They are primarily responsible for promoting the main objectives of a policy-based education system in general (Alım, Şahin & Meral, 2018; Turan, Yıldırım & Tıkman, 2016) and helping students acquire learning outcomes in particular (Akın Kösterelioğlu, 2018). The teaching profession is challenging in line with its responsibilities (Ishumi, 2013). Therefore, prospective teachers should be prepared for its challenges (Calderhead & Robson, 1991; Johnson et al., 2014).

Another concept discussed in this study is school, which is both an organization that hosts cooperative activities and interactive socialization (Sezgin, 2013) and a place that encourages students to acquire knowledge and develop skills and positive behaviors in line with the objectives and principles of the education system (Balcı, 2016). Schools are where planned educational activities can be implemented, monitored, and tested (Akın Kösterelioğlu, 2018). Metaphors for schools show that schools systematically prepare students for life and provide them with knowledge and culture and help them discover their potential (Özdemir & Erol, 2015). Teachers are primarily responsible for achieving those learning objectives (Yıldız, Akgün & Özdemir, 2017). It is, therefore, of paramount importance to identify prospective teachers' views of the school and the meanings they attribute to it for early detection and prevention of possible problems (Buchanan, 2015; Kara & Bozbayındır, 2019; Massengill-Shaw & Mahlios, 2008).

Significance of the Study

This study focused on student, teacher, and school as three main components of an education system. Rapid global developments warrant regular research on stakeholders' views of those three components. Holistic approaches to data allow us to control the effectiveness of the system and to make some guiding implications for educational policies (Akan & Yarım, 2019; Çelikten, 2006; Güçlü & Duran, 2017). Prospective teachers' perceptions of teachers give significant clues about their attitudes towards the teaching profession (Tannehill & MacPhail, 2014; Thomson, 2015; Yılmaz, Göçen & Yılmaz, 2013). Data can also be used to correct false knowledge concerning the profession. Prospective teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards their profession directly affect their relationships with their students, which is of paramount importance for teachers' careers and students' lives (Kasoutas & Malamitsa, 2009; Koç, 2014). Metaphors for schools allow us to understand prospective teachers' perceptions of educational institutions and their attitudes towards educational policies (Eren & Tekinarslan, 2013; Nalçacı & Bektaş, 2012; Pinnegar, Mangelson, Reed & Groves, 2011).

Research Objective

This study aimed to determine prospective teachers' metaphorical perceptions of "*students, teachers,* and *schools.*" To this end, the study sought answers to the following questions:

  a. What kind of metaphors do prospective teachers' have for "*students, teachers,* and *schools"*?

  b. Under what conceptual categories are prospective teachers' metaphors based on their justifications?

METHOD

Research Model

The aim of this qualitative study was to determine prospective teachers' metaphorical images of "*students, teachers,* and *schools*" qualitative research involves many conceptual designs. Data were collected using a qualitative data collection design based on metaphors (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). The methods of metaphor analysis are rhetorical criticism, elicitation, ideography, and drawing. In this study, we employed the elicitation method in which participants are asked to assign metaphors to their experiences. Later, the types of these metaphors are compared to understand how participants make sense of similar experiences (Redden, 2017).

Participants

The study sample consisted of 101 pedagogical formation students of Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University in the 2019-2020 academic year. Participants were recruited using convenience sampling.

Table 1 shows the participants' demographic characteristics.

Table 1. Demographics of participants

Variables		*f*	%
University	Public University	98	97.03
	Private University	3	02.97
Faculty	Distance Education	49	48.51
	Sciences/Arts/Arts and Sciences	42	41.59
	Economics and Administrative Sciences	1	00.99
	Theology	9	08.91
Age (years)	21-30	88	87.13
	31-40	12	11.88
	≥ 41	1	00.99
Type of Education	Formal	51	50.50
	Distance	50	49.50
	Total	101	100

Of participants, 97.03% had a bachelor's degree from a public university while 2.97% a had bachelor's degree from a private university; 48.51% graduated from the faculty of distance education, 41.59% from the faculty of sciences/arts/arts and sciences, 0.99% from the faculty of economics and administrative sciences, and 8.91% from the faculty of theology; 87.13% were 21-30 years of age, 11.88% 31-40 years of age, and 0.99% 41 years of age or older; 50.50% received formal education and 49.50% received distance education (Table 1).

Data Collection

Data were collected using a semi-structured metaphor form developed by the researchers (Patton, 2018). The form had two parts. The first part consisted of items on participants' demographic characteristics while the second part consisted of three semi-structured statements in the form of "*A student/teacher/school is like .... because...................."* used to determine participants' perceptions of "*students, teachers,* and *schools*.*"* Participants themselves wrote down the metaphors, which were used as the main data (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016).

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed in several stages (Saban, 2008);

i. Coding and extracting: First, the metaphors were arranged in alphabetical order, and a draft was drawn up to check to see whether participants expressed the metaphors clearly. Some of their statements were not metaphors, while some were not consistent with their justifications. Eighteen participants' statements regarding "*students*" were not metaphors while three participants did not express any opinion. Therefore, 21 participants' statements regarding "*students*" were excluded from the analysis. Thirteen participants' statements regarding "*teachers*" were not metaphors, while two participants did not express any opinion. Therefore, 15 participants' statements regarding "*teachers*" were excluded from the analysis. Fifteen participants'

statements regarding "schools" were not metaphors, while four participants did not express any opinion. Therefore, 19 participants' statements regarding "schools" were excluded from the analysis.

