



Research Article

Investigation of the relationship between professional commitment levels of classroom teachers and career satisfaction

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Abstract

In this study, the relationship between classroom teachers' professional commitment and career satisfaction was analysed. The research was conducted using relational survey model. The data were obtained with career satisfaction scale, professional commitment scale and information form for classroom teachers. The research was limited to the 2022-2023 academic year. The sample of the study is 290 classroom teachers working in public schools in different cities of Turkey. The data were analysed using ANOVA, t-test, correlation and regression tests. According to the results of the analyses, it was seen that there was a significant difference in the professional commitment of classroom teachers in terms of gender, years of service, place of work and educational status variables. It was concluded that career satisfaction of classroom teachers did not show a significant difference in terms of gender, years of service and place of work variables, but showed a significant difference in terms of educational status variable. It was found that there was a moderate, positive and significant relationship between professional commitment and career satisfaction of classroom teachers. According to the results of the regression analysis, it was determined that approximately 22% of the change in career satisfaction was explained by professional commitment. The findings obtained in the study were discussed and some suggestions were made on the subject.

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Introduction

It is very important for individuals to have the motivation to internalise the goals of the institutions they work for and to ensure the continuity of this situation. As a matter of fact, the communication that teachers who are active in the field of education establish with their colleagues and students in schools, which is their workplace, greatly affects their attitudes and behaviours towards school. In this context, it is predicted that teachers' professional commitment and success may change depending on the situations developing in the school environment.

The contributions of classroom teachers, who assume the role of parents in primary schools where individuals attend after pre-school education, to laying the foundations of the educational process, strengthening emotional relationships in students and starting social associations are undeniable. Classroom teachers establish stronger bonds with students than branch teachers and since they work with young age groups, the responsibilities of classroom teachers are even greater. This situation leads to an increase in expectations from classroom teachers. Expectations

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from teachers may vary according to the region where the teacher serves, the structure and culture of the society (Çelikten, Şanal & Yeni, 2005). Classroom teachers need to be successful in order to fulfil these expectations. Success is possible with the positive attitudes and behaviours of all stakeholders in the school as a whole.

One of the important factors affecting the success of classroom teachers in schools is their commitment to their profession. Professional commitment is defined as an emotional connection with one's profession and doing one's job with love (Güney, 2012). When the concept of professional commitment is considered in terms of teaching profession, it can be explained as the performance of teachers in order to increase their competences in their own fields based on their attitudes towards their profession. Considering the level at which classroom teachers work in terms of their professional commitment, it is expected that teachers will continue to work regularly and their performance increases will develop positively since it is a continuous occupational group. However, the negativities experienced by teachers while continuing their profession may affect their professional commitment, thus their performance at school and their professional development.

As in other professional groups, it is aimed to increase performance by increasing the desire to succeed in the teaching profession. Teachers set goals in order to be the best in their field in education. The progress of teachers in line with these goals reveals the importance of the concept of career. The concept of career has been frequently used in business life in recent years and it is expressed as the work that an individual has done in any field throughout his/her life and progressing in that field of work and gaining experience and mastery (Kitapçı & Sezen, 2002; Koca, 2010). Teachers, who endeavour to take responsibility to realise their goals in order to make progress in their field, set career goals in order to have a higher status and prestige, to increase their current income, to take advantage of the opportunities they will encounter, to be rewarded as successful in their field and to raise their living standards. It is stated that career satisfaction, which is defined as the satisfaction perceived by employees regarding the degree of achievement of their targeted career, also includes positive feelings towards the profession (Shawer & Alkahtani, 2012). Career satisfaction is related to some criteria such as career, salary, promotion and development opportunities in individuals' professional life and includes personalised internal and external perceptions of individuals (Greenhaus et al., 1990; Koçoğlu, 2012). In other words, career satisfaction is the evaluation of an individual's experiences accumulated in his/her career from past to present (Abele et al., 2011). Career satisfaction of employees, which is the subject of many studies, is an important factor that is reflected on the behaviours of individuals in their working lives in general terms. In the literature, there are studies showing that career satisfaction directly affects employees' turnover intention and burnout (Shanafelt et al., 2009; Gerçek, Elmas-Atay, & Dündar, 2015). Considering the results of this research, it is understood that the increase in career satisfaction positively supports work attitude in terms of individuals and professional associations.

