

Teachers’ perspectives on the factors influencing professional resilience: A qualitative study

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the factors that positively and negatively influence teachers' professional resilience based on their perspectives. Employing phenomenology, a qualitative research design, the study utilized semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection method. The research sample consisted of 20 teachers working in public schools, selected through maximum diversity sampling, a purposive sampling technique. The participants included five preschool teachers, five primary school teachers, five secondary school teachers, and five high school teachers. The factors positively impacting professional resilience, as reported by teachers, were categorized into three main themes: "organizational factors and supportive environment," "individual factors," and "motivation and professional commitment." Teachers who feel valued, supported, committed to their profession, recognized for their achievements, and possess positive personal traits tend to demonstrate higher resilience. Conversely, factors that negatively affect professional resilience were grouped into four themes: "organizational factors," "individual factors," "environmental and economic factors," and "psychological and social factors." According to participants, poor communication with school administration, frequent curriculum changes, evolving education policies, low student motivation, high parental expectations, inadequate resources, and an imbalance between work and personal life undermine teachers' resilience. This research offers valuable insights for policymakers and educational institutions to develop strategies and support systems aimed at enhancing teachers' professional resilience.

Keywords: Resilience, Employee resilience, Teacher resilience, Teacher professional resilience, Teacher well-being, Organizational support.

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Contribution of this paper to the literature

This study identifies factors that strengthen and weaken teachers' professional resilience and contributes to a better understanding of the concept of teacher professional resilience. The findings shed light on policies aimed at increasing the effectiveness of support mechanisms and professional development activities for teachers, improving the school climate, and enhancing teacher well-being.

1. Introduction

Teachers are a crucial element of education systems and play a significant role in shaping future generations. Today, being a teacher extends far beyond simply transferring knowledge to students. Teachers assist students in developing social and emotional skills such as self-confidence, self-efficacy, teamwork, responsibility, and understanding others. They also promote the development of skills such as creative thinking, learning to learn, and critical thinking. Additionally, teachers guide students in acquiring the necessary competencies to effectively utilize new technologies (OECD, 2019). These skills, which will play a significant role in enabling education systems to achieve their goals in the future, will contribute to students gaining a perspective that is eager to learn and focused on continuous development. Therefore, in addition to being knowledge transmitters, teachers must maximize the potential of young people and prepare them for life (World Bank, 2016). Despite playing an important role in the continuity of societies and the upbringing of future generations, teachers face many challenges throughout their professional lives. Negative student behaviors (Güler, Demir, Kılıç, & Demir, 2020) the decline in the prestige of the teaching profession (Demir & Arı, 2013), professional burnout, feelings of worthlessness, stress (Aslan, 1996), economic concerns (Uygun, 2013), constantly changing education policies and curricula, political appointments (Aktaş, Düşkün, & Arık, 2021) and excessive workload (Esen, Temel, & Demir, 2017) stand out as the most significant problems faced by teachers. Despite these challenges, teacher professional resilience emerges as a vital concept for enabling teachers to continue providing quality education to students and for education systems to achieve desired outcomes. Teacher professional resilience can be defined as the ability of teachers to recover quickly emotionally and psychologically when faced with stressful, crisis, and traumatic situations, and to overcome adversity. Professionally resilient teachers maintain their balance in the face of adversity, produce quick and effective solutions, and tend to sustain their professional commitment despite all difficulties (Gu & Day, 2013). Teacher professional resilience is vital for teachers to be able to stay on their feet in crisis situations and continue to perform their profession effectively. Considering that teachers face many challenges in their professional lives, developing teachers' professional resilience should be a priority for education systems (Polat & İskender, 2018).

Teacher professional resilience can be considered a sub-dimension of the broader concept of teacher resilience. The fundamental difference between these two concepts is that while teacher resilience encompasses personal, emotional, and environmental factors, teacher professional resilience specifically relates to teachers' ability to remain committed, motivated, and effective in their work despite the constant stress and challenges they face in the school environment. It involves both internal capacities such as self-efficacy, adaptability, and emotional regulation and external supports, including collegial collaboration and institutional recognition. These elements collectively help teachers maintain job satisfaction, manage classroom stress, and respond effectively to organizational demands (Mansfield, Beltman, Broadley, & Weatherby-Fell, 2016).

In today's world, where the teaching profession is becoming increasingly complex, teacher professional resilience stands out as an important characteristic that helps teachers remain strong in the face of challenges and continue to provide quality education. Strengthening professional resilience has become a crucial requirement for both the well-being of teachers and the improvement of the education system's quality. This study, which examines teacher professional resilience in depth, identifies factors that strengthen and weaken resilience based on teachers' perspectives. Analyzing these factors affecting teacher professional resilience will guide policies aimed at enhancing teachers' well-being and improving the quality of professional development for educators.

2. Literature Review

Advancements in technology and rapid changes in environmental conditions affect not only organizations but also their employees. The necessity to adapt to these swiftly changing circumstances has become a key factor in determining organizational success (Onan, Turhan, & Helvacı, 2021). Especially during periods of uncertainty and turbulence, an organization's ability to survive and remain effective depends on the resilience of both the organization itself and its employees that is, their capacity to cope with major challenges and adapt to change. Organizational resilience is now recognized as a crucial competitive advantage, making the enhancement of employees' resilience increasingly important (Bardoel, Pettit, De Cieri, & McMillan, 2014; Lengnick-Hall, Beck, & Lengnick-Hall, 2011; Luthans & Youssef, 2004). The increasing focus on employee resilience stems from the growing competitiveness and demands of the modern business environment, where employees are confronted with heavier workloads and increased performance pressures (Bonanno, 2004). Resilience refers to the ability to adapt to challenging life experiences and to internal and external demands by using mental, emotional, and behavioral flexibility, as well as the capacity to draw on personal strength to overcome such challenges (American Psychological Association, 2020; Boniwell & Ryan, 2012). This capacity enables individuals to manage challenges, recover from difficulties, and function effectively even under stressful and adverse conditions. Individual resilience can therefore be defined as a person's ability to cope with stressful, demanding, or uncertain situations, to learn from these experiences, and to emerge stronger from adversity. Resilient individuals perceive the obstacles they encounter as opportunities and come out of these experiences stronger (Avey, Luthans, Smith, & Palmer, 2010; Bonanno, 2004). However, these definitions are insufficient to explain how the workplace environment either supports or limits individual resilience (Stokes et al., 2019; Vera, Rodríguez-Sánchez, & Salanova, 2017). When evaluating employees' resilience in their professional lives, it is crucial for the future of organizations to consider how workplace factors influence the extent to which employees can handle daily work challenges and exhibit resilient behaviors that contribute to organizational growth (Näswall, Malinen, Kuntz, & Hodliffe, 2019).