ii. Compiling a sample list of metaphors: The metaphors were arranged in alphabetical order again, and the data were revised for the second time. Then a sample list of metaphors was compiled to categorize the metaphors and to validate the data analysis process and participants' comments (Saban, 2009).

iii. Developing categories: Categories were developed for students, teachers, and schools based on participants' justifications. Studies in the literature can be used to develop categories (Merriam, 2013). Therefore, the literature was reviewed to find similar studies for category development.

iv. Validity and reliability: The two most commonly used criteria for credibility are validity and reliability (Saban, 2009). Participants' metaphors were thoroughly evaluated and categorized according to their common qualities. Afterward, experts were consulted to check to see whether the metaphors fully represented the categories and whether the themes accurately represented the metaphors. The metaphors and categories were revised based on expert feedback (n=2). Afterward, interrater reliability was calculated using the equation [Reliability=(number of agreements) / (number of agreements + number of disagreements) *100] suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994). The interrater reliability was 90%, 90.70%, and 81.70% for the concepts of "*student*" "*teacher*" and "*school*" respectively, indicating acceptable reliability. The experts analyzed the metaphors and categories together for the remaining sections and reached a consensus.

FINDINGS

This section addressed the participants' metaphorical perceptions of "*students, teachers,* and *schools*" and conceptual categories based on those metaphorical perceptions.

Table 2 shows the participants' metaphors for "*students.*"

Table 2. Participants' metaphors for "*students*"

Metaphor	*f*	Metaphor	*f*
1. Tabula rasa	5	26. A child who never grows up	1
2. Sapling	5	27. Flower	1
3. Child	4	28. Diamond	1
4. Tree	3	29. Flash memory	1
5. Soldier	3	30. Yield	1
6. Baby	3	31. Ant	1
7. Worker	3	32. Watermelon	1
8. Sheep	3	33. Recorder	1
9. Bee	2	34. Boat oar	1
10. Mirror	2	35. Book	1
11. Notebook	2	36. Slave	1
12. Dough	2	37. Minefield	1
13. Raw material	2	38. Log	1
14. Bucket	2	39. Honeycomb	1
15. Prison	2	40. Picture	1
16. Playdough	2	41. Leaf before the wind	1
17. Land	2	42. Politician	1
18. Soil	2	43. Sponge	1
19. Passenger	2	44. Nature	1
20. Clean slate	1	45. Seed	1
21. Empty bucket	1	46. Ball	1
22. Empty box	1	47. Tourist	1
23. Blank slate	1	48. Greenwood	1
24. Blank tape	1		
25. Empty jug	1	Total	80

Participants generated 48 different (80 in total) metaphors for "*students*" eighteen participants' statements regarding "*students*" were not metaphors while three participants did not express an opinion. Therefore, 21 participants' statements regarding "*students*" were not included in Table 2. The most common metaphors were *tabula rasa (f=5), sapling (f=5), child (f=4), tree (f=3), soldier (f=3), baby (f=3), worker (f=3),* and *sheep (f=3)* (Table 2).

Table 3 shows the conceptual categories for the participants' metaphors concerning "*students*" depending on their justifications, and literature review.

Table 3. Conceptual categories for participants' metaphors concerning "*students*"

Conceptual Categories	Metaphors	f	%
1. Students as individuals who are molded	*Tree, Mirror[2], A Tabula Rasa[2], Child, Diamond, Sapling[2], Dough, Yield, Raw Material[2], Boat Oar, Log, Playdough[2], Honeycomb, Picture, Land[2], Soil, Greenwood*	23	28.75
2. Students as information providers/receivers	*Bee, Baby, Clean Slate, A Tabula Rasa[2], Blank Slate, Blank Tape, Flower, Notebook[2], Flash Memory, Bucket[2], Sponge, Soil, Tourist*	16	20.00
3. Students as developing individuals	*Tree[2], Baby, Empty Box, A Tabula Rasa[2], Child, Sapling[3], Dough, Nature, Seed*	13	16.25
4. Students as obedient individuals	*Soldier[3], Worker[3], Sheep[3], Slave, Ball*	11	13.75
5. Students as unique individuals	*Empty Jug, Child Who Never Grows Up, Child[2], Watermelon, Recorder, Book, Minefield, Politician*	9	11.25
6. Students as inhibited individuals	*Baby, Imprisoned[2]*	3	3.75
7. Students as individuals who are on their way/looking for a way	*Leaf Before the Wind, Passenger[2]*	3	3.75
8. Students as selfless individuals	*Bee, Ant*	2	2.50
	Total	80	100

Participants' metaphors for "*students*" were grouped under eight conceptual categories; "*Students as individuals who are molded, Students as information providers/receivers, Students as developing individuals, Students as obedient individuals, Students as unique individuals, Students as inhibited individuals, Students as individuals who are on their way/looking for a way,* and *Students as selfless individuals*" (Table 3).

The conceptual category of *Students as individuals who are molded* consisted of 17 different metaphors (23 in total; 28.75%). The conceptual category of *Students as information providers/receivers* consisted of 13 different metaphors (16 in total; 20.00%). The conceptual category of *Students as developing individuals* consisted of nine different metaphors (13 in total; 16.25%). The conceptual category of *Students as obedient individuals* consisted of five different metaphors (11 in total; 13.75%). The conceptual category of *Students as unique individuals* consisted of eight different metaphors (9 in total; 11.25%). The conceptual category of *Students as inhibited individuals* consisted of two different metaphors (3 in total; 3.75%). The conceptual category of *Students as individuals who are on their way/looking for a way* consisted of two different metaphors (3 in total; 3.75%). The conceptual category of *Students as selfless individuals* consisted of two different metaphors (2.50%).