The fact that the jobs of the employees are suitable for their goals and objectives increases their career satisfaction levels, while the fact that they are not suitable decreases their career satisfaction levels (Hsu, Chen, Jiang & Klein, 2003). At the same time, it is stated that individuals who are happier and motivated in their jobs and who show higher performance have higher career satisfaction (Peluchette, 1993). Based on these results, teachers' career satisfaction can be associated with their performances at school, their motivation status, and their professional well-being. In this context, teachers are expected to make efforts to achieve professional career success, which is the result of the concept of career satisfaction, which is believed to increase professional quality and contribute to personal development.

As in other institutions operating on the basis of human relations, classroom teachers adopt primary schools, the institution where they work, over time and create a sense of commitment to this institution. It is thought that teachers with a high level of professional commitment will be much more efficient in their work. Therefore, this commitment will bring success and progress. Classroom teachers' progress in their field and career satisfaction appear as a result of this commitment. From this point of view, the relationship between classroom teachers' professional commitment and career satisfaction was analysed in this study. In the literature, it has been observed that the studies in which professional commitment and career satisfaction variables are handled together are insufficient. For this reason, it is thought that this study can contribute to the literature in terms of suggestions for improving professional

commitment and career satisfaction by revealing the perceptions of classroom teachers regarding the variables examined and the relationships between these variables.

Purpose of the Study

The aim of the study is to examine the relationship between professional commitment levels of classroom teachers and career satisfaction. In line with this purpose, answers to the following questions were sought:

Classroom teachers;

- What is their level of professional commitment and career satisfaction?
- Do their professional commitment and career satisfaction differ significantly in terms of gender, years of service, educational level and place of duty variables?
- Is there a significant relationship between their professional commitment and career satisfaction?
- Does their professional commitment significantly predict their career satisfaction?

Method

Research Model

Survey models are a type of research that aims to describe a situation that has existed from the past and still exists as it is. In the relational survey model, the object, event or individual that is the subject of the research is tried to be expressed in its own conditions and as it is. In this model, it is aimed to determine whether there is a change between two or more variables and if there is a change, to determine its degree (Karasar, 2005).

Sampling

The population of the study is classroom teachers working in primary schools in different provinces of Turkey in the 2022-2023 academic year. In order to collect data, 312 volunteer classroom teachers were reached through Google Form. However, in order to ensure the normality value, the data of 22 participants with extreme values were deleted. The remaining 290 data that met the normality value constituted the sample of the study. The demographic characteristics of the classroom teachers participating in the study are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of classroom teachers

Variables	Participant	f	%
Gender	Female	196	67.6
	Male	94	32.4
Age	20-25	17	5.9
	26-30	33	11.4
	31-35	58	20.0
	36-40	65	22.4
	41-45	51	17.6
	46-50	28	9.7
	51 years and over	38	13.1
Education Status	Undergraduate	210	72.4
	Postgraduate	80	27.6
Place of Duty	Province	162	55.9
	District	87	30.0
	Village	41	14.1
Year of Operation	1-5 year	37	12.8
	6-10 year	35	12.1
	11-15 year	72	24.8
	16-20 year	60	20.7
	21-25 year	35	12.1
	26 years and over	51	17.6
	Total	290	100.0

When the information of the classroom teachers participating in the study is analysed, it is seen that the teachers are mostly female (67,6%). The teachers in the study were mostly in the 36-40 age range (22,4%). Most of the teachers are undergraduate graduates (72,4%). More than half of them work in the provincial centre (55,9%) and have 11-15 years of working experience (24,8%).

Data Collection Tools

In this study, personal information form, professional commitment and career satisfaction scales were used as data collection tools. Data were collected with Google Form.

Personal Information Form

It was developed by the researchers in order to collect information about the teachers' age, gender, educational status, years of employment and the place where they work.

Professional Commitment Scale

The scale used to determine professional commitment is a 14-item scale with three sub-dimensions developed by Ergen (2016). The scale is organised in five-point Likert type as "Never=1", "Always=5". The sub-dimensions of the scale are named as "Occupational Pleasure, Social Gain and Occupational Career". Cronbach's alpha value of the scale was found as .92. The reliability coefficient calculated within the scope of this study was found to be .88 for the sub-dimensions; Vocational Pleasure .88, Social Gain .84, Vocational Career .74.

Career Satisfaction Scale

The five-item career satisfaction scale developed by Greenhaus et al. (1990) was used to determine career satisfaction. In the scale, the level of achievement of five different goals such as general career goals, promotion goals, achieving career success and income goals and developing new skills are determined. The answers are evaluated on a 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree). The Turkish adaptation of the career satisfaction scale was conducted by Avcı and Turunç (2012). As a result of exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses, it was determined that the scale was compatible with the single-factor structure as in the original. The reliability coefficient of the scale was calculated as .91 (Avcı & Turunç, 2012). The reliability coefficient calculated within the scope of this study was found to be .88.

