

The role and importance of the problem of ethics in education

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Abstract

The purpose of this research; To evaluate the role and importance of the ethical problem in education through the ethical perceptions of primary school teacher candidates. The research was designed in accordance with the phenomenology pattern, one of the qualitative research designs. In this research, 40 teacher candidates studying in primary school teaching departments in various universities in Kazakhstan in the 2021-2022 academic year constitute the study group of the research. Research data were collected through a semi-structured interview form developed by the researchers. As a result of the research; Primary school teacher candidates' views on ethical behaviors in the teaching profession were evaluated, and teachers ranked ethical behaviors as professional commitment, justice/equality, honesty/reliability, objectivity/impartiality, professional development, respect and professionalism. The pre-service teachers who participated in the research described discrimination, professional abuse, bribery, indiscipline and irresponsibility as unethical behaviors. In addition, the majority of teacher candidates participating in the research stated that the role of ethical behavior in the teaching profession is very effective. It is necessary to increase the courses taken by pre-service teachers during their education on professional ethics, and the course content should be developed in order to ensure their development.

Keywords; Ethical behavior, ethics in education, prospective teachers, unethical behavior.

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1. Introduction

It is thought that, in addition to the professional and personal competence and values of the teacher, the ethical values that the teacher has for the profession also affect the quality of professional life. Ates (2012) states that education will become higher quality with teachers who have clarified teaching professional ethics and professional values, internalized and internalized professional ethics and professional values. For this reason, education faculty students, who will undertake the task of raising and shaping generations as the teachers of the future, must acquire and internalize the ethical values related to the profession before starting the profession.

1.1. Theoretical and conceptual framework

Behaving in accordance with the standards adopted jointly by the members of a profession is an indispensable element of the profession, not an extra responsibility brought to those who do that profession. Awareness of ethical standards and principles that are determined jointly for teachers, as well as for every professional group, and adapting these principles to professional life in a prudent way will also increase the quality of the teaching profession and make teachers more professional in their profession (Campbell, 2008).

In business life, the ethical stance of any business line is defined as the basic foundation of the existence of any business line or profession, as well as being a critical factor that ensures the acceptance of that business line in society (O'Leary and Radich 2001). One of the findings we observed today; is the fact that the employees of the same professional group exhibit different and sometimes completely opposite behavior patterns related to their profession or while performing their profession. At this point, professional ethics limits the arbitrary behavior of people while performing their profession and directs them to the behavior required by the profession (Orenel, 2002).

There are rules that people who are members of a profession must follow. Professional ethics is effective in determining these rules. In addition, professional ethics can be defined as the whole of the desired behaviors in that field. Thanks to professional ethics, professional members are prevented from engaging in unethical behavior. Professional ethical codes determined specifically for each profession are generally compatible with moral principles (Erdem & Simsek, 2013). Teacher training means providing vocational training to develop professional competences. In order to fulfill the requirements of the profession and to shape behaviors that will cope with many difficulties, teachers should be able to examine the consequences of their own actions, and beyond that, they should be aware of their mission (Seghedin, 2014)

The teaching profession differs from all other professions with its unique characteristics. The most important of these features is that teaching is the instructor of all other professions. With this aspect, the teaching profession is in a sacred position that is respected and attributed to high status in all societies, and the necessity of complying with ethical criteria in all practices of those who continue this profession becomes even more important (Pelit and Guclu, 2006). Ethics of teaching profession consists of codes that determine the principles of actions to be taken in teaching environments, the standards of teacher behavior, the boundaries of who can do what kind of actions in these environments and accepted by all stakeholders. Having these codes not only increases the public's trust in the teaching profession, but also acts as a guide for teachers so that the teaching profession can be done properly (Maxwell, 2017).

The education that a teacher has received and the experiences he has gained have important effects on the development of his ethical identity. This ethical identity directs teachers to do the right thing in their profession or to strive to be better (Maher, 2005). The subject of teaching professional ethics has been frequently included in discussions with the teacher training system in recent years, and it is stated that there should be a professional ethics course in teacher training programs (Bowen et al., 2006). It is extremely important for the teacher's professional performance to be able to act

ethically in his communication with the children, or in other words, to have the ability to make ethical decisions (Banks, 2005).

1.2. Related research

Kuusisto et al. (2012) aimed to determine the ethical professionalism and sensitivities of teachers, students studying teaching and teachers from different branches in their study on Finnish teachers' ethical sensitivities. As a result of the study, differences in ethical sensitivity were found between students and teachers. At the same time, it was concluded that both groups of participants had high ethical sensitivity and internalized ethical codes for themselves. The results showed that Finnish participants attach importance to core values and Finnish educational principles.