2.1. Employee Resilience

In a workplace context, employee resilience can be defined as individuals' ability to cope with challenging situations involving stress, crises, and uncertainty in their professional lives, to recover quickly, and to maintain their motivation and performance (Masten, 2001). Employee resilience also includes quickly adapting to changing work conditions, effectively coping with stressful situations, and increasing job satisfaction and productivity. Employees possessing such skills are critical for both personal and organizational success (Sonnentag, 2018). Resilience is a characteristic that varies from person to person and has a structure that can increase or decrease over time (Brouskeli, Kaltsi, & Maria, 2018). While the resilience of individuals varies according to their life experiences, this trait can both develop and weaken under challenging conditions. This demonstrates that resilience is not a static trait but rather a developmental process (Luthar, 2015).

2.2. Teacher Resilience

The primary goal of education systems is to cultivate qualified individuals and deliver high-quality educational services. After determining the type of individuals they aim to develop, education systems design their educational activities and human resources policies in accordance with this philosophy (Karagözoğlu, 2003). Today, countries are seeking various ways to improve their schools and respond more effectively to increasing social and economic expectations. Teachers, who play a central role in schools, are at the heart of these improvement efforts. Achieving both efficient and equitable education primarily depends on recruiting competent teachers, supporting their ability to teach effectively, and ensuring that all students have the opportunity to receive quality education (OECD, 2005). As key pillars of the education system, teachers are essential for a nation's development. They play a vital role in training competent human capital, maintaining social order, socializing citizens, preparing individuals for community life, and transmitting cultural heritage to younger generations (Özden, 1999). Teaching is considered an extremely demanding and stressful profession due to its emotional and intellectual demands (Kyriacou, 2001; Mercer, 2020; Wang, 2022). Research reveals that the teaching profession is stressful, and this stress primarily stems from teachers' interactions with students, high expectations, administrative pressures, and difficulties in classroom management. Teachers who cannot cope with these challenges tend to experience various unpleasant emotions, such as stress, anxiety, worry, and boredom (Kyriacou, 2001). These negative emotions can lead to increased teachers' intentions to leave the profession (Kinter & Kati, 2022; Smith & Ingersoll, 2003), decreased job satisfaction (Polat & İskender, 2018), occupational burnout (Zhao, Liao, Li, Jiang, & Ding, 2022), decreased organizational commitment (Nagar, 2012) and decreased job performance (Agyapong, Obuobi-Donkor, Burbach, & Wei, 2022). Teachers experience higher levels of stress, anxiety and depression compared to many other professional groups (Day, Gu, Edwards, & Griffiths, 2011). The teaching profession is widely recognized as both emotionally and physically demanding (Gu & Li, 2013). Research examining occupational stress in terms of physical health, psychological well-being and job satisfaction indicated that teaching scored above average on all three dimensions, placing it among the most stressful professions (Donald et al., 2005).

According to Gu and Li (2013), teachers reported that their regular work environment involved significant pressure and responsibility, heavy workloads, long working hours, low social recognition, and inadequate compensation. These conditions often lead teachers to feel stressed, overburdened, and undervalued. Consequently, fostering and sustaining teacher resilience is a critical concern for school administrators, scholars, and researchers (Mansfield, 2020). Resilience is considered one of the key factors that help teachers remain in the profession. Broadly, psychological resilience is defined as an individual's capacity to recover effectively and quickly from setbacks, to adapt to life's difficulties, and to maintain mental well-being despite experiencing adverse conditions (Chmitorz et al., 2018; Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2010; Masten & Reed, 2002). The concept of teacher resilience encompasses more than just surviving or recovering from unexpected situations. Teachers who demonstrate resilience are able to adjust effectively to shifting conditions and sustain their educational goals despite challenges (Caroline F Mansfield et al., 2016; Whipple, 2022). They possess high levels of self-efficacy (Beltman, Mansfield, & Price, 2011) and strong problem-solving skills, which enable them to respond constructively to difficulties encountered in their professional practice (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000). Resilient teachers are also strongly committed to their profession and demonstrate sustained professional dedication (Kocakuşak & Akar-Vural, 2023). In addition, they conduct regular self-assessments to continuously improve their teaching strategies and support their personal and professional development (Leroux & Théorêt, 2014).

Furthermore, these teachers are able to effectively manage their emotions by maintaining composure and patience in stressful situations (Whipple, 2022). They are skilled in behavior management, can deal with difficult students and tend to focus on positive aspects of their work while remaining committed to the institutions in which they are employed (Howard & Johnson, 2004). Resilient teachers are also capable of managing unexpected situations inherent in the teaching profession (Qing Gu & Day, 2013). Despite the fluctuations and challenges within education systems, they remain qualified and continue to perform their roles effectively. As a result, they are able to sustain teaching over time and maintain long-term engagement in the profession (Ebersohn, 2014). Teacher resilience can be described as the ability of teachers to preserve their positive personal qualities and maintain their commitment to teaching in the face of challenges, pressures, and work demands (Daniilidou & Platsidou, 2018). This concept encompasses teachers' capacity to sustain their professional performance and overall well-being even under difficult conditions and repeated setbacks (Brunetti, 2006; Mansfield et al., 2016). Developing resilience helps teachers adapt more effectively to daily stressors, negative situations, professional pressures and job demands, enabling them to cope with these challenges more efficiently (Qing Gu & Day, 2013; Mansfield et al., 2016; Morettini, Luet, & Vernon-Dotson, 2020).