Data Analysis

For the analyses, firstly, the normal distribution of the collected data was examined. In order to check the normal distribution, the skewness coefficients of the data were examined. The normality distributions of the values obtained for the Professional Commitment and Career Satisfaction scales of the classroom teachers participating in the study are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Normality distributions for the scales

Scales	N	Min.	Maks.	Mod	Med	Skewness	Kurtosis
Commitment-Occupational gratification	290	2.67	5.00	5.00	4.33	-.484	-.654
Engagement-Social Acquisition	290	1.00	5.00	3.20	3.00	.190	-.350
Commitment-Vocational Career	290	1.00	5.00	4.67	4.00	-.457	-.578
Total Professional Commitment	290	2.14	5.00	3.79	3.78	-.095	-.353
Career Satisfaction	290	1.60	25.00	3.00	3.60	-.216	-.595

As seen in Table 2, the normality distributions of the scales were examined and in this context, the kurtosis and skewness coefficients between +1.96 and -1.96 confirmed that the data showed normal distribution (George & Mallery, 2016; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2006). In line with the information obtained, t-Test was used in the analyses for two independent variables. One-way analysis of variance ANOVA (Post-Hoc: Bonferroni) was used for more than two independent variables. Pearson correlation analysis was used for the relationship between the scales and multiple linear regression analysis was used to determine the level of prediction of career satisfaction by professional

commitment. In the professional commitment scale, arithmetic averages are defined as "Never" between 1.00 and 1.79; "Rarely" between 1.80 and 2.59; "Sometimes" between 2.60 and 3.39; "Most of the time" between 3.40 and 4.19; and "Always" between 4.20 and 5.00 (Ergen & Elma, 2020). In the career satisfaction scale, the arithmetic averages were evaluated in the same way; between 1.00 and 1.79 "Strongly disagree"; between 1.80 and 2.59 "Mostly disagree"; between 2.60 and 3.39 "Moderately agree"; between 3.40 and 4.19 "Mostly agree"; between 4.20 and 5.00 "Strongly agree".

Findings

The findings are presented in order in line with the objectives. The arithmetic mean results obtained for the professional commitment and career satisfaction levels of the classroom teachers included in the study are given in Table 3.

Table 3. Professional commitment and career satisfaction levels of classroom teachers

Scales	Sub Dimensions	N	\bar{X}	S	Level of Participation	Level
Vocational Commitment Scale	Commitment-Occupational gratification	290	4.29	0.60	All the time	Very High
	Engagement-Social Acquisition	290	2.98	0.94	Sometimes	Centre
	Commitment-Vocational Career	290	3.77	0.89	Most of the Time	High
	Total Professional Commitment	290	3,71	0.61	Most of the Time	High
Career Satisfaction Scale	Career Satisfaction	290	3.64	0.88	Mostly I agree	High

Based on Table 3, it is understood that classroom teachers' level of involvement in the sub-dimensions of the professional commitment scale is as follows: professional pleasure ($\bar{X}=4.29$) "Always", social gain ($\bar{X}=2.98$) "Sometimes", professional career ($\bar{X}=3.77$) "Most of the time". Their total professional commitment ($\bar{X}=3.71$) is at the level of "Most of the Time". In the findings obtained, it is seen that the highest level of commitment of classroom teachers is in the dimension of professional satisfaction and the lowest level of commitment is in the dimension of social gain.

According to the mean obtained from the career satisfaction scale ($\bar{x}=3.64$), it is understood that the satisfaction of classroom teachers is at the level of "I mostly agree". In other words, it can be said that teachers are mostly satisfied with their careers. The t-Test results of the classroom teachers' professional commitment and career satisfaction according to gender are given in Table 4.

