



Research Report  
March 2020



# WORKING LIFE OF FEMALE TEACHERS

Findings and Suggestions



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Findings and Suggestions

## Research Group

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## Research and Implementation

Educators Trade Union Women Community  
Educators Trade Union Center for Strategic Research (EBSAM)



**EĞİTİM-BİR-SEN**  
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## ABBREVIATIONS AND TRANSLATIONS OF TURKISH TERMS

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ANOVA	One-way Analysis of Variance
EFA	Education for All
EĞİTİM-BİR-SEN	Educators Trade Union
ERI	Education Reform Initiative
ILO	International Labor Organization
MoNE	Ministry of National Education
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
SASAM	Sağlık-Sen Strategic Research Centre
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TALIS	Teaching and Learning International Survey
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
TurkStat	Turkish Statistical Institute
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VTAH School	Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School



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## PREFACE

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Teaching, an irreplaceable profession throughout history, gains a sacred meaning within the context of student and family life. Teachers, who have without a doubt touched the lives of every member of the society, albeit at different levels, transfer their knowledge to new generations. Women, who perform the teaching profession, in which many important tasks are undertaken in terms of their role in society, are also at the center of the family through motherhood. The family unit is the oldest school where social values are transferred with the role of motherhood and socialization is ensured.

Teaching as an occupation has one of the oldest professional traditions for women in our country. While the labor force participation rate of women in our country is generally lower than that of men, women have a higher rate of participation in the teaching profession than their male counterparts. In addition, although few in number, female school principals overcome important tasks and administer their schools successfully. The association most children form between the teacher and mother-like figures at the beginning of their education is extremely important in terms of preparing the next generation for the future. In this sense, female teachers add value to the teaching profession as a result of their maternal instincts, compassion, devoted attitude and ability to empathize with both students and parents.

Teachers are the key to education. In this sense, it should not be forgotten that an education system is only as good as its primary component: teachers. Therefore, policies and practices that contribute to improving the situation of teachers are needed in order to have a good education system. As the Educators Trade Union (Eğitim-Bir-Sen), we have conducted this study in order to analyze how our female teachers perceive the teaching profession and what factors affect their job satisfaction. This study looks at how our female teachers have both increased the quality of education by expanding the boundaries of their duties and responsibilities, and how our female administrators have overcome heavy workloads by means of devotion. Through our research we had the opportunity to closely examine what difficulties female teachers faced while fulfilling their duties and trying to achieve work-life harmony under the influence of various factors. This study is useful in terms of developing policies that will contribute to the overall peace and happiness of teachers.

The policies to be implemented in terms of harmonizing the work-life balance of female teachers play a key role in both strengthening the family unit and in raising future generations. This study aims to contribute to the balance between work and family life, which is an extremely important target in terms of improving the current status of women teachers in working life and strengthening our family and social structure for women teachers. I hope that our study will further the studies carried out within this broader context.

As a reflection of our efforts to improve the teaching profession as the Educators Trade Union, and to increase the financial, social and personal rights of our teachers and their opportunities, I would like to thank our Women's Commission and our research team for their contributions to the preparation of our study entitled "Working Life of Female Teachers: Findings and Suggestions." I hope that our report will be beneficial for our teachers, education staff, the labor market, public opinion, and policy makers.

**Ali YALÇIN**

President of Eğitim-Bir-Sen and Memur-Sen

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## FOREWORD

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Teachers are actors working with all their strength to increase the quality and efficiency of education. Therefore, any efforts to improve the status of our teachers will be directly reflected in the quality of education. In this regard, it is not possible for an education system that is expected to respond to increasing social demands to succeed without focusing on the problems which teachers face.

In recent years female employees have become more numerous within the teaching profession. This subject requires a more detailed analysis of the perspectives and satisfaction levels of female teachers, their difficulties in working life, and the reasons of these difficulties in terms of work-life balance.

Although the harmony between work and family life concerns all employees, the responsibilities that women bear both at home and at work can create additional challenges. If the harmony between work and family life is impaired, the difficulties experienced by people will negatively affect both work and family life. In this study, we have aimed to uncover the difficulties experienced by our female teachers, by using both qualitative and quantitative research methods in order to obtain extensive results. To this end, face-to-face interviews were conducted with 65 female teachers, principals, and assistant principals within the scope of qualitative research conducted in five provinces. Quantitative research was carried out through surveys applied to 2,717 female teachers and administrators in 12 provinces selected from NUTS Level 1 region of TurkStat.

I hope that our report titled “Working Life of Female Teachers: Findings and Suggestions” will carry the status of our female teachers and administrators to better places in their professional life. In this context, I believe that this study, which aims to contribute to the policies that can be applied to improve work-life balance, which is an extremely important goal in terms of improving the status of female teachers in working life and strengthening our family and social structure, will also be useful source for future studies.

I hope that this study, which we have prepared with specific attention to the work-life balance of female teachers, will be beneficial for all our stakeholders and especially to our female teachers who are the target audience of our research. I would like to thank our Women's Commission and our research team for their contribution to our work.

**Atilla OLÇUM**  
Vice Chairman

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The results obtained from our research show that the factors affecting the choice of female teachers by profession are individual interest, fondness of the profession, family guidance, teacher role models, and comfortable working conditions when compared to other professions. However, qualitative findings about the social perspective that the teaching profession is more suitable for maternal roles, shows that the majority of participants believe that teaching is not just a women's profession. On the other hand, the results of the quantitative research on the subject differ from qualitative findings. Six out of ten participants thought that teaching was the most suitable profession for women.

Within the scope of qualitative research, the participants who thought that being a woman gave “added value” to the profession, defined this value with a maternal instinct, a devoted and compassionate approach, the ability to have empathy, and a sense of dedication. However, most of the participants emphasized that motherhood especially improves feelings of empathy. According to the findings obtained from quantitative research, half of the participants think that being a woman creates an advantage in terms of their profession.

According to qualitative research findings, a significant number of the participants show organizational citizenship behavior in various subjects related to education and training. Most of the participants who exhibit such behavior stated that they think being a woman or mother is related to this behavior. Qualitative research findings revealed that the tendency to display organizational citizenship behavior is common amongst female administrators.

Within the scope of both qualitative and quantitative research, the main factors that female teachers define as challenging in their working life are; extracurricular workload, workload, indifference or pressure faced from parents, salary level, indiscipline amongst students, administrative attitudes, class size and school climate, and relations with colleagues. It was revealed that qualitative research participants faced some issues depending on the flexible and understanding attitude of the school administration on class schedules and leave, as well as work and family life adaptation, depending upon marital status, number of children, having children in the younger age group, receiving social support and child care. On the other hand, the number of participants who stated that it is difficult to establish work and family harmony within the scope of quantitative research is more limited. According to these findings, 22.7 percent of participants within the scope of quantitative research



think that their family responsibilities affect their business life; 31.9 percent think that their job responsibilities affect their family and home life negatively.

According to qualitative research results most participants believe that administratorship does not possess a gender. However, quantitative findings show that only two out of ten participants considered women more suitable for administratorship than men. 36.8 percent of participants consider male teachers more suitable for administrative work. Qualitative findings revealed that approximately two-thirds of the participants thought that teaching was not a career profession, and the willingness to become an administrator among teacher participants was rather low. Among the reasons for the reluctance of female teachers to become administrators are heavy workloads, lack of additional salaries and staff opportunities, the idea that work-life harmony is more difficult than teaching, and the notion that professional satisfaction in teaching cannot be achieved in administratorship and individual characteristics are not suitable for administratorship. In this regard, quantitative research findings also support these qualitative results. Quantitative research findings have shown that the participants want to assume the task of administratorship because of a desire to be more beneficial to the school and to students, showcasing the goal of making a career and the norm staff problems. On the other hand, seven out of ten participants do not want to be administrators. The reasoning behind this reluctance includes full-time working order, high workload of administratorship, individual perception that their personal characteristics are not suitable for administratorship, family responsibilities, teaching having a higher job satisfaction compared to administratorship, and not receiving any additional financial gain.

According to qualitative research results, the challenges faces by participants who are currently in administrative positions are workload and responsibilities without limits, bureaucratic workload, lack of institutional support in solving problems within school, lack of adequate in-service training in jobs requiring expertise, failure to meet expectations regarding personal rights, low status of profession, non-compliance with the principles of merit regarding the promotion of the profession, students' indiscipline, parental indifference or pressure of parents, negative outlook on female administrators, short rotation period, and intra-gender competition. In general the quantitative findings of this study also support these conclusions.

Finally, the majority of participants, six out of ten, stated that they would choose the teaching profession again if they had the opportunity to do so. In contrast, only one out of three participants support their own child choosing teaching as a profession.

- In order to ensure work-life balance, one of the most challenging issues for female teachers, especially those with younger children, nursery facilities should be expanded. In addition, tutoring opportunities should be provided for children who are in the older age group and who do not go to a full-time school. In this regard, the state should provide good quality, low cost or free childcare and preschool education services. These services should be geographically accessible and compatible with working hours. Likewise, nurseries or kindergartens should be established

in every school to popularize preschool opportunities. If nurseries cannot be expanded in the short term due to physical insufficiencies, monetary support should be provided by the state in the form of nursery or caregiver assistance to all teachers. Given the inadequate salary level of teachers, free or low-cost nursery facility or monetary support application provided by the state in terms of fulfilling childcare responsibilities will be an important social transfer.

- In order to lessen the amount of medical reports used by female teachers after birth, paid maternity leave periods should be extended and disruptions in terms of the use of breastfeeding leave should be eliminated since most teachers do not work full time. In this regard, it should be ensured that the conditions related to the restructuring of paid leave periods and the use of breastfeeding leave are improved.
- The postpartum unpaid leave period for female teachers should be increased to 3 years. This will allow female teachers who want to fulfill their care responsibilities in early childhood to take a break from active working life in order to increase work-life balance.
- It should be ensured that the class schedules of female teachers who have face difficulties due to childcare responsibilities are planned around these responsibilities. More formal arrangements should be made regarding this concern, which is currently at the discretion of administrators, in order to avoid victimization and inequality amongst administrators.
- Issues regarding student discipline are one of the main factors that challenge female teacher and administrators. In order to contribute to the solution of such problems, the peculiarities of these issues should be explored extensively. These include the specific kinds of schools and socioeconomic conditions in which student indiscipline occurs, and which students make up the primary risk group for such behavior.
- A further challenging factor for female teachers is extracurricular workload, which can be defined as the workload related to projects carried out regularly in project schools. This includes various paperwork and inputs to the data processing system. The extracurricular workload of female teachers should be reduced by diminishing repetitions, increasing the effectiveness of electronic systems, and reducing the re-entry of the existing data.
- Teaching should be turned into a career profession. A clear definition of staff, responsibility and duties should be put in place for management. In this context, a professional school administratorship approach should be adopted for the creation of an effective administration, as well as an effective learning and school atmosphere. With the professional school administratorship approach, education administratorship should be a staff, not an assignment. An objective and fair selection and appointment system supported by pre-service and in-service trainings should be established. In addition, it should be ensured that the four-year rotation period is raised to eight years in order to achieve higher efficiency and loyalty in the schools where school administrators are assigned.

- The salary levels and personal rights of administrators should be increased in order to increase the desire of female teachers to choose administrative positions. In addition, responsibilities that need specialization (such as occupational health and safety, investigating) that the administrators assume without being among their primary duties should be taken from the school administrators. In-service trainings should be organized in cooperation with the MoNE and unions to increase the educational leadership skills of female administrators.
- Studies should be carried out to reduce classroom size at schools where it is particularly high, as well as in schools with low academic achievement. Large class sizes increase the workload of teachers, resulting in negative results in terms of the quality of education.
- Employment of support staff should be increased to solve the problems experienced by preschool teachers due to continuous class hours. In order to support the physical capacity of preschool education, which has 49,730 classrooms and 68,365 teachers according to the statistics of the Ministry of National Education in 2019, it should be ensured that the required number of teachers are employed alongside about 100,000 support staff. This increase in the number of staff will increase the quality of education and reduce the depreciation rate of all teachers working in this field. In addition, there is a need to define the roles and responsibilities of the support staff currently employed to perform various support services in schools.
- In order for efforts to improve the condition of women teachers in working life, studies should be conducted to monitor and evaluate the problems they face, including demands for work-life balance and the tendency to become administrators. In this sense, impact analysis regarding policies implemented in accordance with the changing dynamics of work and family life should be conducted and the range of policies should be diversified according to the results that will be obtained. This will ensure that these policies are sensitive to changing conditions and are permanent. In addition, successful policies and practices should be practiced at the global level in order to increase the work-life harmony of female teachers solve the problems they encounter in working life.



**WORKING LIFE OF  
FEMALE TEACHERS**  
Findings and Suggestions

1

## **INTRODUCTION**



Teachers are seen as the most basic element of education systems which try to meet increasingly complex social demands, increasing the importance of focusing on teachers' working life. It has been revealed by various studies that the most effective factor in student success teachers. For example, in a study on the most successful countries in international student assessment programs, such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), it is stated that the common feature of these education systems is qualified teachers (Barber ve Mourshed, 2007). Similarly, studies in many countries have confirmed that teachers are the most effective school-based factor in terms of student achievement (EFA Global Monitoring Report Team, 2015; OECD, 2005; UNESCO, 2015). Teacher qualifications are related to productivity and income in the long run (ERI, 2015). Therefore, increasing the status of the teaching profession and improving the qualifications of teachers are vital in increasing the quality of the education system. This was stated in the Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers published in 1966 by the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and to achieve the goals and objectives teachers should benefit from a fair status and public dignity should be shown to the teaching profession (Gülmez, 2010).

The participation rate of women in working life has risen with the increased participation of females in education and the representation rate of women in top and middle management positions. Similarly, the representation of women in the teaching profession has increased and women have started to take a proportionally higher level in this profession than men. For example, as of 2018, 479,890 of the 810,201 teachers working in public schools are women (Gür et al.,



2018). However, despite this increase in the number of female teachers, this trend in educational administration did not emerge and even the number of female school principals decreased from 2007 to 2018 (OECD, 2019b). The Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) 2018 Report prepared by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), performed with the participation of 48 countries and economies, focuses on teachers and school principals, drawing attention to the striking differences between the rate of female teachers and the rate of female administrators in Turkey. According to the report, while female teachers constitute the majority in all countries participating in TALIS 2018, except Japan, women remain in the minority status in about half of these countries when it comes to the gender distribution of school principals. In the



OECD average, the ratio of female teachers is 68.3 percent, while the ratio of female school principals is 47.0 percent.

In Turkey the difference in rate between female teachers and female school principals is particularly noteworthy, with 55.8 percent of teachers being female, and only 7.2 percent of principals being female. These rates compared with TALIS 2008 rates, the rate of female teachers in Turkey has increased and it is observed that the female school principal rate has decreased (According to TALIS 2008 results, 52.0 percent and 8.8 percent). After Japan, Turkey has the lowest rate of female school principals. For example, as of 2018, only 16,263 out of 85,279 administrators in education working in public schools are female (Gür et al., 2018). However, apart from the low representation of women in the administration of education, many problems that teachers face in working life are also revealed (Çelik et al., 2019; Eğitim-Bir-Sen, 2013, 2019; OECD, 2019b). Therefore, it can be expected that focusing on the working life and demands of female teachers and administrators, who make up approximately 55 percent of the teachers working in the public sector, will both significantly increase the efficiency of the education system and contribute to solving of the problems women face in working life.

In this study, the attitudes, satisfaction, and demands of female teachers working in public schools affiliated to the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and the value added by being a woman to the teaching profession are investigated.

### **Purpose of the Study and Goals**

The goal of this research is to see whether women add value to teaching, to uncover the reasons female teachers have difficulties in terms of work-life balance within the framework of improving their working life, and to determine the challenges to female teachers who want to become administrators or are currently administrators. Uncovering these issues will contribute to the creation of effective policies aimed at harmonizing the work and family lives of female teachers, whose number is increasing day by day, thereby both strengthening families and creating the career opportunities that women deserve.

### Significance of the Study

While teaching is a profession where women are commonly found, the number of female teachers has increased in recent years. This situation reveals the necessity to analyze the problems faced by female teachers in working life, the challenging factors faced in terms of work-life balance and their perspectives on the profession. In addition, it is important to investigate how female teachers perceive the social perspective of the teaching profession as being suitable for spouse and motherhood roles.

On the other hand, as mentioned earlier, one of the most important factors affecting students' learning is teacher qualifications (EFA Global Monitoring Report Team, 2015; UNESCO, 2015). Therefore, education systems that are expected to respond to increasing social demands cannot be expected to be successful without firstly focusing on the problems which teachers face. Differing reports, both national and international, have revealed various problems in Turkey that have yet to be resolved (Eđitim-Bir-Sen, 2019; OECD, 2019b).

As mentioned above, Turkey has a lower rate of the rate of female administrators than the OECD despite the high rate of representation of women in the teaching profession. It remains in the last rank among OECD countries in this sense (OECD, 2019b). Hence, it is crucial that we investigate the underlying reasons of these circumstances.

In this context, the effects of women's family care responsibilities, social perspective and/or the personal preferences of female administrators on the tendency of female teachers to be administrators need to be investigated. Furthermore, the policies to be applied to improve the current situation of female teachers in working life and to strengthen our family and social structure, can be diversified to achieve a balance between work and family life.



This study, which aims to contribute to the aforementioned policies, strives to serve as a beneficial resource of future endeavors in this field.







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# 2

## RESEARCH METHOD



In this section, the model of the research, its population, its sample, data collection tools, data collection tools, statistical techniques used in the analysis of the data, and the limitations and assumptions of the research are explained.