The following are some quotations from participants concerning the conceptual categories of "*Students as individuals who are molded, Students as information providers/receivers, Students as developing individuals, Students as obedient individuals, Students as unique individuals, Students as inhibited individuals, Students as individuals who are on their way/looking for a way,* and *Students as selfless individuals.*"

Conceptual category of students as individuals who are molded

S$_{47}$ "*A student is like a piece of land because <u>we can turn her either into a monster or an angel of goodness. Whether the outcome is good or bad depends on the environment</u>.*"

S$_{82}$ "*A student is like a mirror because <u>she is a reflection of her teacher's behaviors and attitudes</u>.*"

Conceptual category of students as information providers/receivers

S$_{21}$ "*A student is like a flash memory because <u>everyone tries to upload and teach something to her. Her family and school constantly try to teach her something, without asking whether she wants it or not</u>.*"

S$_{100}$ "*A student is like a sponge <u>because she interprets and records according to her own strategy all the information provided by her teacher.</u>*"

Conceptual category of students as developing individuals

S$_{28}$ "*A student is like a sapling because <u>she grows and bears fruit</u>.*"

S$_{96}$ "*A student is like a seed because <u>she grows and either becomes fruit or a huge plane tree, under the shade of which people can rest.</u>*"

Conceptual category of students as obedient individuals

S$_{11}$ "*A student is like a worker because <u>she has to do whatever she is told to do</u>.*"

S$_{74}$ "*A student is like a ball because <u>she goes wherever you push her</u>.*"

Conceptual category of students as unique individuals

S$_{24}$ "*A student is like a child who never grows up because <u>you never know when she is bored with the lesson or when she enjoys it.</u>*"

S$_{79}$ "*A student is like a minefield because <u>you never know what she might say and when she will say it. It can be a behavior or a question.</u>*"

Conceptual category of students as inhibited individuals

S$_7$ "*A student is like a prisoner because <u>everyone but her has a say about what she is supposed to learn and when she is supposed to learn it.</u>*"

S$_{45}$ "*A student is like a baby because <u>she is always under control</u>.*"

Conceptual category of students as individuals who are on their way/looking for a way

S$_2$ "*A student is like a passenger because <u>she goes through different ways of knowledge during this process</u>.*"

S$_{17}$ "*A student is like a leaf before the wind because <u>she does not know where to go.</u>*"

Conceptual category of Students as selfless individuals

S$_{49}$ "*A student is like an ant because <u>she always works and produces</u>.*"

S$_{59}$ "*A student is like an ant because <u>she studies, sometimes have to make her living and then gets a job</u>.*"

Table 4 shows the participants' metaphors for "*teachers.*"

Table 4. Participants' metaphors for "*teachers*"

Metaphor	*f*	Metaphor	*f*
1. Guide	10	26. Pal	1
2. Mother-father	8	27. Parent	1
3. Mother	5	28. A color of the rainbow	1
4. Light	5	29. Pioneer	1
5. Book	4	30. Talking book	1
6. Family	3	31. King/queen	1
7. Warden	3	32. Library	1
8. Sun	3	33. Labyrinth	1
9. Mirror	2	34. Carpenter	1
10. Shepherd	2	35. Model	1
11. Candle	2	36. Mentor	1
12. Boss	2	37. Painter	1
13. Artist	2	38. Foundation of the school	1
14. Water	2	39. Exemplary person	1
15. Master	2	40. Robot	1
16. Guide	2	41. Fighter	1
17. Family elder	1	42. Respectable elderly person	1
18. Light bulb	1	43. People you love	1
19. Encyclopedia	1	44. Driver	1
20. Friend	1	45. Life coach	1
21. Lion	1		
22. Cook	1		
23. Father	1		
24. Farmer	1		
25. Sea	1	Total	86

Participants generated 45 (86 in total) metaphors for "*teachers.*" Thirteen participants' statements regarding "*teachers*" were not metaphors, while two participants did not express any opinion. Therefore, 15 participants' statements regarding "*teachers*" were not included in Table 4. The most common metaphors were *guide (f=10), mother-father (f=8), mother (f=5), light (f=5), book (f=4), family (f=3), warden (f=3)*, and *sun (f=3)* (Table 4).

Table 5 shows the conceptual categories for the participants' metaphors concerning "*teachers*" depending on their justifications and literature review.

Table 5. Conceptual categories for participants' metaphors concerning "*teachers*"

Conceptual Categories	Metaphors	*f*	*%*
1. Teachers as guides	*Mother, Mirror, Pal, Sun, Light, Pioneer, Mentor Guide(10), Driver, Life coach, Guide(3)*	21	24.42
2. Teachers as sources and transmitters of knowledge	*Light bulb, Mother-father, Encyclopedia, Mirror, Sea, Sun, Light(2), Book(3), Talking book, Library, Candle, Respectable elderly person, Water(2), Master*	18	20.93
3. Teachers as sources of love and trust	*Family(2), Family elder, Mother, Mother-father(4), Shepherd, Parent, People you love*	11	12.79
4. Teachers as sources of authority	*Lion, Shepherd, Warden(3), King/queen, Boss(2), Robot, Fighter*	10	11.63
5. Teachers as role models	*Mother-father, Friend, Father, A color of the rainbow, Light, Labyrinth, Model, Exemplary person*	8	9.30
6. Teachers as molders	*Cook, Farmer, Carpenter, Painter, Foundation of the school, Artist, Master*	7	8.14

Conceptual Categories	Metaphors	f	%
7. Teachers as self-sacrificing individuals	*Family, Mother[3], Mother-father, Candle*	6	6.98
8. Teachers as sources of improvement	*Mother-father, Sun, Light, Book, Artist*	5	5.81
	Total	86	100

Participants' metaphors for "*teachers*" were grouped under eight conceptual categories; "*Teachers as guides, Teachers as sources and transmitters of knowledge, Teachers as sources of love and trust, Teachers as sources of authority, Teachers as role models, Teachers as molders, Teachers as self-sacrificing individuals,* and *Teachers as sources of improvement*" (Table 5).

