

English Language Teachers' Wellbeing in the Workplace: A Case Study in Türkiye

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Abstract: This qualitative study drew on Seligman's PERMA, Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishments, model (2011) to examine the wellbeing of English language teachers at work in the schools managed by the Ministry of National Education. It also examined factors affecting teachers' wellbeing in their institutional environments. The perceptions of teachers about how their jobs and workplaces affect their general wellbeing were also explored. The study was conducted in Elazığ, a city in Türkiye's Eastern Anatolia region. 53 EFL teachers working in public or private schools participated in this study. Semi-structured interviews and open-ended survey questions were used to gather the data. To reach as many English language teachers as feasible in this city, snowball sampling was used. The data were analysed using both inductive and deductive Thematic Analyses. Firstly, data were analysed deductively, and the PERMA model was used as a theme to answer the first research question. For the second and third research questions, data were analysed inductively to find emerging themes. The PERMA findings show that teachers are in a high state of wellbeing. They stand out for having positive emotions, good relationships, powerful meanings, and pleasure with their professional accomplishments. Student motivation and success, approval and support, and social relationships were discovered to be the three main themes that have an impact on teachers' wellbeing. The results also show that English language teachers believe their profession and workplace have a substantial impact on their general wellbeing, either positively or adversely.

Keywords: Positive psychology, teacher wellbeing, positive and negative emotions, PERMA

İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin İşyerindeki Refahı: Türkiye’de Bir Vaka Çalışması

Öz: Bu nitel çalışma, bir refah teorisi olan Seligman'ın (2011) PERMA modelinden yola çıkılarak Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı okullarında görev yapan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin iyi olma hali ile öğretmenlerin kurumsal ortamlarındaki refahlarını etkileyen faktörleri incelenmiştir. PERMA kısaltması, modelin her biri bağımsız olarak işlev gören bileşenleri olan olumlu/olumsuz duygu, bağlanma, olumlu ilişkiler, anlam ve başarıyı temsil etmektedir. Araştırmada öğretmenlerin işlerinin ve iş yerlerinin genel refahını nasıl etkilediğine dair algıları da araştırılmıştır. Çalışma, Türkiye'nin Doğu Anadolu bölgesinde yer alan Elazığ ilinde yürütülmüştür ve çalışmaya devlet okullarında ve özel okullarda çalışan 53 İngilizce öğretmeni katılmıştır. Bu araştırmanın verilerini toplamak için yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler ve açık uçlu anket soruları kullanılmıştır. Bu şehirde, maksimum sayıda İngilizce öğretmenine ulaşmak için kartopu

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örnekleme kullanılmıştır. Veriler hem tümevarımsal hem de tümdengelimsel tematik analizler kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. PERMA bulguları, öğretmenlerin yüksek bir iyi olma hali içinde olduklarını göstermektedir. Olumlu duygulara, iyi ilişkilere, güçlü anlamlara sahip olmaları ve mesleki başarılarından memnuniyet duymaları ile öne çıkmaktadırlar. Öğrenci güdüleme ve başarısı, onay ve destek ile sosyal ilişkiler, öğretmenlerin iyi olma halini etkileyen üç ana tema olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Sonuçlar ayrıca, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin mesleklerinin ve iş yerlerinin genel refahı üzerinde olumlu ya da olumsuz önemli bir etkisi olduğuna inandıklarını göstermektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Pozitif psikoloji, öğretmen refahı, olumlu ve olumsuz duygular, PERMA

Introduction

Considering the challenges faced by language teachers worldwide (Day & Gu, 2010), it would be appropriate to emphasise the importance of positive psychology (PP) in educational contexts. This is because psychological-emotional factors, as well as the teacher's efforts and practices, significantly affect the success of second language teaching and the teachers (MacIntyre & Mercer, 2014; Ünsal, 2021). The aim of PP is to enhance the quality of life by promoting positive emotions and adding greater meaning to it (Seligman, 2006), and this can create a perspective that language teachers can also benefit from. Instead of emphasising obstacles, PP can reinforce individuals' strengths and positive qualities, enabling them to flourish (MacIntyre, 2021; Seligman, 2018; Derakhshan, 2022). The PERMA Model by Seligman, which forms the basis of this study, prioritises flourishing of the individuals beyond just life satisfaction, and the acronym PERMA represents the components: positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and achievement. The PERMA model stems from PP, which suggests there are three pillars of wellbeing: positive experiences, positive individual traits, and positive institutions, and wellbeing arises from the dynamic interaction of personal and environmental factors in people's lives. Schools, serving as teachers' workplaces, play a significant role in their lives and are a crucial area for examining teacher wellbeing, a field where positive psychology can be effective. Therefore, it is essential to understand these three fundamental components of wellbeing and their interactions (Mercer & Gregersen, 2020). Research in PP has primarily concentrated on positive experiences and individual qualities, which are the first two pillars of wellbeing, while giving much less attention to the role and structure of positive institutions. Although there is a lot of research on wellbeing worldwide, not many studies have examined the wellbeing of English teachers in their workplaces, making the idea of teacher wellbeing relatively new in our country. As a result, we expect this study to make a substantial contribution to our body of literature.

This current study aims to explore the wellbeing of English language teachers in their workplace (Seligman 2011). Also, it specifically aims to generate a broader understanding of the possible factors involved in teacher wellbeing in their institutional contexts. This case study tries to shed light on the following research questions:

1. What is the state of the wellbeing of the English teachers working in the schools of the MoNE?
2. What are the primary factors that influence the wellbeing of English teachers in their workplaces?
3. How do English language teachers perceive the impact of their work on their overall wellbeing?

Literature Review

The field of wellbeing studies, which has its roots in positive psychology and aims to raise awareness about the value of positive emotions, has expanded its scope to include teachers and language teachers through a number of publications. As two researchers who passionately pursue this profession, we recognise the challenges that come with being a language teacher and feel the necessity of identifying and enhancing the wellbeing of English language teachers. To attain this objective, we aim to begin with the principles of positive psychology within the domain, serve as the foundation for teacher wellbeing, and progress from there.

Positive Psychology

The publication of Positive Psychology by Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi in 2000 marked the official beginning of positive psychology (MacIntyre, 2016). Positive psychology (PP), as opposed to helping people cope with unpleasant events, focuses on encouraging good feelings, enhanced involvement, and an appreciation of life's significance (Seligman, 2006). It aims to help people live better lives by capitalising on their strengths and developing positive attributes such as resilience, happiness, and optimism (Peterson, 2006). Traditional psychology concentrates on the bad, such as mental illnesses or disorders, and how to treat them, whereas PP emphasises the positive. A simple description of PP is that it is the scientific study of what happens right in life (Peterson, 2006), and it inspires us to consider the positive aspects of life. According to Seligman (2006), the ultimate objective of PP is to improve quality of life by promoting positive emotions, raising participation, and ultimately giving life more meaning. According to Fredrickson (2001), the action patterns elicited by negative emotions differ markedly from those elicited by positive emotions such as joy, curiosity, contentment, pride, or love. While negative emotions tend to constrict an individual's field of attention and predispose them to specific actions, happy emotions have the opposite effect. According to the broaden and build idea (Mercer, 2015), experiencing good feelings might start a chain reaction that leads to greater emotional wellness down the road. Broadening is associated with a wider field of view, the ability to absorb more information, or the ability to notice more things. Positive emotions play a role in building personal or intellectual resources that can help people cope with unfavourable situations or emotions that they may encounter in the future (Budzińska, 2018).

