



## The Problem of Transformation of the Teaching Profession into a Female Profession: Views of the Prospective Teachers\*

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Article Information	ABSTRACT
<p><i>Received:</i> 06.09.2020</p> <p><i>Accepted:</i> 07.06.2021</p> <p><i>Online First:</i> 15.12.2021</p> <p><i>Published:</i> 31.07.2022</p>	<p>This research aimed to determine the reasons why prospective teachers preferred the teaching profession by gender and discuss the common stereotype that labels teaching as a female profession. The research employed a qualitative descriptive and phenomenological design and a typical case sampling method, which is a purposive sampling technique. The study group of the research consisted of 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th-year prospective teachers at two education faculties of state universities in Turkey, Departments of Primary Education, Social Sciences and Turkish Education, Foreign Languages, Mathematics and Science Education, Computer and Instructional Technologies Education, Educational Sciences, and Fine Arts Education. Data were collected using a semi-structured questionnaire and analyzed with content analysis. Participants preferred the teaching profession mostly because of individual reasons, such as their own choice or being interested in the field. Another reason following these reasons was "self-identification". According to the participants' views, the teaching profession was characterized by being both a male and female profession (not identifying gender; loving the profession; being talented), being a profession appropriate for females (working hours suitable for females; identifying females with the profession; being compassionate and patient; being aesthetical and polite; and low salary), being a profession appropriate for males (establishing authority in the classroom; being natural; identifying females with the profession due to the lack of knowledge), and considering the job as a male or female profession depending on the situation. Based on the research findings, we concluded that prospective teachers might be trying to establish a balance between economic factors and gender factors.</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Gender, the profession of woman, feminization, teaching profession, the choice of the teaching profession</p>
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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Students are the most basic element of education systems. Although human resources such as teachers, administrators and other staff in education systems and material resources such as school buildings, teaching materials, education programs and financing exist for students, teachers continue to be one of the most important elements of an education system. This is because teachers have a very important role in students, who are the cornerstones of the education system. Despite the rapid developments in technology, no technological invention has yet taken the place of teachers in education systems, and the place and importance of teachers in education systems cannot be denied. Today, as in the past, students need qualified and well-equipped teachers who will guide them correctly. Gurbuzturk and Genc (2004) openly state that qualified people take an active role in the production and use of knowledge and that it can only be achieved with a qualified education, while a qualified education requires a qualified teacher. Kavcar (1982) and Uygun (2014) also mention that the quality of a school is related to the quality and quantity of teachers.

Considering the increasing globalization, the importance of lifelong education, and the transformations observed in technological, economic, scientific, social and cultural fields, it can be said that education systems will also be affected by this

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change. Education systems have a predominant importance in raising individuals who are equipped with the knowledge and skills to support the development of countries and who can advance societies economically and socially (Karadag, 2012). The teaching profession differs from other professional groups because it has an aspect based on human relations, is referred to as an important title like behavior change engineering (Senemoglu, 2001), and is not only seen as a regular profession (Sisman, 2005). In addition, teachers create models for students with their attitudes and behaviors and determine what kind of individuals they will be in the future (Recepoglu, 2013). The teaching profession has a special importance in the society when the qualities such as communication with the student, being based on mutual love and respect, and the high responsibility of the work done are taken into account. Accepting the teaching profession as a sacred profession in the society also requires patience, tolerance, being an example to the society and constantly improving oneself. The way to achieve these is to love the profession and to do it willingly.

The reasons for choosing the teaching profession have been examined by many studies in the literature. Teaching profession is preferred by trainee teachers for reasons such as; "Loving the profession and teaching, Boz and Boz (2008); Cicek Saglam (2008); Haciomeroglu and Sahin Taskin (2009); Karadag (2012); Kyriacou, Hultgren and Stephens (1999); Nalcaci and CTFmen (2016); Ovet (2006); Yong (1995)"; "Influence of teachers during student years, Cakir and Akkaya (2017); Yurdakal (2019); Ozsoy, Ozsoy, Ozkara and Memis (2010); Tašner, Žveglic Mihelic and Mencin Ceplak (2017); Yaman, Yaman and Eskicumali (2001)"; "Love of the field, Tataroglu Tastan, Ozgen and Alkan (2011)"; "Loving children, Berkant and Bahadır (2019); Gultekin, Guner, Hayal and Yar Sevmis (2016)"; "serving the country, Ozsoy, Ozsoy, Ozkara and Memis (2010)"; "Having a respectable place in society, Yurdakal (2019)"; "Desiring to be a teacher, Agbaria (2013); Bekir and Bayraktar (2018)"; "Finding oneself talented for this profession, Ulusoy (2015); Yilmaz and Dogan (2015)"; "Being a suitable profession for women, Karadag (2012); Ulusoy (2015)"; "Government assurance, Cermik, Dogan and Sahin (2010); "not long working hours, Tataroglu Tastan, Ozgen and Alkan (2011)"; "Long vacations, Cermik, Dogan and Sahin (2010)"; "Working and job conditions, Berkant and Bahadır (2019)"; "Family and environment, Aydin and Ozcan (2019)"; "the score obtained from the exam, Edmonds, Sharp, and Benefield (2002)".

Schutz, Crowder, and White (2001) define career choice as a complex decision-making process in which individual goals and interests, subjective assessment of one's own abilities, previous professional experience, needs, costs, and job opportunities are important. Erben Kecici (2019) investigated the reasons for choosing the teaching profession of the first year students of the faculty of education. Students stated that they chose the teaching profession for reasons such as job security, desire to work with children/young people, family and career compatibility, desire to transfer knowledge (less scientific or technical knowledge, more value and ideal), and their exemplary teachers. Erben Kecici (2019) also states that meeting with children and young people, professional interest and social contribution are the main reasons for choosing the teaching profession. In Tašner et al.'s (2017) research, prospective teachers associate the teaching profession with the desire to work with children, and they stated that they chose it for reasons such as contributing to community life, influencing other people's opinions, long vacations, suitable working conditions, having a regular income, and the security of family life and social security. In his research, Charalambos (2017) examined the perceptions of teachers coming to China from different nationalities (Greece, Russia, Papua New Guinea, Tanzania, Cambodia, Pakistan, Thailand, Australia and England) about the teaching profession and the factors affecting their choice to join the teaching profession. The participants stated that they liked the teaching profession and perceived the profession as positive despite the low salary. As an important finding in this research, it can be said that although teachers are willing to participate in this profession, it is not their dream profession. Some teachers stated that they chose the teaching profession because they did not have any other options.

Some research results reveal that prospective teachers do not act with the motivations of "liking the profession, desiring to be a teacher" while choosing the teaching profession, and other factors are also effective in their choice of profession (Aydin & Ozcan, 2019; Berkant & Bahadır, 2019; Ekinici, 2017; Haciomeroglu & Sahin-Taskin, 2009; Kilcan, Kece, Cepni and Kilinc, 2014). While choosing the teaching profession, factors such as earnings from the profession, living standards of teachers, recruitment policies, and age group of students should remain in the background. However, the reasons for choosing the profession of female prospective teachers and male prospective teachers may differ. The fact that especially the classroom education and pre-school education in the primary education departments of the education faculties are preferred by female prospective teachers can be interpreted as that the prospective teachers associate the teaching profession with motherhood, being a spouse, and being suitable for life of these departments.

When the history of teacher training in Turkey is examined, it is seen that teacher training dates back to the opening of the first teacher training school, named Darulmuallimin, in 1848 to train teachers for secondary schools (Aydin, 1998). Darulmuallimins continued to meet the needs of teachers by taking the name of Trainers' School in 1924 and Teachers' school in 1935. After the Maarif-i Umumiye Regulation, which was published in 1869, the opening of a girls' teacher's school named Darulmuallimat in 1870 can be described as the first attempt in terms of training female teachers and stepping into the teaching profession for women (Akyuz, 2010). Afterwards, it is possible to see that female teachers are trained in addition to men in the process extending to primary teacher schools, village institutes, two-year education institutes and education faculties (Atanur Baskan, Aydin, & Madden, 2006).

If we look at the examples in the world, when historical conditions have analyzed the entry of women into the teaching profession in Europe, the United States (USA), Canada and Brazil coincide with the second half of the 19th century. One of the

main reasons for this situation can be shown as the social and economic changes related to the urbanization and subsequent industrialization process, the expansion of the labor market, the expansion of compulsory education, and the need for more teachers (Nicolete & Almeida, 2018; Tašner et al., 2017). As countries developed and incomes increased, the education sector grew and women were able to close the gap. These two phenomena have increased both the general demand for teachers and the supply of qualified women. As a result, more women have entered the teaching profession. At the same time, as the private sector expanded, more lucrative occupations emerged for educated men (compared to women) (Lee, Rhee, & Rudolf, 2017).

The end of World War II contributed to the changes in traditions, causing reflections in education and social life, especially for women. In the 1960s and 1970s, a period of feminist agitation began, and at the end of the 2000s, an ideology based on gender relations that no longer accepted inequalities between individuals based on biological differences gained strength. Afterwards, the necessity of considering feminism from a theoretical perspective led to the emergence of the concept of gender as a scientific category indicating the social relationship between the sexes and to elaborating the concepts related to power relations (Nicolete & Almeida, 2018).

Kahraman, Ozansoy Tuncdemir and Ozcan (2015) stated that gender includes social and cultural values associated with masculinity and femininity imposed by society; they state that they are internalized in the socialization process and that the subjects become a part of their selves. These concepts, which are removed from their social context, consist of the roles attributed to women and men in this way. In this context, the social values of a culture signal how a man and a woman should look, behave, and relate to each other, and which professions they can pursue. In a research conducted by Sari (2012) on how female teachers' gender roles affect their practices in the classroom, female teachers explained that gender roles affect their profession in both positive and negative aspects in terms of 'being a mother'. The research has clearly shown that on the one hand, female teachers naturally accept the gender roles set for them by the society, on the other hand, they are aware of the problems arising from these gender roles and they have problems.

Gender inequality is a hierarchical structure; masculine/masculine values are always in a more advantageous and superior position than femininity/feminine values. The secondary position of women in the labor market is handled as a reflection of the male-dominated ideology and the secondary position of women in the family and society. Although it changes and differentiates according to countries/regions over time, in almost all societies, domestic production and child/elder care are perceived as the primary responsibility of women and bringing bread to the house is perceived as the primary responsibility of men. The division of responsibilities based on gender points to the inequality that women are exposed to even before they enter the labor market (Ozkaplan, 2013).

