# **TEACHERS' OPINIONS ON PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

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#### Abstract

This study was designed in the qualitative research design and used single case study model. The study group was 40 teachers, 10 primary school teachers, 20 branch teachers, and 10 teachers in guidance and psychological counselling field working in schools in Rize city centre during 2017-2018 academic years. The study group was determined using maximum variation sampling method. Data were collected through semistructured interview forms. Data were analysed using descriptive analysis technique. Based on the findings, five main themes and 17 sub-themes related to these main themes were determined. The results showed that teachers have different views on performance evaluation. Teachers approaching performance evaluation with an affirmative attitude have stated that performance evaluation will increase the quality of education, contribute to the professional development of teachers and encourage teachers to renew themselves and therefore it is necessary. Teachers, who have an attitude towards performance evaluation expressed that the performance evaluation will cause organizational conflict, decrease the professional prestige of teachers. In addition, the teachers stressed that it will be an impropriety practice while there already have been so many problems in education, and if it is applied, it will disrupt work peace. Teachers state that performance evaluation cannot be based on objective principles. The teachers, who approach the performance evaluation positively, stated that the evaluation should be conducted by experts and supervisors in the field of education, and that the evaluators should evaluate the performance of the teachers according to the neutrality principle and that the evaluation criteria should be clear and objective. On the other hand, the teachers who negatively approach performance evaluation suggest that this practice will decrease organizational commitment and cannot be a sustainable practice because it is far behind the current audit and evaluation practice and is not applicable and functional. Based on the findings it can be suggested that Ministry of National Education should ensure that the performance of teachers is evaluated by fair and impartial education experts and supervisors. In addition, the teachers should closely monitor the changes and innovations in the field of education and should be more attentive to professional development.

**Keywords:** Teacher, performance, performance evaluation.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Today, the fact that some countries such as UK, Singapore, South Korea, the Netherlands, Shanghai, Finland, and Australia are at the top of the international exams as well as the success indicators of education systems so it can be said that these countries have institutional values in education. In these countries, performance evaluation system is applied in pre-service and in-service teacher training processes (Baskan, Aydin and Madden, 2006; Cobanoğlu and Kasapoğlu, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2012; Goodwin, 2012; Sahlberg, 2012). Performance evaluation of teachers is carried out according to the evaluation criteria based on vocational standards.

Performance evaluation, which is a process that involves the measurement of the performance of students, teachers, school management and schools based on certain pre-determined standards, is to provide professional help and guidance in order to improve teachers' quality, to improve the quality of teaching and to increase student achievement. (Demir and Tok, 2016; Sumer, 2000). In the Turkish Education System, performance evaluation of teachers was seen in the 2010 and 2012 Development Plans. The pilot implementation of this system was carried out on the basis of the performance evaluation criteria of the Ministry of National Education in 2016-2017 academic year.

Research shows that civilization progresses are parallel with the quality of teaching (Bossing, 1955). Each culture creates its own education system. Teachers' performance concerns the whole education community, including students, parents and colleagues, in terms of outcomes and sustainability of education. Performance evaluation and the necessity of professional accountability have been demonstrated in the studies (Bostanci, 2004; Bozan, 2017; Dilbaz-Sayin and Arslan, 2017; Duran, 2008; Ilgaz, 2011; Yildirim, 2011). In these studies, it is foreseen that performance evaluation is required and that the school administrator, education inspector, colleagues, group teachers, self-assessment (the teacher himself) and the parents will be included as performance evaluators of the teachers. Akbaba-Altun and Memisoğlu (2008) emphasize the inadequacy of the existing teacher evaluation system and the necessity of performance evaluation with objective measurement tools. In research conducted by Aksit (2006), and Falak (2016), it was emphasized that there should be no parent, school administrator and education inspectors in the evaluation based on multiple data sources. In spite of these studies, the results obtained from the study of Balkan and Sahin (2010) reveal the necessity of evaluation based on multiple data sources, but despite this finding, performance evaluation by education inspectors was considered as negative. A remarkable result of Celik-Uyanikturk's (2009) study is that there is no significant relationship between evaluation of teacher inspectors and teacher performance evaluation in the evaluation based on multiple data sources. The main purpose of performance evaluation is to determine the strengths and weaknesses of teachers and to provide sustainable professional development. Performance evaluation should aim at the development of teachers' professional values.

The aim of this research is to determine the views of teachers about performance evaluation. For this purpose, the following questions were sought:

- 1. What are the views of Turkish teachers about the benefits of performance evaluation?
- 2. What are the views of Turkish teachers about the objectivity of performance evaluation?
- 3. What are the views of Turkish teachers about the sustainability of performance evaluation?