PP was established on three primary pillars: Positive emotions and feelings; positive character traits of people linked with living well; and positive institutions, defined as organisational structures that permit success and generate positive settings (Mercer & MacIntyre, 2014). Contentment with the past, enjoyment in the present, and hope for the future are the three main themes of the positive experiences pillar. In other words, character qualities like bravery, tenacity, and the capacity for love are examples of positive character traits that are frequently supportive of living a happy life. The systemic benefits and traits being essential for developing and sustaining successful communities are addressed by positive institutions (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Aside from personal characteristics and psychological states, social and contextual factors, including a number of institutional dimensions, have an impact on wellbeing (MacIntyre, 2016). Therefore, a combination of personal, professional, and environmental factors, in particular our perception of our environment, contribute to wellbeing (Babic et al., 2022). Despite their equal importance in the pillars of PP, positive institutions have gotten the least amount of research as compared to positive experiences (and emotions) as well as positive character attributes (MacIntyre, 2016).

Wellbeing

Wellbeing is an intricate, fluid, hard, and disputed idea and construct referring to the presence of psychosocial balance and agency for and amongst individuals, groups, and communities (O'Brien & Guiney, 2021). Wellbeing theory emphasises a long-term perspective on meaning and dedication to happiness rather than short-term hedonistic attitudes of pleasure and satisfaction (Hessel et al., 2020). Positive psychology consistently defines wellbeing as more than just the absence of negative functions. In other words, the lack of negative affect, melancholy, loneliness, insecurity, and disease does not imply the presence of positive affect, happiness, social connection, trust, and wellbeing (Butler & Kern, 2016). When a person experiences regular good feelings, is actively involved in a variety of spheres of life, has relationships with other people, and succeeds in their goals, this indicates that they are flourishing or, in fact, are experiencing tremendous wellbeing (Hessel et al., 2020). Despite its complex meanings, understanding wellbeing is important to all of us since it affects our daily lives (O'Brien & Guiney, 2021). The PERMA model was developed by Seligman in 2011. Seligman's (2011) theory of wellbeing focuses on a long-term perspective on meaning and purpose for happiness. It means that someone who has high levels of wellbeing would be deemed to be thriving, or, in other words, enjoying regular happy feelings, involvement in a variety of daily activities, quality connections with other people, and goal achievement (Hessel et al., 2020). Positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning in life, and accomplishment are the core constructs of wellbeing theory. All of these components must combine for one to experience wellbeing and a sense of purpose in life (Mercer & Gregersen, 2020). *Positive Emotions* are the first construct of PERMA. All emotions are important, but the key distinction is that positive emotions serve a different purpose than negative emotions. Positive emotions, for example, might help the expansion of perspectives among language teachers by arousing their curiosity and willingness to creatively explore alternative teaching approaches. This can better prepare instructors for their future work by enabling them to develop their own resources (Mercer et al., 2016). *Engagement* is the second construct, and it can be explained as the flow, which is a state of intense psychological involvement characterised by absorption, concentration, and focus. According to Csikszentmihalyi's flow theory (1990), a person is in a state of positive wellbeing when their level of difficulty and competence are optimally balanced. Flow happens when people are operating at the limit of their capabilities. Flow is a state in which difficulties and skills combine well, creating a sense of being fully immersed in the action at hand, free from self-focus or other distractions, and frequently leading to people losing track of time. As the third one, *Relationships* meet some of our most basic human desires. We feel a need to belong, to be loved and understood, and to be socially supported because other people are important to us (Peterson, 2006). The fourth construct of PERMA is *Meaning*. It is defined as a subjective sense of belonging to and serving something larger than oneself (Seligman, 2011). The last one is *Accomplishment*, which comprises a sense of striving for and accomplishing goals, mastery, and effectiveness in task completion (Butler & Kern, 2016). Work involvement has been defined in terms of organisational passion, dedication, and absorption. Thus, for those in the teaching field, setting and accomplishing personal goals seems crucial (Dreer, 2021) for their work involvement.

Positive Education and Teacher Wellbeing

PP recognises the relevance of negative influences in correcting the imbalance, but the main focus is on learning what makes life better. Therefore, educational psychology should emphasise human strengths, virtues, and positive characteristics rather than emphasise and

exaggerate human problems and deficiencies (MacIntyre, 2021; Derakhshan, 2022). It seems that instructors all across the world are having problems keeping their motivation, dedication, and ideal levels of health over time (Day & Gu, 2010; Ünsal & Hastunç, 2021). The professional wellbeing of teachers is critical to their ability to teach or educate to their full potential (MacIntyre et al., 2019b). The PP perspective can be seen in the form of positive education. Positive Education has been described as a Positive psychology-informed approach to education (Budzińska, 2018). It refers to positive psychology applications in schools in this sense (MacIntyre et al., 2019a). Positive Education aims to bring wellbeing to the heart of school alongside intellectual disciplines without risking either (Seligman, 2011). By merging PP science with best practises in teaching, it is possible to promote and empower schools and individuals to thrive. In his study, Kasap, S. (2021) examines the relationship between psychological well-being and foreign language anxiety, revealing a negative correlation between the two components. Essential to wellbeing and lowering anxiety, happiness and and satisfaction with life are indicators of mental health which play a crucial role in enhancing foreign language environment.

In a professional setting, an individual's psychological capabilities might be particularly significant. For instance, happiness is frequently associated with subjective wellbeing. Employees who are motivated and excited about their work, find meaning and purpose in it, enjoy positive connections with others at work, and feel committed to their work are said to be experiencing "workplace happiness". On the other hand, being a teacher is highly correlated with stress-related outcomes, therefore, studies on teachers' stress and burnout are frequently conducted (Kun & Gadanecz, 2022). Teachers' happiness and wellbeing at work have received less research attention than other elements (Kun & Gadanecz, 2022). In fact, teacher wellbeing is crucial, and teacher wellbeing research identifies elements that might cause wellbeing to decrease or thrive and identifies teacher wellbeing as central to teacher fulfilment and school achievement (O'Brien & Guiney, 2021). The factors impacting teachers' well-being can be separated into three categories: those linked to the individual, those related to the profession and workplace, and those related to society (Aelterman et al., 2007). It is common knowledge that teachers do not clearly distinguish between their personal and professional lives (Day & Gu, 2010). This means that any investigation into teacher well-being must consider organisational factors, the quality of social relationships, particularly with school administrators, and the many forms of social capital that teachers can possibly draw on (Mercer, 2020).

There is a legitimate expectation that there is a relationship between instructors' well-being and students' academic achievement. It is natural to infer that educators with a strong sense of wellbeing are likely to do better and exhibit greater educational consequences, which would result in happier and more successful students (Day and Gu, 2010). Examining teachers' professional wellbeing as a quality indicator is consistent with the aim of monitoring educational quality. Evaluating teacher wellbeing could aid the school or government inspectorate in its goal to determine whether schools fulfil their responsibility for the well-being of their employees (Aelterman et al., 2007) because schools should actively support the well-being of their teachers (Kun & Gadanecz, 2022). The goal is here to identify elements that influence and improve well-being rather than reduce stress. By identifying elements that have a positive impact, schools can take action to improve the wellbeing of their teachers (Aelterman et al., 2007).