A report examining gender imbalances in the teaching profession mentions that historically, the teaching profession is largely dominated by women across Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, and it is underlined that this share has been on the rise (68% for all education levels) in recent years. In addition, it is understood that the ratio of female teachers decreases with the increase in education levels. For example, the rate that reaches 97% in pre-school education tends to decrease up to 43% in higher education (OECD, 2017). The gender imbalance in the teaching profession is seen as a remarkable feature especially in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Russian Federation, where approximately four out of five teachers are female (Eurydice, 2015). In addition, the current age distribution of male and female teachers may be an indicator of future gender imbalances in the teaching profession. For example, at secondary level, women make up 70% of teachers under the age of 30, while they make up 65% of teachers aged 50 and over. This raises concerns about future gender imbalances. The same report points out that although women constitute the majority in the teaching profession, they are relatively underrepresented in leadership positions (OECD, 2020).

Today, women are still seen as dominant in the teaching profession due to a number of demographic, economic, political and cultural reasons (need for teachers, general employment opportunities, the possibility of bridging work and home life, arranging leave for maternity leave and childcare) (Tašner et al., 2017). According to Moya, Exposito, and Ruiz (2010), women and men focus on different occupations, and women are less represented in the labor market and in higher-status occupations. According to Drudy (2008), the teaching of young children has long been dominated by women. This global phenomenon stems from issues related to economic development, urbanization, women's position in society, cultural definitions of masculinity, the value of children and childcare. In some countries there are expressions of concern by the media, government ministers and others about the level of feminization/feminization of the teaching profession. Cohen (Rich, 2014) has made a striking finding that "when a job is primarily done by women, people tend to believe that the job has less value".

Taşner and Rožman's (2015) research shows that most of the women in their career choices still tend towards "typical female" work areas such as education, human sciences, social sciences, social welfare and health; On the other hand, it shows that males are still prevalent in "traditional male" programs such as mathematics, natural sciences, technical sciences, construction and production technology, and computer science. Apart from the numerical dominance of women in the teaching profession, the transformation of this situation into a 'voluntary commitment' (Beauvois, 2000, cited in Dillabough, 2004) is seen as a social problem. For Bourdieu, gender is a social construct and gender habit is not just a biological category; represents an entity in 'complex, historical and fundamentally cultural form' (Dilabough, 2004). Gender habit is thus among the 'basic elements of an individual's identity' (Krais, 2006). Asimaki and Vergidis (2013) point out that women seek

occupations in the business world that are fully compatible with their natural tendencies, avoiding positions of power and prestige, based on their shaped habits in line with the dominant social theory.

Since colonial times, there has always been talk of the expectation that women are responsible for the education of girls in Brazil. With the claim that there is educating children at home in the personality of a woman, the profession of teaching has become a profession that women do/will do in education from the very beginning. For example, since the 19th century, basic courses were taught to girls, while boys were taught other courses such as mathematics, science and history (Nicolete & Almeida, 2018).

According to some research results, it is seen that the number of male prospective teachers who choose the teaching profession in some departments decreases compared to the number of female prospective teachers (Erginer & Saklan, 2016). Even though the educational policies implemented in the pre-school education program for male prospective teachers to choose the profession are effective in the preference of male prospective teachers, the attraction for female prospective teachers has not changed. The teaching profession, especially in some departments, has a tendency to turn into a female profession. At the same time, this tendency creates an environment that questions whether the teaching profession is a professional profession or not, due to the femininity of the teaching profession.

In recent years, the teaching profession includes discussions about women's intense preference for this profession and the feminization of the profession. Perhaps this is related to whether the teaching profession is perceived as a professional profession or not. The concept of a profession, like the concept of a career, has been created and implemented from its inception by male-dominated jobs and career paths. Attempts to professionalize teaching can coincide with a refusal to recognize the role of women in shaping and conducting their work in schools. However, it is argued that what is needed now is a new definition of professionalism (Hey & Bradford, 2004).

Professionalism, as a concept, can be defined as being able to make rational and independent choices. But paradoxically, the teacher's responsibility to ensure the 'freedom' of students contradicts what has been expressed regarding the professional identity of teachers. However, female teachers are constantly constrained by the illusion of 'freedom'; because they are constantly confronted with the attribution of 'motherhood' and 'protection' to them. These constraints are clearly linked to identity narratives that concern women's productive capacities rather than their ability to be 'rational'. As these arguments suggest, educational discourse about female teachers is often associated with traditional notions of female identity. However, such concepts are often emotionally driven and/or interpreted as inappropriate by society. Therefore, the social construction of women's professional status points to the naturalization of women's teaching identity as being lower than men's (Dillabough, 1999).

Looking at the literature on gender and education, the issue of gender in the teaching profession and the reasons behind the teaching profession's becoming a more female-dominated profession continue to be the focus of current discussions (Asimaki & Vergidis, 2013; Drudy, 2008; Richardson & Watt, 2006; Riddell, Tett, Burns, Ducklin, Ferrie, Stafford, & Winterton, 2005). The scarcity of male teachers at primary level has become a worrying situation in the case of Australia, and governments have begun to develop strategies in this regard. Men's reluctance to work in a female-dominated environment, low status and salary, and men's discomfort with working with young children make the teaching profession less preferable for men (Foster & Newman, 2005).

According to the research carried out by Erginer and Saklan (2016), it is observed that the number of female prospective teachers who preferred the education faculty between 1997-2016 is considerably higher than the number of males, and the number of females has increased proportionally over the years. Drudy (2008) states that the increasing weight of women in the field of education is defined as the feminization of education. With industrialization and urbanization, the role of the traditional family in raising children was transferred to the school and the way for women to be in education was paved. Considering the historical relationships between teaching and the duties it undertakes, professions that were previously dominated by men have gradually begun to transform into professions where women outnumber them. The main reason for the increase in the proportion of women, especially in the field of education, is the thought that there is a relatively high harmony between the teaching profession and the task of raising children.

Deren van Het Hof and Hostut (2016) state that feminization can be defined as the fact that some professions rely on female employment well above the average in the process. The increase in the ratio of female employees in a certain profession causes the profession to gain a "female-specific" meaning and feature in the future. Characteristics such as sensuality, softness and motherhood, which are taken for granted as belonging to women, have almost started to precede knowledge and experience in professions that have begun to be accepted as a female profession. This negatively affects the social status of the feminized profession and drags the discussions to a dead end that leads to gender discrimination.

### **1.1. Purpose of the Study**

The aim of the study is to examine the reasons why teacher candidates prefer the teaching profession according to their gender and to discuss the problematic of seeing the teaching profession as a female profession.

In line with this purpose, the sub-objectives are:

- Why do prospective teachers prefer the teaching profession?
- If prospective teachers did not choose the teaching profession, which profession would they prefer?
- What are the opinions of prospective teachers about whether they prefer the teaching profession when given a new opportunity?
- What are the opinions of prospective teachers on whether the teaching profession should be a female profession?
- How do prospective teachers evaluate the decrease in the number of male prospective teachers in some teacher training programs?
- What are the opinions of prospective teachers on whether or not they should pursue this profession after graduation?

## 1.2. The Importance of Research

The fact that the difference between the number of male and female prospective teachers in education faculties increased over time and that this was observed as a problem was the determining factor in deciding the research topic. It is thought that students' encounters with both male and female teachers at school may be effective in increasing students' social skills, developing their communication skills, taking role models for themselves, and preparing the ground for their future professions. In addition, the fact that the subject is a current issue is one of the factors that make this research important. With this research, while it is planned to raise awareness on the transformation of the profession into a female profession in some teacher training programs, it is expected to question whether the teaching profession is a female profession or not. It is also assumed by the research that these questions and their answers will provide further reflection on the social reproduction of the gender of the teaching profession. On the other hand, the research is considered important in terms of presenting ideas to lawmakers and policymakers to take precautions.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The research was designed as descriptive qualitative research. Qualitative methods stand out with their unique and different patterns used in the analysis of words, texts and imaginary data (Christensen, Johnson, & Turner, 2015). The research was planned according to the phenomenological pattern, and the typical case sampling method, one of the purposeful sampling method, was used in the research. Yin (1984, cited in Subasi & Okumus, 2017) explains the case research as follows: The research focuses on "how" and "why" questions; the researcher has little or no control over the events; It is used when the connection between the event and real life is not clear.

Purposeful sampling is a method of determining the sample for reasons such as comparison, obtaining detailed findings about a situation, depending on the research. Units are selected or classified according to certain characteristics; and no random selection is made. Patton (2002) states that purposive sampling takes its power from the fact that it includes information-rich situations.

### 2.1. Participants

While choosing the participants of the research, the typical case sampling technique, which is one of the purposive sampling methods suitable for qualitative research, was used. In typical case sampling, the typical unit that shows the general characteristics of the universe (without obvious differences) is selected for the examined case (Buyukozturk, Kilic Cakmak, Akgun, Karadeniz, & Demirel, 2019). The participants of the research are the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th graders who study in the departments of Primary Education, Social Sciences and Turkish Education, Foreign Languages, Mathematics and Science Education, Computer and Instructional Technologies Education, Educational Sciences and Fine Arts Education of the education faculties of two state universities in Turkey. The research group was formed with a total of 39 prospective teachers, 20 female and 19 male prospective teachers, by paying attention to the equal distribution of prospective teachers according to gender. An attempt was made to create a numerical and gender-based balance between teaching fields.

While determining the participants in this research; teacher training undergraduate programs that can be found in a state university education faculty, programs in which prospective teachers can become teachers in pre-school and primary education institutions (primary school + secondary school) when they graduate, and teaching branches that can typically be found in pre-school and primary education institutions have been taken into consideration. The Council of Higher Education (YOK) included 25 teacher training programs in its statement on new teacher training undergraduate programs in 2018 (<https://www.yok.gov.tr>). These, 11 of the teacher training undergraduate programs that are typically found in education faculties in Turkey, programs that can be taught to pre-school and primary education institutions are included in the research (Primary, Preschool, Social Studies, Turkish, English, Mathematics, Science, Computer and Instructional Technologies, Music, Art Teaching and Guidance and Psychological Counseling). Physical Education and Sports Teaching Undergraduate Program was excluded from the research because it tries to balance the number of male and female prospective teachers, taking into account the student intake by gender. The majority of the remaining 13 teacher training undergraduate programs train teachers for secondary education (Biology, Geography, Philosophy Group, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, History, Turkish Language and Literature Teaching) and were not included in the research. German, Arabic, French, and Japanese teaching

undergraduate programs do not constitute a typical situation as they are not programs in every education faculty and are not included in the scope of the research. Special education teaching undergraduate program, on the other hand, was not included in the research because it is not available in every education faculty, it is not a teaching branch that can be found in pre-school education and primary education institutions, and the field of research is special children compared to other teaching branches.