The conceptual category of *Teachers as guides* consisted of 11 different metaphors (21 in total; 24.42%). The conceptual category of *Teachers as sources and transmitters of knowledge* consisted of 14 different metaphors (18 in total; 20.93%). The conceptual category of *Teachers as sources of love and trust* consisted of seven different metaphors (11 in total; 12.79%). The conceptual category of *Teachers as sources of authority* consisted of seven different metaphors (10 in total; 11.63%). The conceptual category of *Teachers as role models* consisted of eight different metaphors (9.30%). The conceptual category of *Teachers as molders* consisted of seven different metaphors (8.14%). The conceptual category of *Teachers as self-sacrificing individuals* consisted of five different metaphors (6 in total; 6.98%). The conceptual category of *Teachers as sources of improvement* consisted of five different metaphors (5.81%).

The following are some quotations from participants concerning the conceptual categories of "*Teachers as guides, Teachers as sources and transmitters of knowledge, Teachers as sources of love and trust, Teachers as sources of authority, Teachers as role models, Teachers as molders, Teachers as self-sacrificing individuals,* and *Teachers as sources of improvement*."

Conceptual category of teachers as guides

S_2 "*A teacher is like a mentor because <u>she guides us to reach our goals</u>.*"

S_{46} "*A teacher is like a guide because <u>she guides students and sheds light on them and is one of the easiest ways to reach the truth</u>.*"

Conceptual category of teachers as sources and transmitters of knowledge

S_{30} "*A teacher is like an encyclopedia because <u>you can look it up and learn things from it, and it is full of information</u>.*"

S_{92} "*A teacher is like a book because <u>she enlightens her students with her experience and knowledge</u>.*"

Conceptual category of teachers as sources of love and trust

S_{40} "*A teacher is like a parent because <u>you love her even when she is mad at you because you know that she is always there for you</u>.*"

S_{91} "*A teacher is like a mother-father because <u>she gives her students all her love and knowledge</u>.*"

Conceptual category of teachers as sources of authority

S_6 "*A teacher is like a warden because <u>she applies the rules and makes sure that students abide by them</u>.*"

S_{16} "*A teacher is like a king/queen because <u>she is always right and always has the last say</u>.*"

Conceptual category of teachers as role models

S_{52} "*A teacher is like an exemplary person because <u>she always improves herself and has an influence on her students.</u>*"

S_{71} "*A teacher is like light because <u>first the mother and then she sheds light on you. Teachers you love become very dear to you. You would never forget them</u>.*"

Conceptual category of teachers as molders

S_{25} "*A teacher is like an artist because <u>she shapes what she has in the way she wants. She sometimes creates works of art and sometimes messes them up.</u>*"

S_{80} "*A teacher is like a farmer because <u>she cares for her students, who are seeds, and gives them medicine. She tries to correct her students' flaws, just like pulling out weeds under a tree</u>.*"

Conceptual category of teachers as self-sacrificing individuals

S_{26} "*A teacher is like a mother because <u>she helps us in any way from childhood to adulthood</u>.*"

S_{93} "*A teacher is like a candle because <u>she keeps enlightening you as she melts</u>.*"

Conceptual category of teachers as sources of improvement

S_{35} "*A teacher is like a book because <u>the more you read it, the more it improves you. If you do not want to improve, then it gets dusty and, you do nothing but check its cover</u>.*"

S_{98} "*A teacher is like light because <u>she prepares her students for life and informs them about everything</u>.*"

Table 6 shows the participants' metaphors for "*schools*."

Table 6. Participants' metaphors for "*schools*"

Metaphor	f	Metaphor	f
1. Family/Home	24	23. Healthy food	1
2. Life	7	24. Rainbow	1
3. Factory	3	25. Zoo	1
4. Book	3	26. Light	1
5. Mother	2	27. Bookie	1
6. Garden	2	28. Work	1
7. Prison	2	29. Workplace	1
8. Tea	2	30. Cage	1
9. Library	2	31. Camping site	1
10. Water	2	32. Closed box	1
11. Soil	2	33. Kitchen	1
12. Tree	1	34. Breath	1
13. Barn	1	35. Ocean	1
14. A boat in a stream	1	36. Forest	1
15. Car	1	37. Honeycomb	1
16. Mirror	1	38. Flowerpot	1
17. Hearth of knowledge	1	39. Movie theater	1
18. Computer	1	40. Land	1
19. Steering wheel	1	41. Peacock	1
20. Nature	1	42. Burden	1
21. Literature	1		1
22. Entertainment venue	1		
		Total	82

Participants generated 42 (82 in total) metaphors for "*schools.*" Fifteen participants' statements regarding "*schools*" were not metaphors, while four participants did not express any opinion. Therefore, nineteen participants' statements regarding "*schools*" were not included in Table 6. The most common metaphors were *family/home (f=24), life (f=7), factory (f=3),* and *book (f=3)*. Table 7 shows the conceptual categories for the participants' metaphors concerning "*schools*" based on their justifications, and literature review.