Table 4. T-Test results of teachers' gender variable

Scales	Gender	N	\bar{X}	S	Sd	t	p																																												
Commitment-Occupational gratification	Female	196	26.01	3.56	288	1.983	.048*																																												
	Male	94	25.11	3.70				Engagement-Social Acquisition	Female	196	14.68	4.71	288	-1.048	.295	Male	94	15.30	4.70	Commitment-Vocational Career	Female	196	11.33	2.62	288	.101	.919	Male	94	11.29	2.73	Total Professional Commitment	Female	196	52.03	8.44	288	.290	.772	Male	94	51.72	8.88	Career Satisfaction	Female	196	18.09	4.33	288	-.692	.490
Engagement-Social Acquisition	Female	196	14.68	4.71	288	-1.048	.295																																												
	Male	94	15.30	4.70				Commitment-Vocational Career	Female	196	11.33	2.62	288	.101	.919	Male	94	11.29	2.73	Total Professional Commitment	Female	196	52.03	8.44	288	.290	.772	Male	94	51.72	8.88	Career Satisfaction	Female	196	18.09	4.33	288	-.692	.490	Male	94	18.47	4.52								
Commitment-Vocational Career	Female	196	11.33	2.62	288	.101	.919																																												
	Male	94	11.29	2.73				Total Professional Commitment	Female	196	52.03	8.44	288	.290	.772	Male	94	51.72	8.88	Career Satisfaction	Female	196	18.09	4.33	288	-.692	.490	Male	94	18.47	4.52																				
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	Male	94	18.47	4.52																																															

*p<0.05

When Table 4 was analysed, it was found that the mean scores of classroom teachers differed significantly only in the professional satisfaction sub-dimension of the professional commitment scale according to gender variable ($t_{(288)}=1.983$, $p<0.05$). When the arithmetic averages were analysed, it was found that female teachers had higher mean scores in the professional satisfaction dimension than their male colleagues. This indicates that female teachers derive more pleasure from their profession than their male colleagues. It was found that total professional commitment and other sub-dimension scores and career satisfaction scale score of classroom teachers did not differ according to gender ($p>0.05$). The ANOVA results related to professional commitment and career satisfaction of classroom teachers according to their working years are given in Table 5.

Table 5. ANOVA results related to teachers' working year variable

Scales	Experience	N	\bar{X}	S	Sd	F	p	Difference
Commitment-Occupational gratification	1-5 year ^a	37	25.51	3.88				
	6-10 year ^b	35	25.09	3.69				
	11-15 year ^c	72	24.63	3.64	5-284	3.762	.003*	f>c
	16-20 year ^d	60	25.90	3.42				
	21-25 year ^e	35	26.31	2.95				
26 year ^{+f}	51	27.25	3.58					
Engagement-Social Acquisition	1-5 year ^a	37	16.89	5.25				
	6-10 year ^b	35	14.69	4.30				
	11-15 year ^c	72	12.72	4.27	5-284	5.972	.000*	a>c f>c
	16-20 year ^d	60	14.80	4.18				
	21-25 year ^e	35	15.43	5.03				
26 year ^{+f}	51	16.37	4.48					
Commitment-Vocational Career	1-5 year ^a	37	12.05	2.41				
	6-10 year ^b	35	11.51	2.63				
	11-15 year ^c	72	11.08	2.73	5-284	1.214	.302	
	16-20 year ^d	60	11.10	2.57				
	21-25 year ^e	35	11.77	2.59				
26 year ^{+f}	51	10.94	2.84					
Total Professional Commitment	1-5 year ^a	37	54.46	9.69				
	6-10 year ^b	35	51.29	8.28				
	11-15 year ^c	72	48.43	7.76	5-284	4.550	.001*	a>c e>c f>c
	16-20 year ^d	60	51.80	7.99				
	21-25 year ^e	35	53.51	8.16				
26 year ^{+f}	51	54.57	8.57					
Career Satisfaction	1-5 year ^a	37	18.54	5.03				
	6-10 year ^b	35	18.09	4.16				
	11-15 year ^c	72	17.94	4.35	5-284	.179	.970	
	16-20 year ^d	60	18.12	4.17				
	21-25 year ^e	35	18.66	4.65				
26 year ^{+f}	51	18.29	4.38					

* $p<0.05$

When the scores of the classroom teachers are analysed, it is seen that the professional satisfaction ($F_{(5,284)}= 3.762$, $p<0.05$) and social gain ($F_{(5,284)}= 5.972$, $p<0.05$) sub-dimension scores and total professional commitment ($F_{(5,284)}= 4.550$, $p<0.05$) scores differ significantly according to years of service. According to the Bonferroni test, it was determined that the difference was in favour of teachers with 26 years and more experience in the sub-dimension of professional satisfaction, 1-5 years and 26 years and more in the sub-dimension of social gain, and 1-5 years, 21-25 years and 26 years and more in total professional commitment. According to these findings, classroom teachers with the lowest professional commitment are those with 11-15 years of working experience. Teachers' professional career sub-

dimension score and career satisfaction scale score did not show a significant difference according to the working year variable ($p>0.05$). The results of the t-test on professional commitment and career satisfaction of classroom teachers according to their educational background are given in Table 6.