Positive life experiences and character strengths have received much greater research attention. The institutional pillar of positive psychology has received less attention as a result of the lack of a psychological study emphasis (MacIntyre, 2021). Day and Gu (2010) assert that a

teacher's capacity to instruct depends on their professional wellness. It is crucial that a study of an educational institution include both learner and instructor insight since teachers' positive attitudes about the institution they work for seem to have a beneficial impact on student satisfaction. The findings of Frenzel et al.'s (2009) investigation of the connection between instructor and student enjoyment revealed a favourable relationship between them, showing the teacher's passion was the main factor mediating the positive association between them (Frenzel et al., 2009). In their study with educators, O'Brien and Guiney (2021) showed that the more connected teachers are in their daily work to the meaning and purpose of why they became teachers, the happier they are and the more satisfied they are with their jobs. It is clear that teacher wellbeing is desired for both teachers and their students (Mercer, 2020) because instructors' pleasure and wellbeing are correlated with students' wellbeing and performance in the classroom (Kun & Gadanecz, 2022). Budzi'nska (2018) investigated the nature of positive institutions in language education situations to fill a gap. She demonstrated in her study that the three main components of positive institutions are a positive physical structure, the adoption of positive pedagogical approaches, and the positive psychological consequences of being educated in a specific context, such as low anxiety, motivation, or enjoyment. Teachers' and other staff's well-being must be integrated into the complex systems that exist in schools, and schools that care about student well-being may benefit from regularly monitoring balance and agency. (O'Brien & Guiney, 2021). In this sense, teacher wellbeing refers to a favourable emotional state that is the outcome of a balance between a teacher's individual needs and expectations and the unique contextual circumstances as a whole (Aelterman et al., 2007). Undoubtedly, schools, classrooms, and government ministries are vital for language education and language policy as they encourage learning. If PP could aid in identifying and analysing the concepts underlying legislation that would impact every person in the educational environment, it may make a big contribution (MacIntyre, 2021) because the quality of task performance is related to the degree to which the employee (in this context, a teacher) feels satisfied and respected in the workplace (Aelterman et al., 2007).

Language Teachers

Although the importance of positive emotions and affect in L2 teaching had long been understood, it truly blossomed with the advent and growth of PP, welcoming in a new era in language teaching (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). Language teachers may be of particular relevance in terms of wellbeing because there may be additional pressures at work that are less common while teaching other topics. For instance, language teachers are often expected to foster communicative interactions between students and increase active student participation in the classroom which might call for a profound effort and creativity from them making use a variety of energy-intensive approaches (Borg, 2006). In the subject of SLA, Positive Psychology is increasingly gaining popularity (Mercer & MacIntyre, 2014). The PP movement has motivated many L2 researchers and practitioners throughout the world to focus on the positive aspects of language instruction by emphasising the role of positive emotions and behaviours in accelerating teacher and student development. As this mood and the emotion-based movement have risen in prominence, so have the emotional components of L2 instruction among researchers (Prior, 2019). As a result of the advent of positive psychology and its emphasis on the benefits of pleasant emotions for teaching and learning second or foreign languages, numerous studies (see Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2016; Gregersen et al., 2020) on various PP components have been conducted all over the world. According to MacIntyre et al. (2019), PP is a reaction and movement against previous institutions that remained negative and miserable. PP typically investigates what promotes balance

and what produces imbalances in social, personal, and professional arenas. It should be noted that PP combines negative elements with positive emotions and factors such as joy, happiness, and love, as well as human flourishing, creativity, resilience, and grit. (Derakhshan, 2022).

Method

Research Design

Qualitative research is defined as "the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of phenomena" (Berg, 2001, p. 3). It provides detailed definitions and explanations of processes within specific local contexts, identifies events that lead to outcomes, and offers valuable insights (Miles & Huberman, 1994). We used a qualitative case research method to gather in-depth opinions from the participants (Dawson, 2002) in their local context, revealing their workplace wellbeing according to the PERMA model by capturing their perceptions, attitudes, and experiences. This method provides a wealth of information about the wellbeing of English language teachers in their individual contexts (Dörnyei, 2007). However, a thorough analysis that aligns with the study's purpose and objectives is essential (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Setting and Participants

This qualitative case study was carried out to contextually and comprehensively investigate the wellbeing of English language teachers in their workplace in Elazığ province, where one of the researchers resided and was employed. Elazığ is a city located in the Eastern Anatolia region of Türkiye. Participants in this study are 53 Turkish EFL teachers working in state or private schools run by the Ministry of National Education in Elazığ. Out of 53 participants, 43 (81.1%) teachers are female, and 10 (18.9%) teachers are male. The participants have different teaching experiences, ranging from 1 year to 35 years. Only seven teachers have three years or less of experience in this profession. The years of teaching experience of teachers vary, but it is seen that 46 of the teachers have 10 years or more of experience in their profession, making them highly experienced teachers. Out of 53 participants, 24 are middle school teachers who teach in 5–7th grades, and 23 are high school teachers who teach in 9–10–11th grades. Six of the participants teach in 2–4th grades at the elementary school level.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

This study used an open-ended survey and semi-structured interviews as data collection tools. Biographical information of the participants and the consent permissions were collected in the first part of the open-ended survey.

All forms of social research raise concerns about protecting anonymity and confidentiality with respect to information gathering and record-keeping (Dawson, 2002). To maintain anonymity, a researcher may take a variety of precautions, but arguably the most crucial step is to carefully plan the study throughout the design phase. Berg and Lune (2012) recommend that researchers consider the necessary precautions to safeguard participant identities and data during the planning stage of any study. Therefore, in every step of the data collection and analysis, participants' names or the names of the school were not collected or written, and the participants were informed about their anonymity and confidentiality.

The data in this study were generated by open-ended survey questions and semi-structured interviews after participants provided their consent. Snowball sampling was used to reach English

teachers in Elazığ since there were many public and private MoNE schools in the city. A limitation must be acknowledged here. Snowball sampling may result in a homogeneous sample, as participants often refer individuals from their own social or professional networks. However, since participants are recruited through referrals, it can facilitate the establishment of trust and rapport with these populations, leading to more accurate and honest data. Participants in this study were recruited via social media networks such as Twitter and WhatsApp. The goal was to reach as many English teachers as possible. People were asked to forward the GoogleDocs link of the open-ended survey questions to any English teachers they know who work at MoNE schools in Elazığ. In addition, the researchers encouraged anyone who received or saw the message to share it with their networks, resulting in a snowball effect. The key advantage of this sample strategy was that it covered the entire city rather than just one school.

The open-ended survey questions and the semi-structured interview questions were developed by the researchers in accordance with the five components of PERMA. In terms of trustworthiness, methodological triangulation was utilised to gain reliable data. Expert ideas were obtained about the suitability of the questions, and necessary changes were made before implementation. The questions were as follows:

1. How do you describe your purpose or mission as a language teacher?
2. What do you feel while teaching and performing this job?
3. What types of relationships do you have with your colleagues, coworkers, administrators, students, and parents?
4. How do these relationships impact you?
5. How do you feel about your work achievements?
6. How do you think they relate to your overall job satisfaction?
7. How do you feel about your job and your workplace?
8. Is there anything that you would like to add?

In qualitative research, the interview is most likely the most commonly used method. The adaptability of the interview makes it so appealing, but the analysis of transcripts takes a long time. The unstructured interview and the semi-structured interview are the two main types. Researchers may use the term "qualitative interview" to refer to these two types of interviews (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), which are also known as in-depth interviews. The approach in this qualitative research was typically less structured. It was used to maximise the validity and trustworthiness of the study. The current study collected data using open-ended survey questions with eight items, followed by qualitative interviews with 13 volunteer EFL teachers who indicated their willingness to participate in the interview section of the survey. The semi-structured interviews were designed to get insight into participants' thoughts on their open-ended survey responses. Some follow-up questions were asked based on their responses to gain a better grasp of their perceptions and feelings. All interviews were recorded with their permission, and the transcripts were written in English. It took two weeks to complete this process. Given the significance of lowering affective filters (Krashen, 1985) and gathering their genuine feelings about their profession and workplace, interviews were conducted in their native tongue, Turkish. This reduced their anxiety and created rapport between them and the interviewer, allowing them to provide more specific information. The interview questions are as follows:

1. Are you content with your job as an English teacher?
2. What makes you happy and contributes to your professional satisfaction in your job and in your workplace?
3. What affects you negatively in your work and workplace?
4. How do you think your work and workplace impact your overall wellbeing?