### 2.1. Model of the Research

The study was carried out with a mixed research method in which qualitative and quantitative research methods were used together. The mixed research method is defined as a method in which the researcher collects, analyzes, and integrates findings and develops forward-looking predictions using quantitative and qualitative methods and approaches within the same research (Tashakkori ve Creswell, 2007). Complex and multidimensional events and phenomena in our environment constitute the main reason for choosing this method. Multiple methods should be used to understand these events and phenomena and the problems of social sciences (Yıldırım ve Şimşek, 2013). In this study, which was carried out with the mixed research method of sequential exploratory (Creswell, 2003), primarily qualitative data was collected. The quantitative data collection was created through structured questionnaires prepared in the light of the data obtained. In this regard, it can be stated that the rationale for choosing the mixed method is “development” (Gerene et al., 1989). In addition, both qualitative and quantitative data were used with equal emphasis in the evaluation of the data, and no emphasis was placed on either set of data. In this sense, the study was carried out with an equal emphasis/interactive design (Johnson & Christensen, 2014), another mixed method research method.

Qualitative research is used when there is not much information in existing literature about a particular theme, when subjects are addressed quietly or have the need to be explored to form an idea. Qualitative studies should be preferred while working on subjects that have a complex structure and when there is a need to obtain in-depth information and on suppressed social segments (Creswell, 2007). In studies designed with the qualitative method where there is an effort to reach a deep understanding of the subject, problems are not analyzed in isolation from the system in which they occur and develop. Rather, the network of relationships that dominate the situation is interpreted in its natural environment, revealing its meaning (Neuman, 2014).

In the qualitative research, any demographic features that could reveal that the participants were not used in data analysis to protect the anonymity of the participants; the participants were coded as teacher, principal and assistant principal according to their status with the interview number assigned. This method ensures that the rights of the participants are protected.

Quantitative research is research that tries to achieve reality by measuring events and facts from the outside (Arıkan, 2011). The descriptive research method was used to obtain the data required to reach the targeted objectives of this study. In this framework, the quantitative part of the research was carried out by using the “survey” model. General screening models are defined as the screening arrangements made on the whole population or a group taken from it or sample in order to reach a general judgment about the population consisting of many elements (Karasar, 2004).

## 2.2. Population and Sample

Qualitative as well as quantitative research of the sample is made up of female teachers and administrators working in basic education and secondary education in public institutions in Turkey. Within the scope of qualitative research, firstly, a focus group meeting was held with the participation of the members of the Educators Trade Union Headquarters Women's Commission. After the existing literature review was completed in-depth interviews were conducted with 65 female teachers, principals and assistant principals in five provinces consisting of Ankara, İstanbul, İzmir, Diyarbakır and Trabzon.

Qualitative interviews were carried out with 36 teachers, 13 principals and 16 assistant principals. In the determination of the participants to be included in the sample, features differ demographically. Factors such as marital status, having children, work experience, and administrative experience were taken into consideration. Schools taking place in the research field consisted of schools that provide different types and levels of education, and schools located in regions with different socio-economic characteristics. Thus, the sample is intended to have the ability to represent the entire population.

To represent the population in quantitative research TurkStat's (Turkey Statistical Institute) NUTS (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics) Region 1 of the 12 provinces (Ankara, Balıkesir, Bursa, Erzurum, Mersin, İstanbul, İzmir, Kayseri, Malatya, Samsun, Trabzon, Şanlıurfa) was selected.

In this sample diameter, the number of female teachers was calculated in 12 regions by institutional types and shared using the *Proportional Sampling* method. 12 provinces from 12 regions were selected, consisting of one province from each region, and the sample size of the regions was determined as the sample diameter of these provinces. According to the data obtained from MoNE in September 2019; 532,205 female teachers in total are employed within these regions. While the sampling distribution is formed according to the school types, the types of schools and institutions that do not enter the sample or enter in a very small number (Non-formal Education, Science High School, Social Sciences High School, Special Education Vocational School, Special Education Practice School, Gifted or Special Talented, Provincial and District National Education Directorates, Guidance and Research Center) were excluded and calculations were made on 511,205 female teachers representing the population. In total, the data of the questionnaire about 2.717 female teachers and administrators from 332 schools were used. Based on the sample size of 2.717, results were obtained with 2 percent margin of error.

## 2.3. Data Collection Tools

Within the scope of qualitative research, it was emphasized that the interview questions prepared by considering the literature review should be free of bias. A total of 16 questions in the form were arranged to cover the research problem. Open-ended questions were preferred.

A focus on data collection and analysis has been provided with the first questions in which the profiles and perspectives of the participants in the semi-structured interview form were determined. Later, the participants were asked questions that directly investigate the situation of female teachers

in working life and the difficulties they face. In this context, the focus has been on the issues affecting female teachers' thoughts, perceptions, and attitudes regarding the challenging factors related to work and their tendency to become administrators.

Although an average of one hour was determined for the interviews, many interviews went beyond the planned time due to the interest and positive attitude of the participants. During the interviews, the participants were briefly informed about the subject and objectives of the research before the interview began. The confidentiality of the interview and the fact that it serves a scientific purpose were emphasized in order to ensure the confidence of the interviewer in the research and to prove that the research was carried out within the framework of ethical rules.

Qualitative interviews were recorded using a voice recorder and notes were taken with the participants' consent. In interviews where the participants did not allow voice recordings, only notes were taken. In this way, any discomfort or anxiousness that may have arisen from the interviews for the participants was eliminated. However, since it was difficult to record what the participants said exactly in the method of taking notes (Patton, 1990), only the answers given to the questions were noted, and no notes were made about conversations that were irrelevant to the subject. However, no corrections or changes were made in the statements of the interviewees, and the statements used by the participants were subjected to analysis.

The data collection tools used for quantitative research were created through the literature review and pioneering findings obtained from in-depth interviews with 65 participants.

A questionnaire form was created in order to understand whether women add value to teaching, which is generally perceived as a female profession. The form was created as a result of the literature review and qualitative research findings to reveal the questions relevancy was revised by taking the opinions and suggestions of the experts on the subject. The questionnaire explores whether female teachers have difficulties in terms of work-life harmony within the framework of improving their working life, the factors that are challenging for female teachers who want to become administrators or are currently administrators. The first 11 questions in the data collection tool consisting of 31 questions were created in order to determine the profiles of the teachers participating in the research and the qualifications of the schools they work at. The remaining 20 questions were prepared to measure the factors that affect the participants choice of teaching profession, challenging factors about their work and their perceptions about being an administrator, the difficulties administrator participants face because they are an administrator, their views within the framework of work-life balance and job satisfaction. Within the scope of quantitative research, the face-to-face questionnaire technique was used in the data collection process.

#### **2.4. Limitations and Assumptions**

The study focused directly on the working life of female teachers. In this sense, the status of contracted teachers is not the focus of the study. In addition, due to the fact that quantitative research was conducted throughout Turkey quotas for the urban-rural and cost expenses were placed. This research

was carried out between January 6th -24th , 2020 with working female teachers and administrators at basic education and secondary education institutions in TurkStat NUTS Region 1 from Turkey, representing 12 regions selected from 12 provinces in the city (center) and including face-to-face questionnaires.

## **2.5. Data Analysis**

The process of analyzing qualitative data was carried out in an inductive structure. With the creation of codes and themes from the interview transcripts, a process from specific to broad generalizations was followed. In this sense, at the beginning of the analysis, the data was encoded and subdivided, but ultimately a larger, consolidated and holistic structure created. For this, thematic analysis was chosen as the data analysis format. In thematic analysis, analytical techniques are used to search for themes and patterns in the data. For this purpose, analytical coding is done first, then the focus is turned to classification and theming (Glesne, 2014; Rubin and Rubin, 1995). Accordingly, as a result of the literature review, the codes related to the research subject were defined and classified. Finally, a thematic framework was put forward by placing encodings containing similar theoretical and descriptive views within the same data classifications.

The data obtained as a result of the application of the questionnaires prepared within the framework of quantitative research were entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program and analyzed for the purposes of the research. Frequency and percentage calculations were used to analyze the personal characteristics of the female teachers who participated in the questionnaire, challenging factors related to work, problems in terms of work-life balance, willingness to be administrators, and the opinions of women administrators regarding their difficulties. To understand whether there is a meaningful relationship between independent variables such as participants' subject, age, working time, number of children, age of youngest child, education level and working status and the answers provided by the participants Chi-Square Independence Test, Independent Samples t-Test and One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to resolve and interpret the data. In this context, whether there is a significant difference between the independent variables discussed in terms of the opinions of the female teachers participating in the questionnaire regarding the various subjects are the focus of the research, the independent variables were analyzed with the Independent Samples t-Test and One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

In cases where there is a statistically significant difference as a result of One-Way Variance Analysis, the Scheffe Test was performed to determine which level or levels this difference originated from. In addition, a five-point Likert-type scale was used to determine the level of participation of the participants in 12 expressions used in the 20th question. Normality assumption is examined under the assumption of continuity and sum for five-point Likert type scales. In this context, the kurtosis and skewness coefficients were examined and found to be between -1.5 and +1.5 (Tabachnick ve Fidell, 2013). In the statistical analysis used in the research, the significance level was taken as 0.05.



**WORKING LIFE OF  
FEMALE TEACHERS**  
Findings and Suggestions

# 3

## FINDINGS





In this section, the findings obtained from qualitative and quantitative research are handled in a holistic perspective according to the themes determined. Firstly, information was given about the participant profile within the scope of both quantitative and qualitative research; afterwards, findings regarding the view of teaching profession, challenging factors about work, problems in terms of work-life balance, opinion on administratorship and job satisfaction were analyzed. In addition, qualitative and quantitative research findings were also used in developing policy suggestions to improve the situation of female teachers in working life.

### 3.1. Profile of Participants

In this section, information is given about the profile of participants' regarding the quantitative and qualitative stages of the field work carried out by the mixed method.

#### 3.1.1. Quantitative Research

As part of the quantitative research, a total of 2,717 participants were surveyed in 12 provinces. The research was carried out in the provinces of Ankara, Balıkesir, Bursa, Erzurum, İstanbul, İzmir, Kayseri, Malatya, Mersin, Samsun, Şanlıurfa and Trabzon. 90.6 percent of the women participating in the survey in these provinces are teachers, 7.2 percent are assistant principals and 2.2 percent are principals.

Table 1. Distribution of female teachers participating in the research according to their provinces and status

Province	Status at Work			Total
	Teacher	Assistant Principal	Principal	
Ankara	261	8	4	273
Balıkesir	121	12	2	135
Bursa	249	13	2	264
Erzurum	110	4	1	115
Mersin	319	11	1	331
İstanbul	403	18	11	432
İzmir	204	81	25	310
Kayseri	120	9	6	135
Malatya	107	4	0	111
Samsun	151	22	6	179
Trabzon	81	5	0	86
Şanlıurfa	336	9	1	346
Total	2462	196	59	2717

In the study, the demographic variables were selected to reveal the participant profile consisting of age, marital status, having a child and the youngest child's age, education level and subject, total working time, last working time at workplace, type of school and administrative experience. In addition, the genders of the principals and assistant principals in the schools where the participants worked were also investigated. When the distribution of participants by age groups is examined, 42.7 percent of the teachers participating in the research are in the 31-40 age group; 29.2 percent of them are in the 41-50 age group, 21.9 percent are under the age of 30 and 6.3 percent are over the age of 50.

According to November 2018 MEB data; the rate of female teachers under 30 is 25.2 percent; the rate of those in the 31-40 age group is 43.5 percent; the rate of those between the ages of 41-50 is 24.4 percent, and the rate of female teachers aged 51 and over is 7 percent. When comparing the MoNE data with the quantitative research data, it can be said that the sample of the population has a similar distribution in term of age groups.

Marital status and having children are among the important factors that determine women's participation in the labor force. When women get married, they have to divide their time between the labor market, housework and childcare responsibilities in the most appropriate way (Becker, 1965). In this regard, in order to better analyze the family responsibilities of the participants, marital status, having children and the age of the youngest child are important for the participants who have a child. 78.4 percent of the participants are married, 16.7 percent are single, and 4.9 percent are divorced. It seems that having children increases the time women spend on household chores similar to marriage.

Table 2. Demographic characteristics of teachers I (age, marital status, having a child and the age of the youngest child)

<i>Age Groups</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Between 22-30</i>	592	21,9
<i>Between 31-40</i>	1154	42,7
<i>Between 41-50</i>	789	29,2
<i>Age 51 and older</i>	170	6,3
<i>Total</i>	2705	100,0
<i>Marital Status</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Single</i>	452	16,7
<i>Married</i>	2124	78,4
<i>Divorced</i>	132	4,9
<i>Total</i>	2708	100,0
<i>Having a Child</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>No children</i>	683	25,4
<i>1 child</i>	772	28,7
<i>2 children</i>	1013	37,6
<i>3 children</i>	206	7,7
<i>4 and more children</i>	18	0,7
<i>Total</i>	2692	100,0

<i>The age of the youngest child of female teachers with children</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>1 year old and younger</i>	92	4,6
<i>1-3 year olds</i>	475	23,9
<i>4-5 year olds</i>	312	15,7
<i>6-13 year olds</i>	632	31,8
<i>14-17 year olds</i>	225	11,3
<i>18 years of age and older</i>	252	12,7
<i>Total</i>	1988	100,0

Within the scope of the research, 74.6 percent of the participants have children; 25.4 percent do not have children. The rate of those who have one child among the participants is 28.7 percent; the rate of participants with two children is 37.6 percent, and the rate of those with three or more children is 8.4.

Based off of the family structure of the participants, similar to the general trend in Turkey, it is possible to say that they are more members of the household with two children. Since the most critical period for child development is between the ages of 0-6, (Ministry of Labour and Social Security and UNICEF,2013) in this period the burden on the mother increases in terms of childcare responsibilities. Among the participants who have children, the rate of the youngest children in the 0-3 age group is 28.5 percent, the rate of participants in the 4-5 age group is 15.7 percent, the rate of participants in the 6-13 age group is 31.8 percent, the rate of participants in the 14-17 age group is 11.3 percent, and the rate of participants with children aged 18 or older is 12.7 percent.

When the education levels of female teachers participating in the research are analyzed, it is seen that only 10.4 percent of the participants have a postgraduate degree. However, 1.1 percent of the participants are associate degree graduates. On the other hand, 8.7 percent of the participants work as preschool / kindergarten teachers, 25.8 percent as classroom teachers, and 65.6 percent as subject teachers.



From the data in Table 3, 17.9 percent of the participants were 6 years or less in terms of total seniority, between 6-10 years is 21.9 percent, between 11-15 years is 19.6 percent. It is seen that between 16-20 years it is 17.4 percent and 23.2 percent of participants have 21 or more years of work experience. In this regard, it is possible to say that six out of ten participants have ten years of seniority or more. However, in terms of working at the same school, 65.9 percent of the participants have worked for 5 years or less, 23.3 percent between 6 to 10 years, and 10.8 percent of them for more than 10 years.

Table 3. Demographic characteristics of teachers II (Level of education, seniority, subject, type of school, administrative experience)

<i>Level of education</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Associate Degree</i>	31	1,1
<i>Bachelor's Degree</i>	2403	88,4
<i>Postgraduate Degree</i>	273	10,0
<i>Doctorate Degree</i>	10	0,4
<i>Total</i>	2717	100,0
<i>Branch</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Preschool / Kindergarten Teacher</i>	234	8,7
<i>Classroom Teacher</i>	697	25,8
<i>Subject Teacher</i>	1774	65,6
<i>Total</i>	2705	100,0
<i>Total working time</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>5 years and under</i>	485	17,9
<i>Between 6-10 years</i>	592	21,9
<i>Between 11-15 years</i>	530	19,6
<i>Between 16-20 years</i>	469	17,4
<i>21 years and more</i>	626	23,2
<i>Total</i>	2702	100,0
<i>Working time in current workplace</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>5 years and under</i>	1771	65,9
<i>Between 6-10 years</i>	626	23,3
<i>Between 11-15 years</i>	164	6,1
<i>16 years and more</i>	127	4,7
<i>Total</i>	2688	100,0
<i>Type of School</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Preschool</i>	152	5,7
<i>Elementary</i>	862	32,2
<i>Middle school</i>	740	27,6
<i>İmam hatip middle school</i>	274	10,2
<i>Anatolian high school</i>	215	8,0
<i>Vocational and technical anatolian high school</i>	259	9,7
<i>Anatolian imam hatip high school</i>	177	6,6
<i>Total</i>	2679	100,0
<i>Administrative Experience</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Without</i>	2122	86,2
<i>With</i>	340	13,8
<i>Total</i>	2462	100,0

While 13.8 percent of participants have administrative experience currently or in the past; 86.2 percent do not have experience. In this sense, the fact that 86 of every hundred participants do not have administrative experience, reflects the general tendency in Turkey and shows that a rather limited number of female teachers taking place in the study are in administrative positions. Considering the structure of the administrative positions in terms of gender in the schools where the participants work, it is seen that 82.9 percent of the principals in the schools are male, and 17.1 percent are female. However, 9.3 percent of the participants stated that all of the assistant principals in their schools were women and 40 percent stated that they were all men. One out of two participants stated that there was at least one female and at least one male assistant principal in their school. When the aforementioned is evaluated along with the administrative experiences of the participants, it appears that the rate of women in the administration level in educational institutions is quite low.

