



Investigating the levels of teacher retention within the context of sustainable education policies in Turkey*

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to set the views of teachers regarding teacher retention as well as to determine whether these views might change in reference to personal variables or not. Being a descriptive survey model study, it involves 1218 teachers working at state and private middle and high schools located in Adapazarı District of Sakarya Province at 2018-2019 Academic Year and who have been selected through segmented-simple random sampling. “Teacher Retention Scale” developed by Brydson Alexander (2010) and adapted into Turkish culture standards by Kaya (2019) has been used in the study to collect data. In the analysis of the data, parametric analyses have been used. The views of teachers regarding teacher retention in reference to their personal variables have marked significant differences depending on type of institution, union membership and wage satisfaction, while they have marked no significant difference depending on the variables of sex, marital status, type of school, field of study, professional seniority, term of employment and the school of graduation. The significant differences in teacher retention have been found to be in favor of teachers who work at private schools; who lack union membership and among those who are satisfied with their wages.

Keywords: Sustainability; education policy, teacher retention; teacher education; personal variables

1. Introduction

The concept of sustainability which emerged at the beginning of 20th century is an important concept which was initially treated in the environmental and economic sense, and then found meaning also in social, cultural and educational spheres. In the relevant literature, over 200 studies have been conducted about the meaning of sustainability and the definitions have varied depending on whether is handled in economic, cultural, educational or any other field. (Ramsey, 2015). Sustainability is a concept which aims to understand, tackle and reduce the existing or future economic inequalities,

* This research was generated by Ayça Kaya from a PhD Thesis, which was accepted by BAIBU Institute of Educational Sciences under the consultancy of Prof. Dr. Türkan ARGON in 2019.

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environmental disruptions and social disturbances (Lozano, 2008). As can be understood from the targets of the concept, it is a developmental concept dealing with the organizations as well as the individuals and pointing out to a process which needs diligent attention. For anything to be sustainable, that thing should be sustained within its life cycle, thus ensuring also efficient and effective usage of the resources. Today, the most valuable resource is “human resource”. Whatever its position and status may be, this resource is the main pillar which will create and implement the policies of organizations and societies for purposes of sustainability. And the foundation which will raise this resource and serve it to the society is the education system. The education system and institutions have pivotal role in ensuring that the individuals raised to the society can serve for sustainable development and that they can successfully fulfil such service at corporate level. It is because, the educational institutions’ surviving in the national and international competition depends on their ability to exist in a qualified level. That the education policies are sustainable increases the importance of schools and its employees taking the central position of theories and implementations.

The retention of the teachers, who are working in the educational institutions and responsible for performing the education service is considered to be one of the issues directly concerning the sustainability. Because, sustainable existence of the educational institutions requires that the suitable conditions both not only for the students, but also for the teachers are provided at the school environment and measures are taken to support their development. In this country, teacher retention is explained by factors such as cultural background, their social rights, student and administrator profiles, economic situation and working in urban or rural areas (Pittman, 2015). In Turkey, the recruitment of teachers is conducted through an examination called KPSS (Public Personnel Selection Exam). Initially, this examination consisted of two stages and the prospective teachers were able to get into the vacant positions in their fields with the scores obtained from these two stage examinations. However, the increase in the graduates from the faculties of education and the limited number of positions to which teachers can be appointed have led to changes in examinations. The examination has been transformed into three stages for some departments, also an oral examination is required for the appointment. Civil servants in Turkey are subject to the civil servants’ law no. 657 and many of their rights are guaranteed by this law. Factors such as the surplus in the number of teacher candidates waiting for permanent position, the shortage of permanent positions and the number of private schools or courses, offering of relatively higher salaries in private schools compared to public schools, and not being able to work more than thirty hours per week in public schools make it difficult to abandon a permanent position, as well as increases the appeal of public schools for teachers in Turkey. However, as a result of the regulations, some new applications are also noteworthy. One of them is the article stipulating as: “teachers cannot work in the same place for more than 8 years,” in section 35 of the Regulation on Appointment and

Replacement of Teachers dated 17.04.2015 and numbered 29329 (MEB, 2015). In this sense, Turkish authorities make some legal arrangements on teacher retention. According to TEDMEM (Turkish Education Foundation) report published in 2018, in the declarations of the 2018 Presidential and Parliamentary elections, it is seen that all the political parties have attempted to enact “Professional Teaching Law” which handles the situations like the arrangement of teachers' education, development, employment, appointment and placement, improvement of working conditions, and improvement of personal affairs while protecting their financial and social rights.