Table 7. Conceptual categories for the participants' metaphors concerning "*school*"

Conceptual Categories	Metaphors	f	%
1. Schools as sources of information	*Family/Home[3], Hearth of knowledge, Computer, Nature, Light, Book[3], Library[2], Kitchen, Ocean, Movie Theater, Life*	16	19,.1
2. Schools as part of life	*Barn, Family/Home[6], Flowerpot, Life[4]*	12	14.63
3. Schools as places of change, development, and maturation	*Family/Home[4], Mother, Tea[2], Water, Peacock, Soil[2]*	11	13.41
4. Schools as places of trust and happiness	*Family/Home[8], Entertainment Venue*	9	10.98
5. Schools as places of inclusion	*Family/Home, Garden[2], Rainbow, Forest, Honeycomb*	6	7.32
6. Schools as places of inhibition	*Prison [2], Factory, Cage, Camping Site*	5	6.10
7. Schools as places of molding	*Tree, Mother, Mirror, Factory, Land*	5	6.10
8. Schools as places of guiding and leading	*A Boat In A Stream, Car, Steering Wheel, Factory, Life*	5	6.10
9. Schools as indispensable places	*Work, Workplace, Breath, Health Food, Water*	5	6.10
10. Schools as complex places	*Literature, Zoo, Bookie, Life*	4	4.88
11. Schools as places of socialization	*Closed Box, Family/Home[2]*	3	3.66
12. Schools as places that have lost their purpose	*Burden*	1	1.21
	Total	82	100

Participants' metaphors for "*schools*" were grouped under 12 conceptual categories; "*Schools as sources of information, Schools as part of life, Schools as places of change, development, and maturation, Schools as places of trust and happiness, Schools as places of inclusion, Schools as places of inhibition, Schools as places of molding, Schools as places of guiding and leading, Schools as indispensable places, Schools as complex places, Schools as places of socialization,* and *Schools as places that have lost their purpose*" (Table 7).

The conceptual category of *Schools as sources of information* consisted of 11 different metaphors (16 in total; 19.51%). The conceptual category of *Schools as part of life* consisted of four different metaphors (12 in total; 14.63%). The conceptual category of *Schools as places of change, development, and maturation* consisted of five different metaphors (11 in total; 13.41%). The conceptual category of *Schools as places of trust and happiness* consisted of two different metaphors (9 in total; 10.98%). The conceptual category of *Schools as places of inclusion* consisted of four different metaphors (6 in total; 7.32%). The conceptual category of *Schools as places of inhibition* consisted of four different metaphors (5 in total; 6.10%). The conceptual category of *Schools as places of molding* consisted of five different metaphors (6.10%). The conceptual category of *Schools as places of guiding and leading* consisted of five different metaphors (6.10%). The conceptual category of *Schools as indispensable places* consisted

of five different metaphors (6.10%). The conceptual category of *Schools as complex places* consisted of four different metaphors (4.88%). The conceptual category of *Schools as places of socialization* consisted of two different metaphors (3 in total; 3.66%). The conceptual category of *Schools as places that have lost their purpose* consisted of one metaphor (1.21%).

The following are some quotations from participants concerning the conceptual categories of "*Schools as sources of information, Schools as part of life, Schools as places of change, development, and maturation, Schools as places of trust and happiness, Schools as places of inclusion, Schools as places of inhibition, Schools as places of molding, Schools as places of guiding and leading, Schools as indispensable places, Schools as complex places, Schools as places of socialization,* and *Schools as places that have lost their purpose.*"

Conceptual category of schools as sources of information

S$_8$ "*A school is like nature because <u>it gives everything that it has just as nature does</u>.*"

S$_{26}$ "*A school is like a library because <u>it broadens our horizons and teaches us new things</u>.*"

Conceptual category of schools as part of life

S$_{60}$ "*A school is like a family because <u>we spend most of our time at home with our family, and students spend most of their time at school and learn everything there, like in a family environment</u>.*"

S$_{68}$ "*A school is like home because <u>students spend most of their time and learn about brotherhood, love, and many other things there.</u>*"

Conceptual category of schools as places of change, development, and maturation

S$_{22}$ "*A school is like water because <u>it makes students blossom</u>.*"

S$_{82}$ "*A school is a soil because <u>education grows students and makes them useful just like soil</u>.*"

Conceptual category of schools as places of trust and happiness

S$_{41}$ "*A school is like home because <u>we learn everything at school and spend most of our time there. The school feels as warm as home.</u>*"

S$_{73}$ "*A school is like an entertainment venue; <u>I have a lot of fun there because I love entertainment venues</u>.*"

Conceptual category of schools as places of inclusion

S$_{29}$ "*A school is like a rainbow because <u>it is made up of colors from all over Turkey."</u>*

S$_{37}$ "*A school is like a garden because <u>students have different colors and personalities just like the flowers in a garden</u>.*"

Conceptual category of schools as places of inhibition

S$_7$ "*A school is like a prison because <u>it is just like prison life. The 10-minute recess is like going out to the prison yard</u>.*"

S$_{16}$ "*A school is like a camping site because <u>we have no freedom at school</u>.*"

Conceptual category of schools as places of molding

S$_{31}$ "*A school is like a piece of land because <u>you reap what you plant."</u>*

S$_{76}$ "*A school is like a mirror because <u>it prepares students for society and helps them fit into society. It reflects society</u>.*"

Conceptual category of schools as places of guiding and leading

S$_3$ "*A school is like a steering wheel because <u>it gives students a direction</u>.*"