Table 4. The gender of administrators at the school

<i>Gender of Principal</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Female</i>	454	17,1
<i>Male</i>	2195	82,9
<i>Total</i>	2649	100,0
<i>Gender of Assistant Principal/s</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>All female</i>	249	9,3
<i>All male</i>	1073	40,0
<i>A least one female / male</i>	1360	50,7
<i>Total</i>	2682	100,0

### 3.1.2. Qualitative Research

Within the scope of qualitative research, 65 in-depth interviews were conducted in 5 provinces. The provinces where the research was carried out are Ankara, Diyarbakır, İstanbul, İzmir and Trabzon. Within the scope of the research, 36 teachers, 16 assistant principals, and 13 principals were interviewed. Considering the distribution of female teachers participating in qualitative research by age groups, 6.2 percent of the participants are under the age of 30, 32.3 percent of them are in the 31-40 age group, 52.3 percent are in the 41-50 age group, and 9.2 percent are 51 years old and older.

Table 5. Profile of Participants

<i>Part. No number</i>	<i>Province</i>	<i>School Type</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Total working time (year)</i>	<i>Marital status</i>	<i>Number of children</i>	<i>Level of education</i>	<i>Status</i>
1	Ankara	Special education	47	23	Single	1	Bachelor's Degree	Principal
2	Ankara	Special education	29	3	Married	0	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
3	Ankara	Special education	41	20	Single	0	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
4	Ankara	Special education	39	15	Married	2	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
5	Ankara	Anatolian high school	62	38	Single	1	Bachelor's Degree	Assistant Principal
6	Ankara	Anatolian high school	42	22	Married	1	Postgraduate Bachelor's Degree	Assistant Principal
7	Ankara	Anatolian high school	53	30	Married	1	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
8	Ankara	Vocational high school	46	23	Married	1	Bachelor's Degree	Principal
9	Ankara	Vocational high school	50	32	Married	1	Bachelor's Degree	Assistant Principal
10	Ankara	Vocational high school	41	21	Married	1	Postgraduate Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
11	Ankara	Vocational high school	36	15	Married	2	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
12	Ankara	Vocational high school	50	27	Married	2	Postgraduate Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
13	Diyarbakır	Middle school	38	14	Married	1	Bachelor's Degree	Assistant Principal
14	Diyarbakır	Middle school	45	20	Married	3	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
15	Diyarbakır	Middle school	39	19	Married	2	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
16	Diyarbakır	Middle school	38	16	Married	1	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
17	Ankara	Anatolian high school	40	20	Married	2	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
18	Ankara	Anatolian high school	37	15	Married	1	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
19	Ankara	Anatolian high school	32	8	Married	1	Postgraduate Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
20	Ankara	Anatolian high school	54	27	Married	2	Postgraduate Bachelor's Degree	Principal
21	Ankara	Elementary	45	20	Married	3	Postgraduate Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
22	Ankara	Elementary	42	17	Single	1	Postgraduate Bachelor's Degree	Assistant Principal
23	Ankara	Elementary	29	7	Single	0	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
24	Ankara	Elementary	37	15	Married	2	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
25	Ankara	Anatolian high school	42	23	Married	2	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
26	Ankara	Anatolian high school	47	24	Married	2	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
27	Ankara	Girls imam hatip high school	47	14	Married	1	Doktora	Teacher
28	Ankara	Girls imam hatip high school	38	10	Married	2	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
29	Ankara	Girls imam hatip high school	44	18	Single	0	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
30	Ankara	Girls imam hatip high school	47	20	Married	3	Bachelor's Degree	Principal
31	Ankara	Girls imam hatip high school	44	8	Married	3	Bachelor's Degree	Assistant Principal
32	Trabzon	Girls imam hatip high school	52	25	Married	2	Postgraduate Bachelor's Degree	Principal
33	Trabzon	Girls imam hatip high school	45	25	Married	2	Postgraduate Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
34	Trabzon	Girls imam hatip high school	36	13	Married	3	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
35	Trabzon	Girls imam hatip high school	42	21	Married	2	Bachelor's Degree	Assistant Principal
36	İzmir	Middle school	39	19	Divorced	1	Bachelor's Degree	Principal
37	İzmir	Middle school	36	14	Married	1	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
38	İzmir	Middle school	37	14	Married	2	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
39	İzmir	Middle school	50	29	Married	2	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher

40	İzmir	Anaokulu	45	23	Married	2	Bachelor's Degree	Principal
41	İzmir	Anaokulu	31	9	Married	1	Bachelor's Degree	Assistant Principal
43	İzmir	Anaokulu	42	20	Married	3	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
44	İzmir	Middle school	50	30	Divorced	2	Bachelor's Degree	Principal
45	Ankara	Vocational high school	33	8	Married	2	Bachelor's Degree	Assistant Principal
46	Ankara	Vocational high school	36	12	Married	1	Postgraduate Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
47	Ankara	Vocational high school	25	1.5	Married	0	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
48	İstanbul	All girls' high school	42	20	Married	2	Postgraduate Bachelor's Degree	Principal
49	İstanbul	All girls' high school	48	18	Married	2	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
50	İstanbul	All girls' high school	50	24	Married	2	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
51	İstanbul	Middle school	48	22	Boşanmış	1	Bachelor's Degree	Principal
52	İstanbul	Middle school	49	20	Married	3	Bachelor's Degree	Assistant Principal
53	İstanbul	Middle school	46	22	Married	2	Bachelor's Degree	Principal
54	İstanbul	Middle school	47	24	Married	2	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
55	İstanbul	Middle school	42	19	Married	1	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
56	İstanbul	İmam hatip middle school	31	7	Single	0	Bachelor's Degree	Assistant Principal
57	İstanbul	All girls' high school	45	20	Married	3	Bachelor's Degree	Assistant Principal
58	İstanbul	İmam hatip middle school	30	7	Married	1	Postgraduate Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
59	İstanbul	VTAH School	45	20	Married	2	Postgraduate Bachelor's Degree	Principal
60	İstanbul	VTAH School	36	13	Married	1	Bachelor's Degree	Assistant Principal
61	İstanbul	VTAH School	35	10	Married	3	Postgraduate Bachelor's Degree	Assistant Principal
62	İstanbul	VTAH School	51	30	Married	1	Bachelor's Degree	Principal
63	İstanbul	Elementary	45	26	Married	2	Postgraduate Bachelor's Degree	Principal
64	İstanbul	VTAH School	34	8	Married	1	Postgraduate Bachelor's Degree	Assistant Principal
65	İstanbul	VTAH School	53	21	Married	2	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher
66	İstanbul	VTAH School	45	12	Married	3	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher

Note: Participant number 42 wasn't included.

While 73.8 percent of the participants are hold an undergraduate degree, 26.1 percent hold a postgraduate degree. 10.8 percent of the participants are kindergarten teachers, 6.2 percent are class teachers, and 83 percent are subject teachers. Regarding marital status and having children, it is possible to say that a significant number of the participants are married and have children. As can be seen from Table 5, 84.6 percent of the participants are married, 10.8 percent are single, and 4.6 percent are divorced. Nine out of ten participants have children. The rate of the participants with one child is 39 percent, the rate of the participants with 2 children is 44.1 percent, and the rate of the participants with three children is 16.9 percent.





As can be seen from the data in Table 5, only two of the participants have work experience of 5 years or less. However, when it comes to total seniority time, 15.6 percent of participants have 6-10 years, 18.8 have 11-15 years, 26.6 percent have 16-20 years, and 37.5 percent have 21 years or more work experience. In this regard, it is seen that eight out of ten participants have ten years of seniority or more. In terms of years worked at the school, 81.5 percent of the participants worked for 5 years or less, 15.4 percent have worked for 6-10 years, and 3.1 percent have worked for 16-20 years.

Considering the administrative experience of the participants, research shows that more than half (52.3 percent) are currently working in the school they are currently administrating or have previously administered. The reason the rate is high and contrasts with quantitative research results is that the target audience paid special attention participants in the administration role. In fact, when we look at the distribution of principals in the schools where the participants work, it is seen that the rate of female principals is 64.6 percent and is higher than the rate of male principals (35.4 percent), differing from the general trend.

Table 6. Features of the schools

<i>Province</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Ankara</i>	30	46,2
<i>İstanbul</i>	19	29,2
<i>İzmir</i>	8	12,3
<i>Diyarbakır</i>	4	6,2
<i>Trabzon</i>	4	6,2
<i>Total</i>	65	100,0
<i>School Type</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Middle school</i>	14	21,5
<i>Anatolian high school</i>	9	13,8
<i>Girls imam hatip high school</i>	9	13,8
<i>Vocational high school</i>	8	12,3
<i>Vocational and technical anatolian high school</i>	6	9,2
<i>Elementary</i>	5	7,7
<i>All girls' high school</i>	4	6,2
<i>Special education</i>	4	6,2
<i>Kindergarten</i>	3	4,6
<i>İmam Hatip Middle schoolu</i>	3	4,6
<i>Total</i>	65	100,0
<i>The school's socio-economic status</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Upper-middle</i>	19	29,2
<i>Lower-middle</i>	18	27,7
<i>Middle</i>	10	15,4
<i>High</i>	10	15,4
<i>Low</i>	8	12,3
<i>Total</i>	65	100,0
<i>Gender of the school principal</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Female</i>	42	64,6
<i>Male</i>	23	35,4
<i>Total</i>	65	100,0

This research was intentionally included different types of schools in order to enrich the findings obtained from the study. In this respect, as can be seen in the data in Table 6, by paying attention to the condition that school administrators are female- kindergarten, primary, and secondary education and Anatolian high school, imam hatip middle school, imam hatip high school, vocational high school, vocational technical and Anatolian high school and different types of education such as special education have been included in the research area. Special attention has been given to include female teachers and administrators working in schools with different socio-economic levels with the assumption that they may have an impact on the challenging factors related to work. Our research shows that 29.2 percent of participants work at the upper-middle socio-economic level, 27.7 percent at lower-medium socio-economic level, 15.4 percent at intermediate socio-economic level, 15,4 at high socio-economic level, and 12.3% at low socio-economic level.

### **3.2. Perspectives Towards Teaching as a Profession**

Findings obtained from quantitative and qualitative research were discussed within the framework of the view of the participants about the teaching profession, the preference of the profession, the opinion about the perception of the society that teaching is a women's profession, the "added value" to the profession by being a woman, and their views on organizational citizenship behavior.

#### **3.2.1. Profession Preference**

In this study profession preference is defined as the profession of choice by the participants, depending upon which profession the individual thinks they will excel in. (Özpancar, Aydın and Akansel, 2008). Profession preference varies depending individual ability and personality traits. In addition to these factors, the economic return of the profession, social respectability, family guidance, job guarantee, working conditions, career expectations also input to profession preference (Bilgiseven, 1992; Koç, 1994; Genç, Kaya and Genç, 2007; Dinç, 2008; Erol, Yergin and Mercan, 2012).

Within the context of qualitative research, four factors came to the forefront in the preference of the teaching profession. In this sense, what must be emphasized first is individual interest in the profession. Within the scope of qualitative research, approximately half of the 65 participants (31 participants) stated that they chose the teaching profession due to their personal characteristics individual interest in the profession. Studies show that personal factors were effective in the selection of the teaching profession (Özbek, 2007). Similarly, the findings from another study reveal that about half of the pre-service teachers chose the teaching profession because it was their ideal profession (Özsoy et al., 2010). Some participants stated that they wanted to be a teacher from a very young age and placed a sacred meaning to the teaching profession:

*It was my childhood dream. I would pretend be a teacher when playing. (26, Teacher)*

*I chose teaching because I see it as a very sacred profession. (6, Assistant Principal.)*

The second factor that is effective in terms of professional preference of the participants is the family influence. 26 participants stated family influence effected their choice to become a teacher. 9 participants stated that the only factor effective in choosing the profession was family influence. The main reason why families direct their daughters to teaching, as stated by participants, is the thought that the working conditions of teaching are more suitable when compared to other professions in terms of women carrying out both their home and family responsibilities.

*Well, first of all it was not my dream job. There was a bit of family influence. It was said that teaching was a suitable job for women. Teaching was said to be a comfortable environment for work. So, I turned to becoming a high school teacher. My university preferences were oriented according to this. With my family, we thought of the job guarantee because I would be a civil servant. When you look at the factors, there was not that much awareness in the past, when you made your university choices. My family said it's a profession suited for women, so I did not research or turn to another job. (60, Assistant Principal)*

*I never wanted to teach. I became a teacher at the insistence of my mother. I always wanted to be a businesswoman in the private sector. (45, Assistant Principal)*

Another factor which effects teaching profession preference is working conditions. 19 participants stated that working conditions are determinant in choosing a profession. Working conditions have been considered in a holistic perspective. Part-time work due to working hours with longer vacation time and job guarantee effect this factor. In addition, the participants emphasized that working conditions in general were more comfortable for women. At this point, it was seen that especially the participants who had previous work experience in different fields made comparisons. Some participants describe their experiences as follows:

*I worked for the private sector for many years and raised my kids in the private sector. I worked for years without a day off. I worked until the last day of my pregnancy. I started working again when my baby was only 20 days old. Of course, the private sector has many difficulties and that impacted my decision to work in National Education (education sector). (17, Teacher)*

*The reason I chose this profession is definitely the work hours and workdays. I want to have some time for myself. You know when you're married you want to spend time with your family. The fact that we can choose the working hours according to ourselves was definitely the most important factor for me to choose this profession. For me time is also very important. For example, I also worked in the private sector. I worked in a textile*

*factory as well. When I look at the working conditions there, the working hours are too much, you do not get paid enough. Your insurance does not get paid. You don't have any days off, in this case would you like to be in a place like this or would you rather choose a life where you work at a government institution under certain hours, your salary is certain and paid regularly, of course I would choose this life. When I'm working, I can't dedicate my whole day or my identity to an institution or company. (28, Teacher)*

The last factor that comes to the forefront when choosing the teaching profession is the existence of a teacher which serves as a role model for individuals. 15 participants said that they were influenced by their previous teachers in one way or another, and saw them as role models:

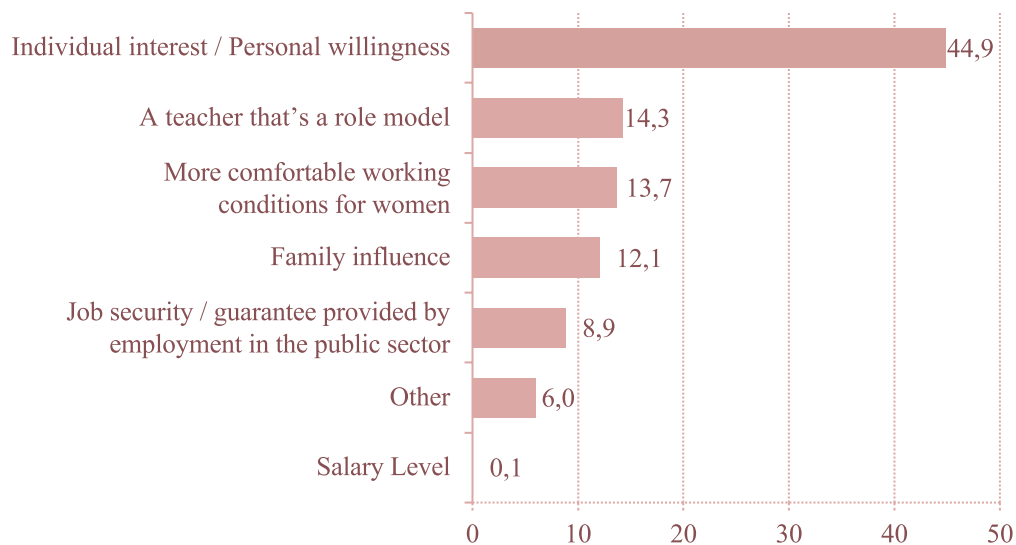
*My elementary school teacher... had a big influence on my life. (1, Principal)*

*My favorite people in life were my teachers. (45, Teacher)*

Other factors which affect profession preference brought up by a small number of participants include the dignity of the profession, liking the students, test scores and the ease of being appointed, spousal influence, and salary level.

In line with the findings obtained from qualitative research, the participants preference of the teaching profession was investigated within the scope of quantitative research. 44.9 percent of participants stated that individual interest was the main driving force behind choice to become teachers. The second factor behind this decision was the existence of a role model teacher (14.3 percent). The third factor was comfortable working conditions for women (13.7 percent), and the fourth factor was family influence (12.1 percent). In this context, it is possible to say that the results obtained in quantitative research are similar to the qualitative research findings.

Figure 1. The most important factor in choosing the teaching profession



The rate of participants who stated that the job security provided by the public sector is effective while choosing the teaching profession is 8.9 percent, and the rate of respondents who stated that salary level is effective constitutes only 0.1 percent. This result is compatible with qualitative research findings. The importance attributed to the level of economic return, which is one of the most prominent factors in the choice of profession, differs in terms of the approach of female teachers to the profession. In this regard, it can be said that the quality of the profession, which is characterized by individual interest and idealism, is more prominent for female teachers.

### 3.2.2. Social Perception that Teaching is the Most Suitable Job for Women

In the study, the participants were asked about their thoughts on the social perception that “teaching is a female profession.” Within the scope of qualitative research, the vast majority of the participants indicated that teaching is not only the profession of a female; in other words, they stated that men can be very successful in the profession as well. In line with the participants’ views on the subject, the reasons behind the social perception that teaching is the most suitable profession for females can be listed as follows:

- Working conditions enable women to fulfill their home-family responsibilities more easily,
- The fact that women have maternal instincts, are more compassionate, emotional, and patient and these advantages in question are very important especially in terms of preschool and classroom teaching,
- Female teacher candidates tend to be more successful in profession exams
- Less preference of the profession by male candidates due to the view that salary levels are inadequate.