Table 6. T-Test results related to the education level of the teachers

Scales	Education Status	N	\bar{X}	S	Sd	t	p
Commitment-Occupational gratification	Undergraduate	210	25.72	3.69	288	.034	.973
	Postgraduate	80	25.71	3.47			
Engagement-Social Acquisition	Undergraduate	210	15.01	4.66	288	.729	.467
	Postgraduate	80	14.56	4.84			
Commitment-Vocational Career	Undergraduate	210	11.02	2.68	288	-	.002*
	Postgraduate	80	12.10	2.41			
Total Professional Commitment	Undergraduate	210	51.76	8.63	288	-.539	.590
	Postgraduate	80	52.37	8.45			
Career Satisfaction	Undergraduate	210	17.88	4.48	288	-	.033*
	Postgraduate	80	19.11	4.05			

* $p<0.05$

In Table 6, it is seen that there is a significant difference only in the professional career ($t_{(288)} = -3.132$, $p<0.05$) sub-dimension score and career satisfaction ($t_{(288)} = -2.146$, $p<0.05$) scale score of the professional commitment scale according to the educational level of classroom teachers. When the arithmetic averages were analysed, it was determined that teachers with postgraduate education obtained higher scores in both scales in which there was a significant difference. In other words, it can be said that the professional career commitment and career satisfaction of classroom teachers with postgraduate education are significantly higher than their colleagues with undergraduate degrees. No significant difference was found in the total professional commitment score and professional satisfaction and social gain sub-dimension scores according to educational status ($p>0.05$). ANOVA results related to professional commitment and career satisfaction of classroom teachers according to their workplace are given in Table 7.

Table 7. ANOVA results related to the variable of teachers' workplace

Scales	Place of Duty	N	\bar{X}	S	Sd	F	p	Difference
Commitment-Occupational gratification	Province ^a	162	25.93	3.48	2-287	.638	.529	
	District ^b	87	25.44	3.93				
	Village ^c	41	25.46	3.55				
Engagement-Social Acquisition	Province ^a	162	15.58	4.52	2-287	4.987	.007*	a>c
	District ^b	87	14.40	4.88				
	Village ^c	41	13.19	4.63				
Commitment-Vocational Career	Province ^a	162	11.46	2.51	2-287	.571	.566	
	District ^b	87	11.09	2.82				
	Village ^c	41	11.24	2.85				
Total Professional Commitment	Province ^a	162	52.98	8.25	2-287	2.980	.052	
	District ^b	87	50.94	9.18				
	Village ^c	41	49.90	8.07				
Career Satisfaction	Province ^a	162	18.30	4.23	2-287	2.099	.124	
	District ^b	87	17.57	4.54				
	Village ^c	41	19.24	4.55				

* $p<0.05$

When the scores of the classroom teachers according to their duty stations were analysed, a significant difference was found only in the social gain sub-dimension score of the professional commitment scale ($F_{(2,287)} = 4.987$, $p<0.05$). According to the Bonferroni test, it was concluded that the social gain commitment of the teachers working in the province was significantly higher than those working in the village. Total professional commitment, professional

pleasure and professional career sub-dimension scores and career satisfaction scale score did not show a significant difference according to the place of employment of the teachers ($p>0.05$). Pearson correlation analysis was performed to examine the relationship between professional commitment and career satisfaction scores of classroom teachers and the results are given in Table 8.

Table 8. The relationship between professional commitment and career satisfaction

Variables	Pearson Correlation	Career Satisfaction
Commitment-Occupational gratification	r	.322**
	p	.000
	N	290
Engagement-Social Acquisition	r	.353**
	p	.000
	N	290
Commitment-Vocational Career	r	.400**
	p	.000
	N	290
Total Professional Commitment	r	.454**
	p	.000
	N	290

** $p<.01$

When the relationship between professional commitment and career satisfaction scale scores of classroom teachers was evaluated, it was found that there was a moderate positive significant relationship between career satisfaction and the sub-dimensions of professional pleasure ($r=.322$; $p<0.01$), social gain ($r=.353$; $p<0.01$), professional career ($r=.400$; $p<0.01$) and total professional commitment ($r=.454$; $p<0.01$). The relationship between professional commitment and career satisfaction was analysed by performing multiple linear regression analysis due to the normal distribution of the values and the linearity condition, and the results are given in Table 9.