According to Kumbetoglu (2005), since qualitative research is designed with small groups, care should be taken that the data collected from the participants do not reveal their personal information. For this reason, the departments of the prospective teachers were coded considering their genders and grades. (Department of Primary Education: Classroom Teaching CTF1, Pre-School Teaching PTM4; Social Sciences and Turkish Education Department: Social Studies Teaching SSTF2, Turkish Teaching TTM3; Department of Foreign Language Education: English Language Teaching ETM4; Mathematics and Science Education Department: Mathematics Teaching MTF2, Science Teaching STM3, Computer and Instructional Technologies Education Department: Computer and Instructional Technologies Education CTM3, Educational Sciences Department: Guidance and Psychological Counseling PCF4, Fine Arts Education Department: Music Teaching MZTF1, Art Education Teaching AEM1). The first and second female or male teacher candidates who attend the same teaching program and have the same gender and class were coded together (CTM4,1, MTF3,2).

## 2.2. Data Collection Tool and Data Collection

In the collection of data, face-to-face interviews were conducted with prospective teachers on a semi-structured form. The fact that the interview technique, one of the qualitative research methods, was used in the research, and the prospective teachers participating in the research conveyed their views without being affected by any factor; It was also helpful to have information about additional problems that may arise during the interview. Publications such as books, articles, papers, reports and theses related to the research topic were reviewed and a draft data collection tool was prepared for prospective teachers. Expert opinion was sought to determine the content and consistency of the subject of the draft form and the level of intelligibility of the questions. After receiving the opinions of two experts from the field of Educational Sciences and Turkish Language Teaching and students, necessary corrections and changes were made in the interview form and it was tried to be brought to a level that prospective teachers could easily answer. Ethics committee approval of the research was obtained with the decision of Tokat Gaziosmanpasa University Social and Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee dated 22.07.2020 and numbered 33368. Then, a pilot application was made on four prospective teachers. Prospective teachers who were piloted were excluded from the interviews.

After the pilot implementation, the stage of making the necessary corrections and finalizing the form was started. After the form was finalized, interviews were started with the prospective teachers. In the data collection tool, a total of seven questions were prepared to be directed to prospective teachers. Some of the questions included in the data collection tool are:

- Would you choose this profession again if you were given the opportunity to pick a profession?
- A decrease is observed in the number of male prospective teachers in many departments in education faculties. What do you think about its reasons/what could be the reasons for this situation? (Especially in pre-school education teaching, female prospective teachers outnumber male prospective teachers. What are your thoughts on this matter? Did you notice this situation? What did you think if you noticed? What are the reasons/what could be the reasons for this situation?)

Interviews with prospective teachers started in March 2017. The interviews took place in the faculty offices of the faculty members and lasted an average of 20 minutes with each teacher candidate. In the interviews made with the prospective teachers within the scope of the research, when it was thought that sufficient data was obtained in accordance with the purpose of the research and it was noticed that the data repeated each other, it was decided that the obtained data reached theoretical saturation (Creswell, 2013) and the interviews were stopped. Creswell (2013) states that in qualitative research, the data collection phase includes a holistic process. Obtaining permissions, executing a good qualitative sampling strategy, developing tools for recording information, and storing data show that data collection is actually a much more complex process. All interviews with prospective teachers were made on a voluntary basis. The interviews were audio-recorded or noted on the forms with the approval of the prospective teachers. While writing the research results, the prospective teachers were informed that their names would not be reflected in the research report through codes, and the audio recordings and notes obtained after the interviews were encrypted.

## 2.3. Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The data obtained from the interviews with the prospective teachers were analyzed by content analysis. Content analysis is primarily used for conceptualizing the collected data and determining the themes that explain the data (Yildirim & Simsek, 2011); it also includes the processes of classification and coding of data (Ekiz, 2009). During the analysis of the data in the research, the recordings of the interviews, which were recorded on a voice recorder, were deciphered in electronic environment. The data converted into written text were read in different ways by the researchers. In the research, the data analysis technique suggested by Moustakas (1994; cited in Ersoy, 2017) was used in the analysis of the data. First of all, the important statements of the participants were determined and the repetitive and irrelevant statements were eliminated.

Then, common expressions were gathered together and meaning sets were themed. The main themes were determined in order to transform the obtained data into meaningful data.

To put it more clearly, an inductive way was followed in the analysis of the research data. For example, the data on the reasons for choosing the teaching profession are divided into themes as "Individual, Social and Settlement-Related Factors". In line with the data, the codes of "desiring to be a teacher, thinking that it is a female profession, believing that one can realize their dreams, thinking that they can continue as an academician, believing that the profession is sacred, desiring to research at a university regardless of their department" are "Individual Factors"; "Family's guidance, social judgment, being a family profession, taking teachers as an example, teachers' approval of this profession, thinking that it is a profession guaranteed by the state" codes are "Social Factors"; "Score and assignment conditions" codes formed the "Factors Related to Settlement" themes. Apart from the teaching profession, the data about the professions to be preferred and their reasons are divided into themes as "Profession and Reason for Preferring". With the data obtained, the codes of "social sciences, positive sciences, fine arts, health sciences, sports science, self-employment, educational sciences, linguistics and not thinking about other professions" are themed as "Profession"; The codes of "finding the profession suitable for him, believing that he will be successful, communicating with people, having a profession in a shorter time, dealing with human psychology, opening his own office, having a better income, being influenced by his teachers, patriotism, making sense of the environment he lives in" themed as Reasons for Preferring ". A similar pattern was followed in other data analyses.

In the presentation of the findings, the main themes and sub-themes were titled and arranged in accordance with the order in the interview. While conveying the results of the research, it was taken into account whether the data were adequately described or not. The data obtained from the participants were tried to be transferred in accordance with the original; For this purpose, direct quotations were frequently included in the writing of the findings and striking data were quoted exactly (Yildirim & Simsek, 2011). In this way, external validity (transferability) was ensured. In the research, phenomenological reduction and creative transformation processes were used in the analysis of the data. Insignificant, irrelevant, repetitive or unconsciously expressed data were excluded; expressions of all participants were transformed into a meaningful structure (Ersoy, 2017).

Validity and reliability analysis in research means ensuring the researcher's control and consistency for the accuracy of the findings (Gibbs, 2007, cited in Dede, 2013). In addition, the data collected in the research were reported in detail and how the results were reached was explained. This is seen as one of the important criteria of validity (Yildirim & Simsek, 2011). In order to ensure internal validity (credibility) in the research, the researchers introduced themselves to the participants before the research and expressed what they planned with the research and what results they expected to reach. It was also stated that no information about them would be shared. In order to ensure internal reliability, after the analysis of the data was completed, the researchers mutually checked the analysis of the encodings. In order to ensure external reliability, data collection tools and data obtained from participants are safely stored.

### **3. FINDINGS**

The data analyzed as a result of the research were presented under four main themes and sub-themes.

#### **3.1. Reasons for Choosing the Teaching Profession**

The findings regarding the reasons for choosing the teaching profession are presented in Table 1.

Table 1.  
*Reasons for Preferring the Teaching Profession*

Themes	Codes	Participants	f	%		
Individual Factors	Desiring to be a teacher	Personal choice	(CTM1), (CTM2), (CTF4), (CTM4), (PTF2), (SSTM1), (SSTF3,2), (SSTF3,3), (SSTM3), (TTF2,2), (TTM2,2), (MTM2,1), (MTM2,2), (STF3), (STM3), (STF4), (STM4), (MTF3), (MTM3), (AEF4)	20	51.2	
		Love of the field	(CTF1), (CTM2), (CTM4), (SSTM1), (SSTF3,2), (TTF2,2), (ETF3,1), (ETM3,1), (ETM3,2), (MTF2,2), (MTM2,2), (STF4), (CTM2), (PCM3), (AEM4)	15	38.5	
		Self-appropriation	(CTM2), (CTF4), (CTM4), (SSTM1), (TTM2,2), (MTM2,2), (CTF2), (CTM2), (PCF2,1), (PCM3)	10	25.6	
		Desiring to study in another teaching program	(SSTM1), (SSTF3,2), (TTF2,1), (TTM2,2), (STM4)	5	12.8	
	Thinking it's a female profession	(CTF4), (STF3), (PCF2,1)	3	7.7		
	Believing dreams to come true	(ETF3,1), (STF3)	2	5.1		
	Thinking to continue as an academic	(CTF1), (CTM1)	2	5.1		
	Believing that the profession is sacred	(CTM2)	1	2.3		
	Desiring to study at university regardless of department	(CTM4)	1	2.3		
	Social factors	Orientation of the family to the profession	Being perceived as a female profession	(CTF4), (SSTF3,1), (TTF2,1), (TTF2,2), (ETF3,1), (ETF3,2), (ETM3,2), (MTF2,1), (STF3)	9	23.1
Finding prestigious career occupations suitable for men and caring about talent due to job anxiety			(TTM2,2), (ETF3,1), (STM4)	3	7.7	
Social judgment			(STF4), (PCF2,2)	2	5.1	
Being a family profession		The importance given to the profession	(PTF2), (SSTM3)	2	5.1	
		Being perceived as a female profession	(CTF4), (SSTF3,1), (MTF2,1)	3	7.7	
		Taking teachers as role models	(SSTF1), (SSTF3,2), (MTF2,2)	3	7.7	
		Teachers find this profession suitable	(CTF4), (TTM2,2), (ETM3,2)	3	7.7	
To think that it is a profession with a state guarantee		(SSTF1), (ETF3,2)	2	5.1		
Factors Related to Settlement		Exam score		(CTF1), (SSTF3,1), (SSTF3,2), (SSTF3,3), (SSTM3), (TTF2,1), (TTF2,2), (TTM2,1), (MTF2,1), (STM3), (STF4)	11	28.2
			Job finding conditions	(PTF2), (PTM3), (PCM3), (CTM2), (TTM2,1), (ETM3,2)	6	15.4

As seen in Table 1, the reasons why prospective teachers prefer the teaching profession are evaluated under the headings of individual, social and settlement-related factors. Explanations and participant statements regarding these themes and sub-themes are given below:

### 3.1.1. Individual factors

Prospective teachers individually prefer the teaching profession for (Desiring to be a teacher, Thinking it's a female profession, Believing dreams to come true, Thinking to continue as an academic, Believing that the profession is sacred,



Desiring to study at university regardless of department) such reasons. More than half of the prospective teachers (51.2%) stated that the teaching profession is their choice. The statements of the prospective teachers who expressed their opinions on this subject are given below:

*"Despite the opposition of my parents, I chose art teaching. They thought I wouldn't be able to find a job, and I guess they underestimated the art of painting." (AEF4)*  
*"My family said that there is no future in 'Social Studies Teaching', but I still chose it, I will work hard and be hired in government." (SSTM3)*

Some prospective teachers (38.5%) stated that they prioritized the field factor when choosing the teaching profession and they preferred the field because they liked it. The opinions of the prospective teachers on this subject are as follows:

*"I thought what I could be in the English profession and decided that teaching would be the best for a woman." (ETF3.1)*  
*"I loved computer games and the computer. Technically, I enjoy working with computers." (IIT2)*

Some prospective teachers (25.6%) stated that they chose the teaching profession because they thought it suited them. The statements of the prospective teachers on this subject are given below:

*"I love kids." (CTF4), (CTM4), (SSTM1), (PCM3)*  
*"I believe I was born for the teaching profession. I chose this profession because I believe that I will provide a very good education to children and young people". (IIT2)*

A few prospective teachers (12.8%) stated that they actually wanted to study in another teaching program, but they were placed in different teaching programs because they could not get enough score in the university exam. The opinions of the prospective teachers on this subject are as follows:

*"My first choice was to be a Turkish teacher". (STF3,2)*  
*"I had science and social field score, so I could not choose PCT. I thought that the way of teaching Turkish was open". (TOE2.2)*

Some of the prospective teachers (7.7%) stated that they preferred the profession because they thought that the teaching profession is a female profession (all of the candidates who expressed their opinions on this subject were women); some (5.1%) stated that they preferred the profession because they believed that they could realize their dreams. The opinions of the prospective teachers on this subject are given below:

*"I thought that the working hours were less and I could spend time with my family and my children". (STF3)*  
*"I chose it to raise free people like myself". (STF3)*

In addition to all these, a few prospective teachers (5.1%) thought that they could continue teaching as an academic; They stated that they chose the profession because they believed it was sacred (2.3%) and because they wanted to study at a university (2.3%) regardless of the department.