Barrett et al. (2012) conducted this study in order to determine the dimensions of their judgments about ethical and unethical behaviors by applying a 41-item questionnaire to 593 educators and teachers on how teachers decide on ethical and unethical behaviors and developing a code of conduct for teachers. As a result, four factors were identified. These are personal harm, violations of grade, carelessness, violations of public and private boundaries. Pre-service teachers are more willing to have standards in practice than in-service teachers. Pre-service teachers approach the issue of inattention in the classroom more seriously than in-service teachers. In-service teachers do not obey the school rules, do not come to the lesson prepared, etc. It was concluded that they overlooked more.

Mayhew and Murphy (2009) aimed to understand how effective ethics education is on behaviors by comparing students who received ethics education in their 4th year of university education and students who were in their 5th year of university education but did not receive ethics education. Unlike the others, in this study, participants were given 40 cents for each correct answer, 10 cents were charged for each incorrect answer, and 5 cents were deducted for each unmarked question. The reason for such an application is to achieve better results. As a result of this study, it was determined that ethics education is not necessary for internalizing ethical behaviors, but it affects ethical behaviors.

Altinkurt and Yilmaz (2009) conducted a research in the screening model in order to reveal the opinions of prospective teachers about professional unethical behaviors. As a result of the research, it was determined that pre-service teachers participated in professional unethical behaviors at a high level; the highest level of distinction between the rich and the poor among the students; it has been revealed that they consider giving paid lessons to their students outside of school as the least unethical behavior. Anangisye (2010) researched current practices and problems in teacher ethics education in teacher schools. As a result of the research, it was stated that the media, family and religious institutions, every adult individual in the society, as well as the responsibility of teacher training institutions and stakeholders, take a role in this process in teacher ethics education.

Boon (2011) presented ethical dilemmas situations to teacher candidates and teachers in his case study titled "Ethics Education for Qualified Teachers"; revealed the views of prospective teachers on ethical education and examined the ethical issues in undergraduate curriculum. As a result of the research, it was revealed that there is a need for ethics education/ethics courses in teaching undergraduate programs.

1.3. Purpose of the research

The purpose of this research; To evaluate the role and importance of the ethical problem in education through the ethical perceptions of primary school teacher candidates. In the research, answers were sought for the following sub-objectives.

1. What are the primary school teacher candidates' views on ethical behaviors in the teaching profession?
2. What are the views of primary school teacher candidates about unethical behaviors in the teaching profession?

3. How do primary school teacher candidates evaluate the role of ethical behavior in the profession?

2. Method and Materials

In this part of the research, there is information about the research method, participants and data collection process.

2.1. Research method

In order to illuminate the main purpose of the study with a holistic approach, qualitative research method was used and phenomenology was chosen as the research design. Qualitative research is the expression of a reductionist, exploratory and interpretive process that the researcher carries out to observe people in their natural environments and to examine the formation processes of events and phenomena in order to explain the basic characteristics of individual and social events and phenomena that people experience (Ishtiaq, 2019). Phenomenology design provides an in-depth perspective in revealing lived phenomena, events, experiences, perceptions and situation (Moustakas, 1994). In this direction, in this study, the role and importance of the ethical problem in education was evaluated in accordance with the phenomenology pattern through the ethical perceptions of primary school teacher candidates.

2.2. Participants

The participant group of the research was selected by purposeful random sampling method. Purposeful random sampling is the purposeful classification of systematic and randomly selected case samples in line with the purpose of the research. This new sampling is done in order to reach richer data than the cases determined by random sampling and to increase the credibility of the research. The researcher first determines a sample group from the universe using random methods and then selects a small subgroup from this group that he thinks will contribute the most to the research (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). This is a small group purpose random sample. In this research, 40 pre-service teachers studying in primary school teaching departments in various universities in Kazakhstan in the 2021-2022 academic year were selected by purposeful random sampling method. Information about the study group of the research is given in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Information on Primary School Teacher Candidates

Class	Gender		Sum
	Female	Male	
1. Class	2	3	5
2. Class	8	1	9
3. Class	6	4	10
4. Class	10	6	16
Sum	26	14	40

In Table 1, the distribution of primary school teacher candidates participating in the research by gender and the classes they study is given. 5 of the pre-service teachers study in the 1st grade, 9 in the 2nd grade, 10 in the 3rd grade and 16 in the 4th grade. Of the participants in the study, 26 were girls and 14 were boys. A total of 40 pre-service teachers participated in the research.