Table 9. The level of professional commitment in predicting career satisfaction

Model	Unstd. β	Std. Error β	β	t	p	Durbin-Watson	Collinearity Statistics	
							Tolerance	VIF
Fixed	21.270	1.509		14.095	.000			
Commitment-Occupational gratification	.184	.071	.152	2.581	.010	1.927	.780	1.282
Engagement- Social Acquisition	.165	.056	.177	2.917	.004		.740	1.351
Commitment-Vocational Career	.463	.096	.280	4.840	.000		.814	1.229
R=.472	R ² =.215	F ₍₂₈₆₎ =27.38	p<.000					

Durbin-Watson test was performed to determine the presence of autocorrelation in the analyses. Durbin-Watson value should be in the range of 1.5-2.5 (Kalaycı, 2014). Accordingly, 1.927 was obtained in the analysis. In addition, whether there is a multicollinearity problem is analysed with the VIF value. In this context, it is stated in the relevant sources that the VIF value should be below 10 (Alpar, 2016). It was determined that the VIF values obtained were below 10. When the results of the multiple linear regression analysis were examined, it was found that professional commitment predicted career satisfaction statistically significantly ($R=.472$, $R^2=.215$, $p<.01$). Accordingly, it can be said that the sub-dimensions of professional commitment explain approximately 22% of the total variance of career satisfaction. In other words, approximately 22% of the total change in career satisfaction is explained by professional commitment.

Conclusion and Discussion

In this study, in which the relationship between professional commitment of classroom teachers and career satisfaction was examined, teachers' perceived professional commitment was found to be at a high level.

Professional Commitment

Professional commitment is the teachers' acceptance of their profession, honouring to fulfil their duties in the best way, doing their jobs with love and contributing to their professional development by following the changes (Hıdırođlu-zkan, 2021). Teachers' high level of professional commitment can be interpreted as accepting and loving their profession. Khan & Aleem (2014) stated that most of the teachers who work with administrators who guide them and increase their motivation are committed to their profession. It can be said that the fact that the teachers who participated in the study had positive thoughts about their administrators was effective in their high perceptions of professional commitment. When the studies on professional commitment are analysed, it is seen that the commitment levels of teachers are high as in this study (Bogler & Nir, 2014; Sorensen & McKim, 2014; nal, 2015; Ergen, 2016; Ata, 2019; Tindowen, 2019; Hıdırođlu-zkan, 2021) as well as moderate (Sood & Anand; 2010; nal, 2015; alık, 2019) or low level (Uřtu & Tmkaya, 2017), as well as the results of studies showing that there is no relationship (Erek, 2018; Yavuz, Durna, Caferođlu, Tařkın, Yavuz, & Derviřođlu, 2022). Teachers' professional commitment is directly related to their performance in their profession and plays a key role in the success of education in schools (Shukla, 2018). Individuals with high professional commitment accept and internalise the success or failure in their professional lives (Giffords, 2003). In schools with employees with low professional commitment, the quality of education and the performance of teachers may decrease and this may cause employees to leave their profession. According to Darling-Hammond (2000), teachers with high levels of preparation for their profession also have high levels of professional commitment and satisfaction.

In the study, the satisfaction levels of classroom teachers regarding the sub-dimension of professional satisfaction, which is expressed as desired results and professional satisfaction, were found to be "very high"; social gain levels, which are expressed as respectability in the society and working conditions, were found to be "medium"; and professional career levels, which mean professional specialisation and success, were found to be "high". Studies have shown that different results have been obtained regarding the sub-dimensions of professional commitment. For example, Ergen (2016), Ergen and Elma (2020), Hıdırođlu-zkan (2021) similarly determined that teachers perceived their professional satisfaction commitment as very high and their social gain levels and professional career levels as high. Karaman (2008) stated that 80% of teachers enjoy their profession, and Erdođan (2013) stated that teachers' professional satisfaction levels are good. In the current study, it was noteworthy that classroom teachers perceived their satisfaction with the social gain sub-dimension at a lower level than other sub-dimensions. Personal rights of teachers, positive and negative aspects of working hours, vacation time, exams taken to become a teacher, attitudes and behaviours of school administrators, economic satisfaction, conditions of access to workplace and career opportunities are factors that indirectly or directly affect teachers' professional commitment (Erek, 2018). From this point of view, the fact that situations such as economic satisfaction, personal rights, social status, and prestige are not at the desired level may have been effective in the perception of classroom teachers' satisfaction with the social gain sub-dimension at a medium level.