Participants who think that the social perception that the most suitable profession for women is teaching because the working conditions provide women with time to fulfill their home-family responsibilities more comfortably state their opinions as follows:

*I don't think it's a women's profession. But teaching is socially considered suitable for women. As the working conditions are suitable in terms of mother and spouse roles and home responsibilities, parents think that the teaching profession is advantageous for girls. Men and their families agree that teaching is a suitable career for their brides. For this reason, it is a preferred profession for women. (5, Assistant Principal)*

*When I was first admitted to my department, I was told: For a lady, teaching is the best. At that point I couldn't understand them. Why I said to myself. Can't we do other professions besides teaching? I criticized this but when I started in real life, I saw the many responsibilities of a Turkish woman in our culture and society, and it was nice to see my teacher friends work half a day and have time for their home and kids. Because unfortunately when a woman starts working here, her responsibilities at home don't diminish. I mean a Turkish man expects everything a housewife would do from a working woman. That's why when I started in this profession and had household responsibilities and became a mother, I understood the reason why teaching is very appropriate for a woman in Turkish culture. (40, Principal)*

The opinions of some participants who think that the perception that teaching is a female profession comes from the motherly and compassionate approach of women are as follows:

*Working conditions are more suitable for females. Moms can spare time for both home and work. Maternal feelings are dominant in the job. There is a perception in society that "teaching is suitable for women." (24, Teacher)*

*Who would you entrust your child to? To who understands him/her better, who do you think understands them the best? A mother or a woman to whom you have attributed motherhood. Because we see it in working life, I did not experience that period as much, but many of our teacher colleagues changed a lot before and after motherhood. In fact, this also confirms the thesis of society. (31, Assistant Principal)*

Another participant who thinks that female teacher candidates are more successful in profession exams expressed their opinion as follows:

*Girls work harder and they can succeed in exams more easily. In addition, this profession is selected because the working conditions are suitable for women. (34, Teacher)*

The opinion of a participant who stated that the profession is less preferred by men due to the consideration of the salary level being insufficient is as follows:

*The salary level may not be sufficient for men because they are taking care of an entire household. Therefore, they may be leaving the space more to women. (12, Teacher)*

On the other hand, a significant portion of participants stated that male teachers should be in the profession at least as much as female teachers. Furthermore, there are also participants who think that male teachers are more productive than female teachers in some levels and subjects due to the fact that male teachers are more professional, less emotional, and more result oriented.

Opinions about the social perception that teaching is the most suitable profession for women were also questioned within the scope of quantitative research. As seen in Figure 2, the rate of participants who think that teaching is the most suitable profession for women is 64.6 percent. 12.1 percent of the participants stated that they are indecisive on this issue and 23.2 percent stated that they do not agree with this social perception.

Figure 2. Level of participation of female teachers in the view that “teaching is the most suitable profession for women” (%)

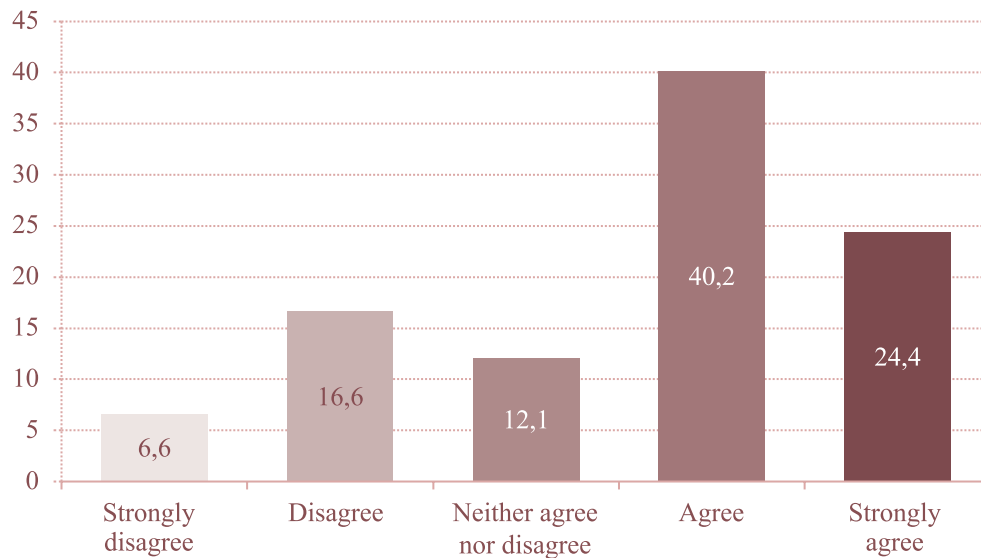


Table 7 shows that there is a significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) in terms of age, total working time (professional seniority), and age of the youngest child in terms of participation levels of female teachers regarding the view that teaching is the most suitable profession for women.

According to the results of the Scheffe Test on which group or groups this difference originates from, comparing female teachers between the ages of 22-30 and female teachers between the ages of 41-50; female teachers who have 5 years or less working time compared to female teachers who have 11 years or more working time; comparing female teachers, whose youngest child is 3 years of age or younger female teachers whose youngest child is 6-13 years old have higher participation in the view that teaching is the most suitable profession for women.



Table 7. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results according to independent variables in terms of the average participation level of female teachers to the opinion “teaching is the most suitable profession for women”

<i>Person Interviewed</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>Ort.</i>	<i>Std.S.</i>	<i>Var.M.</i>	<i>KT</i>	<i>sd</i>	<i>KO</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>Between 22-30</i>	592	3,72	1,118	B.Groups	21,043	3	7,014		
<i>Between 31-40</i>	1154	3,58	1,200	W.Groups	3877,070	2701	1,435		
<i>Between 41-50</i>	789	3,48	1,241	Total	3898,112	2704		4,887	,002*
<i>51 years and more</i>	170	3,59	1,257						
<i>Total</i>	2705	3,58	1,201						
<i>5 years and under</i>	485	3,76	1,143	B.Groups	34,361	4	8,590		
<i>6-10 years</i>	592	3,67	1,157	W.Groups	3865,550	2697	1,433		
<i>11-15 years old</i>	530	3,52	1,204	Total	3899,912	2701		5,993	,000*
<i>16-20 years old</i>	469	3,44	1,208						
<i>21 yıl years and more</i>	626	3,52	1,260						
<i>Total</i>	2702	3,58	1,202						
<i>3 years and under</i>	567	3,72	1,150	B.Groups	20,646	4	5,161		
<i>4-5 years old</i>	312	3,62	1,158	W.Groups	2847,637	1983	1,436		
<i>6-13 years old</i>	632	3,47	1,221	Total	2868,283	1987		3,594	,006*
<i>14-17 years old</i>	225	3,56	1,220						
<i>18 years and more</i>	252	3,51	1,273						
<i>Total</i>	1988	3,58	1,201						

### 3.2.3. The “Added Value” of Being a Women in the Profession

Within the scope of qualitative research, participants were asked whether being a woman “added value to the profession.” Almost all of the participants (63 participants) think that being a woman “adds value” to the profession. The added value of being a woman in the profession in line with the opinions of the participants;

- Motherliness
- Compassion
- Sensibility
- Empathy
- Awareness
- Attention to detail
- Devotion
- Dedication
- As a result, all these factors ensured better communication with students and parents.



In this regard, there are participants who emphasize that motherhood develops the feeling of empathy and its reflection on the classroom environment. These participants stated that after having a child, they were more patient with the students, and felt closer to them emotionally. Therefore, they were able to communicate better with their students. Having the skill of empathy, which can be defined as the capacity to understand what someone else is feeling (Hoffman, 1990), enables teachers to understand or feel their students' feelings and thoughts. The fact that teachers, especially class teachers, who are seen as the most important actors of basic education, can empathize with students may result in less problems in the education process (Demir, 2012). So much so that when students realize that teachers try to understand what they feel, they feel closer to their teachers, trust them, and are even impacted by them (Kuzgun, 2000). This situation, on the one hand, increases the interaction between the teacher and the student and on the other hand, reduces teacher-student conflict. Some participants stated that motherhood developed empathy and reflected on the class as follows:

*Whatever I expected and wanted for my own children, I try to give my own students that. To be honest, it might be more, it might be less I am not naming it, but I do try to do the same for whatever I wanted for my own children. (21, Teacher)*

*After becoming a mother, I could see my students more through the eyes of a child. Otherwise, in my head there were only things I wanted to give, and I was trying to give them. But this provided a way for me to understand why they became angry when they didn't understand. (41, Assistant Principal)*

As stated above, most of the participants stated that being a woman and mother facilitates their communication with students and parents. Some of the participant's statements on this matter are as follows:

*You have to know how to empathize. As soon as you can do that, you start to think about why that kid is bad in the classroom. Why they aren't paying attention to class, call them to your room and listen to them. "You're being disrespectful" but I think there's another reason lying under this. I don't take this disrespect personally but let's see what that child is going to say, what's going to happen to that child. (20, Principal)*

*In professional life, motherhood and profession is equivalent, if you are a teacher and mother and woman you develop the ability to touch the hearts more than the minds of children. (51, Principal)*

*I was always patient before I had a child, but it was a little less. After I had my child, my patience with children increased and I approached them emotionally. It's a process that is mutually enriching. (19, Teacher)*

*Yes, being a woman has an advantage for children. We can establish more intimate and comfortable relationships with children... For example, when I started teaching my students in the first grade, they did not know how to go to the toilet. Girl or boy, it didn't matter, I went to the bathroom with them and taught them how to sit and stand. At first, they always peed their pants, we even did that. (21, Teacher)*

*I am not saying that women are more altruistic and that men are not, but I think women give themselves and time a little bit more. Maybe I think women outweigh in terms of tolerance and patience.*

*The students who stay at the hostel sometimes come and say, teacher we see you as our mother and they hug me. They say if it wasn't for you, we wouldn't be able to get used to this hostel. When I put the detergent in the washing machine, I would've said something, and they would thank me and say if it wasn't for you I wouldn't be able to get used to it here, I'm far away from my mom but I wouldn't get used to it here. (28, Teacher)*

*We're raising people, not robots, they have emotions. Since our maternal feelings are at the forefront for women, we can communicate more easily with the students. This is our advantage. When we contact the parents it's easier for us to communicate with them than men and this leads to a disadvantage for them (men). (36, Principal)*

According to the participants, female teachers can identify students who need support more easily due to their characteristics defined as “added value” and try to help them. On the other hand, the participants stated that these features negatively affect “professionalism” in business life, and also caused female teachers and administrators to expand their business limits. In this regard, female administrators and teachers are more entitled to the school and students; they see their students like their own children and embrace the school like their own house. On the other hand, according to some participants, this situation can also wear out female teachers and administrators.

Another point emphasized by the participants in terms of the added value of being a woman is the fact that female teachers and administrators are more democratic and more sensitive to different ideas. A teacher expresses their thoughts as follows:

*As a woman employee, I see the advantage of having a female administrator, and her being aware of the potential problems we could be facing actually makes our job easier. Women can often be more polite. Being sensitive, polite, and understanding is suitable in a woman's nature. At least they are open to different ideas. (33, Teacher)*

Some participants stated that women pay more attention to detail, are more successful than men in terms of struggling with difficult conditions and overcoming many responsibilities at the same time, and emphasized that this situation is especially important for the performance of women who are school administrators. One participant's views on this issue are as follows:

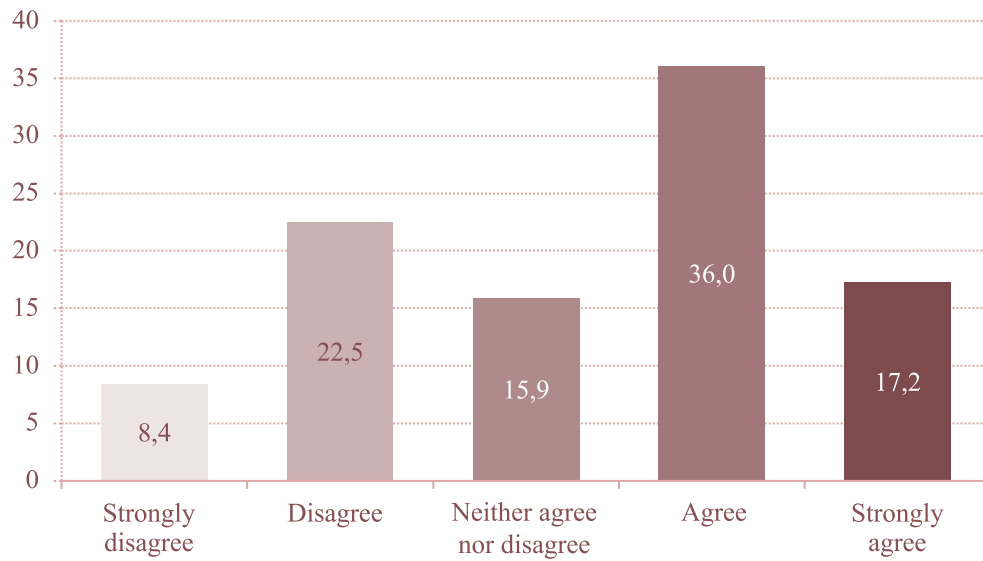
*... Well, it is like seeing complicated details, I mean it's God's gift, it's not something we especially do. My colleagues ask me "Headmistress what are you doing, when did you see that, why did you think that." etc. It's not something I particularly do. It's something God gives. If we're not like that we wouldn't be able to overcome that much work. Women actually face a lot of difficulties, and due to the fact that they face many problems their problem-solving skills developed, and it has become a reflex. If you don't see the details (you can't be successful) success is hidden in the details. It's important to notice that little touch. (62, Principal)*

In contrast to the above-mentioned advantages of being a woman and especially a mother, it was seen that some participants expressed that the emotional and compassionate approach of female teachers could turn into a disadvantage and that the authoritarian behavior of male teachers could be more functional as the ages of the students' progress and the university exam approaches.

*At one point, the children want to hit a wall, they want to be scolded. My son wanted it too. The female teachers here are soft and very compassionate, they don't really do anything about it, but male teachers, look at the situation more professionally because they think at a higher level, they are able to react harshly or just brush it off. Females think in a more detailed manner and are "let me be careful not to hurt their feelings, or make them feel sad, or affect their psychology negatively" but male teachers don't think of these things and are more result-oriented. They say "you need to have these marks, you will do it." Or they say, "Whatever you do, you will study." (30, Principal)*

As can be seen from the explanations above, the majority of participants in the qualitative research stated that being a woman and especially a mother has many advantages that both improve the school environment in teaching and administration and cause less problems and thus increase the quality of education. On the other hand, some participants stated that being a woman may turn into a disadvantage in terms of recognition of authority, especially for students who will take the university entrance exam, in which case the authority of male teachers can be much more functional.

Figure 3. The level of participation of women teachers in the opinion that “Being a woman is an advantage for the teaching profession” (%)



The idea that the “added value” of being a woman contributes to the teaching profession is also one of the issues addressed within the scope of the quantitative research. According to the results of the quantitative research, the rate of participants who think that being a woman creates an advantage in terms of teaching profession is 53.2 percent. In this sense, one out of every two participants have the opinion that being a woman is advantageous in terms of the teaching profession. The rate of participants who stated that being a woman does not have any advantage in terms of the teaching profession is 30.9 percent; the rate of participants who are indecisive on this matter is 15.9 percent.

Table 8. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results according to independent variables in terms of the average participation level of female teachers of the statement “being a woman is an advantage for the teaching profession”

Person interviewed	n	Ort.	Std.S.	Var.K.	KT	sd	KO	F	p
Preschool / Kindergarten Teacher	234	3,12	1,252	G.Arası	29,875	2	14,938		
Classroom Teacher	697	3,47	1,196	G.İçi	3971,117	2702	1,470	10,164	,001*
Subject Teacher	1774	3,26	1,213	Total	4000,992	2704			
Total	2705	3,30	1,216						
No children	683	3,21	1,216	G.Arası	14,165	3	4,722		
1 child	772	3,29	1,198	G.İçi	3979,227	2688	1,480		
2 children	1013	3,34	1,242	Total	3993,392	2691		3,190	,023*
3 and more children	224	3,48	1,164						
Total	2692	3,31	1,218						

Table 8 shows that there is a significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) in terms of participation levels of female teachers regarding the view that being a woman is an advantage for the teaching profession. According to the results of the Scheffe Test on which group or groups this difference originates from, according to kindergarten and field teachers of the classroom, those who have three or more children have higher participation levels on the view that being a woman has an advantage in terms of the teaching profession than those without children.

### **3.2.4. Organizational Citizenship Behavior**

In a focus group consisting of a large number of female teachers and administrators in the initial phase of the research, opinions were expressed that female teachers and administrators were more inclined to show organizational citizenship behavior when compared to their male counterparts. It was questioned whether the participants behaved this way as well in the qualitative research.

Organizational citizenship behavior has attracted the attention of many academicians from different disciplines since the 1980s. The concept was first used by Organ (1988). Organizational citizenship behaviors are individual, discretionary, actions by employees that are outside of their formal job description. Individuals are not rewarded in any way for these actions but strengthen the effective functioning of the organization. Organizational citizenship behaviors have been demonstrated through various studies that increase the effectiveness of organizations (Organ et al., 2006; Podsakoff et al., 1997), and therefore the concept has been subject to intensive research into the factors associated with such behavior.

In the beginning, although the individual characteristics of the employees were generally emphasized, the relationships between such behaviors and organizational characteristics were also investigated in the later period, stating that these individual behaviors occur within a certain organizational environment (Somech & Ron, 2007). Studies carried out in this context revealed that the dominance of justice in the functioning of the organization and in the relations of the organization increases the organizational citizenship behavior of employees (Organ ve Moorman, 1993). Some other studies have revealed that, besides organizational justice, the organizational commitment of employees and working with a supportive leader also facilitates the emergence of organizational citizenship behavior (Organ and Ryan, 1995).