3. Methodology and Data Analysis

3.1. Purpose of Research

The aim of this study is to identify the factors that positively and negatively influence teachers' occupational resilience. The research seeks to understand the elements that help or hinder teachers in maintaining their motivation, psychological well-being, and ability to adapt to changing conditions in their professional roles. By

examining both supportive and obstructive factors affecting teacher resilience, the study provides valuable insights for developing strategies that enhance teacher well-being and strengthen their capacity to cope with professional challenges.

3.2. Research Questions

- 1. How is the concept of teacher occupational resilience interpreted and understood by teachers?
- 2. How do teachers perceive the degree of their own professional resilience?
- 3. What factors positively impact the professional resilience of teachers?
- 4. What factors negatively impact the professional resilience of teachers?

3.3. Methodology

In this study, the interview technique was preferred as the data collection method, and the phenomenology design, which is one of the qualitative research approaches, was employed in this process. The phenomenological approach emphasizes phenomena that individuals are aware of but cannot fully comprehend in detail and depth. Although these phenomena are frequently encountered in daily life and may seem familiar, this does not imply that they are completely understood. Phenomenology provides a robust methodological foundation for studies conducted on issues that people are somewhat familiar with but have not been fully resolved or understood in the realm of meaning (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). Such studies are suitable for phenomena that can be sensed, distinguished and understood in depth (Büyüköztürk, Çakmak Kılıç, Akgün, Karadeniz, & Demirel, 2019). The participants' perceptions of a phenomenon, their intellectual approaches, their narratives about their experiences and how they make sense of these processes are among the basic subjects of phenomenological research (Patton, 2018). Although phenomenological studies do not produce universal and generalizable results, they can provide detailed descriptions, insights into experiences, and explanatory examples that contribute to a better understanding of the phenomenon under study. In this regard, such studies have the potential to enrich both the scientific literature and practical applications (McMillan, 2000; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018).

3.4. Research Group

In this study, maximum variation sampling, which is a type of purposeful sampling, was preferred. This sampling approach allows the individuals included in the study to have as many different characteristics as possible, enabling the subject under consideration to be examined from various perspectives. Consequently, it aims to obtain a comprehensive representation (Patton, 2018). In this context, a total of 20 teachers working in official educational institutions affiliated with the Turkish Ministry of National Education during the 2024-2025 academic year were included in the research group. The sample comprised five teachers from each educational level: preschool, primary, secondary, and high school. Teachers participating in the study are coded according to their school level: T1–T5 for preschool teachers, T6–T10 for primary school teachers, T11–T15 for secondary school teachers, and T16–T20 for high school teachers. Table 1 summarizes their demographic profiles. In addition to maximum variation sampling, the criterion sampling method was also employed in the study. The primary purpose of using this method was to include all individuals or situations that meet specific predetermined criteria within the scope of the research (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). The criteria taken into consideration in the selection of teachers who constitute the study group are as follows:

- 1. The teachers to be interviewed must have worked with the administrator of the institution where they are employed for at least three years.
- 2. They must be on a permanent staff position within the relevant educational institution.

Table 1. Demographic variables of teachers participating in the research.

Variables	Category	N	%
Gender	Male	10	50
	Female	10	50
	Total	20	100,0
Seniority	11-20 years	2	10
	21-30 years	16	80
	31 years and over	2	10
	Total	20	100,0
Marital Status	Married	19	95
	Single	1	5
	Total	20	100,0
Education Level	Bachelor's Degree	18	90
	Master's Degree	2	10
	Total	20	100,0
Teaching Level	Preschool / Kindergarten	5	25
	Primary School	5	25
	Lower Secondary School	5	25
	High School	5	25
	Total	20	100,0

3.5. Qualitative Data Collection Tools

In this research, a comprehensive review of the literature was conducted to explore teachers' understanding of professional resilience in detail. Additionally, a semi-structured interview form was developed based on the recommendations of experts. The semi-structured interview method occupies a middle ground between fully structured and completely unstructured interviews, combining elements of both approaches (Karasar, 2019). Typically, semi-structured interviews use open-ended questions, providing participants with the opportunity to share their views and experiences in their own words. During the interview, the researcher has the flexibility to change

the order of predetermined questions or, if necessary, ask additional questions to elaborate on the responses given by the participants. This method, on the one hand, maintains a certain order and consistency during the data collection process, and on the other hand, thanks to its flexibility, it enables access to in-depth and rich information (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). A preliminary application was conducted with three teachers two subject-matter teachers and one classroom teacher, using the interview form developed by the researcher, which consisted of four questions. After finalizing the form, the application phase was initiated. The interview form was administered to twenty teachers, comprising ten females and ten males. The interviews were recorded with a voice recorder, with the participants' permission.

3.6. Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability in scientific research are addressed using different approaches, especially in qualitative research (Başkale, 2016; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). Guba and Lincoln (1982) developed the criteria of credibility, reliability, confirmability and transferability to increase reliability in qualitative research. In this study, long-term interaction, participant confirmation, expert opinion and detailed descriptions were used to ensure credibility (Holloway & Wheeler, 1996). The data collection and analysis process was based on the conceptual framework, and the methodological details were clearly reported.

Purposeful sampling, face-to-face interviews, triangulation, and referential adequacy were adopted to ensure transferability (Streubert & Carpenter, 2011; Tutar, 2022). Participants were selected from experienced and knowledgeable teachers, and interviews were conducted focusing on their experiences. Additionally, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected, and the findings were interpreted in light of the literature (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Confirmability was ensured by transparently expressing all stages of the research (Bondas & Hall, 2007) and reliability was supported by expert review (Streubert & Carpenter, 2011). Originality was preserved by direct quotations from participants' opinions.