When the relationship between the professional commitment levels of classroom teachers and demographic variables was analysed, it was seen that there was a difference only depending on the working year variable. The results showed that classroom teachers with 1-5 years and 26 years or more of working time had the highest level of professional commitment, while classroom teachers with 11-15 years of working time had the lowest level of professional commitment. zgenel and Ko (2020) stated in their study that teachers with 16 years or more of professional seniority had higher levels of professional commitment than teachers with 5 years or less of seniority. In other studies investigating the effect of professional seniority on professional commitment (Blau, 1998; Sears 2010; Ergen, 2016; Ata, 2019; zgenel, 2019; Aksu, 2021), it was concluded that professional commitment increases in

direct proportion to professional seniority. Although there are different results in the study, it is thought that the experiences of teachers as a result of professional seniority positively affect professional commitment.

It was found that the levels of occupational satisfaction related to the professional commitment of classroom teachers differed significantly according to gender and working year variables. When the differences were analysed, it was understood that the level of occupational satisfaction was higher in female teachers than male teachers. Similarly, Uştu (2014) also found that the professional commitment of female teachers was higher than their male colleagues. Ünal (2015) determined that there was no significant difference between professional commitment and gender. In the study, it was concluded that the level of professional satisfaction of teachers with more than 26 years of professional seniority was high according to the working years variable. It was observed that different results were obtained in the studies examining the relationship between years of service and professional satisfaction. For example, Hidiroğlu-Özkan (2021), in his research on the generality of teachers, found that the level of professional satisfaction of those whose professional seniority was between 0-5 years was higher than the others. On the other hand, in some studies (Erdoğan, 2013; Ergen 2016), it was found that the professional satisfaction levels of teachers with increasing professional seniority also increased. Bozali and Camadan (2018), on the other hand, concluded that professional seniority had no effect on professional satisfaction. Based on the results, it can be said that in terms of gender, female teachers' emotional commitment is higher and they have assumed the role of mother; in terms of working years, it can be said that professional satisfaction increases as the increase in experience contributes to the increase in experience, knowledge and satisfaction.

It was found that there was a significant difference between the professional career levels of classroom teachers' professional commitment and only the educational status variable, and that there was no significant difference with other variables. In the literature, it has been observed that there are studies that overlap and do not overlap with the research findings. Ünal (2015) concluded that there was no significant difference between teachers' professional commitment and their graduation status. This situation does not overlap with the finding obtained in the study. However, in the study conducted by Uştu (2014), it was found that teachers with postgraduate degrees had higher levels of professional commitment than those with undergraduate degrees. This result supports the finding of this study. The fact that the professional career levels of primary school teachers with postgraduate education are higher shows that professional career attitudes are positively affected depending on the variable of postgraduate education. When the level of graduation is taken into consideration, it is possible to conclude that the high level of achievements, accumulation and labour spent by teachers with academic experience also affects career attitudes as it is thought to increase productivity and knowledge level.

A significant difference was found between the social gain levels of classroom teachers' professional commitment and the variables of working year and place of duty. The fact that classroom teachers working in the provincial centre have higher social gain levels than those working in the village can be attributed to the employment status of teachers with permanent and contracted employment. In addition, the fact that the interaction levels of teachers with different professional seniority in the schools in the provincial centre are high and diverse may have affected this situation. According to the working year variable, it was determined that the social gain sub-dimension of professional commitment was higher for classroom teachers with 1-5 years and 26 years or more of working experience than for teachers with 11-15 years of working experience. Hidiroğlu-Özkan (2021) concluded in his study that the perception of social gain of teachers with a seniority of 21 years and above was higher than that of teachers with a seniority of 11-15 years. The finding obtained supports the result of our study. While some studies (Hung & Liu, 2013; Uslu, 2014) concluded that social gains are higher at the beginning of the teaching profession, some studies (Arjunan & Balamurugan, 2013; Uştu, 2014) found that social gains are at a higher level in teachers with more professional seniority. There are also studies that conclude that professional seniority is not related to social acquisition (Bansal, 2016; Kurz, 2006; Ünal, 2015). As a result, it can be said that teachers who have just started to work and teachers with more than 20 years of seniority have higher perceptions of social gain (gaining social environment, gaining status, etc.).

Career Satisfaction

According to the mean obtained from the career satisfaction scale, it is understood that the satisfaction of classroom teachers is at the level of "I mostly agree". In other words, it can be said that teachers' satisfaction levels with their careers are high.

In the study, it was observed that gender variable had no effect on classroom teachers' career satisfaction. When the literature on the gender variable was analysed, different results were found. For example, while gender was found to affect career satisfaction in a study on public sector employees (Rasdi, Ismail & Gravan, 2011), no significant relationship was found in some studies (Peluchette, 1993). Reasons such as the classroom teaching profession is not seen as specific to a certain gender and personal rights do not change according to gender may have led to the conclusion that career satisfaction of classroom teachers does not depend on gender.