#### 2. METHOD

This study was designed in a single case study model in the qualitative research design. Case study model is one of the qualitative research methods. The qualitative research method is used to obtain the information in-depth and comprehensively on a topic (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Marshall and Rossman, 2006; Patton, 2014; Singh, 2007). The key philosophical assumption upon all types of qualitative research, the reality is constructed by individuals via interaction with their social environments (Merriam, 1998, p. 6). Case is a specific, complex, functioning thing, more specifically an integrated system which has boundaries and working parts and purposive in social sciences and human services (Stake, 1995, p. 2). The case study model allows to investigate and reveal the holistic and meaningful features of real life events. The case study also ensures researchers to examine the data closely in a particular context (Fidel, 1984; Yin, 2003; Zainal, 2007). 'The performance of the teachers' was considered as 'the situation' in terms of the quality of the training and this study was designed in a case study model.

#### 2.1. Study Group

The study group consisted of 40 teachers, 10 classroom, 20 branch and 10 teachers in guidance and

psychological counselling field working in the schools of Rize in 2017-2018 academic years. The maximum variation sampling method was used to determine the study group. Maximum variation sampling can be utilized to construct a holistic understanding of the phenomenon by synthesizing studies that differ in their study designs on several dimensions (Suri, 2011). 21 of the study group were female and 19 were male. The average professional seniority of the participants is 21.7 years. 10 of the teachers in the working group are in primary school, 10 in secondary school, 10 in academic high school and 10 in vocational high school. Five participants were working in the schools in village, 18 in the schools in district, and 17 in the schools in city centre.

#### 2.2. Procedure

This research was conducted in four stages: (1) definition of the problem (2) preparation of data collection tool (3) data collection, and (4) data analysis and interpretation (Mayring, 2011; Yildirim and Simsek, 2013). Details of these stages are presented below:

(1) Definition of the problem: At this stage, the concepts related to the problem have been defined. A conceptual framework has been established to define and classify teachers' views on performance evaluation.

(2) Preparation of data collection tool: The data of the study was collected by semi-structured interview forms which was developed by the researchers based on the literature. In the interview form, there are five factual questions in order to determine the gender, professional seniority, and license area, school type and the place of schools where the participants work. In the interview form, there are three open-ended questions aiming to determine the views of teachers about the usefulness, objectivity and sustainability of performance evaluation.

(3) Data collection: The data of the study were collected by face-to-face interviews with the teachers. In the interview process, teachers' opinions were recorded on the voice recorder. Each interview lasted about 20 minutes. The audio recordings were asked to the teachers, whether they wanted to change or did not want to be used in the research. The unspecified statements were noted and not analyzed.

(4) Data analysis and interpretation: The verbal data in the voice recorder were digitized by the researchers in writing. The data were analysed by descriptive analysis technique. In the analysis process, the expressions suitable for the purposes of the research and the explanation of its sub-problems were coded as meaning units. The statements chosen in accordance with the descriptive analysis technique are presented in the form of direct quotations in the findings section (Yildirim and Şimsek, 2013).

#### 3. FINDINGS

As a result of descriptive analysis, two main themes related to the first problem of the research were determined. These main themes are 'affirmative opinions' and 'counter opinions'. There are three sub-themes under the main theme of affirmative opinions. These sub-themes are the quality of education, professional development and self-renewal, and necessity.

Below, the views related to the quality of education sub-theme of were presented.

"I believe that performance evaluation will improve the quality of education." [P1].

"I believe that performance evaluation will be useful in improving the quality of education." [P12].

"Performance evaluation should be based on scientific and objective principles to increase the quality of education." [P30].

Below, the views related to the professional development and self-renewal sub-theme are presented.

"I believe that performance evaluation will contribute to the professional development of teachers." [P8].

"I believe that performance evaluation will be beneficial for professional development." [P11].

"I believe that a performance assessment that measures context knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and teaching skills will contribute to professional development." [P15].

"I am not against the assessment of performance that will allow the continuity of professional development and the teacher's self-renewal." [P28].

"An assessment that will help the teacher in self-improvement." [P37].

"Performance evaluation may be useful in terms of updating teachers' openness to innovation and teaching

#### methods." [P38].

"I think teachers are not trying to improve themselves professionally. Teachers can renew themselves if the performance evaluation system is implemented." [P39].

"I think there is a need for performance evaluation in terms of teachers' professional development. But in this process, everyone needs to develop a professional perspective on performance evaluation." [P40].

Below, the views related to the necessity sub-theme are presented.