2.3. Data collection tools

Research data were collected through a semi-structured interview form developed by the researchers. Interview is one of the data collection tools preferred by researchers in qualitative research. This tool has the feature of asking in-depth questions about the researched subject and

getting answers. In addition, the interview provides the researcher with the opportunity to ask questions again in cases where the answers given by the students are incomplete or insufficient. Thus, the researcher makes the situation more descriptive and has the opportunity to complete the answers. In the semi-structured interview, the researcher prepares the interview form that includes the questions that he planned to ask beforehand. On the other hand, the researcher may ask alternative and final questions depending on the flow of the interview and may ask the person to elaborate on their answers (Patton, 2002). The semi-structured interview questions prepared to be directed to the study group of the research are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Teacher Candidates

Personal Information
Your gender:
Class You're Studying:
Ethical Questions for Teacher Candidates
1. What are your views on ethical behavior in the teaching profession?
2. What are your views on unethical behavior in the teaching profession?
3. How do you evaluate the role of ethical behavior in the teaching profession?

In Table 2, semi-structured questions prepared to be directed to the study group of the research are given. In the semi-structured interview, there are two questions about the personal information of the primary school teacher candidates who accepted to participate in the research voluntarily and three questions about their ethical perceptions.

2.4. Data collection process

Interviews with pre-service teachers who voluntarily agreed to participate in the study lasted approximately 30-35 minutes for each pre-service teacher. During the interview, permission was obtained from the pre-service teachers to record the interviews with a voice recorder. Interviews were recorded in line with the permissions obtained. It took approximately 6 weeks for all interviews to be completed. Subsequent recordings were analysed. First of all, the transcription of the data, the accuracy of the transcripts were ensured, the data were processed according to the determined themes and the findings were interpreted with direct quotations. In order to ensure the reliability of the data, the records and the transcript of the record were examined by another researcher other than the researchers and compared with the transcripts of the researchers. The very small differences between the records and the written transcripts were eliminated and the data was made ready for analysis.

2.5. Data collection analysis

In this study, the views of primary school teacher candidates, who were evaluated to determine the role and importance of the ethical problem in education, were revealed by the content analysis method. Content analysis is a scientific approach that is prepared in a language that readers can understand, brings together similar data within the framework of certain concepts and themes, and allows the objective and systematic examination of repeatable, verbal, written and other materials (Krippendorff, 2012). The answers given by the primary school teacher candidates participating in the research to the questions asked in the semi-structured interview were given by creating frequency and percentage tables in the findings in accordance with the content analysis. In addition, the direct opinions of the pre-service teachers were coded as T1, T2, T3 and given in the form of quotations in the research.

3. Results

In this section, the answers of the pre-service teachers who voluntarily agreed to participate in the research to the semi-structured interview questions were evaluated.

In Table 3, the teacher candidates participating in the research asked the question "What are your views on ethical behaviors in the teaching profession?" Their answers to the question were evaluated.

Table 3. Opinions of prospective teachers on ethical behaviors in the teaching profession

Themes	Codes	F	%
Professional Commitment	Be bound by the bond of love	34	85
Justice/Equality	Demonstrate exemplary behavior to new colleagues	31	77,5
	Treating students fairly		
	Treating students equally		
Integrity/Reliability	To be reliable	28	70
	Being honest		
Objectivity/Impartiality	Not discriminating between students	22	55
	Being open to innovations related to the profession		
Professional development	To follow professional publications and technological developments	19	47,5
	Be productive		
Respect	Respect for students and parents	11	27,5
	Respect for colleagues and supervisors		
Professionalism	Providing timely and perfect service	5	12,5
	Providing students with a conducive classroom environment		

In Table 3, the views of teacher candidates participating in the research on ethical behaviors in the teaching profession are evaluated. 85% of prospective teachers have professional commitment to ethical behaviors in the teaching profession, 77.5% Justice/Equality, 70% Integrity/Reliability, 55% Objectivity/Impartiality, 47.5% professional development, 27% .5 of them gave the answer of respect and 12.5% of them as professionalism.

Some of the pre-service teachers participating in the research were asked, "What are your views on ethical behaviors in the teaching profession?" Their answers to the question are as follows.

T9 Coded Teacher Candidate: I believe that a teacher should be devoted to his/her job with love above all else. Should not discriminate between students, should be respectful towards students and parents. In addition, a teacher must be reliable.