As it is obvious, there are some legal arrangements for the sustainability of teaching profession in Turkey. However, the legal arrangements and regulations are not sufficient alone. Likewise, the relevant literature reports that there are great many factors affecting the attitudes of teacher retention. Pittman (2015) identified the factors that affect teachers' retention at school from the lowest to the highest impact level, such as salary/benefits, educational resources, geographic location, workload/class size, administrative support, professional development, social factors, and work environment. Accordingly, it was seen that while the teachers decide whether to continue their profession at school considering the salary, their decision is the least influenced by the working environments. In this case, it can be said that the monetary satisfaction of teachers will prolong their stay in the profession. Considering the system, it is seen that teachers obviously care about educational resources, since this factor ranks 2nd. For this reason, it can be said that improvements in the education system can also increase the length of time teachers stay at school.

Apart from this research, it is seen that there are many studies about the teacher retention in the literature (see Esquivel 2018; Foster, 2018; Kuhn, 2018; Richardson, 2017; Zengin, 2016; Bartholomew-Jones, 2015; Troutt, 2014; Akbaş, 2013; Weston, 2013; Curtis, 2011; Alexander, 2010; Billingsley, 2004; Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004), and almost all of these studies emphasize the importance of factors in maintaining teachers' stay at school. This finding also reveals the fact that teacher retention attitude is comprehensive research topic that needs to be addressed in the context of each country, every region or even every school. Factors affecting teacher retention attitudes in schools, which are the primary part in the educational organizations, should be examined on the basis of acquired data and the results should be used in order to maintain the availability of teachers in the system in a qualified way. The improvement of the factors affecting the teacher retention will create the basis for a more qualified education environment. From this perspective, while the education policies are being formed, the teacher retention attitudes can be considered within the context of sustainability. Because, the teacher retention attitudes will bring about many qualifications. Likewise, sustainability is a concept which is correlated with a lot of variables including permitting the development of human life quality, and encouragement of decision making in both individual and international level and of cooperation and participation (Tonguç and Özbayraktar, 2017).

Furthermore, a human focused morality principle lays the foundation of sustainability (Tekeli, 2001) and for provision of sustainability, wider means of education should be adopted in creation of knowledge and transformation by the teachers and the school community (Lorenzi and McDonagh, 2014). Because, all of the mental transformations to be realized towards the teacher retention attitudes will contribute to the sustainability of teachers. Within such framework, systematic configuration of the policies on encouragement of the teachers will also pave the way for healthy functioning system.

This study aims to determine whether teacher retention attitudes changes depending on personal variables. Based on the aim of the study, it has been tried to seed answer to the following question: Do the teachers' level of attitude on stay at school make a significant difference by personal variables (gender, marital status, type of institution, type of school, branch, professional seniority, working time in school, graduated faculty, union membership and salary satisfaction)?

2. Method

The research has been designed with descriptive scanning model and it is aimed to depict the characteristics of the situation or phenomenon by accurately describing the situation. The aim, rather than to focus on the cause-effect relationship, is to define the variables that exist in a given situation and sometimes to describe the relationships between these variables (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

2.1. Target Population of the Study

The target population of the study consists of 3896 teachers working in public and private primary, secondary and high schools in Adapazarı district of Sakarya province in the academic year of 2018-2019. For the sample, a total of 1218 individuals were determined by stratified-simple random sampling. Stratified sampling is used in cases where there are substrata or subgroups in the defined target population (Shoukri, 2018). To this end, three separate strata were made in the form of primary, secondary and high schools from private and public schools in Adapazarı district center. For the sampling, stratified simple random sampling method was used and totally 1218 people have been reached. In the bordered population, in cases when there are sub strata or sub groups, the stratified sampling is used (Shoukri, 2018). In parallel with this, three separate strata were made including the primary, elementary and high school level from the private and public schools in district center of Adapazarı. 1218 of the applied data collection tools were available and they were analysed. When the personal characteristics of the teachers participating in the research are examined; 68.5% were women and 31.5% were men; 71.7% were married, 28.3% were single; 38.3% were in primary school, 27.3% were in secondary school; 34.4% were working in high school; and the majority of them, 23.3%, had 1-5 years of professional seniority. It was determined that 20.5% of the

participants were working as classroom teachers, 63.3% working in verbal branches, 8.8% were working in mathematical branches and 7.4% were working in artistry branches. While 63.3% of the participants were employed in the same school for 1-5 years and 59.9% of them were graduated from the faculty of education, it is identified that 69.8% of them were not union members and 53.3% were partially satisfied with their salaries. Furthermore, 61% of the participants were working at the public school and 39% of them at the private school.