"Teacher performances must be evaluated." [P10].

"I believe it is necessary to evaluate performance based on objective and scientific principles." [P14].

"Performance evaluation should be applied to employees of all government agencies." [P20].

"Performance evaluation should be done rationally. It should cover all training staff starting from the undersecretary." [P33].

In this section, the sub-themes related to the main theme of counter opinions are given. The sub-themes related to this theme are organizational conflict, professional respect, impropriety, and working peace.

Below, the views related to the organizational conflict sub-theme are given.

"Performance evaluation leads to conflict and adversely affects organizational development." [P2].

"Performance evaluation disrupts the relationship between teachers, students and parents. So it should not be applied." [P13].

"Performance evaluation is not acceptable because it will fuel organizational conflict." [P19].

"A non-scientific performance assessment, which is not fair and cannot be impartial, nurtures the culture of conflict, does not contribute to the professional development of the teacher." [P32].

"Performance system increases organizational conflict and reduces teachers' motivation." [P36].

Below, the opinions related to the professional respect sub-theme are given.

"Performance evaluation system disrupts teacher." [P4].

"Performance evaluation system disqualifies the teacher." [P5].

"Performance evaluation system damages teacher's professional reputation." [P6].

"The professional competence of teachers can never be increased with the threat of performance and grading. All this is nothing but damaging the reputation of the teaching profession." [P9].

"I certainly don't approve. Performance evaluation can destroy teachers' reputation at a time when we receive news on violence to the teachers every day." [P16].

"Performance evaluation is not acceptable in terms of dignity of teaching profession." [P18].

Below, the views related to the impropriety sub-themes are given.

"When the performance evaluation system is implemented in the current education system, it does not produce results that will increase the quality of education." [P3].

"In order to be a teacher, a teacher who is subjected to a series of exams it is beadledom also evaluated while working." [P7].

"While there are many problems in education, the Ministry of Education should not abandon the practice and should give up this practice as soon as possible." [P17].

*"I think that it will not be a proper and in-place practice in increasing the quality of the education system."* [P21].

"Turkey should develop a unique educational model before performance evaluation." [P22].

"I think it is very unnecessary and will not go further than degrading the teacher." [P24].

"I think that such a practice will have no positive contribution to education and training." [P25].

"Performance evaluation system is a meaningless practice and never acceptable." [P27].

"I find it meaningless to apply such an evaluation to teachers, which is not in any profession." [P29].

"The performance evaluation system is completely impropriety and it is an imposition of an oppressive management approach to teachers." [P34].

Below, the views related to the working peace sub-theme are given.

"I think this practice will disrupt the work of peace in Turkey should definitely return." [P23].

"I believe that performance appraisal will break working peace and therefore I think it is unacceptable." [P26].

"A performance assessment that does not have validity and reliability disrupts only working peace, so it does not contribute to the professional development of the teacher." [P31].

"Performance system disrupts teachers' work peace, if it is applied, it is understood as the imposition of a repressive administration." [P35].

This section includes views on the second sub-problem of the study. Only one main theme 'objectivity' was determined related to the second sub-problem of the study. Sub-themes based on this main theme are fair evaluation, validity and reliability, and distrust.

Below, the views on the fair evaluation sub-theme are given.

"It is not acceptable to think that students and parents can make a fair assessment." [P1].

"I do not believe that students and parents can make a fair assessment." [P4].

"The evaluation of teachers will never be completely objective and fair due to not the same of the working conditions, the school's place and the student groups they have." [P7].

"The success of performance evaluation depends on the principle of objective evaluation. The most troubling situation here is the difficulty of the students to make an objective evaluation." [P10].

"Students and parents cannot evaluate a teacher objectively." [P12].

"I believe that the evaluation will not be ethical and fair if insisted on the current draft. The assessment to be made in its current form will harm many teachers' personal rights and will result in compromising professional principles." [P14].

"I do not find it appropriate for stakeholders to evaluate the teacher. In such an application, I don't think that the people who will score will be fair and impartial because of their political attitude." [P17].

Below, the views related to the validity and reliability sub-theme are given.

"Parents who do not visit the school, the students who do not like the teacher, and the teachers who make the smallest event a personality problem cannot evaluate the performance of the teacher in a valid and reliable way." [P2].

"Millions of children in childhood cannot consciously assess teaching proficiency. Parents who do not like the child's grades or who do not have good communication with the teacher cannot make an objective evaluation." [P9].

"Performance evaluation by students, parents, co-workers and school principal will be subjective." [P15].

"The assessment will be far from the validity and reliability to be made by the people who are unaware of the methods and techniques of education, and the evaluation to be made by insufficient people who are based on mutual interest and a sense of revenge." [P18].