Schools are also obliged to meet a set of ever-increasing demands. Among these demands are cultural and socioeconomic perspectives in increasing student diversity, increasing expectations about the academic achievement of students, new psychological perspectives on learning and pedagogy, and requirements of educational change (OECD, 2006). These demands link and make school success more dependent on teachers' willingness to go beyond their assigned tasks (Somech & Ron, 2007). For example, schools need teachers who are able to cope with the growing variety of students in the classroom, use new pedagogical approaches, and share this information with their colleagues. Similarly, organizational citizenship behaviors such as helping colleagues with heavy workloads,

guiding new-school teachers, and suggesting new approaches to pedagogy or learning (Belogolovsky & Somech, 2010) are vital because they provide additional resources to the school (Christ et al., 2003; Organ, 1997). Formal job descriptions can never fully cover all the necessary behaviors for organizations to successfully meet ever-changing demands. Therefore, the success of schools depends on the willingness of teachers to put in extra effort and take initiative when necessary (George & Brief, 1992).

Organizational citizenship behaviors, exemplified by behaviors such as preparing special assignments for students with low and high academic success, and helping colleagues and administrators, are one of the main factors in the success of schools today (Somech & Ron, 2007). So much so that schools often maintain their effective functioning with this kind of behavior of teachers. Change is striking in schools where teachers exhibit organizational citizenship behavior. In such schools, generalized tasks are carried out with unclear borders and tensions within the school decrease. In addition, such behaviors facilitate the work of the school administrator and increase the efficiency of the school (Dipaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2001).

According to results obtained from our research, a significant number of participants (58 participants) stated that they showed organizational citizenship behavior in various subjects related to education and training. A large part of the participants (45 participants) who showed organizational citizenship behavior have associated this behavior with being a woman or mother. According to participants who hold this view, being a woman or mother increases the tendency to show organizational citizenship behavior. However, some participants (13 participants) stated that they did not think there was any relation between being a woman or mother and organizational behavior. On the other hand, seven participants stated that they were careful not to go beyond their duty limits regarding students because they did not want to invade the personal space of the students. Therefore, it is possible to say that these participants did not take an approach that can be considered as an organizational citizenship behavior. The statements of two administrative participants on this matter are as follows:

*I never said I want a day off or to go home early. I love working and I believe that working is a very important (religious) service. And I think that neither an inspector nor a school principal can follow me while I'm working. My inspector is just God, no one else. Nobody can know what I am doing. You know the principle of benefit to humanity, that's what makes me happy. I walk through the school doors, and someone comes and says, "God bless you," it makes me very happy. This profession is a special profession, it is unlike any other profession, this profession is not a profession to make money. I am currently doing a different kind of administratorship. I also deal with my ill teachers, I also deal with students, I deal with everything in the school, and I continue teaching. Even if I knew this was going to happen, I would still do it again. (20, Principal)*

*As an administrator, when it's necessary for my students, I become a mother, friend, older sister, or an assistant principal. (45, Assistant Principal)*

According to the findings obtained from the research, organizational citizenship behavior can emerge not only in relations with students but also in the process of performing administrative work in the school. One participant expresses this situation as follows:

*I paint, if we have shortage of auxiliary staff, I do the cleaning due to financial difficulties. (51, Principal)*

It can be seen organizational citizenship behavior increases the exhaustion of teachers in the workplace. In this context, some of the participants stated that they took care of the students apart from their main duties in the classroom. This situation increased their fatigue but still they felt obliged to engage in this behavior. A classroom teacher explains their experience in the following sentences:

*There is such a tired mother when I go home that I feel very sorry for the children. But then there must be two teachers in this class. These should also be done. But these things are out of my business right now. But actually, it should be. Teaching is something else, well, teaching is very much about conscience, quality, and humanity. (21, Teacher)*

As stated above, some participants stated that being a mother and woman supports and increases organizational citizenship behaviors, while some participants stated that organizational citizenship behavior is applied by men as much as by women. One of the executive participants describes their experiences on this subject as follows:

*Education consists of school, environment, and family. So, if you don't follow that family environment, it remains in one direction. Let me give you an example. Two years ago, a student did not come to school for a long time. He was in the 12th grade, he was going to fail his classes, meaning he would not receive a diploma. We investigated what happened and found out that he was mentally depressed. We went to his house with a male teacher and the child locked himself in his room. They would put his food on the platter, and he would take it from there like he had leprosy. His beard had grown etc. It was seriously a psychological issue. My male friend went inside and asked what the student was doing. We had him take a shower, we got him shaved and took him to school. The mother explained to us that he doesn't have a father and that there is unemployment. Then the child got a job and so did his sister. We provided the employment, and in this process the child entered his exams and received his diploma. So, if we hadn't kept it this wide maybe we would've lost three people at once. The mom is going to get depressed, the sister's going to get depressed, the child already is. Or let me say it this way, the education I received required this, that's what they taught us. I mean it's not just to stare at the children's faces enter and exit class. You need to examine them and understand their mental state. (5, Assistant Principal)*

Some participants tried to behave professionally rather than expanding the borders of business life. These participants stated that they did not show organizational citizenship behavior in this respect and only did what they were told to within the framework of the education-training activity without entering the personal area too much. These participants stated that otherwise the emotional (maternal) approach is involved and they think that the duty of dealing with the personal problems of the students should be undertaken by social workers apart from the education and training service. The opinions of a participant teacher on this subject are as follows:

*I just do what I have to do. I do not enter the personal space too much. The borders should not be extended too much. Otherwise, the maternal instinct enters the job. In this case, teaching hinders it from being professional. We should not be too intertwined with the families. That's why a social worker is assigned to schools. (23, Teacher)*

In line with the findings obtained from the study, it was revealed that all school administrators show organizational citizenship behavior. It is seen that women who do not have any additional financial benefits or status benefits, moreover, and whose job limits are not clearly determined, are among the teachers who are more prone to show organizational citizenship behavior and tend to expand their job limits. In this regard, the findings of studies in Turkey address that the majority of female teachers go beyond their limits in trying to help their students and assist their administrators and help increase the quality of education. This situation is in line with similar study findings that emphasize the importance of organizational citizenship behaviors in the effective functioning of schools (Dipaola ve Tschannen-Moran, 2001; Organ vd., 2006; Podsakoff vd., 1997; Somech ve Ron, 2007).

### 3.3. Challenging Factors Regarding Work

Within the scope of our qualitative research, the opinions of participants regarding the most challenging factors related to their work were also questioned. As can be seen from Table 9, the factors that participants emphasize the most in terms of the challenging factors related to work are extracurricular workload, general workload, parental indifference or pressure, salary level, the indiscipline of students, administrative attitudes, school climate, and relations with colleagues. Nevertheless, it was stated that the average class size, teaching hour, sense of merit and burnout were challenging, although these factors were not mentioned as much as the aforementioned factors. Few participants stated they had difficulties due to decreased professional reputation, promotion conditions, working conditions, socioeconomic status of schools, physical facilities of the school, security problems especially in Eastern and South Eastern Anatolia regions and in terms of intra-gender competition (problems with other female colleagues).





Table 9. Challenging factors regarding work

<i>Challenging factors</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
<i>Extracurricular workload</i>	28
<i>Workload</i>	24
<i>Parental indifference or pressure</i>	23
<i>Salary level</i>	19
<i>Indiscipline of Students</i>	18
<i>Administrative attitude</i>	15
<i>School climate and relations with colleagues</i>	13
<i>Average class size</i>	9
<i>Teaching hour</i>	4
<i>Sense of burnout</i>	4
<i>Absence of merit</i>	4
<i>Socio-economic status</i>	2
<i>Professional reputation (respectability)</i>	2
<i>Promotion conditions</i>	2
<i>Working conditions</i>	2
<i>Security (Eastern and South Eastern Anatolia Regions)</i>	2
<i>Physical facilities of the school</i>	2
<i>Intra-gender competition</i>	1

According to findings obtained from the research, it is seen that the most challenging factors about work are the workload and extracurricular workload. While creating a significant part of the workload of teachers, the lesson load that can be defined as the time spent by teachers in the classroom with the students; other tasks such as lesson preparation, homework correction, exam preparation, evaluation of exam results, counseling and guidance also take a significant part of teachers' time. However, various paperwork, entries to the data processing system, and workload related to projects carried out regularly in project schools were defined as extracurricular workload and it was stated that these jobs created a great time cost. Some participants' opinions about the challenging aspect of the extracurricular workload are as follows:

*If we think that some things about paperwork are evaluated and helpful, it's not a burden. But there are some things that I'm sure no one even looks at, it's a chore really. We don't want to do that job because we receive nothing in return. For example, we wrote for years, but not even one of them opened it up and read it. We're a hundred percent sure about this. If it helps, we would prepare the documents because it's a burden on us, but I mean then there wouldn't be arbitrary stuff. It looks like a burden to some teachers but us administrators we need it. For example, we used to use the e-school application and write the same things manually. It was unnecessary and for example we would stand against it. (27, Teacher)*

*The worst part about our job is that we take work home [laughs]. Aside from other civil servants we take work home. We grade exams at home. You know history and literature exams are difficult to grade. Other quantitate classes are easy to grade but history and literature are hard. I grade at home. Exam papers are important to me. My husband and son at home don't touch the exams, they're private. We have to form a program because we take work home. (7, Teacher)*

One of the duties of teachers is to communicate with parents and respond to their requests to receive information about their children (Eroğlu & Demiray, 2008). According to the participants, especially oppressive and uninvolved parents negatively affect the relations between teachers and parents. In this sense, the fact that the family is uninvolved with the child or doesn't set limits or sets very strict rules or has unrealistic high expectations are the main issues that challenge the participants. One participant stated their opinion by saying:

*"The parent profile determines the student" (44, Assistant Principal).*

Another issue that participants struggle with is lack of discipline on part of the students. Undesirable behavior at the root of the discipline problem leads to a significant disruption of the education and training process (Başar, 1994). These behaviors also disrupt school order. Similarly, it was stated by the participants that student profile and discipline problems significantly affect both the classroom environment and school order. Some participants stated that disciplinary problems can be much more challenging as a result of the profile of students studying in vocational high schools as follows:

*For the first day, for example, I entered the classroom, there is no such thing as a class environment... One child was on top of the desk and was sitting with his feet on top of it... That was the first picture I encountered. Another child had a bağlama (a stringed Turkish instrument) in his hand and was trying to change the strings while two others were shouting next to him... I don't get tired of teaching, but the class environment ruins me. (17, Teacher)*

*When the student has a goal, has qualifications this case motivates the teacher. We don't have that much here. This is because there are children attending the school from disadvantaged places. This is one of the challenging factors for me. (10, Teacher)*

A significant part of the participants emphasized that insufficient salary level is one of the challenging factors they face. Inadequate salary levels affect job satisfaction, as discussed further in the study. Salary levels are also important for teachers to work more efficiently. In this regard, after meeting basic consumption needs such as rent, child care costs, electricity, water, and natural gas with the salary received, it is difficult for teachers who worry about how they can make ends meet.

*The salary level is not satisfactory. (22, Assistant Principal)*

*The inadequacy of the salary level. The status of teachers became insignificant... Should the teachers think about the classes or the natural gas bills? (23, Teacher)*

Another factor that is considered challenging about the work for the participants is school climate and relations with colleagues. The concept of school climate, which is used to define the general atmosphere of the school, limits behavior amongst teachers, students, and other stakeholders of the school, and creates rules and values that support social, emotional, and physical security (Thapa et al., 2013). In order to have a positive school climate it is very important for teachers to support each other and have strong communication. A healthy school climate is also an important source of motivation (Flint, 2000). In this sense, if both the school climate and relations with colleagues are positive, participants were found to have a much higher level of job satisfaction.

*I come from a far place, there's a school I can work about 10-15 minutes away from my house but when I left there and started working here, I found peace and didn't want to leave this place... It takes an hour to come here but it doesn't bother me. I found the student profile I desired, and in terms of my teacher colleagues, I'm with working people and I'm happy. In terms of administrative abilities, every single one of them are good at their job I'm happy I'm with them. I don't care about our environment, but the school climate is very important for me. (28, Teacher)*

*The school environment was always my dream school environment. It was a must-have environment that schools should have. We are like family here. There's sincerity here and they know, that's why when we go to the administration, they listen to us and solve our problems. Sometimes I get mad at them but after a couple of days we resolve our issues. We talk and fix it. Could there be an environment like this? Well there could. Could we create an ideal environment, did it work? It did. It makes us glad to see these. Leaving a mark in life, leaving a product makes you happy because life is passing, but when everything is over, when you look back, if you couldn't produce something, if you couldn't leave anything humanity, society, young people, you have lived completely for yourself. (20, Principal)*

*Colleague relations are also very important. Asking how you are or being protective and supportive at certain times is very important. I went through it, well, when there's a problem we become unhappy and drag our feet, but when relations are going well, we're happy. You come to work willingly and work more devotedly. (11, Teacher)*

According to a significant part of the participants, one of the challenging factors of their work is the attitude of the administration. In this sense, having problems in relations with administrators

challenges teachers. On the contrary, if good relations can be established with administrators, a facilitating situation arises in terms of maintaining work, job satisfaction, and work peace. Relations between administrators and teachers are important for the recognition of the administrator. The strong communication between administrators and teachers contributes to an increased the sense of trust in terms of business relations, and also increases job satisfaction and professional loyalty. The quality of communication between administrators and teachers also has a direct impact on the development of other relationships in the school environment (Celep, 1992). Some teacher participants express their experiences regarding this issue as follows:

*But that administrator doesn't understand what's wanted to be done. They look at the regulations and say "no this won't do..." I mean this is the thing that challenged me the most. Administrators that don't understand what we're trying to do are what really challenged me. (27, Teacher)*

*The thing that challenged me the most in this profession is thank God I worked with really good administrators but I know these kinds, they like do exactly what the legislations say, they don't do anything other than that, they're very strict and it's like taking the teacher's breath away. I think if I had this kind of administrator this would have been the most challenging part for me. Being a bit more flexible in this matter makes the teacher happy and provides a better school environment. (29, Teacher)*

One of the issues that the participants emphasize regarding the challenging attitude of the administration is the attitudes and behaviors of the administrators about the planning of class schedules in a way that enables the care responsibilities of especially young children. Participants who stated that they were working with the administrators who understood them on this issue expressed their satisfaction, and the participants, especially those who had children in the young age group and faced problems regarding arranging the curriculum addressed that this was a big problem for them. Some of the participants who stated that they had problems on this issue describe their experiences as follows:

*I started work when my baby was five months old. We had financial problems and I didn't take unpaid leave or get medical reports. I didn't choose that kind of way. I was working at a village and at normal education. School started at 8 in the morning. I would come home at 4. The man (school principal) would say 'go and breastfeed at lunch break'. But I work at a village how am I supposed to go? There's no vehicle. No transportation. I begged my friend to take one of my classes. And reluctantly requested this as well. I emptied my classes hours. I was only at school on my watch days. I arranged it that way. I went with another village's bus. I gave milk for 18 months. I did it for a year. I only stayed at school the whole day once a week. (13, Assistant Principal)*

*They don't give you permission. Once they say no you can't get it. I worked at a school for 7 years. My oldest daughter had issues. I really wanted it. You can put as many classes but not the first two. The principal was stubborn and said no. My daughter*

*didn't want to use the school bus. She couldn't go to school for a month because she couldn't get on a school bus. (14, Teacher)*

On the other hand, in order to evaluate the attitude of the administration more objectively, it would be useful to include the opinions of the administrators interviewed within the scope of the research regarding the teachers' requests for permission due to their family care responsibilities. In this context, it was observed that some administrators stated that they tried to meet these demands most of the time, but this was not always possible. Some participants express this situation as follows:

*Just so our classroom teachers work happily... They have a day off, so they don't come and say I need to take care of my mom. Because my conscience feels uncomfortable when I say no. They shouldn't say I'm going to take my child to the doctor, or I have something I need to do I can't come. They shouldn't come up to me about mother and child matters. I did this accepting the criticism from the inspectors, so the school climate doesn't collapse. But I mean there's no solution to this. (8, Principal)*

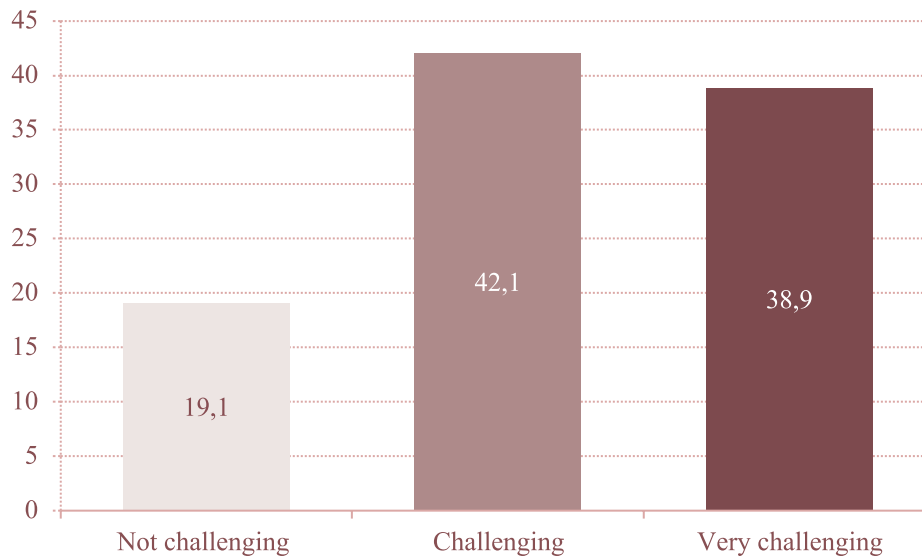
*Everybody comes with a demand; they think their demand is more important than every subject and want it to happen. Someone comes up and says I don't want class in the morning I'm going to take my child to school. Someone else comes and says I don't want class in the afternoon I'm going to pick up my child from preschool. It's hard to settle this in a vocational high school. They say I'm going to take care of my mother, I have an ill person, I'm going to visit them, assign me a half day until the afternoon, I want all my afternoons to be empty. (9, Assistant Principal)*

Based on the findings obtained from qualitative research, challenging factors related to work were also covered within the scope of quantitative research. The opinions of the participants regarding each challenging factor and the distribution of the challenges faced by the participants according to various independent variables and the results of the chi-square analysis are presented in the figures and tables below. All factors can be listed as follows in line with the opinions of the participants regarding the level of challenge:

- Student indiscipline (80.9 percent of respondents see it as challenging),
- Extracurricular workload (76.6 percent of respondents who see it as challenging),
- Salary level (77.3 percent of respondents who see it as challenging),
- Parental indifference or pressure (the proportion of participants who see it as challenging, 67.3 percent),
- Average class size (62.5 percent of respondents who see it as challenging),
- Approach of the administration (37 percent of respondents who see it as challenging),
- Relations with other teachers working in the school (the percentage of participants who see it as challenging is 27.9 percent)

The most challenging factor for the participants is the lack of discipline of the students. In this sense, as seen in Figure 4, the rate of participants who see student indiscipline as a challenging factor for their job is 42.1 percent and the rate of participants who see it as a very challenging factor is 38.9 percent. Eight out of ten participants have difficulties in their work due to student discipline. In contrast, approximately two out of ten participants stated that they did not see the disobedient behavior of students as a challenging factor for their job.