2.2. Data Collection Tool and Data Collection

Data collection tools are the Personal Information Form and Teacher Retention Attitude Scale. The questions regarding the gender, marital status, type of institution, type of school, branch, professional seniority, working time in the school, graduating faculty, union membership and salary satisfaction are included in the personal information form. The Teacher Retention Attitude Scale is developed by Brydson Alexander (2010), which was used to determine the teacher retention attitudes; and it is adapted to Turkish culture by Kaya (2019). The original scale, consisting of 8 items, is of 5-point Likert type, which is evaluated between the range of “strongly disagree” and “strongly agree”. The original scale consists of one dimension. Cronbach Alpha coefficient, which expresses the internal consistency coefficient of the scale, is stated as $\alpha = .75$. For the language equivalence of the scale adapted to Turkish culture by Kaya (2019), a linguistic equivalent form study was conducted with back translation. AFA and DFA were used for construct validity. Cronbach's alpha coefficient is calculated as $(\alpha) = .81$. It is observed that ten total correlation coefficients ranged from .84 to .69. As a result of the adaptation study, it was found that the scale was a valid and reliable measurement instrument showing a factor load value in one dimension with a total of 6 items. In this study, internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach Alpha coefficient) of the scale was re-calculated and found to be .80.

2.3. Data Analysis

In the analysis of data, frequency and percentage were used for personal variables; the distribution of data was examined with skewness and kurtosis values. If skewness and kurtosis coefficients are between -1.96 and +1.96, it indicates that the data shows normal distribution (Can, 2014). In this study, skewness coefficient is found to be -.59, and Kurtosis value is found to be +.98; and parametric tests were performed by assuming data is normal distributed. In this respect, one-way ANOVA and t-test were used to determine whether there is a significant difference between opinions according to personal variables. It was decided that the significance level of the research was taken as .05. In the scoring of the data collection tool used to determine the opinions of the teachers working in primary, secondary and high schools which constitute the sample of

the research; 1,00–1,79 (strongly disagree), 1,80–2,59 (disagree), 2,60–3,39 (undecided), 3,40–4,19 (agree) and and 4,20– 5,00 (strongly agree) intervals were used.

3. Results

The findings obtained as a result of the analysis of the data obtained from the teachers are presented in tables.

3.1. Findings Regarding Teachers' Perceptions of Teacher Retention Attitudes According to Personal Variables

The findings of the analyses conducted to determine whether the opinions of teachers about their teacher retention attitude differ significantly according to their personal variables are presented in the tables below.

The results of the t-test on gender variable are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The t-test results of the mean scores of teacher retention attitudes according to gender variable

Scale	Gender	n	\bar{X}	SS	t	sd	p
Teacher Retention	Female	834	3.55	0.56	-0.668	1216	0.504
	Male	384	3.58	0.61			

p>0.05

Table 1, setting forth the teachers' opinions about teacher retention are examined reveals that both female and male teachers expressed their opinions at the level of “agree” with \bar{x} =3.55 and \bar{x} = 3.58 respectively. It has been found that the gender variable does not make any significant difference regarding the teacher retention attitudes (p> 0.05). According to such finding, it can be claimed that there is some similarity between the opinions of female teachers and male teachers about teacher retention attitudes.

The results of the t-test for the marital status variable have been presented in Table 2.

Table 2. The t-test results of the mean scores of teacher retention attitudes by marital status variable

Scale	Marital Status	n	\bar{X}	SS	t	sd	p
Teacher Retention	Married	873	3.58	0.56	1.734	1216	0.08
Attitude	Single	345	3.52	0.61			

p>0.05

Table 2, presenting the teachers' opinions about teacher retention reveals that both married ($\bar{x}=3.58$) and unmarried ($\bar{x}=3.52$) teachers have expressed their opinions at the level of “agree”. It has been found that the marital status variable does not make any significant difference regarding the teacher retention attitudes ($p > 0.05$). This finding shows that the opinions of teachers about teacher retention attitudes do vary by their marital status.