### **3.1.2. Social factors**

In the research, it was determined that the prospective teachers had some social reasons (Orientation of the family to the profession, Being perceived as a female profession, Finding prestigious career occupations suitable for men and caring about talent due to job anxiety, Social judgment "The importance given to the profession, Being perceived as a female profession, Being a family profession, Taking teachers as role models, Teachers find this profession suitable, To think that it is a profession with a state guarantee) to prefer this profession.

It is seen that the most important social factor in choosing the teaching profession for prospective teachers is the guidance of their families. Some prospective teachers (23.1%) stated that they tended towards this profession because the teaching profession was perceived as a female profession. The views of some of the prospective teachers are as follows:

*"Because I am a girl, my mother liked this profession very much for me. After I started studying this profession, my family said that teaching is already a female profession, the job that a woman can do best". (TTF2.2)*  
*They said, "You will have holiday breaks, and it is a profession where the working hours are certain". (MOK2,1)*  
*"I wanted to study pre-school teaching, my mother said, 'I can't say my child is studying in the pre-school teaching'. They didn't let me put it even after English teaching on my university preference list. When it comes to my sister, they first thought of the teaching profession." (ETM3,2)*

Some participants (7.7%) stated that their families sees teaching profession not suitable for men; and it has been revealed that they think it is better for them to find different jobs that are more prestigious and where they can make a career. One of the female prospective teachers (ETF3,1) said; *"My brother is also an English teacher, I took him as an example. But my family told him 'don't be a teacher, be a doctor' during the university and filed preference period. They see teaching as a lowly profession for man"*, while another male prospective teacher stated that *"My family wanted me to be a police officer or a pharmacist"* (STM4).

Contrary to the view that the teaching profession is not suitable for men, a male teacher candidate (SEE1) stated that he received support from his family in the process of choosing the profession and that his family thought that the teaching profession was suitable for him. The prospective teacher said, *"My mother thought that I could raise the children very well. She trusted me a lot about this."* (CTM1)

Social judgment is another important factor in choosing the teaching profession. The prospective teachers whose opinions were taken also focused on this issue and underlined the importance given to the profession (5.1%) and the perception of the profession as a female profession (5.1%). The opinions of the prospective teachers on this subject are given below:

*"The teaching profession has an important place even though it is considered in a low position in society and students are told 'you become a teacher in worst case'."* (PCF2.2)

*"Preschool teaching is not valued in the eyes of people, it is perceived as babysitting. Even some of our relatives thought that when I accepted in this field, I would be paid less than other teachers, because I would take care of the children. So there is such a point of view".* (OOK2)

*"Because it is a profession with a long summer break, it is suitable for women. Every woman is considered like mother since she will be mother one day."* (OOK2)

While a few prospective teachers (7.7%) stated that they chose teaching because of the family profession, *"There are many successful teachers like my uncle in my family"* (CTF4); a few (7.7%) said that they took their teachers as an example and said, *"I especially liked my male mathematics teachers. My female math teachers were tough-tempered."* (MTF2,2)

Some of the prospective teachers (7.7%) stated that they turned to the teaching profession because their teachers found this profession suitable for them. On this subject, a male candidate stated, *"Our teachers used to call us prospective teachers because I graduated from a teacher's high school"* (ETM3,2). The fact that the teaching profession is a government-guaranteed profession, which has been considered for a long time, was mentioned by only two prospective teachers (5.1%). A female teacher candidate expressed her opinion as *"My family thought that I would lean my back on the government"* (ETF3,2).

### 3.1.3. Factors related to settlement

Prospective teachers underlined that in addition to individual and social factors, factors related to settlement had an impact on their preference for the teaching profession. Central exam point and job opportunities are the points that candidates take into consideration when making their choice. Almost half of the prospective teachers (CTF1), (SSTF3,1), (SSTF3,2), (SSTF3,3), (SSTM3), (TTF2,1), (TTF2,2), (TTM2,1), (MTF2,1), (STM3), (STF4), emphasized that the central exam score factor is the most important factor in their current teaching program that they are currently studying. Candidates also added that if they had received a higher score, they could have made different choices. The participant views on this issue are as follows:

*"If I had a higher score, I would not have chosen this profession".* (MTF2,1), (SSTF3,3)

*"It wasn't a profession I thought of before. I chose it because I didn't get enough points for where I wanted to study".* (PSE3)

In addition to the score factor, job opportunities of the teaching profession are among the factors that cause some candidates (PTF2), (PTM3), (PCM3), (CTM2), (TTM2,1), (ETM3,2) to turn to this profession. Candidates also made this choice among the teaching programs and reflected the job opportunities of the departments to their preferences.

On this subject, a female prospective teacher thought, *"When the male students in my class are asked why they came to this department, they answer because of the job opportunities"* (PTF2); another male candidate said, *"I chose PDR because the chance of finding a job is higher than other branches"* (PCM3). Another male prospective teacher said, *"We decided to change departments, thinking that I could not find jobs studying the Sociology department that I stated studying with my sister. (CTM2)"*, while another candidate stated that *"My family researched which teaching programs have better job opportunities (PCTM3,2)"*. According to the opinions of the prospective teachers, not only the teaching profession was researched in the selection of profession and program, but also the job conditions of the teaching programs was taken into account.

### 3.2. If the Teaching Profession was not Preferred, Other Professions to be Preferred and Their Reasons

When the teaching profession was not preferred, the findings about which profession would be preferred are presented in Table 2.

Table 2.

*If the Teaching Profession was not Preferred, Preferred Professions and Reasons*

Themes	Codes	Participants	f	%
Profession	Social sciences	(CTF1), (CTM2), (SSTF3,1), (SSTF3,2), (SSTF3,3), (TTF2,2), (ETF3,1), (PCF2,1), (PCM2)	9	23.1
	Positive sciences	(SSTM1), (ETM3,1), (MTM2,2), (STM3), (STF4), (CTF2), (CTM2), (PCF2,2), (MTM3)	9	23.1
	Fine Arts	(PTF2), (CTF4), (SSTM3), (ETM3,1), (MTF3), (AEM4)	6	15.4
	Health sciences	(CTM4), (TTF2,2), (MTF2,1), (MTF2,2)	4	10.3
	Sports science	(TTF2,1), (TTM2,1), (STM4)	3	7.7
	Self-employment	(STF3), (AEF4), (PCM3)	3	7.7
	Educational Sciences	(SSTF1), (MTM2,1)	2	5.1
	Linguistics	(ETF3,2)	1	2.3
	Security sciences	(PTM3), (CTM1)	2	5.1
	Not thinking about another job	(ETM3,2)	1	2.3
Reason for Preferring	Interested in	(SSTF3,2), (SSTM3), (TTF2,1), (TTF2,2), (TTM2,1), (ETM3,1), (ETF3,2), (MTF2,2), (MTM2,1), (MTM2,2), (STF4), (CTF2), (PCF2,1), (MTM3)	14	36.0
	Finding the job suitable	(SSTM1), (SSTF3,1), (TTM2,2)	3	7.7
	Believing to be successful	(TTF2,1), (ETF3,2)	2	5.1
	Communicating with people	(SSTF3,3), (ETF3,1)	2	5.1
	Get a job faster	(CTM4)	1	2.3
	Dealing with human psychology	(CTF1)	1	2.3
	Opening own office	(STF3)	1	2.3
	Earning better income	(STM3)	1	2.3
	Being influenced by teachers	(STM4)	1	2.3
	Patriotism	(CTM1)	1	2.3
	Making sense of the environment	(CTM2)	1	2.3
	Producing	(CTF4)	1	2.3

As it can be seen in Table 2, if the prospective teachers did not choose the teaching profession, the desired professions and their reasons are evaluated under the headings of profession and reasons of preference. Below are explanations and participant statements regarding these themes and sub-themes:

### 3.2.1. Profession

If Table 2 is examined, the prospective teachers stated that if they did not choose the teaching profession, they would prefer social sciences, positive sciences, fine arts, health sciences, sports science, self-employment, educational sciences, security sciences and linguistics. Some participants (23.1%) who said that they prefer social sciences stated that they liked to understand society and people as the reason. On this subject, a male participant said, *"I want to answer the question of what kind of society I grew up in. I love working about people"*. (CTM2).

Prospective teachers (23.1%) who stated that they would choose positive sciences stated that they could make such a choice because the teaching profession had a problem about job opportunities. A male participant expressed himself, *"I talked with graduates from computer and automotive engineering, they said that finding a job is difficult. They said, 'It's available in almost every university'."*

Some prospective teachers (15.4%) stated that they might prefer fine arts because they are related to the field of fine arts. A teacher candidate (MTF3) studying in the music teaching department said, *"I can't imagine a life without music. Teaching is not a requirement, but I would still prefer a department related to music"*, which suggests that he chose the department consciously and made a choice about the field he is interested in. However, another prospective teacher (ETM3,1) stated that *"I could study at the conservatory, but there is no guarantee for this profession"*, pointing to the job finding problems in teaching profession.