Figure 4. Challenge level of student discipline of female teachers (%)



In Table 10, the distribution of student indiscipline as a challenging factor to female teachers in terms of the participant subjects were organized. According to the data, classroom teachers and subject teachers have more difficulty due to the undisciplined behavior of students compared to preschool / kindergarten teachers.

Table 10. Distribution of student indiscipline challenge level on female teachers according to independent variables (%) and chi-square analysis results

	<i>Student Indiscipline</i>			$\chi^2$	<i>sd</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>Not challenging</i>	<i>Challenging</i>	<i>Very Challenging</i>			
<i>Preschool / Kindergarten Teacher</i>	35,0	42,5	22,6	63,36	4	,001*
<i>Classroom Teacher</i>	17,4	47,3	35,3			
<i>Subject Teacher</i>	17,5	39,9	42,6			

The second factor that challenges participants most about their work is extracurricular workload. According to Figure 5, the rate of the participants who think that the extracurricular workload is a challenging factor for their job is 47.4 percent and the rate of participants who think it is very challenging is 29.2 percent. In contrast, 23.4 percent of the participants stated that extracurricular workload is not a challenging factor for their work.

Figure 5. The challenge level of extracurricular workload (paperwork, grading exams, activity, project etc.) on female teachers (%)

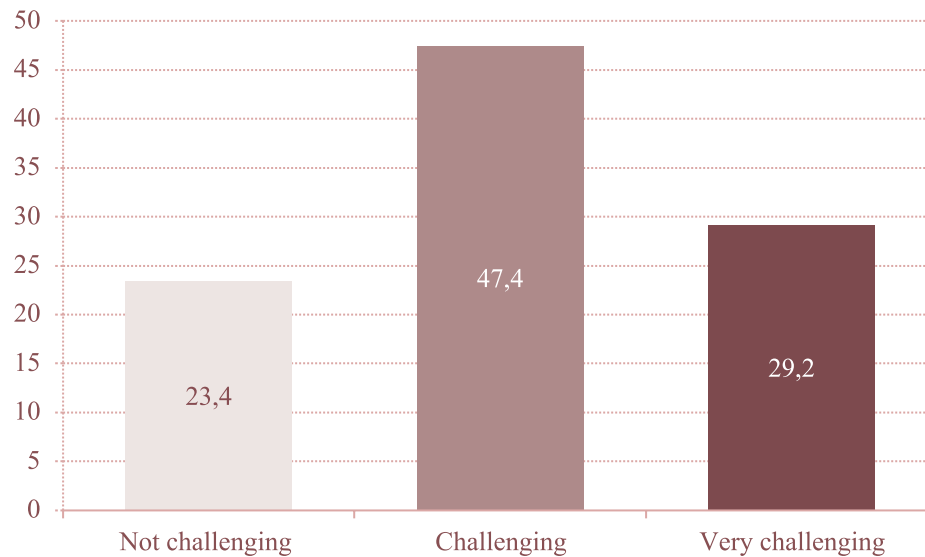


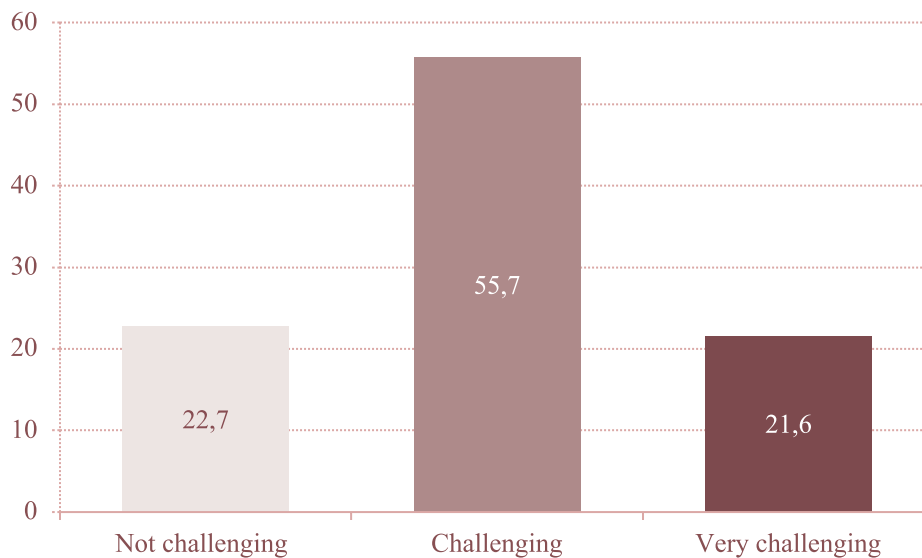
Table 11 shows the distribution of extracurricular workload of female teachers by various independent variables such as age group, seniority, number of children, and education level. Accordingly, in the 41-50 age group, in terms of seniority period, participants who have 11-15 years of seniority face more difficulty due to extracurricular workload. However, the group facing more challenges in terms of extracurricular workload regarding the number of children is participants who have two children. In addition, participants who had children evaluated extracurricular workload as a more challenging factor compared to participants who do not have children. Considering the opinions of the participants regarding the problems in terms of work-life balance, it is not surprising that extracurricular workload is seen as a more challenging factor by participants who have children. Participants who have additional workload at home due to childcare responsibilities have more difficulty in performing tasks defined as extracurricular workload.

Table 11. The distribution of the independent variables (%) regarding extracurricular workload (paperwork, grading exams, activity, projects etc.) on female teachers challenge level and chi-square analysis results

	<i>Extracurricular workload</i>			$\chi^2$	<i>sd</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>Not challenging</i>	<i>Challenging</i>	<i>Very Challenging</i>			
<i>Age Between 22-30</i>	30,3	48,4	21,3	34,79	6	,001*
<i>Age Between 31-40</i>	21,4	46,4	32,2			
<i>Age Between 41-50</i>	20,7	48,0	31,3			
<i>51 years and older</i>	26,1	48,4	25,5			
<i>5 years and under</i>	32,6	47,2	20,2	41,99	8	,001*
<i>6-10 years</i>	22,8	49,0	28,2			
<i>11-15 years</i>	19,2	48,1	32,8			
<i>16-20 years</i>	20,6	46,6	32,7			
<i>21 years and more</i>	22,6	46,1	31,3			
<i>No children</i>	28,2	47,1	24,7	19,06	6	,004*
<i>1 child</i>	22,9	47,3	29,7			
<i>2 children</i>	20,8	46,9	32,3			
<i>3 or more children</i>	22,3	51,6	26,0			

The most challenging factor for the participants after student indiscipline and extracurricular workload is salary level. As seen in Figure 6, while the rate of participants who think that salary level is a challenging factor for their job is 55.7 percent; the rate of those who state that this is very challenging is 21.6 percent. Almost eight out of ten participants address salaries are insufficient. On the other hand, 22.7 percent of the participants do not think that the salary level is a challenging factor for their job.

Figure 6. Challenge level of female teachers of salary level (%)





When we look at the distribution of the amount of challenge salary levels pose for female teachers according to various independent variables such as subject, age group, seniority, having a child and the age of the youngest child, it is seen that the teachers who face the most challenges in the branch are class teachers.

Based on age groups in terms of seniority time, participants 51 years and older with seniority time of 21 years or more face more difficulties due to this factor. Considering the status of having children, the salary level challenges participants with one or two children more than those with no children or those with three or more children. In addition, when evaluated over the age of the youngest child, it can be concluded that as the age of the children increases, the salary is more inadequate in meeting the teacher's needs.

Table 12. The distribution of independent variables regarding challenge level of level of salary on female teachers (%) and chi-square analysis results

	<i>Salary level</i>			$\chi^2$	<i>sd</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>Not challenging</i>	<i>Challenging</i>	<i>Very Challenging</i>			
<i>Preschool / Kindergarten Teacher</i>	28,6	53,2	18,2	12,29	4	,001*
<i>Classroom Teacher</i>	18,5	58,4	23,1			
<i>Subject Teacher</i>	23,6	55,0	21,4			
<i>Age Between 22-30</i>	28,0	48,5	23,5	30,89	6	,001*
<i>Age Between 31-40</i>	23,6	56,1	20,3			
<i>Age Between 41-50</i>	19,1	60,6	20,3			
<i>51 years and older</i>	15,0	55,1	29,9			
<i>5 years and under</i>	27,7	45,2	27,1	38,75	8	,001*
<i>Between 6-10 years</i>	24,6	58,7	16,7			
<i>Between 11-15 years</i>	23,5	56,4	20,1			
<i>Between 16-20 years</i>	20,5	58,5	21,0			
<i>21 years and more</i>	18,0	58,2	23,8			
<i>No children</i>	24,6	51,5	24,0	17,01	6	,009*
<i>1 child</i>	20,7	55,9	23,4			
<i>2 children</i>	21,8	59,4	18,8			
<i>3 or more children</i>	28,2	52,2	19,6			
<i>Age 3 and under</i>	28,5	53,4	18,1	22,99	8	,001*
<i>4-5 years old</i>	21,8	57,0	21,2			
<i>6-13 years old</i>	20,2	59,9	19,9			
<i>14-17 years old</i>	20,4	57,8	21,8			
<i>Age 18 and older</i>	15,3	59,0	25,8			

Figure 7 shows that the rate of participants who think that parental indifference or pressure is a challenging factor for their job is 41.1 percent and those who think it is very challenging is 26.2 percent. 32.7 percent of participants think that parental indifference or pressure is not a challenging factor for work.

Figure 7. The challenge level of parent indifference / pressure on female teachers (%)

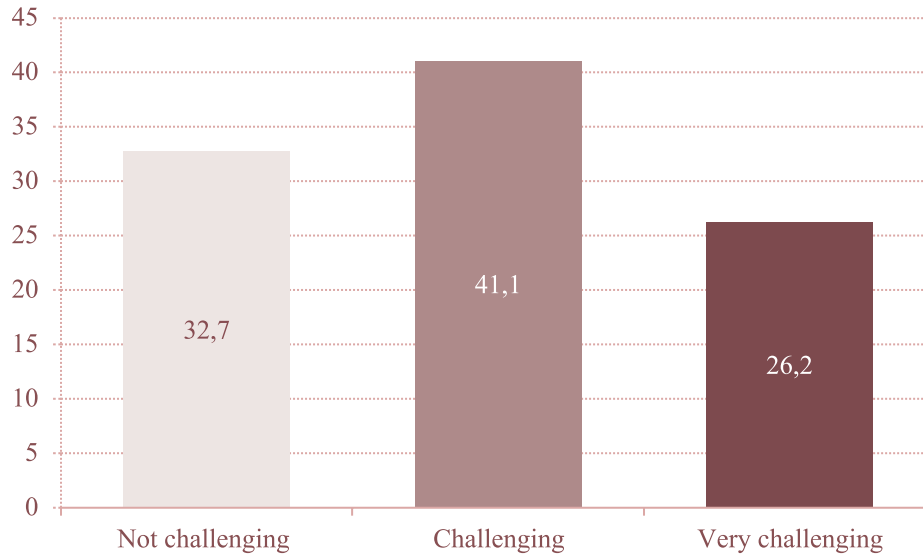


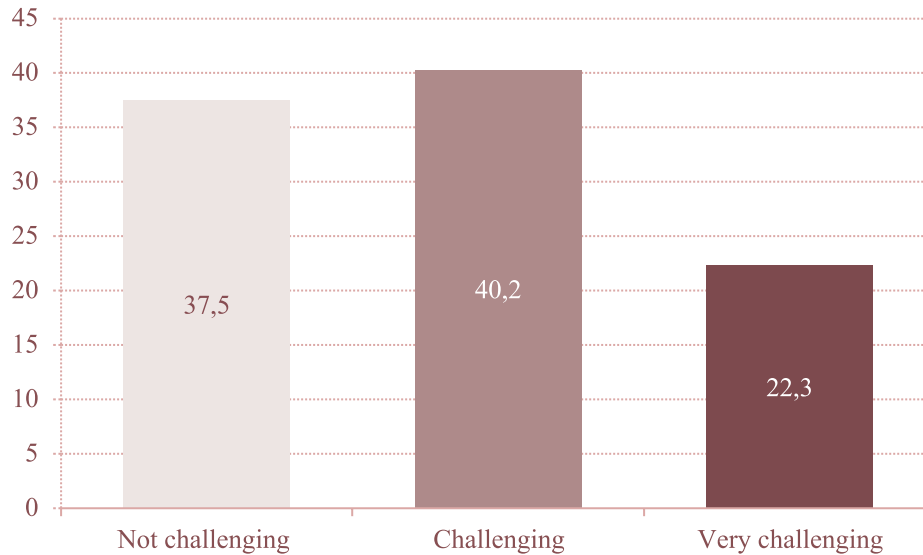
Table 13 shows the distribution of parental indifference / pressure on female teachers' challenge level by various independent variables such as branch, age group, and seniority duration. According to the data in Table 13, preschool / kindergarten teachers face more difficulties compared to classroom teachers and field teachers due to parental indifference or pressure. However, participants in the age group 51 and above have more difficulty due to the parental indifference or pressure. When the seniority period is taken into consideration, the group having the most difficulty is those with 11-15 years of seniority. The parental indifference and pressure serves as a challenging factor more for principals and assistant principals than for teachers.

Table 13. The distribution of challenge level of parental indifference / pressure on female teachers according to independent variables (%) and chi-square analysis results

	<i>Parental indifference / pressure</i>			$\chi^2$	<i>sd</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>Not challenging</i>	<i>Challenging</i>	<i>Very Challenging</i>			
<i>Preschool / Kindergarten Teacher.</i>	18,9	44,5	36,6	64,99	4	,001*
<i>Classroom Teacher</i>	25,9	41,0	33,2			
<i>Subject Teacher</i>	37,0	40,8	22,2			
<i>Age Between 22-30</i>	37,3	41,6	21,1	16,49	6	,011*
<i>Age Between 31-40</i>	30,3	41,7	28,0			
<i>Age Between 41-50</i>	33,5	38,7	27,7			
<i>51 years and older</i>	28,4	46,5	25,2			
<i>5 years and under</i>	40,2	37,2	22,6	23,29	8	,003*
<i>Between 6-10 years</i>	32,0	43,9	24,1			
<i>Between 11-15 years</i>	28,5	44,2	27,3			
<i>Between 16-20 years</i>	31,7	37,6	30,8			
<i>21 years and more</i>	31,9	41,4	26,7			
<i>Teacher</i>	33,9	41,3	24,7	33,06	4	,001*
<i>Principal / Assistant Principal</i>	20,5	38,9	40,6			

Figure 8 shows that the proportion of participants who think that average class size is a challenging factor for their job is 40.2 percent and those who think it is very challenging is 22.3 percent. 37.5 percent of the participants stated that the average class size is not a challenging factor for their job.