The data were analysed using Thematic Analysis because it aims to utilise identified themes to address research questions or provide insights on a specific topic (Çarıkçı et al., 2024). In contrast to simple summaries or categorizations of codes, themes are intentionally generated patterns (or meanings) derived from a data collection that address a research issue. A good thematic analysis interprets and explicates the data. It aggregates extensive datasets and categorises them based on similarities or themes (Creswell, 2013). The creation of themes can be conducted deductively or inductively (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Bryman, 2012). In this study, the qualitative analysis employed a hybrid approach where both inductive and deductive Thematic Analyses were done (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). Firstly, data were analysed deductively, and the PERMA model was used as a theme to answer the first research question. The data were read carefully multiple times for the familiarisation step, and for example, codes corresponding to positive/negative emotions for P were collected for the coding step and placed under the relevant theme. Then, the frequency of these codes was determined for all participants. The same steps were followed for E, R, M, and A as well. Then, relevant quotations were exemplified to demonstrate the themes. An inductive analysis of the data was conducted for the second research question, following the steps of familiarisation, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, and defining and naming themes. Student motivation and success, approval and support, and social relationships were discovered to be the three main themes that have an impact on teachers' wellbeing. For the third research question, analysis proved a significant impact of participants' workplace, whether positive or negative, on their overall wellbeing.

Findings

The State of English Language Teachers' Wellbeing: PERMA

Positive/negative emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment are the five pillars upon which wellbeing rests. The acronym PERMA stands for these five components.

Positive/Negative Emotions

Results indicate that positive and negative emotions were mentioned together by the participants although positive emotions and thoughts constitute the majority. Out of 53, 37 of the teachers talked about completely positive experiences and emotions without mentioning any dissatisfaction or negativity.

Excerpt 1: *I always felt pleased, peaceful, and satisfied thanks to the hard work of my students and their willingness to learn. Also, thanks to the supportive approach of my colleagues and administrators, I always felt confident and happy.*

Excerpt 2: *Being an English teacher is very fun and makes me feel happy. Because my administrator and coworkers are good people, I feel happy. Also, my workplace is very small, so working there is not tiring.*

Excerpt 3: *The workplace where I work and the co-workers I work with are very supportive and positive people. I work in a positive work environment, which encourages me to keep my job.*

Excerpt 4: *I was born to be a teacher of English and I really love my school and colleagues.*

In addition to mentioning their positive feelings, such as love and excitement for their profession and workplace, eleven out of the 53 teachers also expressed some issues they faced in their profession and workplace. Among these issues, there are administrative problems as well as student-related ones, such as the mixed levels of students and their lack of willingness to learn the language.

Excerpt 5: *I love my students and my school. My students level and success are pleasing, but I don't like the general environment. My efforts to be a better teacher and to create a more effective learning environment aren't appreciated. Therefore, I sometimes get demotivated. I expect to hear good things from my school's administration.*

Excerpt 6: *I'm mostly satisfied with my job, but I would love it if classes were classified as levels such as A1 and A2.*

Excerpt 7: *I love my job, but we have some constraints at schools, such as time constraints and crowded classrooms. These are the major things that are decreasing my motivation. Also, unfair administrators, gossiping, and misjudgment among the teachers make me unhappy at work. I sometimes don't even want to go to school because of these reasons. Therefore, I don't have positive feelings at work.*

Excerpt 8: *Sometimes I am very tired and unmotivated, sometimes good and motivated.*

Excerpt 9: *Sometimes I get bored of some situations, but overall, I am passionate about my job.*

Excerpt 10: *I like teaching with good students. It affects me so much. When the students think learning a language is not meaningful, I feel like an alien. And administration is very important because sometimes I want to do some outdoor activities with my students, but they can be handicapped, or some activities can make a loud voice, and I think they are normal, but the administration can warn you, and these all demoralise you.*

Five teachers, out of a total of 53, exhibit negative feelings towards their jobs or work environments. Of these five teachers, only one did not provide a reason for their negative feelings, while the other four provided specific explanations for their feelings. Among the issues raised, the disregard for education and teachers, along with the inadequate conditions of the school environment, take center stage.

Excerpt 11: *Even the government doesn't give importance to teachers or education, so this job is just a job. I don't like schools or being a teacher.*

Excerpt 12: *I am not satisfied with my current workplace for the reason that I feel like I cannot fulfil my needs and demands as a teacher.*

Excerpt 13: *We had to relocate to another school because of the earthquake, so it's not the ideal situation. And because of the reasons I stated in previous questions, I need to make a transition to a high school like science to get the most out of it.*

Excerpt 14: *I don't like school because we don't have enough training places.*

Excerpt 15: *I feel rather stressed.*

The findings reveal that teachers have a wide variety of emotional experiences. 37 of the 53 teachers reported positive experiences and emotions, indicating that they had a favourable perception of their professional environment and that it was in alignment with their vocational aspirations. Love, enthusiasm, and commitment were frequently present in these positive emotions, which suggested a high level of job satisfaction.

On the other hand, 11 educators expressed a combination of positive and negative emotions, including enthusiasm for teaching and positive experiences, as well as challenges or issues in their professional environment. This implies that while these teachers generally maintain a positive outlook, they also have concerns or areas of dissatisfaction, which could be related to specific aspects of their work environment. Five participants expressed only negative feelings towards their job or workplace, pointing to underlying factors such as administrative challenges, workload, or lack of support. Only one participant expressed negative emotions without providing a specific reason, suggesting their discontent may stem from more subjective or less tangible sources.

The results highlight the complexity of emotional experiences in the teaching profession, with the majority of positive emotions suggesting fulfillment and joy in their roles. However, the presence of negative sentiments highlights the need to address specific issues within the educational environment to improve overall job satisfaction and wellbeing.

Engagement

When teachers answers to their engagement while teaching and performing were examined, it was found that their answers varied between full engagement, partial engagement, and non-engagement. Seven of the teachers were found to be not engaged in what they were doing due to feeling tired, sad, consumed, anxious, stressful, and desperate. The majority of the participants (n = 46) generally described their emotions as positive in terms of their participation; however, six of these 46 teachers mentioned their changing situations and emotions in addition to the positive experiences they had while doing their work. Therefore, they fell into the "partially engaged" category.

Excerpt 1: *While doing this job, I feel very happy and, at the same time, energetic, although sometimes I am tired. I have a lot of fun while teaching something, it makes me happy to see that children have fun and learn by having fun in this process, and to encounter smiles and surprise expressions on their faces.*

Excerpt 2: *I am a really enthusiastic teacher. I love my job. Teaching A language is an interesting journey. Although I have 17 years of experience, I still feel excited about my classes. I deeply think about the lessons and try to find different and interesting activities.*

Excerpt 3: *I love English but not being a teacher. I feel like doing everything is in vain.*

Excerpt 4: *It's no challenge with these students. They have no purpose, no goals, and no interest in anything; they just come and go without knowing what to do with their lives. And seeing those students every day makes me feel sad about the situation in this country.*

A substantial majority of the teachers rated their level of involvement as predominantly favourable. This demonstrates a significant level of dedication and emotional involvement in their teaching responsibilities. They clearly care deeply about their teaching positions and put a lot of effort into them.