Similarly, it can be interpreted that these thoughts of the participants (10.3%) who stated that they would have turned to health sciences if they had not preferred the teaching profession were due to the conditions of finding a job. For example, a female teacher candidate (MTF2,1) stated that *"Nursing is a profession that has an open future, has a good salary, and is needed at all times"*. Apart from these, a few prospective teachers stated that they would prefer (7.7%) sports sciences ;( 7.7%) self-employment; a few (5.1%) stated that they could choose educational sciences, and one participant (2.6%) stated that they could choose linguistics. Two prospective teachers (5.1%) stated that they would prefer security sciences to the teaching profession on the grounds that they found it prestigious. A prospective teacher commented on this issue as follows:

*"I think military service is the most prestigious profession because of 'weapon, uniform'. I really like the hierarchical respect in the military."* (CTM1)

### 3.2.2. Reasons of Preference

Considering the reasons why prospective teachers prefer the teaching profession, some of the participants (36.0%) stated that they chose the profession because they were interested. It is striking that the participants, who stated that they were interested in and chose the teaching profession, studied in different teaching programs. Another reason for preferring the teaching profession is that a few participants (7.7%) find the profession suitable for them. Considering other reasons, participants believed that they would be successful (5.1%); communicating with people (5.1%); getting a job in a shorter time (2.3%); dealing with human psychology (2.3%); opening their own office (2.3%); have a better income (2.3%); being influenced by their teachers (2.3%); patriotism (2.3%); They stated that they preferred the teaching profession for reasons such as making sense of the environment they live in (2.3%) and producing (2.3%).

### 3.3. Opinions on whether to choose the teaching profession when given a new opportunity

Table 3 presents the findings regarding whether or not prospective teachers prefer the teaching profession when given a new opportunity.

Table 3.

#### *Whether to Prefer the Teaching Profession When Given a New Opportunity*

Themes	Participants	f	%
Planning to continue	(CTM1), (CTM2), (CTF4), (CTM4), (SSTF3,3), (ETF3,1), (ETF3,2), (ETM3,2), (TTF2,2), (MTF2,1), (MTF2,2), (STF3), (STM3), (CTF2), (CTM2), (PCF2,1), (PCF2,2), (PCM2), (PCM3), (MTF3), (MTM3), (AEF4), (AEM4)	23	59.0
Thinking to change	(CTF1), (PTF2), (PTM3), (SSTF1), (SSTM1), (SSTF3,1), (SSTF3,2), (SSTM3), (TTF2,1), (TTM2,1), (TTM2,2), (ETM3,1), (MTM2,1), (MTM2,2), (STM4), (STF4)	16	41.0

Table 3 presents the findings regarding the opinions of prospective teachers about whether or not they would prefer the teaching profession when given a new opportunity within the scope of the research.

#### 3.3.1. Planning to continue

More than half of the participants (59.0%) stated that they are planning to continue in the department they chose. It was found that the participants who stated that they were interested in the teaching profession and chose this profession did not study in the same teaching program, but were from different programs. The opinions of the prospective teachers are given below:

*"I would definitely choose. I loved studying it. My love in the internship perion was doubled". (CTM4)*

*"I liked the profession that I never thought of before". (STM3)*

*"Yes, I would choose because it was one of my biggest dreams". (PCF2,1)*

#### 3.3.2. Thinking to change

In addition to those who stated that they wouldn't change the teaching program they attend, some participants (41.0%) stated that they would change the department they are studying. It is seen that this rate is not low at all. The words of a male prospective teacher who is studying in the pre-school teaching program proves that the teaching profession is seen as a female profession, especially in some teaching programs. The statements of the teacher candidate are as follows:

*"I wouldn't have preferred the department I was studying, I could been a police officer. Recently, I said to someone that I'm studying in preschool teaching, he said things like "How come, isn't it a women job?", that I heard for the first time. I was very sad after that". PTM3*

### 3.4. Whether the Teaching Profession is a Female Profession or not

The findings regarding whether the teaching profession is a female profession or not are presented in Table 4.

Table 4.  
*Whether the Teaching Profession is a Women's Profession or not*

Themes	Codes	Participants	f	%
Being both male and female profession	No gender identification	(CTF1), (CTF4), (CTM1), (CTM2), (MTF2,1), (MTF2,2), (STM3), (CTF2)	8	21.0
	Love of the profession	(SSTF3,3), (TTF2,1), (ETF3,2), (ETM3,1), (ETM3,2), (MTF2,1), (PCF2,2)	7	18.0
	To be talented	(TTM2,1), (SSTM3)	2	5.1
To be a profession suitable for women	Working hours suitable for women	(SSTF3,1), (PCM3)	2	5.1
	Suitable to women	(CTM4), (SSTF31), (STF4)	3	7.7
	Require compassion and patience	(SSTF1), (SSTF,2), (SSTM1), (STF3), (CTF2), (PCF2,1), (AEF4)	7	18.0
Being a profession for men	Establishing authority in the classroom	(CTM1), (TTF2,2), (PCM3)	3	7.7
	Being natural	(CTF4)	1	2.6
	To see suitable only to women for lack of knowledge	(PTM3)	1	2.6
Changing whether it is a male or female profession depending on the situation	Suitable for women due to younger age groups and some classes	(PTF2), (STM4)	2	5.1
	Suitable for man due to older age groups and some classes	(SSTM1), (STM4)	2	5.1

The statements given by the participants to the question of whether the teaching profession is a female profession are presented in Table 4. According to this, the opinions of the prospective teachers differ as the teaching profession is both male and female profession, a profession suitable for women, a profession suitable for men, and the profession changes whether of a it is a female or a male profession according to the situation.

### 3.4.1. Being both male and female profession

Some of the prospective teachers (44.1%) stated that the teaching profession has the characteristics of both male and female professions. While some of the candidates who support this view (21.0%) did not define any gender for the teaching profession, some (18.0%) approached the subject through the factor of liking the profession. From the statements of the candidates, it can be interpreted that they think that the teaching profession cannot be classified as specific to any gender. Some of the participant statements on this subject are given below:

*"The teaching profession is suitable for both men and women. Because giving education, teaching something is not about gender". (CTF2)*

*"Women tend to this profession because they express themselves better. Men are more passive. In fact, the gender factor is not effective in the teaching profession". (MTM2,1)*

*"Teaching requires love. Love is not only found in women. My teachers, whom I took as an example, were men". (MTF2,1)*

*"This has nothing to do with gender. To be a teacher, you have to love teaching. I have seen very good female and male teachers who do their jobs properly". (ETM3,1)*

A few of the prospective teachers (5.1%) stated that there should be a predisposition to the teaching profession, that talented people can do the job, and that there is no gender difference. The opinions of the prospective teachers on this subject are given below:

*"Both genders can do it. There is no difference. It is a matter of talent and it takes willingness". (TOE2,1)*

*"It is a profession for both men and women. Depends on capability. Both genders must be present in the system. Students should not always receive training from teachers of the same gender (Industrial vocational high school)". (SSTM3)*

### 3.4.2. To be a profession suitable for women

In addition to these, a significant part of the prospective teachers (30.8%) stated that they think that the teaching profession is suitable for women for various reasons. Some of the candidates (5.1%) claimed that the working hours of teaching were suitable for women. A female prospective teacher expressed her opinion on this issue as follows:

"I also want to have a comfortable profession with fixed working hours and no shifts. When I think about these, teaching is suitable for women, it is a comfortable profession". (SSTF3,1)

A few of the prospective teachers (7.7%) stated that they found the teaching profession more suitable for women. Some of the striking statements of prospective teachers on this subject are given below:

*"Women are better suited for this job. When we went to go to a job interview with a female friend, will the jury find me or my female friend better teacher?". (CTM4)*

*"Society sees it as a women profession". (SSTF31), (STF4)*

It can be thought that some of the prospective teachers (18,0%) associate the teaching profession with feelings such as maternal instinct, compassion and patience, and this is the clearest indicator that they see the profession as a female profession. Some of the prospective teachers' statements on this subject are given below:

*"Women have compassion, understanding and the emotionality that motherhood brings. From this point of view, maybe this profession would suit women better." (CTF2)*

*"Because women are mothers-to-be, they see their students as their own children. Therefore, women are more inclined to be teachers." (SSTM1)*

*"It is not suitable for men. They are not as good as a woman in handwriting, diction and oratory. They speak rudely." (CTM2)*

*"The salary to be earned from teaching may be sufficient for women, but not enough for men. In this respect, we can say that it is a women profession." (STF3)*

### **3.4.3. Being a profession for men**

Some of the prospective teachers, which can be described as a minority, stated that the teaching profession is a profession suitable for men. The reason why some candidates (7.7%) think this way is the belief that men will provide better authority in the classroom than women. Some of the prospective teachers' views on this subject are as follows:

*"Men can do better. Men are authoritarian, they can dominate better". (TTF2.2)*

*"The classroom environment demands authority, it is difficult for women to gain authority. As fathers are spoken to, male teachers are more listened to. Students like male teachers more than female teachers". (CTM1)*

One of the female candidates, who finds the teaching profession more suitable for men than women, approached the subject in a different way and said, "Women cannot approach students, they see themselves in a higher position. Male teachers treat their students more sincerely."

Another candidate stated that the teaching profession was attributed to women as a result of the lack of social knowledge on this subject. *"Men can do better. Since women do work such as handicraft, the profession seems to be more suitable for them. But those who have no knowledge attribute this profession to women."* He expressed his views with words such as (PTM3).

### **3.4.4. Changing whether it is a male or female profession depending on the situation**

A few prospective teachers, who think that the teaching profession is a male or female profession, has underlined that they think this way because of the age groups of the students and the content of the courses. Some prospective teachers (5.1%) stated that teachers who appeal to younger age groups are female; while others (5.1%) stated that it is more appropriate for teachers who address and train older age groups to be male. Below are participant views on this issue:

*"When we think in terms of departments, pre-school, primary school and secondary school are more suitable for female teachers. Women are sympathetic and friendly". (STM4)*

*"High school is not suitable for women, women cannot establish authority in high school". (STM4)*

*"In some subjects (technology design) men are better". (SSTM1)*

## **3.5. Reasons for the Decline in the Number of Male Prospective Teachers in Some Teacher Training Programs**

The findings regarding the reasons for the decrease in the number of male prospective teachers in some teacher training programs are presented in Table 5.

Table 5.

*Reasons for the Decline in the Number of Male Prospective Teachers in Some Teacher Training Programs*

Themes	Codes	Participants	f	%
Social Factors	Perceiving it as a female profession	(CTM1), (CTF4), (SSTF3,2), (SSTM3), (TTF2,1), (TTF2,2), (TTM2,2), (ETF3,2), (MTF2,2), (STM4), (PCF2,2)	11	28.2
	Thinking that there are more prestigious and popular occupations suitable for men	(CTF1), (CTM1), (CTM2), (TTF2,2), (ETM3,1), (MTF2,1), (MTM2,2), (STF4), (CTF2)	9	23.1
Global Factors	Women's entry into education and business life	(CTF1), (CTM1), (SSTF1), (SSTM1), (SSTF3,2), (SSTF3,3), (TTM2,2), (ETM3,1), (ETM3,2), (STF3)	10	25.7
	Teaching profession to be a more valuable and sacred profession in the past	(CTM1)	1	2.6
	The situation in the country	(CTM4)	1	2.6
Personal Factors	Male students do not want to deal with children	(ETF3,2), (PCF2,1), (MTF3), (AEF4)	4	10.3
	Male students do not want to deal with homework and activities	(ETF3,1), (MTM2,1)	2	5.1
	Male students are unable to attend the programs because they do not study	(ETM3,2)	1	2.6
	The fact that women do not prefer difficult professions	(MTM2,2)	1	2.6
	The fact that women like the teaching profession more	(STM3)	1	2.6
Legal Factors	Recruitment policies	(CTF4), (CTM2), (PCM3), (AEM4)	4	10.3
	Male students' finding teaching salary low	(PTF2), (ETF3,2), (PCM2)	3	7.7

As it can be seen from Table 5, the reasons for the decrease in the number of male prospective teachers in some teacher training programs are grouped under the headings of social, global, personal, and legal factors.