Figure 8. Challenge level of female teachers of the average class size (%)



In Table 14, the distribution of the average class size as a challenging factor for female teachers according to various independent variables such as subject, age group, seniority time, youngest child's age and status has been arranged. According to Table 14, the most group facing the most challenge by



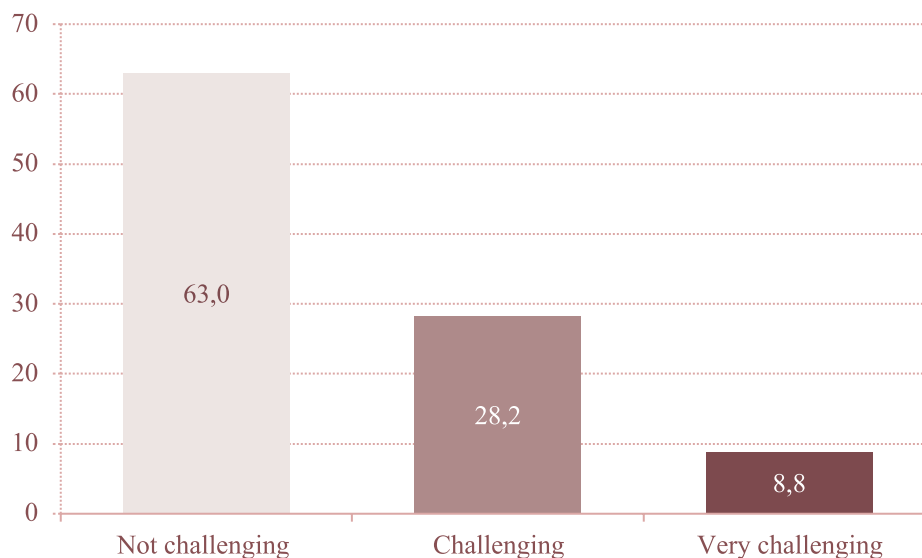
average class size are preschool / kindergarten teachers. In addition, by age groups under 40 years of age in terms of seniority time, participants with 16-20 years of seniority stated that they had more difficulty due to the average class size. When the youngest child is evaluated by age, it can be said that the average class size is a less challenging factor as children get older. On the other hand, teacher participants have more difficulty than the participants who hold the position of principal or assistant principal.

Table 14. The distribution of the average class size of the challenge level of female teachers according to independent variables (%) and chi-square analysis results

	<i>Average class size</i>			$\chi^2$	<i>sd</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>Not challenging</i>	<i>Challenging</i>	<i>Very Challenging</i>			
<i>Preschool / Kindergarten Teacher</i>	29,7	36,7	33,6	19,31	4	,001*
<i>Classroom Teacher</i>	37,7	40,3	22,0			
<i>Subject Teacher</i>	38,5	40,5	21,0			
<i>Age Between 22-30</i>	36,9	38,9	24,2	21,08	6	,002*
<i>Age Between 31-40</i>	35,5	41,8	22,7			
<i>Age Between 41-50</i>	37,2	40,1	22,7			
<i>51 years and older</i>	52,6	35,7	11,7	20,40	8	,009*
<i>5 years and under</i>	40,8	36,3	22,9			
<i>Between 6-10 years</i>	35,4	39,4	25,2			
<i>Between 11-15 years</i>	34,5	43,2	22,3	25,39	8	,001*
<i>Between 16-20 years</i>	33,2	43,0	23,9			
<i>21 years and more</i>	42,5	39,4	18,2			
<i>3 years and under</i>	34,3	41,7	24,0	14,73	4	,001*
<i>4-5 years old</i>	34,3	39,7	25,9			
<i>6-13 years old</i>	37,1	40,9	22,0			
<i>14-17 yaş</i>	38,4	37,4	24,2	14,73	4	,001*
<i>14-17 years old</i>	50,6	35,6	13,7			
<i>Teacher</i>	36,4	40,7	22,9			
<i>Principal / Assistant Principal</i>	48,7	35,3	15,9			

Figure 9 shows that the rate of participants who think that the administration's approach is a challenging factor for their job is 28.2 percent and the rate of respondents who think it is very challenging is 8.8 percent. 63 percent of the participants think that the attitude of the administration is not a challenging factor for their job. Therefore, it is possible to say that at least six out of ten participants have no difficulty in their work due to the attitude of the administration. In this sense, it can be said that there is a positive school climate and working peace in the schools where our participants work. Considering the rate of participants who hold this view, positive school climate and working peace are common in the research field.

Figure 9. The challenge level of administration's approach on female teachers (%)



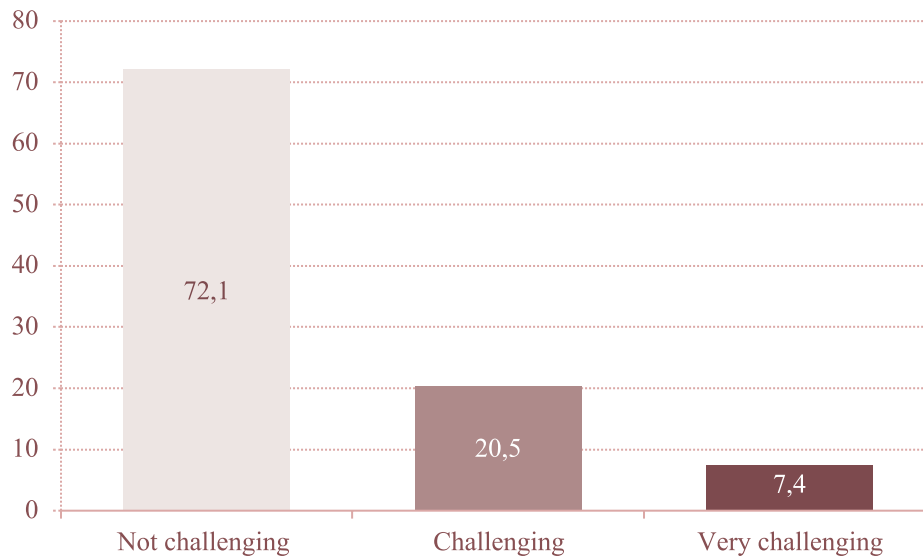
In Table 15, the distribution of the challenge level of the female teachers of the administration's approach is arranged according to the education levels of the participants. From the data given in the table, it is seen that participants with a postgraduate degree have more difficulty due to the administration's approach when compared to graduates with an associate or undergraduate degree.

Table 15. The distribution of challenge level of the administration's approach to female teachers' according to independent variables (%) and chi-square analysis results

	<i>Administration's approach</i>			$\chi^2$	<i>sd</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>Not challenging</i>	<i>Challenging</i>	<i>Very Challenging</i>			
<i>Associate and bachelor's degree</i>	64,0	27,6	8,4	9,30	4	,010*
<i>Postgraduate and doctorate degree</i>	54,8	33,3	11,9			

As seen in Figure 10, the rate of participants who see the atmosphere of the teachers' room, in other words, the relations with other colleagues working in the school, as a challenging factor for their work is 20.5 percent and those who see it as a very challenging factor is only 7.4 percent. 72.1 percent of participants think that relations with colleagues is not a challenging factor. Again, this finding suggests that teachers who participated in the study generally worked in peace with their colleagues and in a positive school climate.

Figure 10. The level of challenge posed by the atmosphere of the teachers' room on female teachers (relations with other colleagues at school) (%)



In Table 16, the distribution of the atmosphere of the teachers' room in terms of the challenge level on female teachers regarding the participants' having a child has been provided. As can be seen from Table 16, participants who have only one child and participants who do not have children face more difficulty as a result of relations with colleagues when compared to the participants with two or more children.

Table 16. The distribution of the challenge level of the atmosphere of the teachers' room (relations with colleagues) according to independent variables (%) and chi-square analysis of female teachers' challenge level

	Teachers' room atmosphere			$\chi^2$	sd	p
	Not challenging	Challenging	Very Challenging			
No children	70,5	22,7	6,8	15,59	6	,016*
1 child	68,5	22,7	8,9			
2 children	75,1	17,7	7,3			
3 or more children	77,7	16,7	5,6			

### 3.4. Issues Regarding Work- Family Harmony

One of the goals of both the qualitative and quantitative research was to reveal the problems experienced by female teachers in terms of work-life balance and propose policies to contribute to the solution of these problems. Work-life balance is defined as the conceptual balance of work and family life, in other words, the avoidance of conflict between the two spheres (Aycan et al., 2007). In

this context, in order to achieve harmony between work and family life, an individual must be able to fulfill their responsibilities both at home and at work. The high number of responsibilities expected from women in family life brings the gender factor to the forefront concerning the matter of the work-life balance. In this respect, the age of the woman, the life-career stage, and the level of putting up with responsibilities at work and at home become important (SASAM Institute, 2018).

Job demands and demands of the house are directly effective in ensuring the harmony between work and family life (Kapız, 2002). In this sense, flexible working hours or flexibility related to childcare affects work-life balance positively. On the other hand, job demands such as heavy workload, long working hours, inflexible work schedules, and overtime of work can make it difficult to draw the boundary between work and family life (Brown, 2004). In terms of home demands that define responsibilities other than work, the fact that the employee is married or single or has a child in the young age group causes home demands to differentiate. In this regard, family-related special conditions, such as the care of a young or ill child, may lead to increased tardiness or absenteeism with regards to work.

Within the scope of qualitative research, 48 of 65 participants stated that they had difficulty in harmonizing work with their family life, and 17 stated that they did not have any problems in this regard. One participant stated that they have problems in terms of work-family harmony, emphasizing that the responsibilities at work are reflected at home or, on the contrary, the responsibilities at home are reflected to work. Some of the participants express their difficulties as follows:

*When you go home you need to take on a different role and you are constantly working to take on that role. There are always different expectations from you. Cook, take care of the children, put them to sleep. My husband helped a lot but since he has to teach a full day, I faced many problems. There were many times when he wasn't home. At that period, he was an administrator as well. He would come home late and by that time I would be exhausted. And my child, thanks a lot, wasn't those who would need much sleep he would always want me right beside him. This period wore me out. That's why I'm not really considering having a second child. It affects your family and work life. (16, Teacher)*

*The responsibilities at work and home differ and I mean it wears you out. When the children get older their responsibilities are different, the responsibilities of a single person or someone who is newly married is different than someone with three kids. I remember those times; you would be sleepless until morning you would go to school in the morning and look at the kids' faces and try to find the energy to teach class actively. Well, we could call it a time problem and having no energy left. (33, Teacher)*

In line with the opinions of the participants, it has been observed that the factors that stand out in terms of work-life balance are

- Marital status,
- Number of children,
- Having a child that needs care, in other words, a child in the young age group,
- Ability to receive support from reliable people such as a spouse, family member, or close neighbors regarding home and childcare,
- The school administration's flexible and understanding attitude towards class schedules and permissions.

The status of all the participants who stated that they did not have any problems regarding work-life balance can be evaluated within the scope of these factors. In this regard, for example, single workers are naturally more comfortable as they do not have home and childcare responsibilities. The statement of a single participant on the subject is as follows:

*I mean it's not a problem because I'm comfortable, I don't have a child or household responsibilities, I don't have it as much as them so I'm comfortable. (29, Teacher)*

Some participants emphasized that a supportive spouse is extremely important in fulfilling their responsibilities for housework and childcare. Participants stated that having a supportive spouse in housework and childcare is one of the most important factors in maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Some participants expressed the importance of this issue in the following statements:

*It's so hard. I mean my husband's my biggest supporter in this matter. He takes very good care of the children and the house. To be honest, I do a little bit cleaning and the cooking, he takes care of the academic side of the children. But previously I was taking care of the academic side. I took care of it until eighth grade, after high school my husband started doing it. It's like we have this silent agreement between us. (21, Teacher)*

*I am in administration because I raised my kids. The others wouldn't have done it. Cooking at home, shopping etc. my husband is really supportive. It's really important in my profession that my husband is helping out. We share the load. I don't really reflect it at school. It reflects at home more. I share with my husband and we discuss it. I'm trying to manage the balance between home and work. (53, Principal)*



On the other hand, some other participants expressed the difficulties of not being able to receive enough support in terms of home and childcare responsibilities. At this point, as stated above, house demands are of great importance in terms of ensuring work-life balance. Some participant statements on this subject are as follows:

*For example, in the morning, I cooked beans and rice at seven in the morning. For example, I get the reaction “why did not you prepare the food that the child will take to school” ...*

*My mother-in-law wants me to make a career and fulfill all my responsibilities at home. I need to make everything perfect. (48, Principal)*

*Of course, the support of the spouse is also very important here. Whether the spouse leaves it entirely to the woman or helps out, it's important. Since my spouse had to support me because of the things we went through, in time he had to share as well. It's an extra task that the husband does. This situation is difficult, you have to take two kinds of responsibilities and it's not something everybody can put up with. (63, Teacher)*

*The childcare and the house tasks are completely on me and I know that all my friends are like that as well. For example, picking up, and taking the kids (somewhere) etc. it's all on us mothers. (18, Teacher)*

*Our women have gone a long way. They started working. They tried to manage work, home, their social life and family, they succeeded. (62, Principal)*

One of the biggest challenges in terms of work-life balance is having a young child that needs to be taken care of. Participants stated that they became exhausted a lot in the period regarding childcare responsibilities, but they were relieved after raising their children. Some participants explain their difficulties as follows:

*I went back to school when the kids were a year old then it was summer vacation etc.... After that I found a nanny. I would come to school crying... I was demoralized. It reflected here. I was discouraged and I had a difficult time at home and at work. But now that the children have grown up, I'm comfortable. I refer to myself as a slice of bread stuck in a toast machine. (14, Teacher)*

*Well, I relax here. This was a place where I could get a breath fresh air. My duties at school were over but my kid's responsibilities or house tasks never were. I was saying to myself; I hope schools open on the weekend so I could go... I was exhausted from the house tasks and the kids' responsibilities. But I've made life easier. I felt better when the kids grew up. I started doing things for myself. When they were young the kids were tiring. (50, Teacher)*

It has been observed that in terms of working women that undertaking childcare responsibilities during working hours and insufficient social support increases problems experienced in terms of work-life balance. In this context, the participants, who were supported by reliable people such as spouses, families, close relatives, and neighbors in taking care of their children, emphasized the importance of this support. In this context, there are also participants who state that the concern of the working mother about whether her child is safe or not is sometimes reflected in job performance, especially if childcare service is provided from the market through caregivers. Some of the participant's statements on this subject are as follows:

*I didn't face a problem regarding work-life balance, I mean my husband was a big help. I started after I gave birth to two of my children, I didn't take maternity leave. I was with them until almost after a year. I started when one was a year and a half year old and the other one was 6-7 months old, my mother in law came and stayed with us. My mom took care of them for a year and my mother in law for another, then I hired a nanny. I had a neighbor, I'm so grateful she took really good care for them. At age 4-5 we had them start preschool. And then kindergarten. (30, Principal)*

*The child gets ill the mother takes them to the hospital. Guests come over and the women host them. I mean you're trying to do work with someone that's always occupied with the child. I have kids but thank God my family's here with me and they support me. I have my mother and mother in law, if my child gets ill and they're not around what would I do? (48, Principal)*

One of the findings obtained within the scope of the research is that some participants withdrew from the labor market by using the right of unpaid leave after birth until their children reached a certain age and could fulfill their self-care responsibilities. This finding, on the one hand, ensures that the participants did not have a problem in terms of work-family harmony, and on the other hand, due to their withdrawal from the labor market, creates a loss of income and causes other important problems such as not being able to benefit from career opportunities. The participants express their problems in this regard as follows:

*I started working after my kids grew up, he was eight years old, I didn't spend my time teaching when he was going through a rough infant period. I was right beside them. That's why I didn't have any difficulty in terms of work-life balance. (28, Teacher)*

*When I started teaching, my children could maintain their own self-care responsibilities, I had overcome those difficult times. I had the comfort of this. (31, Assistant Principal)*

The fact that institutional services such as nurseries and day care centers that support women's work-family life adaptation are limited, or that such services are placed on the market and are expensive makes it difficult for women to actively participate in the labor market. This situation also causes women in the labor market to be reluctant when it comes to assuming administrative responsibilities,

as working conditions and workload negatively affects work-life balance.

The quantitative and qualitative inadequacy of childcare facilities, the fact that childcare is not regulated within different needs of working mothers, and the costliness of childcare creates anxiety in terms of reliability, makes it difficult for women to access these services, and often leaves them out of the labor market. In the European Union the general trend for women between



the ages of 15-24 not participating in working life is due a continuation in education. However, in Turkey the primary cause of this same tendency is the family and childcare responsibilities of women (Eurostat, 2012). Similarly, in a study by ILO (2005), it was concluded that women are withdrawn from the labor market if social support for free or low-paid childcare services in Eastern and Central Europe is cut. Therefore, policies to meet the needs of women with children are of great importance in order to ensure women's participation in the workforce and work-life balance when do they join the workforce.

On the other hand, practices related to working order, which was previously conceptualized as “job demands,” and the flexibility given in terms of fulfilling child care responsibilities are directly related to the approach of the administration in the educational institutions that make up the research field. In this context, the flexible or insightful attitude of the school administration on planning certain permissions and class schedules is another issue that the participants emphasize within the framework of work-life balance. The opinions of a teacher participant on this subject are as follows:

*If you come across a good administrator and when you explain your situation, they arrange it. Such as when the kids get out of school, start school etc. I really love teaching because of the flexibility and arrangements. Otherwise, I couldn't have done it... I mean when the administrators help you out you can pick your kids up from school or be home before them. (28, Teacher)*

When participants were asked whether their job and family responsibilities reflected on each other, it was seen that a large number of participants expressed that the weariness from work and problems reflected on family life, relationships with their spouses, and children. In this sense, it is not possible to talk about a balanced relationship between work and family life. Particularly, participants who worked as administrators stated that their spouse or children complained that they spent limited time with their families due to excessive workloads. Some participants expressed their problems in this regard as follows:

*School is exhausting. When I start talking about the issues at school they react and say “don’t tell us about the problems” I mean it’s always on my mind, I even in my dreams I’m dealing with the issues. (48, Principal)*

*I remember very clearly about ten years ago when I came home my son would want to talk about his day and how it went and I would say “please just give me half an hour, I want to rest.” Teaching is such a profession that depreciation is a lot, you’re with many kids, they are a gift from God and their families trust you, you do your job on how sacred those kids are and you get really tired. You have listened to many childrens’ issues or you had to manage a crisis in the classroom, if you are a school administrator, you had to manage many crises that’s why you get depreciated, you go home and your family members want you to pay attention to them you are unable to respond. (51, Principal)*

*I mean of course we’re going through very difficult times. Well, you can’t show the same patience to your husband, to your kids, it’s not just household tasks you know what I’m saying? That’s a part of it, but the biggest part is when you can’t spend time with your husband or children. (59, Principal)*

*My husband doesn’t really like it when I go somewhere for work besides working hours... On the weekends there would be breakfast, or something else in the afternoon. Then my husband automatically says you already work all day. It’s like we see each other for two hours at night. (40, Principal)*

While some of the participants stated that the problems in family life, in other words at home, can be reflected at work; some participants also stated that they did not face such a situation. In this regard, some participants emphasize personal characteristics and state that they leave these problems when entering the door of the school, no matter what problems they experience.