3.7. Data Analysis

In this study, participants were asked four open-ended questions. Their responses were audio-recorded and later transcribed into written form by the researcher. The questions posed to the teachers were as follows:

1. What is your understanding of the concept of teacher professional resilience?
2. What can you say about the level of professional resilience of our teachers?
3. What are the characteristics that distinguish a professionally resilient teacher from other teachers in terms of overcoming stressful situations?
4. What are the factors that negatively affect teacher professional resilience?

The MAXQDA 24 software was utilized for analyzing interview data, following a systematic process. Initially, interviews recorded with a voice recorder were transcribed into written text. Subsequently, the texts were edited to ensure clarity and accuracy, and meaningful data segments were identified. These segments were then coded, and preliminary themes were developed. The codes were grouped under relevant themes to facilitate organization. Next, the themes were refined and their interrelationships were examined to understand the connections among different data categories. The identified themes were aligned with the research questions, and direct quotes from participants were included during the analysis to support the findings. These quotes were explained and interpreted to provide deeper insights into the data, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the research outcomes (Şamdan & Baskan, 2019).

4. Findings

4.1. Findings on Teachers' Interpretation and Understanding of Occupational Resilience

In the study, teachers were initially asked to describe what the concept of teacher professional resilience meant to them. Teachers primarily defined teacher professional resilience as "the ability to cope with challenges" and "flexibility." Below are the definitions of teacher professional resilience provided by some of the teachers interviewed.

"So, the ability to cope with stress is, in my opinion, professional resilience." (T14)

"It refers to the ability to cope with stressful and challenging situations and maintain motivation." (T13)

"Frankly, professional resilience for me means patience, adaptability and being able to continue without losing motivation. We face many difficulties during the day, but I still try to go into the classroom and be useful to my students. Sometimes it is really tiring, but my desire to teach keeps me going." (T19)

"It seems like flexibility to me. That is, being able to be flexible directly." (T15)

"Being able to cope with difficulties or overcome newly emerging problems and continue normal education." (T3)

Based on the above definitions, it is possible to briefly define teacher professional resilience as "the ability to successfully overcome difficulties and stressful situations and to continue educational activities with the same motivation and dedication."

4.2. Findings on the Degree of Teachers' Self-Perceived Professional Resilience

Secondly, teachers were asked how resilient they perceived themselves to be in their profession. Only 2 out of 20 teachers (10%) reported that they were not resilient, while 2 teachers (10%) described themselves as moderately resilient. The majority of the participants (16 teachers; 80%) perceived themselves as resilient.

"I see my own professional resilience at a medium level. I can't say that I have a very high resilience; however, after a certain period of time, I can recover and re-motivate myself and continue the process in a positive way." (T5)

“I see myself as professionally resilient. Over my 15 years in the teaching profession, working in Istanbul and different districts, I have faced many challenges, especially during my first appointment. Through these experiences, I gradually learned how to become resilient.” (T1)
“Frankly, I do not see myself as professionally resilient at all. Constantly changing curriculum, exam systems and unfair practices are killing my motivation to teach.” (T20)

4.3. Findings on Positive Factors Affecting Teacher Professional Resilience

According to teachers’ views, the factors that positively influence professional resilience were identified, coded, and grouped into three main themes. These themes are: “Organizational Factors and Supportive Environment,” “Individual Factors,” and “Motivation and Professional Commitment.” The themes reflecting teachers’ perspectives on the factors that enhance their professional resilience are presented in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Factors that positively affect teacher professional resilience according to teachers' views.

Table 2. Themes and codes related to factors positively affecting teacher professional resilience.

Theme	Conceptual Codes	<i>f</i>
1. Organizational Factors and Supportive Environment	1.1. Respect for teachers’ ideas and opinions	16
	1.2. Colleague support	13
	1.3. Constant consultation with subject/ Departmental committee	11
	1.4. Family support	9
	1.5. Support from school administrators	9
	1.6. Feeling of belonging to the institution one works for	7
	1.7. Parents’ cooperation	6
	1.8. Students’ willingness to learn	5
	1.9. Organizational culture based on cooperation and solidarity	2
2. Individual Factors	2.1. Being solution-oriented	15
	2.2. Being consistent in behavior	12
	2.3. Adapting quickly to changes	11
	2.4. Being patient	11
	2.5. Having high communication skills	10
	2.6. Being optimistic	10
	2.7. Having a positive perspective	10
	2.8. Being able to empathize	9
	2.9. Effective emotional management	9
	2.10. Keeping one's cool	8
	2.11. Being able to follow current events and agenda	7
	2.12. Not giving up	6
	2.13. Being responsible	6
	2.14. Having practical intelligence	6
	2.15. Being self-confident	6
	2.16. Self-sufficiency	5
	2.17. Acting in a planned and programmed manner	5
	2.18. Being tolerant	5
	2.19. Being able to cope with stress	5
	2.20. Learning from mistakes	5
	2.21. Being able to act professionally	5
	2.22. Being a researcher	2
	2.23. Being able to ask for help when needed	1
	2.24. Being aware of one's own strengths and weaknesses	1
	2.25. Being happy	1
3. Motivation and Professional Commitment	3.1. Love and commitment to the profession	17
	3.2. Recognition and reward of achievements	13
	3.3. High teacher motivation	12
	3.4. Continuous self-renewal and elimination of deficiencies	8
	3.5. Seeing the development of students	3
	3.6. Sense of professional competence	3
	3.7. Being valued by managers and colleagues	1

In Table 2, the factors that positively influence teachers' professional resilience, according to teachers' opinions, are categorized into three main themes. Under the theme of organizational factors and a supportive

environment, teachers primarily expressed their views through the conceptual codes of respecting teachers' ideas and opinions ($f=16$), support from colleagues ($f=13$), and ongoing consultation with subject or departmental committees ($f=11$). Regarding respecting teachers' ideas and opinions, T8 states that:

“I can say that our school administrators value our ideas. If there is going to be a change in the school or a new practice, our administrators exchange ideas with us. We can express our opinions easily. Also, our opinions are taken into consideration most of the time. This makes us feel valued.”