However, it is important to highlight that while expressing positive engagement overall, the mentioned fluctuations in six of these teachers' responses suggest that their engagement is not consistently high but rather subject to change based on various circumstances. This limited level of involvement may be indicative of the dynamic nature of teaching. A smaller but still significant group of educators, consisting of seven participants, reported that they were not engaged in the work that they were doing. The reasons provided for this disengagement—feelings of tiredness, sadness, exhaustion, anxiety, stress, and desperation—highlight potential areas of concern. The existence of disengaged teachers indicates a crucial area that requires action, since prolonged disengagement can have adverse effects not just on the teachers' well-being but also on student outcomes and the whole school environment.

Relationships

All the teachers expressed that they had good relationships at work, but some of them highlighted the importance of formal relationships. Also, the majority of the teachers (n = 50) stated that these relationships have a positive influence on them. Along with positive interaction and feelings, answers included different attitudes towards administrators and parents in terms of sincerity, formality, or closeness in relations at work. One of the participants stated that work relations had negative effects on her. Two of them emphasised that any kind of work relationship does not have any influence on them.

Excerpt 1: *I try to be in contact with my coworkers. Sometimes I learn new things from them, and I try to inspire them about teaching English. I have a good relationship with my colleagues and administrators. I know my responsibilities towards my administrators. I am friendly and have good relationships with my students. I believe having contact with parents is compulsory; otherwise, we cannot reach our goals. Cooperation with parents is really an important factor. So I try to negotiate with parents about the students.*

Excerpt 2: *I have great relationships with the administration and my colleagues. I also get along really well with the students; they really love me. Parents, not so much, because they don't really care what their children are doing. They don't even come to the parents' meeting.*

Excerpt 3: *I have a good relationship with my students, their parents, or colleagues. But administrators make things hard. I just try to limit my communication with the administrators at the school.*

The results of the “relationship” reveal that almost all of the participants emphasised the positive effects of positive relationships at work on their wellbeing, strikingly drawing our attention as one of the most prominent elements of the PERMA model. This result may be important in terms of showing how much the teaching profession is based on interpersonal relationships. This can be understood as that a good work environment is largely related to having good relationships with people at the workplace (Şahin et al., 2019). As Ateş (2024) asserts in his MA thesis, since educators must collaborate to meet the difficulties of the demanding teaching profession, collegial connections are also considered a significant factor impacting teachers' wellbeing. Positive connections amongst colleagues where there is mutual trust, support, sincerity, and belongingness are an element that contributes positively to teachers' wellbeing (Arda, 2023).

Meaning

Except for one of the teachers, all the teachers have a strong meaning to their job in terms of their purpose and mission as language teachers. Their meaning concepts were categorised under four themes:

1. Teaching language through four skills
2. Promoting the affective side of learning English
3. Being a role model or a guide to students
4. Teaching English for use in real life

Excerpt 1: *To help children be able to speak fluently, understand what they have read, and communicate with each other in the second language.*

Excerpt 2: *As a language teacher, my first aim is to make students love English, so I try to integrate as many enjoyable activities as I can.*

Excerpt 3: *A guide helping students find their way in life.*

Excerpt 4: *My purpose is to enable the learner to communicate effectively and appropriately in real-life situations and to use English effectively for study purposes across the curriculum.*

Excerpt 5: *I feel like I'm just punching the clock with no purpose because I'm a teacher at a vocational high school. I don't feel like I'm accomplishing anything because of the lack of interest from the students. If I were teaching at a higher level, I would feel like I was doing something more meaningful.*

Except for one teacher, all participants emphasised the strong meanings they attributed to their professions. This finding highlights "meaning" as the most crucial pillar of the PERMA model. The difference in the meanings attributed did not diminish the power of this pillar; on the contrary, it added diversity.

It is seen that the only participant who could not attribute a purpose and meaning to his/her profession explained this situation with student indifference and school type. This participant believes that having the desire and hope to work with students at different levels will increase the possibility of assigning more meaning to the profession in the future.

Accomplishments

The majority of the participants (n = 46) were found to be content with their work achievements, but three of them stated that what they achieved was insufficient and that they could do more. Seven teachers were dissatisfied with their work success. Three of these teachers pointed to the student as the underlying cause of their dissatisfaction with their achievements. Only one teacher cited the earthquake as the cause, while another addressed the circumstances by stating that she was a novice teacher.

Excerpt 1: *My work achievement changes from time to time. Last year, 80 percent of my students were able to get into universities. This has contributed to our school in a good way. The demand for the English department has increased every year, but this year only one English class could be opened.*

Excerpt 2: *Achieving our goals and the feeling of being able to achieve something certainly make me extremely happy. It is motivating for me to produce a concrete product or to see that children are happy and satisfied at the end of a workday.*

Excerpt 3: *I feel like I am confident and pretty successful at my job, but I still have a huge room for improvement.*

Excerpt 4: *I don't feel I have achieved anything. I need to make the switch to a higher level of education to feel like I'm making a difference.*

It has been observed that participant teachers' subjective definitions of "achievement" varied, but their professional success appeared to have contributed to their wellbeing. Especially the belief of three participants that they can do more than what they have already achieved may indicate their idealism and professional development motivation.

Seven participants have expressed dissatisfaction with their professional accomplishments, citing a variety of reasons. The student factor emerges as the primary reason for the dissatisfaction with their professional achievements. Although dissatisfaction with professional achievement due to an earthquake or being a newly appointed teacher are reasons that can be overcome over time, the student factor may be a more difficult situation to control or change.

Primary Factors Affecting English Teachers' Wellbeing

The data analysis revealed three main themes concerning the second research question as affecting participants' wellbeing both positively and negatively: student motivation and success, approval and support, and social relationships.

Student Motivation and Success

It was seen that students were the most effective factor for teacher wellbeing. The relevance of student motivation was emphasised by all participants. They mentioned that the students were their first priority at work. Motivated students made the teachers feel content, satisfied, and motivated to continue their job despite all the other negativities they face in their profession. It was seen that the factor that enabled the teachers to overcome all the difficulties was the willing student who participated in the lesson in a motivated way. The students' attitude towards English as being irrelevant to their future career plans and their lack of interest in learning it were the teachers' main complaints.

Three teachers stated their dissatisfaction as a result of the unmotivated and reluctant students. These are the metaphors used by teachers to describe these circumstances: "harder than to split an atom", "feel like I'm punching the clock", "I feel myself redundant". Another student-related concern is student achievement. It was seen that student success caused teachers to feel their profession more meaningful and themselves more useful and happier. For this reason, student failure or failure to achieve success also negatively affected the level of teachers' well-being. Crowded classrooms, insufficient lesson hours, inadequate school facilities, and a lack of some school equipment are some of the challenges highlighted by the teachers for their students due to their importance for motivation and achievement.

Approval and Support

After the students, it is the administration and management that are seen as variables that affect instructors positively or negatively. Nearly all participants were influenced by the positive and negative attitudes of the administration. Teachers explicitly said that the school administration's support and approval have a significant positive impact on them by enhancing their motivation and job satisfaction. Teachers not only want themselves or their students to be successful but also want to be appreciated by the administration. For example, one teacher

commented "I felt proud of myself when the administrator shared my success on school social media". They also desired administration support when they had indoor or outdoor events with students and used school facilities. Restrictive and limiting behaviours by the administration had negative effects on teachers as well. "While working on an activity with my students, suddenly the administrator entered and told us not to make noise," a teacher said when describing the incident. They stated that teaching languages should be different from teaching other subjects in the classroom, but they do not feel supported in their actions. For all of these reasons, it was evident that the administration's appreciation and supportive approach strongly impacted the degree of teachers' wellbeing, both favourably and unfavourably.