T17 Code Teacher Candidate: It is very important to be devoted to the profession, honesty, professionalism, professional development and respect. A teacher who should set an example in the profession. He should love his job, attend classes on time, and plan correctly. Make the classroom environment suitable for learning. Must be innovative and productive.

T34 Coded Teacher Candidate: I think the most important ethical behavior is for a teacher to love his/her job. Self-development is also very important. Must follow current publications and use technology. In the working environment, he should be respectful in his relations with his subordinates and his colleagues.

T39 Coded Teacher Candidate: The most important ethical behavior expected from teachers is to love their profession. We can also define this situation as commitment to the profession. It is also very important that they treat students, parents, principals and colleagues with respect. In addition, a teacher must follow the publications and technological developments related to his field.

In Table 4, the teacher candidates who participated in the research asked the question “What are your views on unethical behaviors in the teaching profession?” Their answers to the question were evaluated.

Table 4. Opinions of prospective teachers about unethical behaviors in the teaching profession

Themes	Codes	F	%
Discrimination	Distinguish between students	35	87,5
	Comparing between students		
Profession Abuse	Act in your own interests	32	80
	Misuse of corporate property		
Bribe	Receiving gifts from students	20	50
	Receiving gifts from parents		
	Failure to comply with regulations		
Indiscipline	Not getting to classes on time	14	35
	Not teaching the lesson effectively		
	Come to class unprepared		
Irresponsibility	Informing students incorrectly	9	22,5
	Not disclosing exam results on time		

In Table 4, the views of pre-service teachers participating in the research on unethical behaviors in the teaching profession were evaluated. 87.5% of the teacher candidates gave the answer to unethical behaviors in the teaching profession, 80% of them abuse the profession, 50% of them bribery, 35% of them indiscipline and 22.5% of them irresponsibility.

Some of the pre-service teachers participating in the research were asked, "What are your views on unethical behaviors in the teaching profession?" Their answers to the question are as follows.

T2 Code Teacher Candidate: Teachers discriminating between students, receiving bribes or gifts from students or parents, Teacher not attending classes on time. It is a serious irresponsibility and unethical behavior in my opinion that the teacher does not sufficiently inform the students in the communication with the students.

T27 Code Teacher Candidate: It is unethical for the teacher to be irresponsible and undisciplined. For example, the teacher does not act in accordance with the regulations. It is also very bad for him to make comparisons among students. It may be that the institution he works for misuses his belongings.

T33 Coded Teacher Candidate: The most important unethical behaviors of a teacher are to distinguish between students, to be undisciplined in terms of using the lesson time efficiently, and to misuse his profession by looking after his own interests rather than the student's.

T35 Coded Teacher Candidate: I think discriminating among students is the most unethical behavior that should not be done. A teacher should not act in his own self-interest. Failure of the teacher to attend the classes on time and not to teach the lesson efficiently are also undisciplined behaviors. These can also be considered unethical.

In Table 5, the question of "How do you evaluate the role of ethical behavior in the teaching profession?" Their answers to the question were evaluated.

Table 5. Opinions of prospective teachers on the role of ethical behavior in the teaching profession

Themes	F	%
Very efficient	31	77,5
Effective	6	15
Slightly Effective	3	7,5

In Table 5, the views of prospective teachers on the role of ethical behavior in the teaching profession were evaluated. 77.5% of the teacher candidates found the role of ethical behavior in the teaching profession very effective, 15% effective and 7.5% somewhat effective.

Some of the pre-service teachers participating in the research were asked, "How do you evaluate the role of ethical behavior in the teaching profession?" Their answers to the question are as follows.

T11 Coded Teacher Candidate: I think it is very necessary to adopt ethical behaviors in order to properly fulfill the teaching profession. I think it is at least as effective as knowledge.

T17 Coded Teacher Candidate: I find the role of ethical behaviors very effective in the teaching profession. The teaching profession is one of the most important professions with the function of raising people useful to the society. Therefore, it is one of the most important duties of the teacher not only to convey information to the student, but also to exhibit exemplary behavior in all aspects.

T25 Coded Teacher Candidate: I find the role of ethical behaviors in the teaching profession effective. In my opinion, one of the necessary conditions to be a qualified teacher is to exhibit ethical behaviors.

T40 Code Teacher Candidate: One of the necessary conditions to be a good teacher is to have knowledge of professional ethics and to behave in accordance with ethics. However, this alone is not enough to be a good teacher. So I find it somewhat effective.