When the relationship between career satisfaction and education levels was examined, it was concluded that the career satisfaction levels of classroom teachers who received postgraduate education were higher. This is an expected result. Because postgraduate education provides new opportunities for teachers to advance their careers. However, it has been observed that there are studies in the literature that support our findings as well as studies that do not coincide with our findings. For example, Hirschi, Nagy, Baumeler, Johnston & Spurk (2017) determined that there is a positive and significant relationship between career satisfaction and education level, which supports the result obtained in this study. In addition, there are also those who concluded that there is no relationship between career satisfaction and education level (Emmerik, Euwema, Geschiere & Schouten, 2006; Rasdi, Ismail & Gravan, 2011). These results show that the relationship between career satisfaction and education level is not always positive. The fact that different results are obtained in studies related to educational level can be explained by factors such as the type of sample and culture.

No significant relationship was found between career satisfaction of classroom teachers and their place of employment. The fact that there is no difference between classroom teachers working in the city, district and village except for the service score reveals the disadvantage of working with large student groups in the centre. Although there are more limited opportunities in districts and villages, the place where classroom teachers work may not have made a significant difference in terms of career satisfaction as a result of the balancing of working environments due to reasons such as the low number of students.

No significant relationship was found between classroom teachers' career satisfaction and teachers' professional seniority. Kılınc, Tortumlu, and Uzun (2021) stated in their study that the career satisfaction of teachers with a professional seniority of 21 years and above was higher than the others. In different studies (Sevimli & İşcan, 2005; Knight, Cruisinger & Kim, 2006), it was found that career satisfaction and professional commitment were related to each other. The lack of a relationship between career satisfaction and professional seniority of classroom teachers may be due to the fact that there is no significant difference in salary and status between teachers with different seniority, classroom teachers have a stable working life, and promotion opportunities are limited (Aksu, 2021).

Career success is an important issue in career research (Abele et al., 2011; Boehm & Lyubomirsky, 2008; Hall & Chandler, 2005). Career satisfaction is one of the main indicators of subjective career success and can be seen as an important component of career success in real labour market generations (Hall & Chandler, 2005; Ng et al., 2005). It is important to note that occupational groups may differ in terms of objective career success (e.g. doctors earn more than teachers or general management earns more than marketing; Abele & Spurk, 2009) and career success is positively related to occupational satisfaction (Judge et al., 1995; Ng et al., 2005). Therefore, it can be said that there is a relationship between career satisfaction and professional commitment. It can be thought that individuals who are committed to their profession can affect their career satisfaction. When the researches are examined, it is predicted that the steps taken by individuals who are committed to their profession for their careers may be of higher quality (Wang et al., 2021). This is because stronger commitment, increased job involvement and specific citizenship behaviours are associated with better performance, higher satisfaction, lower stress, less absenteeism and work-family conflict (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005; Meyer et al., 2002). Somech and Bogler (2002) found that there is a close

connection between Israeli teachers' commitment and citizenship behaviours. For example, teachers who reported higher levels of commitment were more likely to stay at school after working hours to support students with classroom materials. Similarly, McInerney et al. (2015) reported that teachers with higher levels of engagement in Hong Kong showed better psychological well-being, which was reflected in workplace engagement and perceived desire for recognition. This study also obtained similar results with the related literature. In other words, it was concluded that professional commitment predicts career satisfaction.

As a result, it was found that gender, years of employment and place of employment variables did not affect career satisfaction, while educational status did. It was concluded that gender is a significant variable affecting the occupational satisfaction sub-dimension of professional commitment; years of service, occupational satisfaction and social gain sub-dimensions of professional commitment and total professional commitment; and educational level is a significant variable affecting the occupational career sub-dimension of professional commitment. It was found that there is a linear relationship between professional commitment and career satisfaction. In the regression analysis, it was found that professional commitment predicts career satisfaction.

Recommendations

- In this study, the effect of professional commitment on career satisfaction was analysed in terms of different variables. In future studies, qualitative research method can be used to obtain more in-depth information about the factors affecting the variables examined and their causes.
- This study, which examined the effect of professional commitment of classroom teachers on career satisfaction, can be applied to teachers from different branches and the results can be compared.
- This study can be conducted with different professional groups and the levels of professional commitment and career satisfaction of the teaching profession and other professional groups can be compared.
- Legal regulations that will positively affect the perceptions of classroom teachers about their social gains can be enacted.
- By making more use of experienced teachers in teaching practice, the professional commitment and career satisfaction of pre-service teachers who have not yet started to work can be increased from the early stages.

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