Another important factor is parental approval and support. Firstly, teachers wanted to be appreciated by parents for the work they did with their students. Second, teachers expected parental cooperation in encouraging students to value English. While some teachers refer to it as "support," others refer to it as "cooperation" with parents. Although parental support significantly improved teachers' professional satisfaction and the success of their professions, they claimed that they did not always receive enough support.

Social Relationships

The majority of the participants defined their relationships with their colleagues and administrators in the workplace as "good relationships". Participants also noted that whether these relationships are positive or negative has a huge impact on them. Except for two teachers, findings revealed that teachers had warm and sincere relationships in the work environment and went to the workplace in a "more motivated manner". "Sincere, friendly, and respectful" were the key adjectives used by the majority of the teachers to describe their relationships at work. The other two teachers felt demotivated and lonely in their work environments, where there was no sincere and reliable relationship. In such a case, one teacher conveyed her feelings, saying, "I just wonder what I'm doing here. I'm depressed and angry." Another instructor considered leaving the school and even the city because of issues with the administrators. Regarding the relationship with parents, teachers expressed that they had good relations, and they highlighted "respect" as the most crucial thing between them.

The Impact of the Workplace on English Teachers' Overall Wellbeing

In examining wellbeing studies grounded in the PERMA model, it is noted that the PERMA-Profiler (Butler & Kern, 2016) is utilised to evaluate overall wellbeing and the Workplace PERMA-Profiler (Kern, 2016) to assess workplace wellbeing. This situation highlights the possibility of assessing these two states of wellbeing independently. In light of this need, it is essential to assess the perspectives of teacher candidates regarding the influence of their workplace wellbeing on their overall wellbeing.

Analysis of the participating teachers' responses revealed that they believed their work and workplace wellbeing, whether positive or negative, impacted their overall wellbeing. All the teachers who participated in the study stated that everything they experience at work and in their professional lives directly affects them in their daily lives. They asserted that the negative dynamics in their school relationships carried over into their home relationships. They explained that they experienced depression after school when they encountered unwanted incidents. Additionally, the findings indicated that workplace positivity and positive relationships had a significant impact on the wellbeing of teachers. They stated that this energy and motivation continued throughout the day and made them pleased when they were in close, trusting relationships at school.

Discussion

This study examined the state of English teachers' wellbeing, drawing on the PERMA model (Seligman, 2011). Also, the underlying factors of their wellbeing were examined, and last of all, teachers' perspectives on the effect of their work and workplace on their wellbeing were investigated.

PERMA results indicate that participants in this study have a high level of wellbeing. Despite some dissatisfaction or negativity in their workplaces, they notably have positive emotions, good relationships, strong meaning, and satisfying achievements in their profession. In a recent mixed-methods doctoral thesis conducted by Şavran (2023), the PERMA-Profilier and Workplace PERMA-Profilier were used to determine the wellbeing levels of Turkish EFL teachers working in the centres of Adana and Osmaniye provinces. Turkish English teachers demonstrated a high level of professional (7.37 out of 10) and general wellbeing (7.57 out of 10). The results of Şavran's study support the findings of this study conducted in Elazığ province.

One of the findings is that the meaning that teachers give to their profession is diversified. Some teachers want to teach language through four skills, while others want to teach English for real-life situations. Some teachers highlighted the affective side of teaching English as a goal. Another goal for teachers was to serve as role models or mentors for students. Their purpose and aims may change, but they have a powerful meaning when they talk about their job.

The findings of factors affecting teachers' wellbeing highlighted three issues: Student Motivation and Success, Approval and Support, and Social Relationships. The idea to emphasise in each of these factors is that their presence positively influences teachers' wellbeing, while their absence negatively affects them. In these results, the most striking finding was the effect of students on teacher wellbeing. Teachers began almost every statement with their students and their impact on them, whether favourable or negative. This can be explained through their internalised interactions with students, because personal interactions with students provide instructors with internal incentives and give meaning to their profession. Internalised interactions impact their emotional reactions and responses in their dealings with pupils on a daily basis. These interactions can have an effect on the well-being of both teachers and students over time (Spilt et al., 2011). This is compatible with teachers' own sense of responsibility for their students. Furthermore, teachers' well-being and job satisfaction improve as they become more connected to the meaning and purpose of why they became teachers in the course of their daily work (O'Brien & Guiney, 2021).

Second, the school administration's approval and support have a significant positive impact on teachers' motivation and job satisfaction. Teachers not only want to be successful for themselves or their students, but they also want to be appreciated and praised by the administration. Praise is a sort of social reinforcement that has an immediate effect on motivation since it is the direct and socially awarded statement of greatest appreciation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The present study found that teachers were eager to receive the administration's endorsement and assistance. Parental acceptance and support were also important for teachers' wellbeing, but they came second to administrators. Arda (2023) conducted a study involving part-time English language instructors at a private university in Türkiye, revealing comparable findings regarding the significance of administrative approval and support. The hierarchy between permanent and temporary instructors, the absence of mentoring programs, and the administration's lack of recognition negatively impacted the emotional wellbeing of part-time instructors. The hierarchy between permanent and

temporary instructors, the absence of mentoring programs, and the administration's lack of recognition reduced them to mere teachers who should teach and then leave the institution. Discriminatory acts of their administrators reduced their emotional wellbeing and hindered their attachment to the department. A recent study by Şavran (2023) reveals results that align with those of this study. English teachers exhibiting a high degree of professional wellbeing benefited from assistance and support from colleagues and managers, fostering a sense of value and safety in their work environment while also reflecting feelings of being esteemed and appreciated in the workplace. Findings revealed that the majority of the teachers have a very favourable work environment. They have positive working relationships, which significantly impacts their wellbeing. Relationship sincerity and dependability, a welcoming setting, and respectful conduct were proven to be highly effective. Also, in Arda's study (2023), findings proved that positive workplace relationships and helpful coworkers positively impact language teachers' wellbeing. The study results from Aelterman et al. (2007) align with the current study's expectations for a positive workplace culture that fosters cooperation, trust, and a sense of involvement among coworkers. This similarity among these studies demonstrates the value of relationships in the workplace. The results also showed that teachers have positive relationships with parents, but for teachers, "respect" is the most crucial component of a strong connection with them. The analysis revealed that, while teachers rated their jobs as favourable for their wellbeing, this did not mean they were free of obstacles or negativity. Economic issues can also be one of these challenges. This study reveals that only two teachers have addressed this issue, contrasting with the findings of Arda's (2023) recent study in another Turkish context. It is noteworthy that the English teachers in both cases operate in distinct working settings. One of the most commonly cited problems affecting these part-time instructors' wellbeing was the fact that they do not receive a consistent and adequate pay on a set date. Financial difficulties inherently emphasise this finding in a manner distinct from our study. Since MoNE school teachers in this current study earn the same monthly salary as other teachers in the nation, we can assume that they may be less likely to bring up financial concerns. Instead, despite potential workplace concerns, it is seen that the teachers thrived. There may be negatives, but the benefits outweigh the drawbacks, allowing the teacher to maintain a sense of wellbeing. In their recent meta analysis review Zhou et al. (2024) report that exhibiting high levels of work engagement, job satisfaction, and dedication, teachers who have a high degree of wellbeing are also more likely to have lower rates of burnout, stress, and plans to quit their jobs. In a similar vein, Babic et al. (2022) found that when educators have access to more positive possibilities, they are better able to handle the pressures and negative elements that could negatively affect their wellbeing.