S$_{35}$ "*A school is like a car because <u>you can go anywhere if you know how to drive but you may have an accident if you do not know how to drive.</u>*"

Conceptual category of schools as indispensable places

S$_9$ "*A school is like water because <u>it is indispensable for life</u>.*"

S$_{12}$ "*A school is like breathing because <u>every moment there keeps you alive.</u>*

Conceptual category of schools as complex places

S$_{39}$ "*A school is like literature because <u>sometimes you run into a favorite poet, and sometimes a boring novel</u>.*"

S$_{90}$ "*A school is like life because <u>you never know what to learn and when to learn it and what to expect</u>.*"

Conceptual category of schools as places of socialization

S$_{50}$ "*A school is like a closed box because <u>when you open it, it spreads you around</u>.*"

S$_{81}$ "*A school is like a family because <u>we spend most of our time at school and build relationships with our friends and teachers and share our troubles and memories with them</u>.*"

Conceptual category of schools as places that have lost their purpose

S$_{25}$ "*A school is like a burden because <u>I believe that it gives us nothing and does nothing but numb our minds</u>.*"

RESULTS, DISCUSSION and SUGGESTIONS

Metaphors can be used both to explain very complex facts and to improve teachers' feelings and thoughts (Ocak & Gündüz, 2006; Cerit, 2006; Rosaen & Florio-Ruane, 2008). Metaphors are a convenient instrument to explore how prospective teachers with different professional knowledge perceive things and to identify their classroom roles and their beliefs and assumptions concerning students and education (Ben-Peretz, Mendelson & Kron, 2003; Hamilton, 2016). This study determined prospective teachers' metaphors for *students*, *teachers*, and *schools*. Their mental images point to a wide spectrum of metaphors with different characteristics.

Students are the *raison d'etre* of education systems, and hence, schools (Can, 2018), and meanings attributed to students determine the future of society and are the guarantee of future generations (Sezgin et al., 2017). Our participants generated 48 different (80 in total) metaphors for "*students*" which were grouped under eight conceptual categories; *"Students as individuals who are molded, Students as information providers/receivers, Students as developing individuals, Students as obedient individuals, Students as unique individuals, Students as inhibited individuals, Students as individuals who are on their way/looking for a way,* and *Students as selfless individuals."* Students are individuals who achieve learning outcomes in educational programs in a certain period (Balcı, 2016). Our participants perceived students as *"information providers/receivers"* and *"individuals who are molded"* which is consistent with the literature (Aydın & Pehlivan, 2010; Çırak, 2014; Çırak Kurt & Yıldırım, 2019; Özdemir & Erol, 2015). A significant feature of education systems is the progress made by students. Contemporary education systems are concentrated on the development of students (Özdemir, 2018a), who are defined as developing individuals (Neyişci & Özdiyar, 2019; Saban, 2009; Sezgin et al., 2017). Our participants used such metaphors as soldier, worker, sheep, and slave to describe students as *obedient individuals* but also perceived them as *unique individuals*, which has been reported by previous studies as well (Neyişci & Özdiyar, 2019; Saban, 2009; Sezgin et al., 2017). Teachers who focus on exploring students' potential should possess a special skill to be able to protect their students' originality and personal rights and to make sure that they cooperate with their teachers (TEDMEM, 2014). On the one hand, our participants described students as unique individuals, but, on the other hand, used such metaphors as prisoners and babies to describe them as *inhibited individuals*, which has been reported by previous studies (Aydın & Pehlivan, 2010; Çırak, 2014; Çırak Kurt & Yıldırım, 2019; Neyişci & Özdiyar, 2019). Aydın (2015) reported that students felt inhibited at school. Under the category of *Students as individuals who are on their way/looking for a way*, participants stated that students needed a guide (Cemaloğlu, Sezgin, Şahin & Sönmez, 2017; Çırak, 2014) and were *selfless individuals* (Aydın & Pehlivan, 2010).