"The assessments of managers, teachers, parents and students cannot have validity and credibility as it will be in personal interests." [P30].

"The student can evaluate according to his/her favourite lesson and the teacher he/she likes so an objective result will not occur. Also the evaluation of the friend of the teacher who is not in the same field does not constitute objective data. If the child fails in that class, parents will be unable to give reliable points and behave emotionally in evaluating process of the teacher." [P31].

"Students or parents cannot evaluate teachers' performance in a full and objective manner." [P37].

Below, the views related to the distrust sub-theme are given.

"The evaluation of teachers by students and parents in this education system is quite absurd. It is clear that

the students who do not know how to read correctly even though they are in grade 6, who have grown up against TV, and the parents who spend whole time against TV series how will evaluate teachers?" [P5].

"It is not possible to make a reliable assessment by the students who have not achieved certain principles of ethics and the parents who are not aware of the school's working environment. In addition, it is not correct for the teachers who are already sufficiently confronted with parents to be put in front of the parent under the name of performance evaluation. [P6].

"I am against the participation of parents and students in the performance evaluation system. I also don't trust the unit chiefs. I am concerned that they cannot make a healthy evaluation due to their opinions on trade union and politics." [P11].

"The evaluation of the teacher should not be left to the initiative of persons who have not received any training on this subject." [P19].

"It is not ethical that the parents and students evaluate teachers and the teachers evaluate each other. The parents cannot evaluate the methods and techniques used by the teacher in the classroom without observing the teacher in the classroom environment." [P28].

"I do not believe that the assessment of teachers by parents and students will be objective and reliable." [P32].

"No one in the education community believes that parents, students, teachers and school administrators can make an assessment in line with objective criteria. The concern that someone will be favoured is not yet resolved." [P37].

"I don't think that teachers, parents and students are ready for an objective assessment. I am not sure how parents will evaluate the teacher's performance." [P40].

This section includes views on the third sub-problem of the study. Two main themes were identified as positive opinions and negative opinions about the third sub-problem of the study. The sub-themes determined based on the positive opinions main theme are specialization, impartiality and clarity.

Below, the views related to the specialization sub-theme are given.

"A performance evaluation that allows teachers to update themselves as the education system changes should be made continuous. I believe that if the people who evaluate the performance of the teacher are well-equipped and expert in the field of education, this practice will be sustainable and that it will ensure to achieve the aims of the education effectively." [P8].

"This assessment should be done by experts in education and the inspectors. [P28].

"The experts in education and inspectors should supervise that whether the teachers apply essential professional knowledge and skills." [P30].

"I believe that an evaluation will be made by experts and inspectors in the field of education will be sustainable." [P37].

Below, the views related to the impartiality sub-theme are given.

"Performance evaluation in terms of sustainability should be done by professional and impartial supervisors away from sensuality." [P10].

"For a sustainable performance system, I think teachers should be evaluated by technically neutral supervisors and top managers." [P11].

"Teachers need to be assessed by impartial training experts to implement the performance system." [P12].

"If the performance evaluation is carried out by impartial training specialists, it will be continuous and serve its purpose." [P15].

Below, the views related to the clarity sub-theme are given.

"A sustainable performance assessment should be valid for all training personnel, from the lowest-level education staff to the senior management, on the principle of clarity. In the performance evaluation practice, the employees should evaluate managers and the managers should evaluate employees." [P1].

*"It is important for sustainability that a performance assessment system should include clear, transparent and fair criteria. If the independent boards of experts in the field of education conduct performance evaluation in* 

a scientific way, I believe that it will be useful and sustainable." [P33].

"Performance evaluation process can be successful if it is managed according to objective criteria prepared by impartial training experts." [P40].

In this section, participant's opinions which are evaluated in the sub-theme of negative opinions about the third sub-problem of the research are given. The sub-themes related to the negative views main theme are organizational commitment, supervision and evaluation, applicability and functionality.

Below, the views related to the organisational commitment sub-theme are given.

"In a school where there is no organisational culture, due to the personal interests being in the forefront and the lack of common values, organizational commitment will be reduced and the separation will be greater with performance evaluation." [P2].

"Performance evaluation will reduce organizational commitment and adversely affect education. It will destroy the reputation of the teaching profession that has already been destroyed and its reputation in the community, so it is not sustainable." [P18].

"Dignity of the teaching profession is under the feet. Teachers should now be given the value they deserve. An evaluation system that will adversely affect the general well-being of schools, teachers' professional perceptions and their commitment to school will not be continuous." [P19].