Everything that happens to teachers at work and in their professional lives has a direct impact on their overall wellbeing in their daily lives. Wellbeing is not only individualistic and subjective but also societal and objective. Situations, location, activities, and psychological resources, including interpersonal interactions, all influence the dynamic creation of wellbeing (La Placa et al., 2013). As a result, job satisfaction and positive relationships have a major impact on the wellbeing of teachers. This effect can be beneficial or negative, but it does occur. Everyone has the ability to influence their own well-being. However, rather than putting all of the responsibility on the individual, Knight and McNaught's (2011) approach recognises that institutions, cultures, situations, and policies can all have an impact on an individual's well-being with the hope of attaining "wellbeing for all" (p. 3).

Conclusion

This study examined the wellbeing of English teachers working for MoNE schools as well as the underlying factors that contribute to their wellbeing. Analysis of their perceptions of the impact of their jobs on their overall wellbeing was also conducted. It was demonstrated that these English language teachers have a high level of wellbeing at the MoNE-run schools. They were always advocating for their students when they voiced opinions or had grievances over a certain topic. Research demonstrated that the pupils at these MoNE schools were the main element influencing English language teachers' wellbeing, whether positively or negatively. These teachers attribute a strong sense of purpose to their students, and research shows that this significantly raises their levels of wellbeing. It can be concluded that these teachers are dedicated to their profession. At the same time, despite the challenges in their organisations, they have the ability to succeed. Three months before the study was finished, for example, Elazığ, the province of Kahramanmaraş, and eleven other cities were all hit by two large earthquakes at the same time. This massive earthquake claimed thousands of lives and destroyed hundreds of buildings. Elazığ is one of the cities that has been affected to differing degrees. Nevertheless, the findings indicated that not a single teacher had asked for comfortable working conditions. The country's economic woes offer yet another challenging situation, although only two educators feel that their profession has not been adequately compensated. Comparatively to several big cities like İstanbul, Ankara, and İzmir, the city of Elazığ might be less impacted by financial difficulties such as rent and transportation. When evaluating the research results, it is crucial to take into account the unique context and characteristics of the province, ensuring that the findings do not apply universally to all provinces. Teachers face many challenges in economic, professional, social, and managerial aspects. The education system is a fundamental pillar that shapes a nation's future, and teachers are among its most essential components. The challenges encountered by educators are significant not only for the educational framework but also for the broader societal future (İş & Atış, 2024). Kun and Gadanecz (2022) mention that educators are qualified professionals who often demonstrate considerable dedication to their chosen field, and we should recognise and value their experience and professionalism.

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Geniş Özet

Giriş

Bu çalışma, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin işyerindeki refah hallerini ve refahlarına etkisi olan faktörleri tespit etmeyi amaçlamaktadır (Seligman, 2011). Araştırma soruları:

1. MEB'e bağlı okullarda çalışan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin refah seviyeleri nedir?
2. İngilizce öğretmenlerinin iş yerlerinde refahını etkileyen başlıca faktörler nelerdir?
3. İngilizce öğretmenleri yaptıkları işin genel refah durumlarına etkisini nasıl algılamaktadır?

Bilimsel çalışmalarda nitel araştırma türünün zengin veri sağlaması nedeniyle (Dörnyei, 2007) bu çalışmada nitel araştırma modeli tercih edilmiştir.

Yöntem

Çalışma, Türkiye'nin Doğu Anadolu Bölgesi'nde yer alan Elazığ ilinde gerçekleştirilmiştir. Katılımcılar Millî Eğitim Bakanlığına bağlı devlet ve özel okullarında çalışan 53 İngilizce öğretmenidir. Veriler GoogleDocs bağlantısıyla katılımcılara ulaştırılan açık uçlu anket soruları ve yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yoluyla elde edilmiştir. Mümkün olduğunca çok İngilizce öğretmenine ulaşmak için kartopu örnekleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Bu çalışmanın katılımcıları Twitter ve WhatsApp gibi sosyal medya ağları üzerinden toplanmıştır. Açık uçlu anket soruları ve yarı yapılandırılmış mülakat soruları PERMA modelinin beş bileşenine uygun olarak araştırmacılar tarafından geliştirilmiştir. Soruların uygunluğu konusunda uzman görüşleri alınmış ve uygulama öncesinde gerekli değişiklikler yapılmıştır. Gönüllü 13 katılımcıyla ana dilleri olan Türkçe yapılan görüşmeler katılımcıların izniyle kaydedilmiş ve dökümler İngilizce olarak yazılmıştır. Veriler Tematik Analiz kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Bu çalışmada, nitel analizde hem tümevarımsal hem de tümdengelimsel Tematik Analizlerin yapıldığı karma bir yaklaşım kullanılmıştır (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). İlk olarak, veriler tümdengelimli olarak analiz edilmiş ve PERMA modeli

ilk araştırma sorusunu yanıtlamak için bir tema olarak kullanılmıştır. İkinci ve üçüncü araştırma soruları için, ortaya çıkan temaları bulmak amacıyla veriler tümevarımsal olarak analiz edilmiştir.

Bulgular

İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Refahı: PERMA

Olumlu duygular, bağlanma/akış, ilişki, anlam ve başarı, refahın dayandığı beş temel unsurdur. PERMA bu beş bileşenin kısaltmasıdır.

Olumlu/Olumsuz Duygular

Katılımcıların olumlu ve olumsuz duyguları birlikte dile getirildiğini, ancak olumlu duygu ve düşüncelerin çoğunluğu oluşturduğunu görmekteyiz. 53 öğretmeninden 37'si herhangi bir memnuniyetsizlik ya da olumsuzluktan bahsetmeksizin tamamen olumlu duygulardan bahsetmiştir. Katılımcılardan beşi, idari zorluklar, iş yükü veya destek eksikliği gibi altta yatan faktörlere işaret ederek işlerine veya işyerlerine yönelik yalnızca olumsuz duygularını dile getirmiştir. Yalnızca bir katılımcı belirli bir neden belirtmeksizin olumsuz duygularını ifade etmiştir; bu da hoşnutsuzluklarının daha öznel veya daha az somut kaynaklardan kaynaklanabileceğini düşündürmektedir. Öte yandan, 11 eğitimci öğretme hevesi ve olumlu deneyimlerin yanı sıra mesleki ortamlarındaki zorluklar veya sorunlar da dâhil olmak üzere olumlu ve olumsuz duyguları bir arada ifade etmiştir. Bu durum, bu öğretmenlerin genel olarak olumlu bir bakış açısına sahip olmakla birlikte, çalışma ortamlarının belirli yönleriyle ilgili olabilecek endişeleri veya memnuniyetsizlik alanları da olduğunu göstermektedir. Sonuçlar öğretmenlik mesleğindeki duygusal deneyimlerin karmaşıklığını vurgulamakta, olumlu duyguların çoğunluğu rollerinde tatmin ve memnuniyete işaret etmektedir. Bununla birlikte, olumsuz duyguların varlığı, genel iş memnuniyetini ve refahını artırmak için eğitim ortamındaki belirli sorunları ele alma ihtiyacını vurgulamaktadır.