The results of the t-test for the Type of Institution variable are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. The t-test results of the mean scores of teacher retention attitudes according to type of institution variable

Scale	Type of institution	n	\bar{X}	SS	t	sd	p
Teacher Retention Attitude	Public School	743	3,51	0,59	-4,241	1216	0,00**
	Private School	475	3,65	0,55			

** $p < 0.01$

Table 3, presenting the teachers' opinions about teacher retention reveals that both teachers working at public schools and teachers working at private schools have stated opinions at the level of “agree” with $\bar{x}=3.51$ and $\bar{x}=3.65$ respectively. On the other hand, it is observed that the mean teacher retention attitude scores of the teachers working at public and private schools ($t = -4.241$; $p = 0.00 < 0.01$) makes a significant difference. The mean attitude score of the teachers working at private schools ($\bar{x} = 3.65$) is statistically higher than the teachers working at public schools ($\bar{x} = 3.51$). This finding suggests that the opinions of teachers about teacher retention are higher in favour of teachers working at private schools.

The results of the ANOVA for the Type of School variable are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. ANOVA results of the mean scores of teacher retention attitudes by the grade of school variable

Scale	Type of school	n	\bar{X}	SS	sd	F	p
Teacher Retention Attitude	Primary	467	3.54	0.57	2	2.14	0.119
	Secondary	332	3.53	0.62	1215		
	High School	419	3.61	0.54	1217		

$p > 0.05$

Table 4, presenting the teachers' opinions about teacher retention reveals that teachers working at primary schools, secondary schools or high schools have opinions at

the level of “agree” with $\bar{x}=3.54$; $\bar{x}=3.53$ and $\bar{x}=3.61$ respectively. It has been found that the school grade variable does not make any significant difference regarding the teacher retention attitudes ($p > 0.05$). In other words, teachers' opinions about teacher retention attitudes show similarity, independently from the grade of school they work at.

The results of the ANOVA for the branch variable are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. ANOVA results of the mean scores of teacher retention attitudes by branch variable

Scale	Branch	n	\bar{X}	SS	sd	F	p
Teacher Retention Attitude	Classroom Teacher	250	3.56	0.60	3	0.15	0.92
	Verbal Branch	771	3.57	0.58	1214		
	Mathematical Branch	107	3.56	0.56	1217		
	Artistry Branch	90	3.52	0.54			

$p > 0.05$

Table 5, presenting the teachers' opinions about teacher retention, reveals that teachers working as classroom teachers or in verbal, mathematical or artistry branches have opinions at the level of “agree” with $\bar{x}=3.56$; $\bar{x}=3.57$; $\bar{x}=3.56$ and $\bar{x}=3.52$ respectively. It has been found that the branch variable does not make any significant difference regarding the teacher retention attitudes ($p > 0.05$). This finding shows that there is no difference between the opinions of teachers according to the type of branches; in other words, their views are similar.

The results of the ANOVA for the professional seniority variable have been presented in Table 6.

Table 6. ANOVA results of the mean scores of teacher retention attitudes according to the professional seniority variable

Scale	Professional Seniority	n	\bar{X}	SS	sd	F	p
Teacher Retention Attitude	1-5 years	284	3.51	0.56	4	1.20	0.31
	6-10 years	268	3.58	0.58	1213		
	11-15 years	263	3.53	0.62	1217		
	16-20 years	196	3.60	0.57			
	21 or more years	207	3.60	0.53			

$p > 0.05$

Table 6, presenting the teachers' opinions about teacher retention reveals that teachers who have professional seniority of 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, 16-20

years and 21 or more years have opinions at the level of “agree” with $\bar{x}=3.51$; $\bar{x}=3.58$; $\bar{x}=3.53$; $\bar{x}=3.60$ and $\bar{x}=3.60$ respectively. It has been found that the professional seniority variable also does not make any significant difference regarding the teacher retention attitudes ($p > 0.05$). According to this finding, it can be suggested that teacher retention attitude does not change according to their professional seniority, in other words, teachers have a positive attitude towards teacher retention regardless of their professional seniority.