With these statements, we can conclude that valuing and respecting teachers' ideas and opinions enhances their professional resilience and fosters a sense of being valued. According to teachers' perspectives, in addition to respecting their ideas, support from colleagues, peers, and family members positively influences teachers' professional resilience. The statements from T5 further emphasize the significance of support from colleagues and family in this context.

“I think that teachers who can manage stress effectively are better at seeking support. In my opinion, teachers who ask for and receive help from their families and colleagues when necessary are resilient in their profession.”

Under the theme of individual factors, teachers primarily expressed their opinions on the conceptual codes of being solution-oriented ($f=15$) and maintaining consistency in their behavior ($f=12$). Regarding being solution-oriented, T5 states that:

“I think teachers who can produce quick solutions, display a professional attitude and engage in self-renewing activities are more resilient in terms of their profession.”

The statements highlight that teachers who can think quickly and develop prompt solutions during crises, exhibit consistent behavior, and consistently uphold their professional stance have an advantage in managing negative situations. Additionally, according to teachers' perspectives, professionally resilient teachers are those who can adapt swiftly to change, possess strong communication skills, maintain a positive and optimistic outlook, regulate their emotions effectively, demonstrate empathy, remain composed under pressure, and show perseverance when facing challenges.

Under the theme of motivation and professional commitment, teachers primarily expressed their opinions through the conceptual codes of love and dedication to the profession ($f=16$), recognition and reward for their success ($f=13$), and high teacher motivation ($f=12$). Regarding the relationship between love for the profession and teacher motivation, K14 states that:

“I believe that in order for professional resilience to be high, motivation also needs to be very high. I can see this clearly when I compare myself now with my past self. Currently, I work with very high motivation. However, at the beginning of my teaching career ten years ago, there was a teacher who constantly complained, avoided stressful situations, and would give up immediately instead of solving problems. The stress I experienced back then was maybe one-tenth or even one-twentieth of what I face now. Yet, thanks to my motivation, I can cope much more easily today. I keep telling myself, ‘You can handle this.’ Because now, I truly love my job. I think motivation is extremely important in this context.”

It is emphasized that teachers have difficulty coping with stress during periods when their motivation is low. This reluctance to solve problems negatively affects their professional resilience. Over time, as teachers develop a greater love for their profession, their motivation tends to increase. Teachers with high motivation demonstrate a strong professional commitment. These factors directly enhance teacher professional resilience and serve as a driving force that sustains teachers during times of crisis. The statements also indicate that teacher professional resilience is not a fixed trait; it can fluctuate over time and under changing conditions.

4.4. Findings on Negative Factors Affecting Teacher Professional Resilience

According to teachers' opinions, the factors that negatively affect professional resilience were coded and grouped into four themes. These themes are listed as “organizational factors,” “individual factors,” “environmental and economic factors,” and “psychological and social factors.” The themes related to factors that negatively affect teachers' professional resilience are presented in Figure 2.

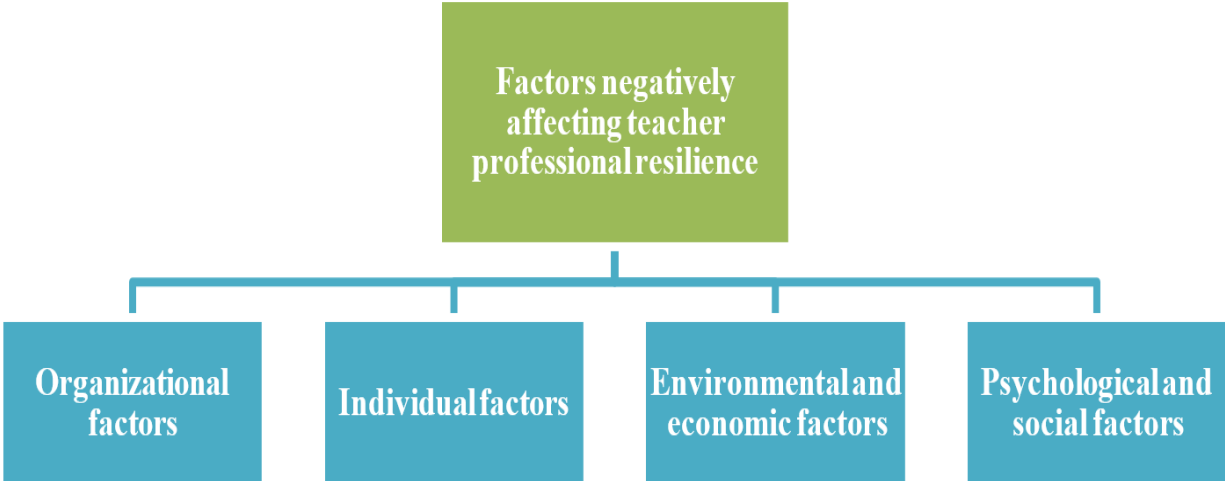


Figure 2. Factors negatively affecting teacher professional resilience according to teachers' views.

Table 3. Themes and codes related to factors negatively affecting teacher professional resilience.

Theme	Conceptual codes	<i>f</i>
1. Organizational factors	1.1. Weak communication between teachers and school administration	14
	1.2. Constantly changing curriculum and education policies	13
	1.3. Disinterest and low motivation of students	9
	1.4. Inconsistency between teachers' practices	7
	1.5. Excessive course load and additional duties	6
	1.6. Discipline problems in classes	6
	1.7. Discrimination	3
	1.8. Not including teachers in decision-making processes at school	2
	1.9. Frequent changes in methods and techniques	2
	1.10. Mobbing	1
2. Individual factors	2.1. Inability to determine personal boundaries well	8
	2.2. Low communication skills	5
	2.3. Difficulties in classroom management	5
	2.4. Lack of self-confidence	3
	2.5. Lack of optimism	3
	2.6. Difficulty in following current developments	2
3. Environmental and economic factors	3.1. High expectations of parents	13
	3.2. Insufficient resources (tools/equipment)	12
	3.3. Economic concerns	9
	3.4. Declining reputation of the teaching profession	6
	3.5. Violence against educators	4
	3.6. Parents' low respect for teachers	2
4. Psychological and social factors	4.1. Work-life balance disruption	11
	4.2. Low support from school administrators	8
	4.3. Low support from colleagues	8
	4.4. Low family support	4
	4.5. Stress	3
	4.6. Low psychological resilience	2
	4.7. Feeling of professional burnout	1

In Table 3, the factors that negatively affect teachers' professional resilience, according to teachers' opinions, are categorized into four main themes. Under the theme of organizational factors, teachers primarily highlighted issues such as poor communication between teachers and school management (*f*=14) and the frequent changes in curriculum and education policies (*f*=13). Regarding weak communication between teachers and school management, T3 states that:

“If communication between school administration and teachers is weak, and teachers feel that they are not supported enough and valued, their motivation may decrease. This will negatively affect professional resilience. Therefore, communication based on mutual trust with school administration helps teachers cope with stress.”