Below, the views related to the supervision and evaluation sub-theme are given.

"I think that instead of performance evaluation it is necessary to encourage teachers to follow the innovations related to their field, to participate in seminars, workshops and conferences." [P3].

"Supervision of the quality of the training and the educational activities of the teachers by the supervisors should become functional again. The persons who need to evaluate teachers' professional development and performance are impartial top executives and specialist supervisors in the field of education." [P6].

"The Ministry should not insist on performance evaluation. A sustainable professional assessment should be carried out by impartial training experts and supervisors." [P13].

Below, the views related to the applicability sub-theme are given.

"I think that performance evaluation will cause groupings and a relationship of interest between friends. In order to get a high score, it will lead to contrived relations between the school administration-teacher and parents-teacher. So it is not applicable." [P21].

"I believe that this implementation, which shows the teacher insufficient, will not be practicable." [P27].

"I think that such a system, which is not implemented in any country in the world, will be a blow to working life. I believe it is not applicable." [P29].

"This application will ultimately lower the teacher. Performance evaluation will reduce the respect for the teaching profession. So it is not applicable." [P32].

"It only serves to establish an understanding based on the success of the performance evaluation process. Those who are to be assessed move away from professional principles and focus on getting higher scores from the assessment. This reduces the quality of education. So it is not applicable." [P36].

Below, the views related to the functionality sub-theme are given.

"In the education system changing continuously without ever asking to the teachers, parents and school administrators, if the results do not give the desired results, in my opinion the merits and performances of the bureaucrats and senior managers who see themselves as if self-sufficient should be questioned." [P22].

"The evaluation of teachers' performance by the people such as parents, students, etc. causes polarization among teachers, deterioration of work peace and lack of motivation." [P23].

"Every day in this country, a new application is given in the name of education. Let say to us that the education is privatised and don't make us worry about with these unnecessary applications. How can an unhappy and reactive teacher raise a person who thinks happy and healthy?" [P24].

"The quality of education cannot be increased in this way." [P25].

"Teachers are not responsible for the failure in education. If there is a failure in education, the reason should be sought elsewhere." [P26].

"It is more than nonsense to believe that the problems of education can be solved by bringing the performance evaluation system to the teacher. In fact, the teacher has proven himself graduating from university after 4-year education and shown performance in a ridiculous exam such as Public Personnel Selection Exam (KPSS)." [P35].

# 4. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This research aims to reveal the views of Turkish teachers about performance evaluation. Based on the findings, five main themes and 17 sub-themes related to these main themes were determined. The results show that teachers have different views on performance evaluation. The opinions of the teachers about the benefits of performance evaluation were evaluated in two main categories as affirmative opinions and counter-opinions. Teachers approaching performance evaluation with an affirmative attitude have stated that performance evaluation will increase the quality of education, contribute to the professional development of teachers and encourage teachers to renew themselves and therefore it is necessary. Teachers, who have an attitude towards performance evaluation expressed that the performance evaluation will cause organizational conflict, decrease the professional prestige of teachers. In addition, the teachers stressed that it will be an impropriety practice while there already have been so many problems in education, and if it is applied, it will disrupt work peace.

Teachers state that performance evaluation cannot be based on objective principles. These views focus on the fact that parents, students, senior executives and teachers who are expected to evaluate teachers are not able to make a fair evaluation by teachers who can be appointed from outside their own licensees. In addition, teachers state that performance evaluation is not objective and that its validity and reliability will be low. Teachers also state that they do not trust that the process will be carried out objectively and fairly, as they are concerned about the introduction of factors such as personal attitude, political understanding and membership of different unions.

Teachers have different views on the sustainability of performance evaluation. The teachers, who approach the performance evaluation positively, stated that the evaluation should be conducted by experts and supervisors in the field of education, and that the evaluators should evaluate the performance of the teachers according to the neutrality principle and that the evaluation criteria should be clear and objective. On the other hand, the teachers who negatively approach performance evaluation suggest that this practice will decrease organizational commitment and cannot be a sustainable practice because it is far behind the current audit and evaluation practice and is not applicable and functional.

Depending on the results of the research, it can be said that the Ministry of National Education should ensure that the performance of teachers is evaluated by fair and impartial education experts and supervisors. By the top managers of education the reasons of the problems in education system should be analysed well and the perception that the problems in education cause only the teachers' performance should be eliminated. Teachers should closely monitor the changes and innovations in the field of education and should be more attentive to professional development. The ministry should not leave only to the school principals the supervision of education, supervisors should review the quality of education in schools and the guidance and supervision practices for teachers should be restarted.

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