Teachers are the initiators, developers, and practitioners of education (Bursalıoğlu, 2010a; Cüceloğlu & Erdoğan, 2018) who determine the functioning and quality of the education system (TEDMEM, 2014). Our participants generated 45 (86 in total) metaphors for "*teachers*" which were grouped under eight conceptual categories; *"Teachers as guides, Teachers as sources and transmitters of knowledge, Teachers as sources of love and trust, Teachers as sources of authority, Teachers as role models, Teachers as molders, Teachers as self-sacrificing individuals,* and *Teachers as sources of improvement."* Effective teaching requires guidance skills (McBer, 2000), which is emphasized by numerous educational studies (Alım et al., 2018; Aydın & Pehlivan, 2010; Cerit, 2008; Çevik Kılıç, 2016; Egüz & Öntaş, 2018; Ertürk, 2017; Işık, 2014; Kart, 2016; Kıral, 2015; Koç, 2014; Neyişci & Özdiyar, 2019; Ocak & Gündüz, 2006; Özdemir, 2018b; Saban, 2004; Saban, Koçbeker & Saban, 2006; Sarıkaya, 2018; Tulunay Ateş, 2016; Turan et al., 2016; Turhan & Yaraş, 2013; Yılmaz et al., 2013). Teachers are regarded as experts who are capable of guiding students (Can, 2018). In this context, the teaching profession is at the junction of being a powerful tool for self-discovery and self-realization and being responsible for guiding and determining the future of society (TEDMEM, 2014). Teachers who can guide their students enable them to develop skills, resulting in academic performance (Bursalıoğlu, 2010a). Another category with high level of frequency based on participants' metaphors was "*teachers as sources and transmitters of knowledge*" (Aydın & Pehlivan, 2010; Cemaloğlu et al., 2017; Cerit, 2008; Çevik Kılıç, 2016; De Guerrero & Villamil, 2002; Egüz & Öntaş 2018; Ertürk, 2017; Işık, 2014; Kart, 2016; Kıral, 2015; Koç, 2014; Neyişci & Özdiyar, 2019; Ocak & Gündüz, 2006; Ogurlu, Öpengin & Hızlı, 2015; Özdemir, 2018b; Özdemir & Erol, 2015; Saban, 2004; Saban et al., 2006; Sarıkaya, 2018; Tulunay Ateş , 2016; Turan et al., 2016; Turhan & Yaraş, 2013; Yılmaz et al., 2013). This perception is of paramount importance for effective education because teachers are responsible for transmitting knowledge (Bursalıoğlu, 2010a), and students' performance depends on teachers' occupational competence. The fact that teachers perceive themselves primarily as educators affects the way they interact with students (Brophy, 1985 cited in Karadağ & Dulay, 2017). Effective teaching also requires teachers to be *sources of love and trust* (McBer, 2000), which has also been reported by studies on teachers' metaphorical perceptions (Egüz & Öntaş, 2018; Ertürk, 2017; Kart, 2016; Kıral, 2015; Kuyumcu & Özsarı, 2016; Ogurlu et al., 2015; Özgenel & Gökçe, 2019; Tulunay Ateş, 2016; Turhan & Yaraş, 2013). Love, which is as a form of human existence that reproduces itself, and trust, which is a natural product of that existence (Aydın, 2017) are two main values (Cüceloğlu & Erdoğan, 2018) and images of teachers in the eyes of society (Can, 2018). Teachers should build positive relationships with students to achieve effective classroom management (Karadağ & Dulay, 2017) because human relationships mean nothing unless there is love and trust (Cüceloğlu & Erdoğan, 2018). Teachers build love and trust, but sometimes experience role conflict, especially when it comes to discipline (Bursalıoğlu, 2010a). Therefore, most teachers build *"distant relationships with their students where the boundaries of the two sides are clear"* (Karadağ & Dulay, 2017), which may be due to the socialization function of the school (Aydın, 2015). Our participants perceived teachers as "*sources of authority,*" which has been reported by previous studies (Aydın & Pehlivan, 2010; Işık, 2014; Ogurlu et al., 2015; Saban et al., 2006). However, teachers are also considered by students to be the representatives of the values of the modern and contemporary world (Aydın, 2017). It should be kept in mind that students identify with teachers who care and support them (TEDMEM, 2014). Teachers' values and views of life are

reflected in their behaviors, which affect students because they are role models for them (Cüceloğlu & Erdoğan, 2018). Research also shows that teachers are considered "*role models*" (Aydın & Pehlivan, 2010; Cemaloğlu et al., 2017; Ocak & Gündüz, 2006; Özdemir, 2018b; Yılmaz et al., 2013). According to McBer's model (2000), one of the characteristics of effective teachers is that they can shape their students' learning dispositions and attitudes for certain objectives, which is perceived as positive (Alım et al., 2018; Aydın & Pehlivan, 2010; Cemaloğlu et al., 2017; Çevik Kılıç, 2016; Egüz & Öntaş, 2018; Ertürk, 2017; Işık, 2014; Ocak & Gündüz, 2006; Özdemir, 2018b; Özdemir & Erol, 2015; Saban, 2004; Saban et al., 2006; Tulunay Ateş, 2016; Turan et al., 2016; Yılmaz et al., 2013). Also, teachers make sacrifices beyond all reasonable expectations (Cüceloğlu & Erdoğan, 2018). Research shows that teachers are regarded as "*self-sacrificing individuals*" (Işık, 2014; Kart, 2016; Koç, 2014; Neyişci & Özdiyar, 2019; Ocak & Gündüz, 2006; Özdemir, 2018b; Özdemir & Erol, 2015; Sarıkaya, 2018). Teachers are committed to making sure that their students become the best version of themselves. The only thing they expect in return is that their students become learned and happy people (Cüceloğlu & Erdoğan, 2018). Another category based on our participants' metaphors was "*teachers as sources of improvement,*" which emphasized that teachers are responsible for monitoring their students' development and supporting them throughout that process (Aydın, 2017). Metaphorical studies on students' perceptions of their teachers also confirm this result (Koç, 2014; Neyişci & Özdiyar, 2019; Ocak & Gündüz, 2006; Saban, 2004; Saban et al., 2006; Sarıkaya, 2018).