With these statements, it is emphasized that healthy communication between school administrators and teachers positively influences teachers' professional resilience. Conversely, poor communication can undermine this resilience. Regarding the constantly changing curriculum and education policies, T10 states that:

“In our system, there are constant changes in the curriculum, examinations, and related procedures. Such situations can be challenging for teachers to accept, as they have years of training and established teaching methods. When the curriculum changes, some topics are added or removed, and teachers are expected to adjust their instructional techniques accordingly. This creates difficulties and makes it hard for them to keep up. As a result, teachers may sometimes feel bored or perceive themselves as unable to cope. I believe these factors reduce teachers’ professional resilience.”

These statements emphasize that frequently implementing reform initiatives, rather than addressing existing deficiencies in the Turkish education system, negatively affects teachers’ professional resilience.

Under the theme of individual factors, teachers primarily expressed their opinions through conceptual codes such as not being able to clearly define their personal boundaries (*f*=8), possessing low communication skills (*f*=5), and experiencing difficulties in classroom management (*f*=5). According to teachers, when they are unable to establish a healthy balance between their professional and personal lives and assume more responsibilities than necessary, their professional resilience is adversely affected. Additionally, when teachers struggle to maintain effective communication with colleagues, students, and school administrators, and face challenges in expressing themselves, their professional resilience diminishes. Furthermore, negative student behaviors contribute to teachers' difficulties in classroom management and can lead to decreased motivation. It is also possible that teachers who are less successful in managing classrooms tend to have lower levels of professional resilience.

Under the theme of environmental and economic factors, teachers primarily expressed their opinions through the conceptual codes of high expectations of parents (*f*=13) and lack of resources (tools/equipment) (*f*=12). Regarding the high expectations of parents, T18 states that:

“Sometimes parents have interesting expectations from teachers. For example, at the parent-teacher meeting last week, many parents in my class said that their children were using their phones too much at home and asked me to help with this. However, how can I solve a problem that parents cannot solve? Children spend more time with their parents. I can talk to students about this and warn them about it. However, I do not think it is right to put all the responsibility on teachers for a

situation that parents cannot solve themselves. Parents, just like teachers, have responsibilities on the path to success."

It was emphasized that both teachers and parents have responsibilities for students' success. Teachers do not possess a magic wand; therefore, cooperation between teachers and parents is essential. Assigning parents' responsibilities solely to teachers can undermine teachers' professional resilience. The teachers interviewed also stated that their professional resilience would decline in the absence of adequate course materials and equipment.

Under the theme of psychological and social factors, teachers primarily expressed their opinions through the conceptual codes of disruption of work-life balance ($f=11$), lack of support from school administrators ($f=8$), and lack of support from colleagues ($f=8$). This finding emphasizes that teachers' professional resilience is negatively impacted when they encounter crisis situations without adequate support. A deficiency of support from school administrators, colleagues, and family members, as well as difficulties in maintaining a balance between work and personal life, can further diminish their resilience.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1. Results and Discussion on Positive Factors Affecting Teacher Professional Resilience

This study examined teachers' views on professional resilience. As a result of the research, forty-one conceptual codes were developed under the themes of organizational and supportive environment, individual factors, motivation, and professional commitment, focusing on factors that positively influence teachers' professional resilience according to their perspectives. Additionally, twenty-nine conceptual codes were identified under the themes of organizational factors, individual factors, environmental and economic factors, as well as psychological and social factors, concerning elements that negatively impact teachers' professional resilience.