4. Discussion

In this study, primary school teacher candidates' views on ethical behaviors in the teaching profession were evaluated, and the teachers listed ethical behaviors as professional commitment, justice/equality, honesty/reliability, objectivity/impartiality, professional development, respect and professionalism. Teacher candidates, being connected with the bond of love and exhibiting exemplary behavior to new colleagues, commitment to the profession; fairness/equality to treat students fairly and equally; being reliable and honest honesty/reliability; They considered not discriminating among students as objectivity/impartiality and being open to innovations related to the profession, following professional publications and technological developments, and being productive as professional development. In addition, respect to teacher candidates, students and parents, and respect to colleagues and supervisors; They defined professionalism as providing a timely and perfect service and providing a convenient classroom environment to students. In a qualitative study on teachers, Smith (2013) determined the ethical behaviors that teachers highlight as "autonomy, originality, responsibility, dedication, social justice, professionalism, honesty, respect and trust". In his research, Memisoglu (2005) stated that behaviors such as threatening students with grades, discriminating between students, shouting at students, displaying lowly behavior, bringing personal problems to the classroom, dealing with certain students, trying to impose their opinions, not valuing students and not understanding students are unethical.

The pre-service teachers who participated in the research described discrimination, professional abuse, bribery, indiscipline and irresponsibility as unethical behaviors. By pre-service teachers, making a distinction between students and making comparisons between students is discrimination; acting in their own self-interest and misusing corporate property; misconduct; Receiving gifts from students and parents is considered bribery. In addition, while the pre-service teachers considered not behaving in accordance with the regulations, not attending the classes on time and not teaching the lesson effectively, they considered it as an irresponsibility to come to the lesson unprepared, to inform the students incompletely and not to explain the exam results in a timely manner. Tunca et al. (2015) stated in their study that discrimination was emphasized as the most common unethical behavior by teachers. Altinkurt and Yilmaz (2011) also determined in their research that teachers see a high level of unethical behavior in making discrimination in their relations with students and behaving biased in student evaluation. According to Aksoy's (1999) research, the majority of teachers find the following behaviors unethical: Making ethnic or religious discrimination among students, making negative

statements about other teachers in the classroom. In addition, revealing confidential information and problems about a student to classmates, humiliating the student in front of the class, discriminating among students in terms of their economic level, humiliating students when they are not present, interrupting teaching time by being late or leaving early, and doing private affairs in class are also considered unethical behaviors. has been defined.

Majority of the pre-service teachers who participated in the research stated that the role of ethical behavior in the teaching profession is very effective. Similarly, Kuusisto et al. (2012), in their study to determine the ethical sensitivity of Finnish teachers, concluded that the participants had high ethical sensitivity and internalized ethical codes for themselves, as well as giving importance to basic values and educational principles.

5. Conclusion

The basis of the existence of the education system is the student. Schools, which are the institutions where educational services are provided in an organized manner, and teachers and administrators working in these schools are responsible for creating an educational environment that will enable students to internalize their rights and responsibilities in all their actions and transactions. The powerful effects of the educational process and teachers in shaping international social and moral situations further increase the importance of the subject. The role of teachers in shaping societies requires them to be equipped with social and ethical education formation. In this direction, in this research; The role and importance of the ethical problem in education was evaluated through the ethical perceptions of primary school teacher candidates. As a result of the research; Primary school teacher candidates' views on ethical behaviors in the teaching profession were evaluated, and teachers ranked ethical behaviors as professional commitment, justice/equality, honesty/reliability, objectivity/impartiality, professional development, respect and professionalism. The pre-service teachers who participated in the research described discrimination, professional abuse, bribery, indiscipline and irresponsibility as unethical behaviors. In addition, the majority of teacher candidates participating in the research stated that the role of ethical behavior in the teaching profession is very effective.

6. Recommendations

In line with the results obtained from the research, the following suggestions were developed in order to ensure that prospective teachers adopt ethical behaviors.

1. It is necessary to increase the courses taken by the teacher candidates during their education on professional ethics, and the course content should be developed in order to ensure their development.
2. The ethical relationship between the teaching profession and the teaching profession should be emphasized in various seminars and conferences to be given at universities.
3. Case studies on ethical behavior and unethical behavior should be done in the curriculum of prospective teachers.
4. Ethical behaviors should be reinforced and adoption of unethical behaviors should be prevented by organizing in-service training programs for teachers.

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