### 3.5.1. Social factors

The participants of the research made inferences about the reason for the decrease in the number of male prospective teachers in some teacher training programs. Based on the statements of more than half of the participants (51.3%), it can be said that the decrease in the number of male prospective teachers in the programs is largely socially based. While some of the prospective teachers (28.2%) were united in the opinion that the teaching profession is perceived as a female profession, pointing to social factors, similarly, some prospective teachers (23.1%) stated that they thought that more prestigious and popular professions were found suitable for men. Participants who think that the teaching profession is perceived as a female profession, express the decrease in the number of male candidates with the following statements:

*"Teaching is the ideal profession for women. Some of the men consider female teachers to be ideal partners". (MTF2,2)*

*"Teachers who will work with younger age groups are always ridiculed for caring for children. For this reason, male students choose the teaching profession less or they behave hesitantly. (MTF2,2)*

*"The working conditions of teaching are very suitable for women. She can spend more time at home". (CTM1)*

*"There is a perception that the profession most suitable for women is teaching. They say, 'Let her take care of the family, and she be at home by 15.00". (TTM2,2)*

From the statements of the participants, who think that more prestigious and popular professions are suitable for men, they state that they have heard similar opinions not only from their families or circles, but also from experts who should orient themselves according to their interests and abilities, both in the process of choosing a profession and department, and in the process of continuing their teaching education. The opinions of the prospective teachers are given below:

*"Society determines genders for occupations. Military and policing are for men, teaching is for women" (CTF1)*

*"Actually, men become math teachers. But still, professions such as engineering and architecture are more suitable for men. These professions have names and they are preferred by male students". (MTF2,1)*

*"I get ridiculed about being a teacher in my family. I say, 'I will not be a teacher, I will do a master's degree, I will be a research assistant'" (CTM2)*

*"When I went to the guidance center, they said not to go to teaching with this exam score. They said go to engineering". (MTM2,2)*

### **3.5.2. Global factors**

Some prospective teachers whose opinions were asked within the scope of the research attribute the decrease in the number of male teachers in some education programs to global factors. According to some of the participants (25.7%), one of the most important reasons for the decrease in the number of male prospective teachers is that women have recently been more involved in education and business life and are more visible in this field. The statements of the prospective teachers on this subject are as follows:

*"In the past, girls could not study, over the years, families became aware, but professions were determined for female students. But then the mentality of 'If you can study and become a teacher, you will at least do a job that suits women, you will have three months of vacation, you can raise your child comfortably' has developed. (CTF1)*

*"Women's literacy rates have increased in recent years. They move away from being a housewife and come to teaching, which is the most suitable profession for them." (ETM3,1)*

*"There is no room left for us (men) among female students." (ETM3,2)*

A male participant (CTM1) who thought that the teaching profession was a more valuable and sacred profession in the past; *"Our grandfathers approach the teaching profession very differently. It was like medicine in their time. My generation does not find it valuable".* Another male participant (CTM4) said that this decline was experienced due to the situation in the country, *"Male students turn to the police and military (master sergeant, officer, etc.) because there is a great need. They get a job in a short time"* and they emphasize that men tend to these professions lately.

### **3.5.3 Personal factors**

When it comes to the personal factors of the decrease in the number of male prospective teachers in some teaching programs, the point that some of the participants, the majority of whom are women, emphasized that men do not want to deal with tasks such as homework and activities both with children and during the education process. From this point of view, it can be interpreted that some female prospective teachers are influenced by the idea that has been adopted in the society for centuries and that the care and education of children is the duty and responsibility of women, and moreover, they make statements. A few participants (10.3%) who think that male students do not want to deal with children do not choose the teaching profession because they realize that they are impatient.

A few participants (10.3%) who thought that male students do not want to deal with children stated that: *"Male students do not choose the teaching profession because they realize that they are impatient." (AEF4)* and *"Men may turn to other professions because they are intolerant". (MTF3).*

Apart from these, two prospective teachers (5.1%) think that duties such as homework and activities are not preferred by men. The statement of a female teacher candidate is as follows:

*"Male students learn by working through the book. The activities of preparing word cards on colored cardboards and playing games are more suitable for female students." (ETF3.1)*

Under the category of personal factors, a male prospective teacher (ETM3,2) stated that male students could not attend the programs because they did not study; another male participant (MTM2,2) stated that women do not prefer difficult professions, *"Engineering is difficult to study, courses are heavy, maybe female students choose teaching for this reason";* another male participant (STM3) claimed that women like the teaching profession more. As it can be understood from the statements of the prospective teachers, it can be said that the prospective teachers see the teaching profession as a women's profession, although their number is low among the total participants, and they develop a way of thinking along with it.

### **3.5.4 Legal factors**

Legal factors have been cited as the last factor in the decrease in the number of male prospective teachers in some teaching programs. The factors that support this idea are the recruitment policies and the fact that male students do not see the teacher's salary as sufficient for life. The opinions of the participants (10.3%) who claimed that this situation was experienced due to the recruitment policies are given below:

*"Men may be turning to different professions for job security. There is not much recruitment after all". (AEM4)*  
*"Job opportunities have to be considered. Currently, thousands of graduates cannot be hired. All of them are jobless, so they turn to other fields to work. They try to be a police officer. I'm not talking about the department I'm studying, but it is very difficult for my friends who study social studies and science teaching programs to find a job.*



*Those who direct them send them to 'study', after all they do not think about the exam to be taken" to be hired after the graduation (PCM3)*

Some of the participants (7.7%) who think that men are not inclined towards the teaching profession state that male students find the teaching salary and the job status is low. The statements of the prospective teachers regarding this subject are given below:

*"Teacher status is low, and salary is low. I see it around me. Those who are married and have a single salary may face the problem of making a living. That is why women are turning to this profession". (PTF2)*

*"The status of teaching is low; they are not paid enough. Men have a weakness for money". (PCM2)*

### 3.6. Opinions on whether They Plan to Do This Job after Graduation

The findings about whether the prospective teachers plan to do the teaching profession after graduation are presented in Table 6.

Table 6.  
*Whether to Do the Teaching Profession*

Themes	Codes	Participants	f	%
Planning to work	Desire to be hired and improve oneself	(CTF1), (CTM1), (SSTF,1), (TTF2,1), (TTF2,2), (TTM2,2) (ETF3,1), (ETF3,2), (ETM3,2), (PCM2)	10	25.7
	Trying other ways if not hired	(CTF4), (CTM4), (PTM3), (SSTF1), (SSTF3,2), (SSTM3), (STF3), (STF4)	8	20.5
	Consider a side job	(CTM2), (SSTM1), (MTM2,2)	3	7.7
To try other professions		(PTF2), (ETM3,1), (STM4)	3	7.7

Table 6 shows the opinions of prospective teachers on whether they plan to work in this profession after graduation.

#### 3.6.1. Planning to work

Most prospective teachers (53.9%) stated that they plan to do the teaching profession after graduation. Some prospective teachers (25.7%) want to improve themselves after hired. The opinions of the participants were reflected in their statements as follows:

*"I will be hired and start working in my profession. I will insure myself. Later, I can be involved in projects like EU projects". (ETF3.1)*

*"After my short-term teaching experience, I want to pursue a career in this profession". (CTF1)*

*"I want to be an academic". (TTF2.2), (PCM2)*

Some prospective teachers (20.5%) stated that they would try other ways if they could not get hired. From the statements of the prospective teachers, it is striking that they want to be hired, and when there is no opportunity to work in the public sector, they primarily want to teach in the private sector. The statements of the participants are given below:

*"I am studying social services (AOF) because of the fear of not being hired". (CTF4)*

*"I will do. If I cannot get a position in the government, I will try the private sector. If not, I will give private lessons". (STF3)*

*"If I can be hired, I want to do this job. If not, I will try the professions of police department and army". (SSTM3)*

A few prospective teachers (7.7%) stated that they planned to do the teaching profession, but; they stated that if they do not find a job, they can deal with different jobs. It is striking that all of the participants who said they would do additional work were male. The opinions of the prospective teachers are given below.

*"I want to run a small business for additional income". (CTM2)*

*"I want to do this job. If not, I will go into business and deal with car buying and selling. Even if I am hired as a teacher, I think that I will take care of cars as an additional job, since the salary will not be enough to support the house". (SSTM1)*

#### 3.6.2. To try other professions

Finally, some prospective teachers (7.7%) stated that they would try other professions after graduation. A female prospective teacher (PTF2), who continues to the preschool teaching program, said, *"I can do this job, but not for life. It's a tiring job, a tough job, even for half a day. I can open a kindergarten and become a manager there or take part in cartoons. I can continue at university."*

Another prospective teacher (ETM3,1) said, *"I will try for the first two years. Teaching is a huge responsibility. Teachers shape the future of the country. If I can't, I quit. I can work with companies,"* she said, adding that she could look for different professions after she graduated. Another participant (STM4) said, *"I am preparing for KPSS (public personnel selection examination). But it is ok if I cant work as a science teacher. I will try to be an officer, a police officer or a physical education teacher"*. It can be seen as a remarkable situation that the candidates who stated that they would try other professions after graduation stated that they chose the teaching profession with their own preferences and that they were choosed because they were interested in the field.

#### 4. RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In today's markets, where neo-liberal regulation and flexible working hours have become a working rule, the distinction between women's work / men's work and the wage / earnings differences between male and female employees doing the same job has been a reality for the last twenty, thirty years. Gender-based division of labor evolves into gender inequality depending on the differences in countries and socio-economic systems. The biggest stratification in this area is the separation of jobs and/or occupations into male or female occupations. As the proportion of women in these professions increases, the perception of the nature of the profession inevitably turns towards the female profession (Ozkaplan, 2019).