The results of the ANOVA for the working time in the school variable are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. ANOVA results of the mean scores of teacher retention attitudes according to the working time at school variable

Scale	Working time in the school	n	\bar{X}	SS	sd	F	p
Teacher Retention Attitude	1-5 years	771	3.54	0.57	4	0.82	0.51
	6-10 years	258	3.60	0.61	1213		
	11-15 years	109	3.61	0.58	1217		
	16-20 years	43	3.50	0.50			
	21 or more years	37	3.59	0.41			

$p > 0.05$

Table 7, presenting the teachers' opinions about teacher retention reveals that teachers who have school working time of 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, 16-20 years and 21 or more years have opinions at the level of “agree” with $\bar{x}=3.54$; $\bar{x}=3.60$; $\bar{x}=3.61$; $\bar{x}=3.50$ and $\bar{x}=3.59$ respectively. It has been found that the working time at the school variable also does not make any significant difference regarding the teacher retention attitudes ($p > 0.05$). According to this finding, it can be suggested that teacher retention attitude does not change according to their working time at the school.

The results of the ANOVA for the graduated faculty variable are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. ANOVA results of the mean scores of teacher retention attitudes according to the graduated faculty variable

Scale	Graduated Faculty	n	\bar{X}	SS	sd	F	p
Teacher Retention	Education Fac.	729	3.54	0.58	2	1.41	0.24
	Arts&Sciences Fac.	344	3.60	0.57	1215		

Attitude	Other	145	3.57	0.56	1217
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p>0.05

Table 8, presenting the teachers' opinions about teacher retention reveals that teachers who graduated from education faculty, arts & sciences faculty and other faculties have opinions at the level of “agree” with \bar{X} =3.54; \bar{X} =3.60 and \bar{X} =3.66 respectively. It is found that graduated faculty variable also did not make a significant difference regarding the teacher retention attitudes ($p > 0.05$). According to this finding, it can be suggested that teacher retention attitude does not change according to the graduated faculty.

The results of the t-test for the union membership variable are presented in Table 9.

Table 9. the t-test results of the mean scores of teacher retention attitudes according to the union membership variable

Scale	Union Membership	n	\bar{X}	SS	t	sd	p
Teacher Retention Attitude	Unionized	368	3.49	0.63	-2.763	1216	0.00**
	Non-unionized	850	3.59	0.55			

**p<0.01

Table 9, presenting the teachers' opinions about teacher retention reveals that both unionized and non-unionized teachers have opinions at the level of “agree” with \bar{X} =3.49 and \bar{X} =3.59 respectively. On the other hand, a significant difference has been observed in the mean scores of unionized and non-unionized teachers' teacher retention levels ($t = -2.763$; $p = 0.00 < 0.01$). The average attitude of non-unionized teachers regarding teacher retention (\bar{X} =3.59) is statistically higher than the teachers who are unionized (\bar{X} =3.49). According to this finding, teachers' opinions about the teacher retention attitude are in favour of teachers who are not union members.

The results of the ANOVA for the salary satisfaction variable are presented in Table 10.

Table 10. the ANOVA results of the mean scores of teacher retention attitudes according to the salary satisfaction variable

Scale	Salary Satisfaction	n	\bar{X}	SS	sd	F	p	Fark
Teacher Retention	Satisfied	194	3.72	0.52	2	23.05	0.00**	1-3
	Relatively Satisfied	649	3.60	0.54	1215			2-3

Attitude	Unsatisfied	375	3.41	0.63	1217
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**p<0.01 1= Satisfied; 2= Relatively Satisfied; 3= Unsatisfied

Table 10, presenting the teachers' opinions about teacher retention reveals that the teachers who are satisfied, relatively satisfied and unsatisfied have opinions at the level of “agree” with $\bar{x}=3.72$; $\bar{x}=3.60$ and $\bar{x}=3.41$ respectively. On the other hand, there was a significant difference in the mean scores of teacher retention attitudes regarding the salary satisfaction variable ($F(2,1215)=23.05$, $p=0.00<0.01$). As a result of the Scheffe test conducted to determine the meaningful difference between the groups, the significant difference has been found to be between the mean scores of teachers who were unsatisfied with their salaries and those who were satisfied with their salaries and who were relatively satisfied with their salaries. Therefore, the average attitude score of the teachers who are unsatisfied with their salary ($\bar{x}=3.41$) is statistically lower than the average of teachers who are satisfied with their salary ($\bar{x}=3.72$) and the average of teachers who are relatively satisfied with their salary ($\bar{x}=3.60$). According to the findings, teachers' opinions about the teacher retention in terms of salary satisfaction are in favour of the teachers who are satisfied with their salary and those who are not satisfied with their salary are more likely to leave school.

4. Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions

According to the research, teachers' opinions about teacher retention according to their personal variables revealed a significant difference in variables of institution type, union membership and salary satisfaction; on the other hand, gender, marital status, grade of school, branch, professional seniority, working time in the school and graduated faculty variables did not make a significant difference. The significant difference in the attitudes of the teachers according to the type of institution variable is in favour of the teachers working in private schools. The reason for this may be that teachers working in the private school are worried that they will be unemployed, if they leave the school due to their status as contracted labour (Erakkuş, Başören and Abimbola, 2016). For this reason, they may prefer to stay at their school. On the other hand, the feeling of being supported by the school administration depending on the working conditions, the positive environment of the school and respecting the decisions can also positively influence the attitude of staying at school. Since, in the collaborative school environment supported by the administrator, teachers will prefer to stay in the school, if there are opportunities to develop continuously (Chapa, 2012). Another study, which is not consistent with the findings of this study, suggests that the attitudes of teachers in private schools to stay are lower than those in public schools; in other words, the dropout rates have been found

to be higher (Ingersoll, 2001; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). The difference between public and private schools may also be due to the fact that private schools tend to be smaller than public schools (Guarino, Santibanez & Daley, 2006). As opposed to the anxiety of losing job in Turkey, in the United States, for example, 7% of teachers in public schools and 13% of teachers in private schools quit each year. The other factors that may influence the retention of teachers in schools are poor administrative support, inadequate social perceptions and low salary (Adhikari, 2018). When it is evaluated from the perspective of the indicated factors, it is possible that the opinions of teachers working at public schools may have lower “agree” level on retention attitudes. Likewise, although the profession of teaching is a highly preferred one in Turkey, the lowness of salaries is known to everyone and it is a profession which is regarded to offer an average status. On the other hand, it may be the region where the school is located, causing teachers who are working in public schools to have lower opinions about their attitudes towards school. As a matter of fact, it was seen that the attitudes of the teachers working in rural areas to stay were found to be negative (Özdemir, Civelek, Çetin, Karapınar and Özel, 2015). Teachers working in the Eastern regions of Turkey are unfortunately not working on permanent basis (Kesik, Şahin and Zoraloğlu, 2018). Teacher retention is an important issue for both public and private schools, and both types of institutions should take measures to ensure that qualified teachers remain at school. For this reason, policy makers have big duties (Jones, 2016). At the same time, this situation requires also that due improvements are made to provide sustainability of the profession. In this sense, among the issues taken into consideration in the Agenda 21 Action Plan, which is the first and the most comprehensive report published on sustainability of education in Turkey, the development of fundamental education and the rearrangement of the existing education system are noteworthy (Tonguç and Özbayraktar, 2017).

In terms of teachers' attitude towards staying at school according to union membership variable, significant difference is in favour of teachers who are not union members. This can be explained primarily by the fact that most of the teachers participating in the research are not members of the union or that teachers have more autonomy in their schools to act independently without conducting union activities. Therefore, teachers who do not focus on a single point of view may think that they are more supported by their schools. As a matter of fact, Buckley, Schneider & Shang (2005) stated that the parents and the relationships in the society have the strongest effect on the teacher's attitude to stay at school. For this reason, teachers may adopt the school environment by developing their relationships in the school more positively without being bound to any opinion. On the other hand, the more negative opinions of unionized teachers about their attitudes towards staying in school may be due to the fact that there are fewer people in their schools from their own opinions or from their own union. Because people look for school environments where their ideas are important, where they can collaborate and feel socially belonged. As a matter of fact, there are studies in the literature that show that

employees who learned to cooperate and socialize have positive opinion in staying with the organization (Rai, 2012). In this context, it can be suggested that the sustainability of teachers at school is affiliated with their being a member of union.