The interviewed teachers stated that teachers whose ideas and opinions are respected, who receive the necessary support from their colleagues, who love their profession and are committed to it, who are highly motivated, whose achievements are recognized and rewarded, who act in a solution-oriented manner in all situations, who exhibit consistent behaviors, who adapt quickly to change, who are patient, optimistic, and who possess high communication skills will be more resilient in their profession. A review of the literature on teachers' professional resilience reveals that similar findings are frequently reported. In their interviews with teachers, [Raja and Saddique \(2023\)](#) found that support from colleagues and school administrators, in particular, increases teachers' resilience and contributes to their successful emergence from stressful situations. Teachers who have supportive colleagues and administrators are more successful in coping with workload and stress. According to teachers, in addition to receiving support from colleagues and administrators, professional resilience is enhanced when they experience a sense of appreciation, when school leaders demonstrate empathy and concern, and when their opinions carry weight in decision-making. [Salvo-Garrido, Cisternas-Salcedo, and Polanco-Levicán \(2025\)](#) examined the factors affecting teacher resilience in interviews with teachers under two headings: resilience in personal life and resilience in professional life. Resilience in personal life encompasses four dimensions: individual, family, external factors, and organizational factors. At the personal level, teachers' effective emotional management, ability to cope with personal problems, and capacity to seek help positively influence their resilience. Additionally, teachers who are aware of their strengths and weaknesses, emotionally and mentally healthy, and humble tend to be more resilient. At the family level, teacher resilience is reinforced through effective communication with parents, parental support, and harmonious collaboration with families. At the external level, establishing strong and meaningful connections with colleagues, students, families, and broader community stakeholders fosters a more inclusive and enriching educational environment. At the organizational level, the quality of teachers' interpersonal relationships and the overall working conditions within the school directly impact their personal and professional resilience. Resilience in professional life also comprises four dimensions: teacher, family, external, and organizational factors. In the teacher dimension, conflict management styles adopted within the school, teachers' ability to adapt to new situations, professional experience, motivation, and organizational commitment enhance teacher resilience. In the family dimension, the support and commitment teachers receive from students' families, along with the support they provide during their involvement in the educational process, make teachers feel valued, thereby increasing their motivation and job satisfaction. In the external dimension, teachers' resilience improves when they work in environments free from significant economic and social vulnerabilities. Finally, in the organizational dimension, cooperation within the institution increases the sense of belonging and improves teacher resilience. [\(Kocakuşak & Akar-Vural, 2023\)](#) named the factors that positively affect teachers' resilience as protective factors as a result of their interviews with teachers and divided the protective factors into three categories: individual, environmental, and organizational. At the individual level, teachers tend to be more resilient if they possess problem-solving skills, patience, and the ability to remain calm in all situations. Other contributing traits include determination, empathy, understanding, effective communication skills, a love for teaching, quick learning, positive thinking, bravery, and compassion. At the environmental level, teachers' resilience increases when they receive support from family members, friends, and more experienced individuals. At the organizational level, teachers' resilience improves when they receive support from colleagues, parents, and the guidance services. In their qualitative study, [Kırmızı, Irgatoğlu, and Ekizer \(2025\)](#) stated that teachers' resilience increases when they can touch the souls of their students, when they witness students' success, when they are respected by people, when they work in an environment where cooperation and solidarity prevail, when their thoughts are valued by others, when they work with like-minded colleagues and when their creativity is encouraged. [Ahrens \(2001\)](#) stated that teachers who receive support from colleagues, positively impact their students' lives, take advantage of professional development opportunities, enjoy working with children, have their ideas valued and possess personal characteristics such as humor and patience tend to be more resilient. [Albrecht, Johns, Mounstevan, and Olorunda \(2009\)](#) reported that sufficient support from school administrators enhances teachers' resilience. [Belknap \(2012\)](#) found that teachers who receive colleague support and feel that they make a difference demonstrate higher resilience. [Brunetti \(2006\)](#) stated that teachers who are committed to their students, strive for professional and personal growth and receive support from school administrators and colleagues are more resilient. [Coetzee, Ebersöhn, and Ferreira \(2013\)](#)

highlighting that teachers with a social support network comprising school administrators, colleagues, and families, who have high job satisfaction and prioritize student success, tend to exhibit greater professional resilience. Based on interviews conducted with six primary school teachers, Giroux (2007) concluded that teachers' resilience is strengthened by their sense of spirituality, the availability of professional or personal support networks and the personal bonds they establish with their students. According to Ainsworth and Oldfield (2019) factors that positively contribute to teacher resilience can be categorized as individual or contextual. Personal attributes such as emotional intelligence, self-confidence, and autonomous problem-solving, along with social support from administrators, colleagues, and friends, as well as contextual factors like school culture, play a vital role in strengthening teachers' resilience. When evaluating the findings of the current study alongside other research in the literature, some common themes emerge. Social support provided by colleagues, school administrators, and parents being appreciated and valued, effective communication, positive personality traits (such as patience, optimism, and determination), professional commitment, and a supportive school culture are recurrent themes in similar studies. The research results confirm the hypothesis that social support significantly contributes to overcoming the challenges teachers face in their professional lives. Studies indicate that social support positively impacts teachers' mental health and overall life satisfaction, highlighting its importance in fostering resilience and well-being among educators (Li, Huang, & Liu, 2022), subjective well-being (Väisänen, Pietarinen, Pyhältö, Toom, & Soini, 2017) and self-efficacy (Brouwers, Evers, & Tomic, 2001) and reduces professional burnout and stress (Greenglass, Burke, & Konarski, 1997; Russell, Altmaier, & Van Velzen, 1987; Sarros & Sarros, 1992). This finding also emphasizes the importance of working in an inclusive and supportive school climate. The appreciation and value of teachers' achievements increases their professional motivation, professional competence, job satisfaction (Yoestara, Putri, & Ismail, 2020) and professional performance (Wen & Salwana, 2023). Professional commitment and passion are among the most important elements of the teaching profession. Teachers with high levels of professional commitment and passion are never satisfied with their current achievements; they constantly seek innovation to better serve their students. Additionally, they prioritize their professional development to unlock their full potential and enhance their teaching effectiveness (Yildiz & Celik, 2017). Constructive and supportive interactions between school leaders and teachers help foster a positive school atmosphere (Halawah, 2005).

5.2. Results and Discussion on Negative Factors Affecting Teacher Professional Resilience

In the current study, according to teachers' opinions, the main factors that negatively affect teacher professional resilience are poor communication between school administration and teachers, constantly changing curricula and educational policies, low motivation among students, high expectations from parents, insufficient resources, and disruption of the balance between work and private life. These findings are also largely consistent with other research findings in the literature. Kirmizi et al. (2025) identified factors that negatively impact teacher resilience, categorizing them into five main themes: school, social life, school administration, colleagues, and parents. Under the theme of school contact, crowded classroom environments, a constantly changing examination system, indifferent parents, and teachers having to cope with problems alone are significant negative factors. In terms of social life, complaints and accusations related to education adversely affect resilience. Regarding school administration, belittling, discrimination, mobbing, and a lack of cooperation and solidarity among administrators diminish resilience. Within the colleague contact theme, mobbing and humorous insults among colleagues are detrimental. Lastly, issues with parents, such as false accusations, threats, and a lack of motivation and expectations concerning their children, also negatively influence teacher resilience. (Kocakuşak & Akar-Vural, 2023) grouped the factors that negatively affect teacher resilience, which they call risk factors, under five themes: environment, institutions, students, parents and colleagues. Under the theme of environment, the factors identified included exposure to trauma, living in disadvantaged regions, areas receiving migrants, and experiences of abuse. Within the institutional theme, teachers reported challenges such as a lack of equipment, overcrowded classrooms, insufficient supervision, and transportation issues. Regarding students, negative behaviors, language difficulties, disadvantaged backgrounds, grouping practices, absenteeism, and substance use were highlighted as factors affecting the educational process. Under the parental theme, teachers identified negative attitudes and behaviors, a pessimistic perspective on education, frequent complaints and demands, and cultural differences as influencing student outcomes. Finally, within the theme of colleagues, factors such as conflicts during discussions, lack of communication, negative attitudes and behaviors, prejudice, discrimination, grouping, and hypocrisy were reported as affecting professional interactions. Ahrens (2001) stated that teachers' resilience is negatively affected by working with constantly critical and unsupportive school administrators, dealing with parents who have high expectations and make unreasonable demands, teaching problematic students, and receiving low salaries despite a heavy workload.