The research opens the question of whether the teaching profession is seen as a female profession or not. If a general evaluation is made, the problem of feminization of the profession is a sociological situation that not only teaching but also professional groups such as nursing, cashier, presenter, secretarial, and hostess (Moya et al., 2010) are faced with. Occupations that women prefer heavily include risk factors such as insecure work, lower wages than men, and career barriers over time. This situation generally leads to the loss of value of the profession itself. In addition to all these, professions such as teaching that are perceived as female professions, when combined with the abandonment of men and the attributes of motherhood, compassion and patience attributed to women, turns into a structure that damages the social structure. Acker (1995), in his extensive discourse and work on the "combination of teaching and motherhood", recalls the debates in the early 19th century in the United States where the realization of "natural motherhood" was encouraged in the classroom. On the other hand, Warin and Gannerud (2014) stated that education work fits the "soft skills" that are culturally related to femininity and motherhood; Guillaumin (1992, cited in Moreau, 2018) undersigns biological essentialist discourses in which gender is "naturalized" or structured as a "social destiny".

Yelland and Grieshaber (1998; cited in Mukuna and Mutsotso, 2011) state that the teaching profession has been perceived as an extension of a woman's 'natural' role as an educator for centuries. Being a preschool teacher has actually been defined as a woman's natural duty and has taken its place in the traditional gender hierarchy. While pre-school teachers are placed at the bottom of the teaching ladder, as they teach young children; Secondary education teaching is defined as 'professional'. So much so that society is skeptical about men who choose to work with young children instead of entering better-paying occupations and refer to them as men who do not use their gender correctly.

Pestalozzi on education, motherhood, and teaching; "...it is the duty of all mothers to provide their children with a primary education" and Goethe; They describe a "teacher" as "we can only learn from someone we love, that person should look like a mother figure". Since women were entrusted with the education of their sons and daughters in the family environment, it was accepted that they had a special talent for teaching; this ability was used to justify the admission of women to the teaching profession and the profession was built on patriarchal thinking (Gabriel, 2014).

In the study, it was concluded that individual factors were dominant in choosing the teaching profession. Participants preferred the teaching profession mostly because of "being their own choice (51.2%) and love of field (38.5%)". Then comes the factor of "self-attribution (25.6%)". It is also revealed by some research in the literature that individual preferences predominate in the reasons for choosing the teaching profession. The results of Yurdakal (2019) and Ozbek's (2007) research show that personal decisions are dominant in individuals' choosing the teaching profession.

In the process of choosing the teaching profession, individual factors are followed by social factors. The participants stated that they preferred this profession among the social factors, especially according to the guidance of the family (30.8%) and the perception as a female profession under this factor (23.1%). All of the prospective teachers who say that they prefer the profession because they perceive teaching as a female profession. It is noteworthy that all of the participants who expressed their opinions under the heading of "anxiety about finding a job and finding prestigious and career professions suitable for men", which came after perceiving teaching as a female profession, were male prospective teachers under the heading of family orientation from social factors. It can be interpreted that the perspectives of the prospective teachers' families towards the teaching profession played an important role in the choice of profession of their children and enabled them to turn to the teaching profession. This situation supports the idea that the teaching profession is a profession specific to women among the society.

It can be thought that the statements made by the participants support the fact that the teaching profession is suitable for women, and even when approached from another perspective, it contains elements like it is unnecessary for women to turn to professions that are considered respectable by the society and that feeds a painful and unhealthy mentality. In Akar's (2012) research, it was determined that the most important factors affecting students' university preferences are academic prestige,

the location of the university, and information resources. In the research, it has been concluded that the students consider the factor of academic prestige the most, as it is perceived in the society, as a status, prestige or a showcase.

It would not be wrong to say that the prestige of the teaching profession in the social field and among other professional groups has been gradually decreasing in recent years. According to Ozoglu (2009), social status and economic return are accepted as one of the professionalism indicators of a profession. The meaning attributed to teaching by the society changes with teacher employment policies, education expenditures of the country, and wages paid to teachers. According to Ozsoy et al. (2010), this change has made the teaching profession a profession that almost everyone can do over the years, and which is kneaded with a completely incomplete, ordinary and simple understanding such as "become a teacher if you can't be anything". Similarly, in his research, Dinc (2008) expressed the factors that affect individuals' career choices as career and social status expectation, high earnings expectation, professional knowledge and skill expectation. In the research of Eret Orhan and Ok (2014), the 'respect of the profession' factor, which is among the reasons why prospective teachers prefer the profession, is among the least mentioned reasons. In addition, Aydin and Ozcan (2019) investigated the reasons why prospective teachers prefer teaching. Only 13% of the candidates stated that they chose teaching for reasons such as being a respected profession, serving the society, and raising a new generation. Contrary to all these studies, Yurdakul, Gur, Celik, and Kurt's (2016) studies reveal that the majority of teachers (62%) expressed satisfaction with the fact that their profession provides them with the opportunity to become a respected person in the society.

It is understood that the opinions of the society about the status of the teaching profession take place in the statements of some prospective teachers. As a matter of fact, in the decisions of the Eleventh National Education Council dated 1982, "...the value given to the teaching profession in society is gradually decreasing; teaching is losing its attractiveness for young people and is becoming a profession of last resort. This situation is also a source of problems for teachers." (Ministry of National Education (MEB), 1982), it is understood that there were similar concerns about the future of the teaching profession about forty years ago.

The research conducted by Drudy (2008) that is focuses on the reasons why the teaching profession in Ireland is less preferred by men. Accordingly, 45% of the students, they thought being a teacher at primary school level was a woman's job/related to the role of a mother as the first reason (female students expressed more). The second reason is that other professions are more attractive and prestigious; the third reason is that primary education teaching has features that are unattractive, boring, difficult, and stressful or require a lot of patience. The last reason is the low wages. According to Drudy, this indicates the existence of a prejudice towards seeing the ideal primary school teacher as a woman. Therefore, the choice of profession is generally related to the social construction of masculinity and femininity. In addition, Drudy emphasizes that her research shows that the feminization of teaching is a cumulative historical and social process. In the research, the concern was expressed that male teachers are needed for the positive development of male students both academically and personally. However, there is no evidence that this is related to the feminization of teaching. In fact, Sabbe and Aelterman's (2007) research shows that teachers' gender has little effect on student achievement. Research by OECD (2005) on this topic focuses on the concern about the increasing femininity of teaching and the perceived benefits for students and teachers of having more men in schools in terms of providing positive male role models, especially for male students who leave school.

Demirkasimoglu and Taskin (2019) conducted a research with 2 male preschool teachers with more than thirty years of experience in Turkey on the advantages and disadvantages of being the first male preschool teachers, whether the behaviors of society and education stakeholders are different from female teachers. The point expressed by the participant in the research is that the numerical balance between male and female teachers is extremely important for the development of children's sexual identities. The participant stated that he thinks it is a great necessity for children to see male role models, especially at a time when gender identity is determined. The participant also recommends that an affirmative action is needed like an advantage in the undergraduate entrance exam towards male students in order to ensure gender balance in the teaching profession. He underlined that a certain quota application can be made for male students who want to choose this profession. Cunningham and Dorsey (2004) and Wardle (2004) mention that the field of early childhood education is overwhelmingly female, and they state that many people believe that women are naturally inclined to care for young children, while men are not. It is the belief that in most cultures, including our own, women are associated with child-rearing responsibility, both at home and in collective approaches, reflecting the power structures in societies.

Smilansky (1993) argues that family plays an important role in career choice in Arab society. Similarly, Agbaria (2013) emphasizes that most of the female students are financially dependent on their parents in order to meet all or most of the education costs, so they turn to the professions chosen for them by their parents and they are left with little choice in this regard. In addition, due to the nature of the society they live in, women respect authority in their career choice decisions and do not prioritize their personal preferences.

Ali, Zeb, and Maqbool (2013) examined the reasons for students to choose the teaching profession in their research. According to the research findings, the majority of the students stated that they chose the teaching profession because their families' preferences and wishes were in this direction. The majority of the participants stated that they chose the teaching profession because they could not find another job. While a significant part of the participants think that the teaching profession is suitable for women, the majority of them emphasize that they see the teaching profession as a respectable and honorable

profession. Erden, Ozgun, and Ciftci (2011) investigated the reasons why male preschool teachers prefer the teaching profession. Participants stated that they consciously decided to become a teacher due to financial concerns, but they could change their profession if given a chance. At the same time, the participants stated that their families did not support them in the selection process and that they saw preschool education teaching as a female profession. In the research of Ubuz and Sari (2008), Sara and Kocabas (2012), Yaman et al. (2001), and Yurdakul et al. of (2016) it's been revealed that, individuals stated that they made a choice according to the results of the exam they took.

According to participant opinions, if the teaching profession were not preferred, the professions that would be preferred were "social sciences (23.1%), positive sciences (23.1%), fine arts (15.4%), health sciences (10.3%), sports science (7.7%), self-employment (7.7%), educational sciences (5.1%), linguistics and security sciences". Only one participant stated that he "does not think of any other profession other than teaching". Participants expressed their opinions about the professions that they would prefer if they did not choose the teaching profession, mostly within the scope of "social sciences" and "positive sciences". The majority of the participants who said they would prefer "social sciences" are women, and the majority of participants who said they would prefer "positive sciences" are men.

Some of the prospective teachers (15.4%) stated that they would prefer these departments because they are related to the field of fine arts. On the other hand, it can be said that the gender factor is not taken into account, since the condition of talent is sought in the admission of students to the relevant departments. However, when some studies in Turkey (Cicek Saglam, 2008; Deniz, Atalay, Yungul, & Ozder, 2014) are taken into account, it is observed that female students are in the majority in these programs due to reasons such as preference in the field of music, country policies or the approach of the society. In support of the research findings, in Karadag's (2012) research, first and fourth-grade prospective teachers studying in the Turkish language teaching program expressed their views on the profession and departments they would choose if they had the chance to choose again. Accordingly, while the majority of the first-year prospective teachers stated that they would choose the same department again, this rate decreased considerably when they came to the fourth-grade. It is undeniable that the reason for the fourth grade students' thinking in this way in the research is the problem of finding a job.

In the research conducted by Unal, Tarhan, and Curukvelioglu Koksall (2018), male prospective teachers stated that they found the professions of teaching, nursing, medicine, and attorneyship appropriate for women. Being a teacher is considered suitable especially for women in pre-school and primary education, but they considered men suitable as high school teachers. The view here is that male authoritarian attitudes are used to control adolescent and active students. Being a teacher is for women with the concepts of care, love and education; for men, it is associated with authority, control and power. Similarly, it is pointed out that men's physical strength, tough, authoritarian and decisive attitudes turn them to professions such as engineers, police, judges/prosecutors, businessmen and politicians.

The reasons for the professions they would prefer if they did not choose the teaching profession were expressed as "being interested (36.0%), finding the profession suitable for themselves (7.7%), believing that they will be successful (5.1%), communicating with people (5.1%)., to have a profession in a shorter time (2.3%), to deal with human psychology (2.3%), to open their own office (2.3%), to have a better income (2.3%), to be influenced by their teachers (2%) ,3), patriotism (2.3%), making sense of the environment (2.3%) and producing (2.3%)". As the reason for the occupations to be preferred, the participants stated that they would prefer these occupations because they were more "interested" and the male and female participants showed a balanced distribution (8/6) regarding the reason for "being interested".