The salary satisfaction variable also made a significant difference in the opinions of teachers about their attitudes towards staying at school. Therefore, improvement in teacher salaries may affect this attitude positively. According to the index published by the Varkey GEMS Foundation (2013) on the status of the teaching profession, teacher salaries should be increased by at least 30%. At this point, it has become a necessity to understand the self-motivation sources of teachers to ensure teacher sustainability and retention (Okeke and Mtyuda, 2017). The salary factor considered as one of the self-motivation sources of teachers should be treated as one of the main pillars of sustainability and the relevant improvements should be kept on the agenda continuously. In addition, 80% of the participants said that teachers should be paid according to their performance. Teachers' salaries in Turkey are very low compared to OECD countries (World Bank, 2011). It can be said that this value is almost 50% of other countries considering the income and expense balance and the economy of the country. This situation may cause teachers to quit their professions due to their lack of deep understanding of their profession and not being able to develop themselves. Therefore, financial incentives are essential to ensure that high quality teachers are present in the field (World Bank, 2011). In the study of Education and Science Employees Union (Eğitim-İş, 2018), teachers complained the most about their salaries and emphasized that the salaries they received were hardly sufficient to meet their basic needs. Therefore, it has been concluded that teachers should be given salaries that will allow them to live humanely. Similarly, Ingersoll (2003) also stated that the most important factor that encourages teachers to stay in their jobs is improving wages.

Teachers' opinions about their attitudes towards staying at school according to their personal variables did not make a significant difference; in terms of gender, marital status, grade of school, branch, professional seniority, working time in the school and graduated faculty variables. In terms of gender variable, the opinions of male and female teachers about attitudes towards staying at school are similar. It is seen that the researches carried out do not coincide with this finding. Zengin (2016) stated that women's perceptions about their organizations' retention of them were higher than that of male teachers, and Kılıç (1997) found that female teachers liked their profession more than male teachers. Therefore, the attitude of female teachers who love their profession to stay in school is more positive. Similarly, Tanrıöğen (1997) found in his study, which carried out in the faculties of education, that female prospective teachers had more positive feelings about the profession than male ones. In many studies, it was found that female teachers were more likely to stay at school than male teachers (Chapa, 2012; Guarino, Santibanez & Daley, 2006). According to Eğitim-Bir-Sen (2016) report, the reason for the favour of women is that child raisers are generally mothers and there is a

connection between raising children at school. According to the marital status variable, whether the teachers are married, or single does not change their views on the attitude of staying at school. However, this finding does not match the findings in the literature. According to Coetzee & Stoltz (2015), married people have higher perceptions of their organization's retention of them than single people. In other words, the attitudes of married people to stay at school are higher than single ones. However, this situation may vary from culture to culture. In fact, according to the Bakan (2013), the fact that the majority of this profession is consist of women in Turkey, led to various changes in the position of this profession. However, the fact that women preferred the profession of teaching more, also supported their retention in their profession.

Moreover, their willingness to pursue their profession regardless of marital status may also be effective in having similar ideas. When the school grade variable is examined, teachers' opinions about their attitudes towards staying in school, regardless of the level they work, show similarity. In other words, if there is a positive learning environment in the school and if teachers are supported by the administration and given the right to take initiative, the teachers will probably prefer to stay at the school regardless of the level they work. As a matter of fact, the reasons that affect employees to stay in their organizations are that they boast with their organization, they are in harmony with their manager, there is a fair wage policy, they have good relationships with colleagues and they are doing meaningful work (Harvard Business School, 2011). In this respect, it can be considered natural that teachers' thoughts do not change according to the level in which they work. In terms of branch variable, there is no significant difference between the opinions of teachers. This finding does not coincide with a study in the literature. In the study of Guarino, Santibanez & Daley (2006), it was observed that teachers in mathematical branches had lower attitudes towards staying in school than other branches. This may be due to the fact that teachers in the mathematical branches are more likely to prefer alternative jobs. According to Darling-Hammond & Sclan (1996), some teachers may leave the profession by looking for alternative career paths. Because the teachers in the mathematical branches can think more analytically due to their fields and they can utilize these skills in areas other than teaching profession (Akkoyunlu and Soylu, 2010). On the other hand, classroom teachers, verbal and artistry teachers may have a more positive attitude towards staying at school. Teachers in this area are likely to have a higher level of school commitment. Because, according to the research conducted by Varkey GEMS Foundation (2013), classroom teachers are the most respected teachers in Turkey. According to Ingersoll, Merrill & May (2012), the reason for the teachers being unqualified in mathematics and science is due to the fact that qualified teachers leave their profession. Eđitim-Bir-Sen (2013) listed the reasons for leaving the profession as situations where institutions do not allow teachers to develop and pay low wages or teachers do not feel themselves ready for teaching. According to the professional seniority variable, teachers have a positive attitude towards staying at