The effective and efficient use of limited resources in schools depends on healthy and continuous communication between school administrators and teachers (Bayar & Zengin, 2021). Indeed, research findings indicate that communication between administrators and teachers has a direct impact on the school climate (Bayar & Zengin, 2021; Ekici, 2020; Üstün & Balci, 2023). Communication problems between school administrators and teachers cause conflicts, insecurity, increased intention to leave the school (Üstün & Balci, 2023), decreased organizational trust (Sağır, 2018), decreased motivation (Özgan & Aslan, 2008), and decreased organizational commitment (Çağlar & Çınar, 2021). Constantly changing curriculum and educational policies are another factor that negatively affects the professional resilience of teachers. Yıldızoğlu and Cemaloğlu (2023) stated that in Türkiye, the frequent implementation of change initiatives leads to high levels of change fatigue among teachers, which in turn causes stress. The disruption of the balance between work and private life also has negative consequences for teachers. Decreased job satisfaction, increased professional burnout (Nayeem & Tripathy, 2012), and emotional burnout (Wei & Ye, 2022) can be counted among these negative outcomes. While the high expectations of parents and their active involvement in their children's educational process positively affect teachers' perceptions of students and increase their expectations from students (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 1996; Yamamoto & Holloway, 2010) it can also create pressure and stress on teachers,

leading to professional burnout, negative feelings towards parents and dissatisfaction with teaching (Prakke & Van Peet, 2007). When examining the literature, the lack of physical infrastructure, equipment, and resources is also frequently among the problems teachers face (Eğmir & Çelik, 2021). In Turkey, approximately 80% of the education budget is allocated to personnel and social security expenses, leaving limited resources available to implement policies and achieve targets aimed at improving the quality of education (Eğitim-İş., 2024). This situation is the most significant obstacle to ensuring equal opportunities. The availability of complete physical facilities, such as classrooms, laboratories, reading and study areas, sports facilities, and school yards, enhances the efficiency of the educational services provided (Alicigüzel, 1979). Lack of resources often requires teachers to produce course materials with their own means, forcing teachers to constantly adapt their teaching methods and techniques to current conditions; this can cause loss of time and energy. Current research findings and similar studies in the literature indicate that the factors negatively affecting teacher professional resilience are multidimensional and interrelated. These adverse factors lead to a decrease in teachers' motivation, an increase in their stress levels, and damage to their psychological and professional resilience. Therefore, to support teacher professional resilience effectively, school administrators should adopt a more inclusive and supportive approach. Additionally, implementing structural reforms aimed at minimizing disparities between schools and promoting equal opportunities is essential for fostering a resilient teaching workforce.

6. Conclusion

Teachers, who are among the most important elements of education systems, encounter many difficulties, crises, and stressful situations throughout their professional lives. Teachers' ability to resist such negative situations and continue on their path successfully is defined as teacher professional resilience. Professionally resilient teachers are more successful in coping with stressful situations and perform their teaching roles in a healthier way in the long term. It is also possible to say that teachers with professional resilience experience less burnout and have higher job satisfaction. In this research, the aspects perceived by teachers as supporting or hindering their professional resilience are evaluated. The qualitative dataset was obtained from 20 teachers working at different school levels and in various branches.

The results of this research indicate that teachers who are respected for their ideas and opinions can receive support from colleagues, family members, and school administrators when needed. Their successes are recognized and rewarded, which tends to enhance their levels of professional resilience. Furthermore, teachers working in schools with a culture based on cooperation, solidarity, and inclusion, who are committed to their profession, highly motivated, and continuously seek self-improvement and learning from their mistakes, also demonstrate greater professional resilience. The study also reveals that teachers with certain personality traits such as being solution-oriented, consistent, adaptable to change, patient, effective communicators, optimistic, empathetic, emotionally intelligent, responsible, calm, tolerant, and self-confident are more resilient in their profession. Conversely, the findings suggest that teachers' professional resilience can decline under adverse conditions. Factors that undermine resilience include weak communication with school administrators, frequent changes in curriculum and educational policies, low student engagement, discrimination among teachers, heavy teaching workloads, disruption of work-life balance, insufficient support from colleagues and administrators, and inadequate instructional materials. Addressing these challenges is essential to fostering a resilient teaching workforce and ensuring a positive educational environment for both teachers and students.

7. Suggestions

According to the results of this research, the following recommendations can be made.

1. School administrators should establish an institutional culture based on mutual trust and cooperation, in which teachers' successes are appreciated, their opinions are valued, and open communication is encouraged.
2. School administrators should be closely interested in teachers' problems and should listen to their suggestions by holding regular meetings with them. This approach will make teachers feel valued and increase their organizational commitment.
3. School administrators should distribute duties and responsibilities fairly among teachers and should never discriminate among teachers.
4. When decisions are made in schools, plans are developed, or educational policies are formulated, teachers' opinions should be taken into consideration. Furthermore, they should be given opportunities to assume responsibility, and the rationale behind the decisions should be communicated transparently. This approach fosters a sense of ownership among teachers regarding the decisions implemented.
5. Instead of frequent curriculum changes that cause teachers to experience uncertainty, deficiencies in existing curricula should be eliminated. Additionally, long-term policies should be developed in which teachers' opinions are considered.

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