Institutions have specific goals to meet the needs of society and have organizational structures to achieve those goals. Schools are one of those institutions. School is an integrated model that encodes collective memory, reflects life, and designs the future (TEDMEM, 2014). Our participants generated 42 (82 in total) metaphors for "*schools*" under 12 categories; "*Schools as sources of information, Schools as part of life, Schools as places of change, development, and maturation, Schools as places of trust and happiness, Schools as places of inclusion, Schools as places of inhibition, Schools as places of molding, Schools as places of guiding and leading, Schools as indispensable places, Schools as complex places, Schools as places of socialization,* and *Schools as places that have lost their purpose.*" Today, schools are widely regarded as places where learning takes place (Taşgın, 2018) and as "*sources of information*" (Bülbül & Toker Gökçe, 2015; Cemaloğlu et al., 2017; Doğan, 2014; Gök, 2017; Kara & Bozbayındır, 2019; Nalçacı & Bektaş, 2012; Ogurlu et al., 2015; Özdemir & Akkaya, 2013; Özdemir & Erol, 2015; Saban, 2008; Tulunay Ateş, 2016; Yüksel & Hayırsever, 2019). Schools are also seen as "*part of life*" where students' physical, social, and psychological needs are met (Akan & Yarım, 2019; Cemaloğlu et al., 2017; Doğan, 2014; Gök, 2017; Kara & Bozbayındır, 2019; Neyişci & Özdiyar, 2019; Özdemir & Orhan, 2019), which may be mainly because it is believed that schools are the institutions where social norms are passed down to the next generation (Dewey, 2019). The world is changing at a rapid pace, driven by science and technology. Therefore, education systems, and thus, schools, should be reformed to enable students to acquire new knowledge and to help them develop 21st-century skills based on their interests and needs (Bursalıoğlu, 2010a). Today, modern schools focus both on individual and social development (Özdemir, 2018a), and therefore, are defined as "*places of change, development, and maturation*" (Bülbül & Toker Gökçe, 2015; Cemaloğlu et al., 2017; Doğan, 2014; Gök, 2017; Nalçacı & Bektaş, 2012; Neyişci & Özdiyar, 2019; Saban, 2008; Tulunay Ateş, 2016; Yüksel & Hayırsever, 2019) because successful physical development involves both instructional development (*reading and writing skills, etc.*) and maturation (Dewey, 2019). Schools perceived as places of change, development, and maturation promote human interaction, and students who feel safe and happy have better academic performance. Research also shows that schools are regarded as "*places of change, development, and maturation*" (Akan & Yarım, 2019; Demirel, 2016; Gök, 2017; Kara & Bozbayındır, 2019; Nalçacı & Bektaş, 2012; Özdemir & Akkaya, 2013; Özdemir & Erol, 2015; Tulunay Ateş, 2016; Yüksel & Hayırsever, 2019). Students have different characters, lifestyles, behaviors, and backgrounds (Can, 2018), which are incorporated by schools in common cultural life (Sezgin, 2013). This enables students to perceive "*schools as places of inclusion*" (Demirel, 2016; Kara & Bozbayındır, 2019). Education is a multidimensional activity, and therefore, should be modeled in such a way that it meets the needs of students of all backgrounds, abilities, and interests (Bursalıoğlu, 2010b). Some of our participants perceived "*schools as places of inhibition*". Teachers avoid associating schools with a restrictive metaphor like prison because it would damage their self-esteem and confidence. However, students think of schools as prisons because they often use that metaphor when talking about their schools (Aydın, 2015), which has been reported by other studies as well (Cemaloğlu et al., 2017; Özdemir & Akkaya, 2013; Özdemir & Orhan, 2019; Saban, 2008; Yüksel & Hayırsever, 2019). Our participants also defined "*schools as places of molding*" (Bülbül & Toker Gökçe, 2015; Cemaloğlu et al., 2017; Nalçacı & Bektaş, 2012; Ogurlu et al., 2015; Özdemir & Akkaya, 2013; Saban, 2008). The most important feature of schools is that their raw material is human (Bursalıoğlu, 2010a). Schools work on students as raw materials and provide them with knowledge and help them develop skills and positive attitudes (Çiçek Sağlam, 2019). Our participants also perceived "*schools as places of guiding and leading,*" which is supported by previous studies (Nalçacı & Bektaş, 2012; Özdemir & Erol, 2015; Saban, 2008; Tulunay Ateş, 2016). Schools are primarily responsible for guiding and leading (Çiçek Sağlam, 2019). They are still regarded as the answer to social problems (Aydın, 2015) and as "*indispensable places*" (Nalçacı & Bektaş, 2012; Yüksel & Hayırsever, 2019). Schools, which are perceived as indispensable, are human-oriented, and therefore, very complex (Bursalıoğlu, 2010b). Research also shows that schools are considered to be "*complex places*" (Cemaloğlu et al., 2017; Ogurlu et al., 2015; Özdemir & Akkaya, 2013). Some of our participants also considered schools to be "*complex places*". Schools are responsible for turning students into individuals not only with academic degrees but also with social and cultural values (Schreglmann, 2019) and for promoting student socialization (Bursalıoğlu, 2010a). Therefore, they are also seen as "*places of socialization*" (Doğan, 2014; Gök, 2017; Nalçacı & Bektaş, 2012; Neyişci & Özdiyar, 2019; Ogurlu et al., 2015; Özdemir & Akkaya, 2013). Although schools are perceived by students as the places of socialization, they lose reputation and credibility when they fail in effective teaching. Such schools are regarded as "*places that have lost their purpose*" (Doğan, 2014; Özdemir & Akkaya, 2013).

This study determined prospective teachers' mental images of *"students, teachers,* and *schools"* through metaphors. Metaphors are very powerful instruments that can be used to determine mental images.

The following are suggestions based on the results:

i.   *Prospective teachers' metaphoric perceptions of students, teachers, and school should be used to develop better teacher training policies.*

ii.   *Possible causes of negative metaphors should be addressed to reform education policies.*

iii.   *Future studies should use different research methods and recruit larger groups of participants from different cities to analyze the concepts of student, teacher, and school.*

iv.   *Future studies should investigate prospective teachers' metaphorical perceptions of different concepts (school principals, education inspectors, etc.).*

Statements of publication ethics

We hereby declare that the study has not unethical issues and that research and publication ethics have been observed carefully.

Researchers' contribution rate

The study was conducted and reported with equal collaboration of the researchers.

Ethics Committee Approval Information

Batman University Ethics Committee;

Date of ethics committee decision= 07/05/2020

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