school regardless of their seniority. New generation teachers seek a work environment in which they are accepted, encouraged, allowed to question, their ideas are respected and in which there is a sustainable retention attitudes and where they can find opportunities for their development (Akbaş, 2013). In this sense, it can be concluded that teachers who have less seniority are satisfied with the school environment. On the other hand, there is also evidence that new teachers are likely to change schools or quit the profession. Given this evidence, schools should become more supportive organizations to attract and retain high-quality teachers (Johnson, 2006). However, as stated in the previous comment, being a permanent teacher in public schools in Turkey is a very tedious task and it is normal that teachers do not intend to quit their professions as they already experienced difficulties in obtaining this profession. Teachers who receive the expected appointment score in KPSS after undergraduate education, who are recruited according to the number of teacher shortages determined in the country and who are able to continue their teaching profession if they succeed in the interview process depending on the conditions of the regulation, may not want to leave the schools where they are appointed since they have been through very difficult conditions. However, teachers who have not been able to meet the conditions of appointment, who do not have any shortages in their field or who cannot work in public schools for special reasons prefer to work in private schools. In both cases, teachers may be worried about quitting their professions they obtained after many stages. Teachers, especially those who have just started the profession, can develop a positive attitude towards staying in their schools by acting with the idea that they are at the beginning of the road. On the other hand, senior teachers, who may be called experienced, may be worried about starting a new job after many years in their profession. Unlike many other professions, the teaching profession is deemed as a sacred profession that aims to train qualified human resources. In this sense, Argon and Çelik Yılmaz (2018) also stated that although the definition of the teaching profession seems to have changed, despite the constantly changing and developing processes, the basic duties of the teacher continue to stay as educating people, guiding them towards the good and becoming a role model. According to the working time in the school variable, it is seen that the opinions of the teachers about the attitude of staying at school do not change. Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2011) stated that job satisfaction is effective in teachers' retention at schools; Kaysi and Gürol (2016), on the other hand, claimed that teachers lost their enthusiasm for their professions due to the negative effects of other teachers and the general environment culture in the institution. School culture may vary with teachers' circulation. However, at this point, it is necessary to talk about the adaptation situation.

In the first years, a teacher who is a beginner is excited about his/her profession, strives for professional learning (Fullan, 2003), and getting used to the difficulties of his/her job in the following years is a situation that should be taken into consideration in terms of job satisfaction and it can be said that it is effective in their retention. At this point, it can be stated that teachers' retention depends on the harmony of school culture

with their individual values rather than their working time in the school (Turner & Chelladurai, 2005). Because, if the teaching profession meets the individual's expectation, it is likely that the profession will stimulate positive emotions and increase job satisfaction. This situation will be reflected in the increasing effectiveness of the teacher's retention attitude (Ihtiyaroglu, 2014). Here, it can be said that the research findings support the literature.

According to the last variable, which is the graduated faculty variable, it was seen that the opinions of the teachers about the attitude of staying at school did not change. In the literature, it is shown that not graduating from faculties of education is among the reasons for teachers to leave school (Brill & McCartney, 2008). However, this finding does not match the research findings. As a matter of fact, various researches have been made in the context of the faculty graduated in Turkey, in previous years. Graduates of the faculties of arts & sciences were included in the system by receiving pedagogical formation in order to do the teaching profession. Because those who manage education policies tend to fill schools with paid/contracted teachers or teachers who are educated in another subject (Brill & McCartney, 2008). Therefore, graduates from faculties outside the faculty of education have turned to the teaching profession.

The recommendations developed in line with the results of the research are as follows: Although teachers' retention is an issue that has not been studied in Turkey before, it is a subject that is considered important and therefore researched in developed countries. The education policies of the developed countries can be rearranged considering the cultural and socio-economic structure of Turkey and the education policies can be operated in this way. Therefore, teacher retention is an issue that needs to be studied both academically and politically.

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