Some of the participants (59.0%) stated that they would continue their studies when given a new opportunity, and although the number of male and female prospective teachers who want to continue in their departments shows an almost balanced distribution, mostly female prospective teachers do not want to change their departments. When we look at the participants who are considering changing their departments (41.0%), it is understood that male prospective teachers come to the fore although there is an almost balanced distribution. These results suggest that male prospective teachers will go to other departments if they find an opportunity. Prospective teachers participating in Yurdakal's (2019) research also stated that although they chose the teaching profession themselves, they would like to do another profession when given the opportunity. In this respect, the research coincides with Yurdakal's (2019) research.

In the research conducted by Semerci, Semerci, Eliusuk, and Kartal (2012) on teachers, it was concluded that nearly 80% of the teachers chose the teaching profession voluntarily; again, a high rate of 73% are satisfied with their profession; 92.3% of them did not underestimate their profession. On the other hand, 40% of teachers think that teaching profession is not a prestigious profession. There are also studies that do not reach similar results with this research. For example, in the research conducted by Eret Orhan and Ok (2014), prospective teachers were asked whether they would prefer the same department if they had the chance to choose it again. While 42.6% of the candidates stated that they could choose the same department again, 42.9% stated that they would choose another department. Few of the candidates (0.7%) were undecided about this question. In addition, 32.6% of the prospective teachers (42.9%) who stated that they could change the department they chose, stated that they would like to choose a department other than teaching.

According to participant views, the teaching profession is "both male and female (44.1%) (not defining gender, loving the profession, being talented), being a profession suitable for women (30.8%) (working hours suitable for women, befitting

women, compassionate and being patient, aesthetic and polite, low salary), being a profession suitable for men (12.9%), being a female or male profession changes according to the situation (10.2%)". Participant views mostly focus on the teaching profession as "both men and women profession" and "it is a profession suitable for women".

Male and female prospective teachers show an almost equal distribution in terms of seeing the teaching profession as "both male and female profession". On the contrary, almost all of the participants who expressed an opinion on "seeing it as a profession suitable for women" are female prospective teachers. This situation shows that female prospective teachers are under the influence of social perceptions while they prefer the teaching profession. Yaman et al. (2001) conducted two decades ago, it is noteworthy that 85% of the participants perceived the teaching profession as a female profession. This situation can be considered as an indication that social judgments are not easily destroyed. As can be understood from the explanations of the prospective teachers, it can be said that the main reason for thinking that the teaching profession is suitable for women on a social basis is found in the triangle of working hours, motherhood and housework. Obviously, in such a stuck mentality, men are prevented from turning to some teacher training programs.

The reasons for the decrease in the number of male prospective teachers in some teacher training programs are according to the participants' opinions: "Social factors (51.3%) (Perceiving it as a female profession, considering men's to have more prestigious and popular professions), global factors (30.8%) (Women's education and embarking on business life, the teaching profession being a more valuable and sacred profession in the past, the situation in the country), personal factors (23.2%) (Male students do not want to deal with homework and activities, they cannot come to the programs because they do not study, women do not prefer difficult professions and teaching they like their job more) and legal factors (18,0%) (Recruitment policies and male students find the teaching salary less)".

Participant views on the decrease in the number of male prospective teachers in some of the teacher training programs mostly focused on "Social factors". "Social factors" are followed by "Global factors", and while the prospective teachers expressing their opinion on "Social factors" for the decrease in the number of male prospective teachers are mostly women, the prospective teachers expressing opinions on "Global factors" are mostly men. This result shows that female prospective teachers are more affected by social perceptions.

Some research findings in the literature reveal that the teaching profession is mostly preferred by female prospective teachers. In the research of Eret Orhan and Ok (2014), the number of female prospective teachers who were consulted for their opinions was approximately four times the number of male prospective teachers; in the research conducted by Gokce and Sezer (2012) with prospective teachers, 197 female and 88 male prospective teachers in the first grade; 174 female and 77 male prospective teachers were studying in the fourth grade, so, female prospective teachers were more than twice the number of male prospective teachers. In the research conducted by Ovet (2006), 61.1% of prospective teachers were women and 38.9% were men; Gultekin et al. (2016), stated that the majority (73.4%) of the prospective teachers attending the primary teaching program were female prospective teachers. In France, women account for 58% of all secondary school teachers; 61% in the UK (Moreau, 2015); and in Kenya, only 13% of primary school teachers are male (Cunningham & Dorsey, 2004); as of 2015, 44.9% of primary school teachers in Sub-Saharan Africa are women, with 59.3% for all developing countries and 84.5% for developed countries (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations (UNESCO)- Institute for Statistics, 2017); It is reported that similar findings were found in the studies of Aksu, Demir, Daloglu, Yildirim, and Kiraz (2010).

In addition, in the report prepared by Eurydice (2010) on gender equality, it is stated that the majority of teachers in primary and secondary education are women. According to the report, most teachers in primary education in all European countries except Turkey (65% in Greece and 98% in Slovenia) are women. When it comes to secondary school level, the rate is around 52% in Liechtenstein and 86% in Latvia. On the other hand, as the level of education increases, the representation of women decreases. It is stated that the rate of female teachers at high school level is between 45% and 56%. In the same report, only a few countries addressed the low number of male teachers at pre-primary and primary education levels at the political level; very few countries are reported to have taken concrete initiatives to include men in the profession. On the other hand, in Finland, where the teaching profession is highly prestigious, and in Luxembourg, where the teaching profession is well-paid, the majority of teachers working at the compulsory education level are still women, clearly revealing the perception that the teaching profession is a 'care job', at least at the beginning level.

Participants' opinions about whether they plan to do the teaching profession after graduation are as follows: "planning to work (53.9%) (desiring to develop him/herself after getting hired, trying other ways if he can't get hired and thinking of doing additional work) and to try other professions (7.7%)". Slightly more than half of those who want to do the profession (25.7%) "Want to be hired and improve themselves" and among the prospective teachers who hold this view, women are more common than men (6/4). Regarding "trying other ways if not hired", female prospective teachers constitute the majority (5/3). All of the participants who expressed an opinion about "thinking about doing additional work" were male (7.7%). Female prospective teachers stated that they are more stable than male prospective teachers in terms of being hired to the profession and improving themselves after starting to job. Although the participants who stated that they would try other professions are in the minority, despite the almost equal distribution between the genders, male prospective teachers stand out in terms of inclining to other professions.

As can be understood from the results of the research, it is seen that the understanding that the teaching profession is a female profession continues and it is effective in choosing this profession for some prospective teachers. Acting on the idea that the teaching profession is a profession specific to both genders, by cooperating with education faculties and schools, policies can be developed to carry out regulations and activities that will enable prospective teachers to be psychologically attached to their profession and to create positive feelings towards this profession, starting from the first year of undergraduate education.

The perception of the teaching as a professional profession requires that it be shaped based on the concepts of 'teacher empowerment'. One of the biggest obstacles to professionalism is the amount of wages, and the other is the lack of qualified individuals for the profession. Seeing teaching as a professional profession will also increase the quality of the profession and at the same time, it will help to break the intense view of women observed in the teaching profession, with the reduction of men's reservations. It is known that the numerical dominance of women observed in a profession is also associated with the decline in the status of that profession. This situation also raises fundamental questions about the role and position of women in society. Especially between women and men, social and economic equality and dignity problems arise. This situation prevents the teaching profession from being taken into account (Gannerud, 2001).

In the research of Erginer and Saklan (2020), it is emphasized that the discussions that male primary teachers do not turn to this profession due to the low status and salary of the teaching profession and job finding problems continue in various environments. In the research, primary teachers attributed the low number of male primary teachers to these reasons. The ability of the teaching profession to gain a respectable place in the society also depends on the quality of the students studying in these programs. Placing students with low scores in departments in education faculties harms the quality of the teaching profession and education in general. As it is known, the low status of the teaching profession, the insufficient number of jobs; therefore, men do not turn to the teaching profession due to reasons such as the inability of newly graduated teachers to find a job and low teachers' salaries are argued in many platforms.

In the research, prospective teachers drew attention to this and attributed the low number of male prospective teachers to these reasons. The fact that the teaching profession is a respected profession in the society also depends on the quality of the students studying in the teaching program. The placement of students with low scores in many departments in education faculties also reduces the quality of the teaching profession and harms the quality of education in general. This situation leads to the transformation of teaching into a profession that is not respected and devalued in terms of society. In order to increase the quality of student placements in education faculties, arrangements can be made such as seeking special conditions for entry to the profession.

It is hoped that this research will give clues about the recruitment policies related to the teaching profession. It is thought that with the improvement to be made in the salary, holiday breaks and recruitment policies for the teaching profession, will change in favor of male prospective teachers. The research is limited to the students studying at the education faculties of two state universities in Turkey. Comprehensive research on this subject with more prospective teachers will contribute to the discussion of the problem of the profession's transformation into a female profession.

It can be thought that the qualitative problems experienced in the current education system stem from the fact that male teachers see this profession as a female profession. Comparing a similar situation with the experiences of other countries can help to see the differences between the Turkish sample and the understanding of other countries. From the results of the research, it is understood that the families of female prospective teachers take into account the gender factor when directing their children to this profession and they are effective in choosing this profession, while it is seen that the families of male prospective teachers have an opposite understanding. Considering that the perception that the teaching profession is still a female profession by the society, it may be beneficial to break this perception and make regulations that will increase the status, salary and place of the teaching profession in the society. In addition, interviews with the families of prospective teachers will help to make an in-depth analysis on this subject.

From the findings of the research, it is understood that both female and male prospective teachers are stuck between a situation such as not being able to think about the teaching profession independently of economic factors such as job anxiety and the gender factor. In this situation, in order to get rid of the continuing perception of "babysitting" for the teaching profession in the society, initiatives can be taken in this regard by taking into account the active participation of education faculties in decision-making processes in education policies. It may be useful to deal with the selection process for the teaching profession from the beginning, to seek special conditions for entering the profession and to employ personal characteristics, to get rid of the image that teaching is an easy profession and that it is mostly a female profession.

### **Research and Publication Ethics Statement**

Researchers have adhered to all ethical principles and rules in the collection, analysis and reporting of data.

## Contribution Rates of Authors to the Article

This article is based on a topic that both authors are working on. Both of the authors carried out the application by developing the application tool after scanning the relevant literature. The first author took an active role in the method, field scanning and accessing the relevant resources, discussion and re-reading the article. The second author played an important role in summary, translation, literature review, gathering sources, and preparing findings and comments.

## Statement of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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