Bağlanma/Akış

Katılımcıların önemli bir çoğunluğu (46) bağlılıkları açısından duygularını genel olarak olumlu olarak tanımlamıştır. Bu bulgu öğretmenlik sorumluluklarına önemli düzeyde adanmışlık ve duygusal bağlanma gösterdiklerini ortaya koymaktadır. Genel olarak olumlu bağlanma ifade etmekle birlikte, bu öğretmenlerden altısının yanıtlarında belirtilen dalgalanmaların, bağlanmalarının sürekli olarak yüksek olmadığını, daha ziyade çeşitli koşullara bağlı olarak değişime tabi olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu sınırlı bağlanma düzeyi, öğretmenliğin dinamik doğasının bir göstergesi olabilir. Yedi katılımcıdan oluşan bir grup, yaptıkları işe bağlı olmadıklarını bildirmiştir. Yorgunluk, üzüntü, bitkinlik, endişe, stres ve çaresizlik gibi nedenler, potansiyel endişe alanlarına ışık tutmaktadır.

“İlişki” sonuçları, katılımcıların neredeyse tamamının iş yerindeki olumlu ilişkilerin refahı üzerindeki olumlu etkilerini vurguladıklarını ortaya koymakta ve PERMA modelinin en belirgin unsurlarından biri olarak dikkatimizi çekmektedir. Bulgular öğretmenlik mesleğinin kişiler arası ilişkilere dayandığını göstermesi açısından önemlidir. Bu durum, iyi bir çalışma ortamının büyük ölçüde iş yerindeki insanlarla iyi ilişkilere sahip olmakla bağlantılı olduğu şeklinde anlaşılabilir (Şahin vd., 2019).

Öğretmenlerden biri hariç, tüm öğretmenler dil öğretmeni olarak işlerine güçlü bir anlam yüklemişlerdir. Bu bulgu, PERMA modelinin en önemli ayağının “anlam” olduğunu vurgulamaktadır. Atfedilen anlamlar farklılık göstermiş ama bu ayağın gücünü azaltmamış, aksine

çeşitlilik katmıştır. Mesleğine anlam yükleyemeyen tek katılımcı bu durumu öğrenci ilgisizliği ve okul türü ile açıklamıştır. Aynı katılımcı, farklı seviyelerdeki öğrencilerle çalışma isteği ve umuduna sahip olmanın ileride mesleğe daha fazla anlam yükleme olasılığını artıracasına inanmaktadır.

Başarı

Katılımcıların çoğunluğunun (46) iş başarılarından memnun olduğu görülmüştür. Katılımcıların öznel “başarı” tanımları farklılık göstermekle birlikte, mesleki başarılarının refah hallerine katkıda bulunduğu görülmektedir. Mesleki başarılarından memnun olmama nedenlerinin başında öğrenci faktörü gelmektedir.

İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Refahını Etkileyen Başlıca Faktörler

Öğretmenlerin refahını etkileyen faktörlere ilişkin bulgular üç konunun altını çizmiştir: Öğrenci Motivasyonu ve Başarısı, Onay ve Destek ve Sosyal İlişkiler. Bu faktörlerin her birinde vurgulanması gereken fikir, varlıklarının öğretmenlerin refahını olumlu yönde etkilediği, yokluklarının ise olumsuz yönde etkilediğidir. Bu sonuçlarda en çarpıcı bulgu, öğrencilerin öğretmenlerin refahı üzerindeki etkisi olmuştur. Öğretmenler neredeyse her ifadelerine öğrencileriyle ve onların kendileri üzerindeki olumlu/olumsuz etkileriyle başlamışlardır. Bu durum, öğrencilerle olan içselleştirilmiş etkileşimleriyle açıklanabilir; çünkü öğrencilerle olan kişisel etkileşimler öğretmenlere içsel teşvikler sağlamakta ve mesleklerine anlam kazandırmaktadır. İkinci olarak öğrencilerden sonra katılımcıların refahını idare ve yönetim olumlu ya da olumsuz yönde etkilemektedir. Öğretmenler sadece kendilerinin ya da öğrencilerinin başarılı olmasını değil, aynı zamanda idare tarafından takdir edilmeyi de istemektedir. Veli onayı ve desteği daha sonra gelmektedir. Üçüncü etken faktör çalışma ortamındaki sosyal ilişkiler olmuştur. Velilerle ilişkiler konusunda “saygı” etkin bir faktör olarak bulunmuştur.

İş Yerinin İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Genel Refahı Üzerindeki Etkisi

Araştırmaya katılan tüm öğretmenler, iş ve meslek hayatlarında yaşadıkları her şeyin günlük yaşamlarında kendilerini doğrudan etkilediğini belirtmişlerdir. Gün içinde okulda yaşadıkları ilişkilerdeki olumsuzlukların genel refahlarına yansıdığını ifade etmişlerdir.

Sonuç ve Tartışma

Bu çalışmada, MEB okullarında çalışan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin refahı ve refahlarına katkıda bulunan temel faktörlerin yanı sıra işlerinin genel refahları üzerindeki etkisine dair algıları da incelenmiştir. Bu çalışmadaki İngilizce öğretmenlerinin okullarında yüksek bir refah seviyesine sahip oldukları görülmüştür. Belirli bir konu hakkında görüşlerini dile getirdiklerinde veya şikâyetleri olduğunda her zaman öğrencilerinden yana duygularını ifade etmişlerdir. Araştırmanın sonuçları, öğrencilerin İngilizce öğretmenlerinin refahını olumlu veya olumsuz olarak etkileyen ana unsur olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu öğretmenler, öğrencilerine güçlü bir amaç duygusu atfetmektedirler ve bu da onların refah seviyelerini önemli ölçüde artırmaktadır. Katılımcı öğretmenlerin mesleklerine adanmış oldukları, aynı zamanda iş yerlerindeki zorluklara rağmen başarılı olma yeteneğine sahip oldukları sonucuna varılabilmektedir. Örneğin, çalışma tamamlanmadan üç ay önce, Elazığ, Kahramanmaraş ili ve diğer on bir şehir aynı anda iki büyük depremle sarsılmıştır. Bu büyük deprem, binlerce insanın hayatına mal olmuş ve yüzlerce binayı yıkmıştır. Elazığ, farklı derecelerde etkilenen illerimizden biri olmuştur. Bununla birlikte, bulgular katılımcı öğretmenlerden hiçbirinin rahat çalışma koşulları talep etmediğini göstermiştir. Ülkenin ekonomik sıkıntıları da başka bir zorlu durumu sunuyor olmasına rağmen, sadece iki eğitimci

mesleklerinin maddi olarak yeterince karşılanmadığını ifade etmiştir. Bu noktada, Elazığ şehrinin İstanbul, Ankara ve İzmir gibi büyük şehirlerle kıyaslandığında küçük bir il olması nedeniyle kira ve ulaşım gibi mali zorluklardan daha az etkilenen bir şehir olduğu söylenebilir. Bu bağlamda, araştırma sonuçlarını değerlendirirken bulguların tüm illere evrensel olarak uygulanmadığından emin olmak için ilin benzersiz bağlamı ve özelliklerini dikkate almak gerekmektedir. Tüm dünyada öğretmenler, ekonomik, mesleki, sosyal ve yönetsel alanlarda birçok zorlukla karşı karşıya kalmaktadır. Oysa eğitim sistemi, bir ulusun geleceğini şekillendiren temel unsurlardan biridir ve öğretmenler en önemli bileşenlerindendir. Öğretmenlerin karşılaştığı zorluklar, yalnızca eğitim sistemi için değil, aynı zamanda daha geniş anlamda toplumsal geleceğimiz için de önemlidir (İş & Atış, 2024). Eğitimciler genellikle seçtikleri alana önemli ölçüde bağlılık gösteren nitelikli profesyonellerdir. Onların deneyimlerini ve profesyonelliklerini tanıyıp değer vermemiz gerekmektedir (Kun ve Gadanez, 2022).