*If anyone says it doesn’t reflect, I don’t believe them. Work life reflects home, and home reflects on work. There’s no such thing as I don’t take work home, first of all when you’re a teacher especially a preschool teacher, you need a lot of patience. You come home from work, they expect dinner, so you cook... I get really tired and there are times when I don’t want to talk to anybody. (43, Teacher)*

*Whether you like it or not it reflects. I don’t think it’s just about the teacher. I think it goes for every profession. If you’re not happy at home, if there’s conflict at home it reflects on your classes. If the kids are young and they’re ill it reflects when you go to school, and the students observe you. If you haven’t slept that night the students can easily understand it. Even though we try hard not to reflect it, it happens. (35, Assistant Principal)*

Another issue to be mentioned about work-life balance is that some participants who have worked in the private sector and experienced the working conditions there stated that teaching in the public sector is more advantageous in terms of work-life balance. One participant stated:

*As long as you don't die [in the private sector] you have to go to work. I came from such a system that I'm not complaining about this one. (17, Teacher)*

Participants who are school principals or assistant principals face more problems in terms of work-life balance when compared to the teacher participants due to reasons such as heavier workload and responsibilities, uncertain job definition and full working hours, and even overtime. As will be seen later in the research, this causes female teachers to be reluctant about administrationship. An administrative participant states this situation as follows:

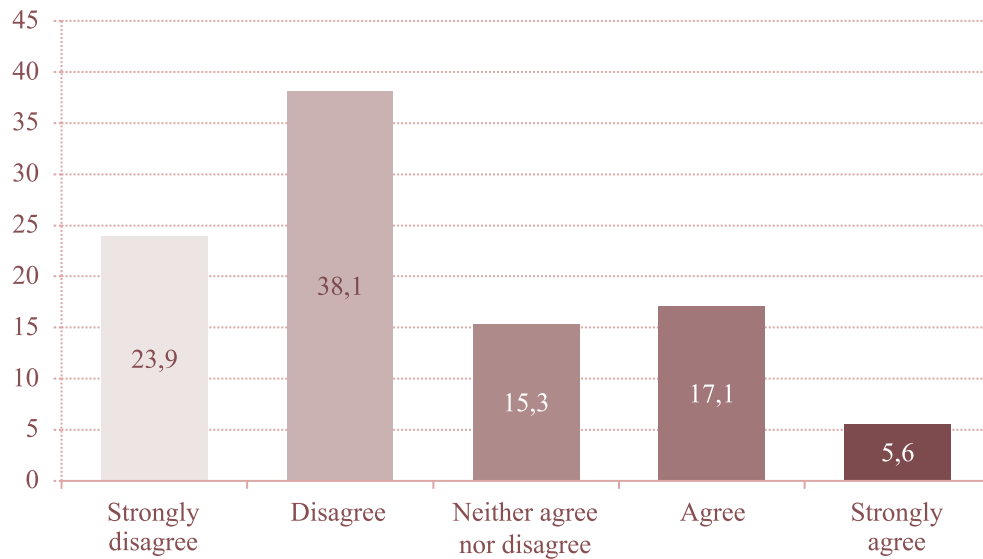
*So, there's this, generally I leave here at 20:30. I used to work as the only assistant principal with about 800-900 students. There were times when I would go home at 8-9 pm. At 21.30 I would come home and go up the stairs using the flashlight on my phone, and I go home late and my child's sleeping, I mean I go to work on the weekends, I can't spend time with my child. You come home early, it's extremely exhausting. (6, Assistant Principal)*

In line with the findings obtained from the research, it is possible to say that the participants who do not have sufficient support in terms of work-life balance face more burnout and occupational fatigue. One participant explains their experiences as follows:

*We're already created emotional, if there's no one around you to take care of your child then at the slightest inconvenience you get hung up and upset. I think everybody reflects their problems to work. But I think in the period of raising a child we reflect it even more. Because I'm seriously tired. Maternal leave is a short time, I had to work due to financial reasons. And this makes me spend less time with my child. Sometimes I ask myself would it have been better if I hadn't done it. Sometimes as a woman I feel the burnout. Because women don't just work, they have responsibilities at home as well. If your husband has a busy work life, then it's normal to feel burned out. There are times where you go, I wish I didn't work, and you sob. After there are times where you go and say I'm glad I'm a teacher and can support myself, I mean there are times when these two clash. (64, Assistant Principal)*

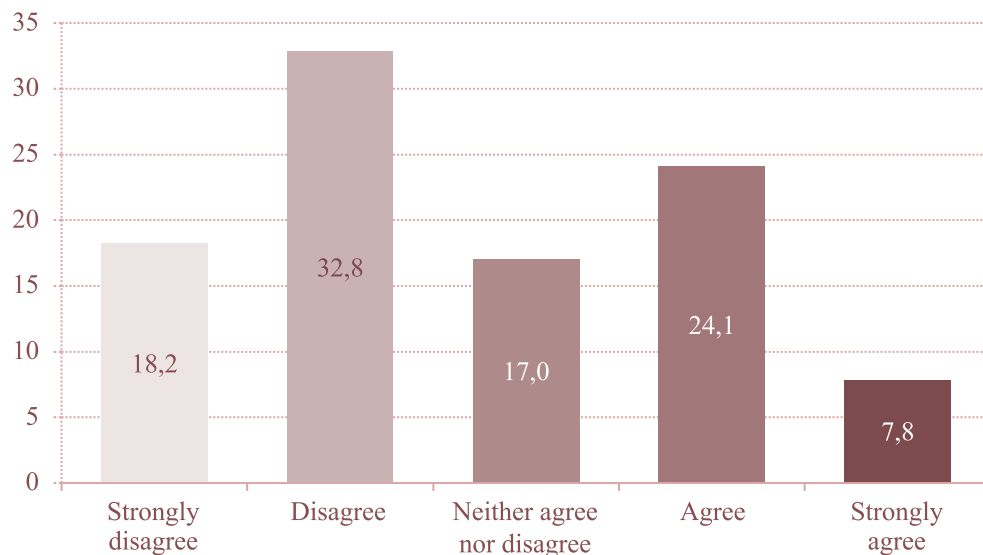
The opinions of female teachers on work-life balance were also discussed within the framework of quantitative research. Accordingly, as seen in Figure 11, 22.7 percent of the participants are of the opinion that family responsibilities affect business life negatively. 62 percent of the participants do not think this way. According to this finding, it is possible to say that six out of ten participants do not reflect their family responsibilities to business life. The rate of participants who stated that they are indecisive in this regard is 15.3 percent.

Figure 11. The level of participation of women teachers in the expression “My family responsibilities affect business life negatively” (%)



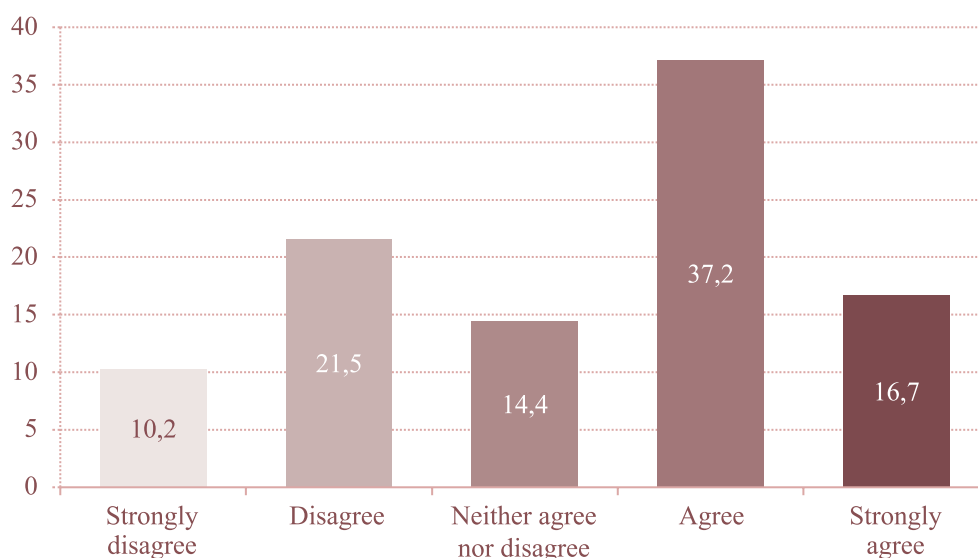
Another issue that is questioned within the scope of quantitative research in order to reveal the problems in terms of work-life balance is whether the participants reflect their job-related responsibilities to their family and home lives. In this context, 31.9 percent of the participants think that their job responsibilities affect family and home life negatively and 51 percent, that is, one of two participants, believe that their job responsibilities do not have a negative reflection on family and home life. 17 percent of the participants stated that they are indecisive regarding the subject.

Figure 12. The level of participation of female teachers to the statement “My job responsibilities negatively affect my family and home life” (%)



As mentioned in the qualitative research results, if the work-life balance cannot be achieved, teachers experience the feeling of wear and burnout. 53.9 percent of quantitative research participants stated that taking on their home and work responsibilities wore them out. 14.4 percent of participants were indecisive on this matter and 31.7 percent had the opinion that taking on home and work responsibilities did not wear them down.

Figure 13. The level of participation of female teachers in the expression “Taking on both home and work responsibilities wears me out” (%)



### 3.5. Overview of the Administration

As previously stated, this research aimed to investigate why the ratio of female teachers in management levels remains low. In this section the obstacles to becoming administrators and the problems faced by female administrators are discussed with the aim of evaluating their perspectives on administratorship. Matters such as the opinions of the participants on whether they think that administration has a gender, whether the teaching profession offers employees a career opportunity, their willingness to become administrators, and the reasons behind the desire of female teachers to be administrators will be explored.

#### 3.5.1. Gender of the Administration

One of the issues addressed in the study is whether female teachers attribute gender to administrative positions. It has been questioned whether female teachers agree with the social perception that administration is male work, both within the scope of qualitative and quantitative research. First of all, according to the qualitative research results, most participants (60 participants) stated that they think administration does not have a gender. According to these participants, the important issue in terms of taking part in line management is that the administrator has management and leadership skills and is assigned according to merit principles. Regarding the subject, one of the participants summarized their views as follows:

*An administrator is an administrator. Merit and qualification are important.*  
(30, Principal)

Participants who think that administration has a gender and that men should be administrators in this sense, expressed their views on the grounds that the emotions of women have a negative effect on administration. These participants think that women are not as suitable for administration as men because they are more emotional and reflect their feelings to work. According to the participants, it can be said that some of the determining factors in administration are risk-taking, being result-oriented, not involving feelings, being controlling and authoritarianism. As stated above, these participants have the opinion that these behaviors are more prominent in men. This perception leads to the fact that administration is seen as a “man’s job”, in other words, the “male” gender is attributed to administration. Some expressions of the participants who perceive the administration as “male work” are as follows:

*In some regards I think men are better administrators. Women are at a disadvantage because they are emotional. Men are more stern, harsh and authoritarian, while women act more emotionally. That’s why most men are good administrators.* (29, Teacher)

*People who become administrators should possess some attributes. In this sense, women should put their emotional and tantrum behaviors aside. Because of these behaviors I prefer to work with male assistant principals.* (48, Principal)

On the other hand, there are also participants who think that the administration is “women’s work.” According to these participants, the features that make it “women’s work” are; being pedantic, having a multi-faceted way of thinking and aesthetic understanding. The participants’ views on the subject are as follows:

*When female administrators lay their hands on work, it progresses quicker. It’s because they are pedantic. The school’s discipline and its quality affect how it looks from the outside positively.* (26, Teacher)

*First of all, women can think of many things simultaneously and move quicker. It’s scientifically proven.* (62, Principal)

As stated above, quantitative research participants were also asked what they think about the gender of the administration. While the rate of participants who think that administration is more suitable for female teachers is 21.3 percent; 38.9 percent think they are indecisive about this subject and 39.9 percent think that administration is not suitable for female teachers. In this respect, it is concluded that only two out of ten participants consider women more suitable for administration. However, as seen in Table 17, the participants in this opinion are mostly those who are already working in administration positions.



Figure 14. The level of participation of female teachers to the statement “Administratorship is more suitable for female teachers” (%)

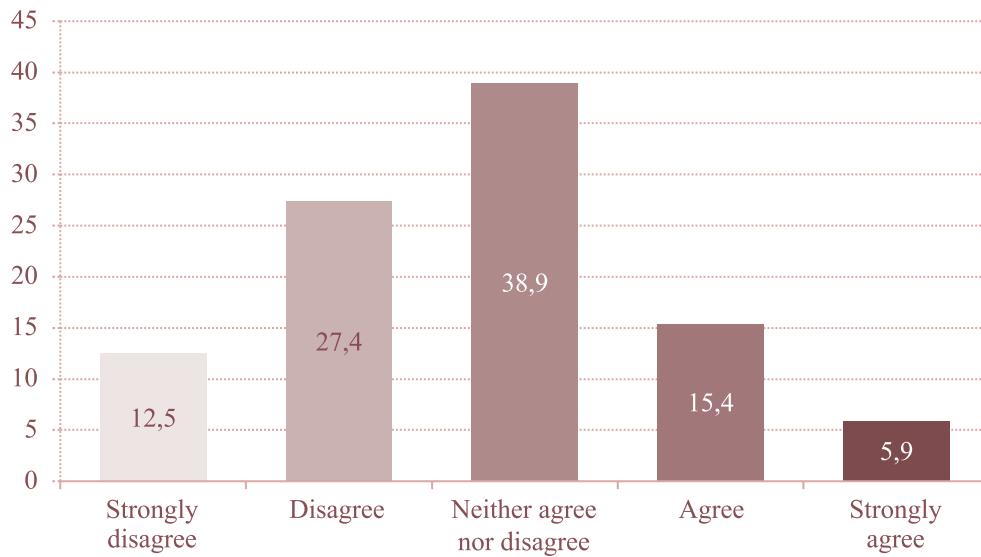


Table 17. Independent samples t test results according to the status variable in terms of the average of the participation level of female teachers to the statement “Administratorship is more suitable for female teachers”

	<i>n</i>	<i>mean</i>	<i>S.D</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>sd</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>Teacher</i>	2462	2,73	1,016	-4,338	2715	,001*
<i>Principal / Assistant Principal</i>	255	3,02	1,115			

When asked whether they agree with the opinion that administration is more suitable for male teachers 36.8 percent participants said that male teachers are more suitable for administration work. 30.4 percent of participants stated that they were indecisive on the matter and 32.8 percent disagreed with the statement.

Considering both findings that administration is more suitable for female and male teachers, it can be said that at least three out of ten participants do not think that administration is with -being indecisive respectfully- gender based. However, the fact that the participants who think that male teachers are more suitable for administration positions are in the position of teachers supports the data in Table 18.

Figure 15. The level of participation of female teachers to the statement “Administratorship is more suitable for male teachers” (%)

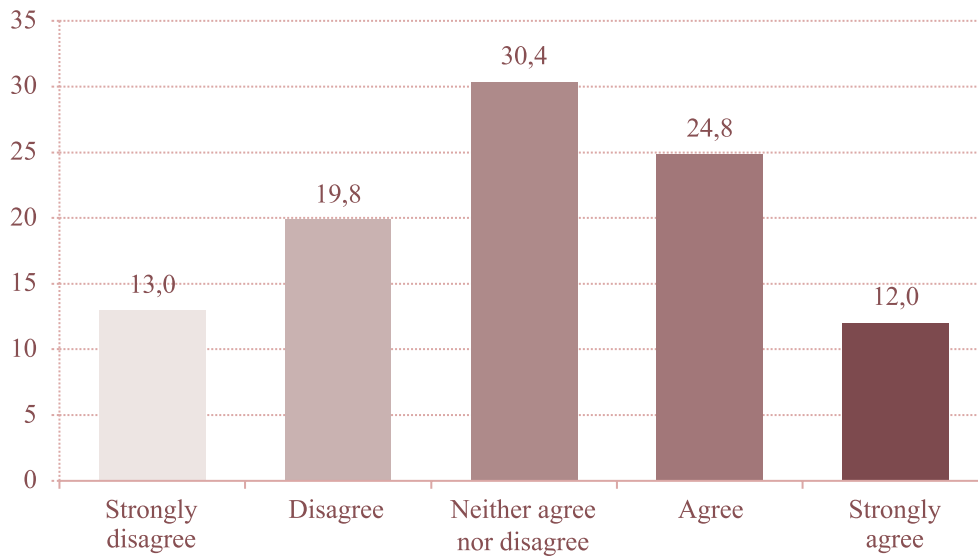


Table 18. Independent samples t-test results according to the status variable in terms of the average of the participation level of female teachers to the statement “Administratorship is more suitable for male teachers”

	<i>n</i>	<i>mean</i>	<i>S.D</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>sd</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>Teacher</i>	2462	3,05	1,171	2,803	302,77	,005*
<i>Principal / Assistant Principal</i>	255	2,82	1,241			

### 3.5.2. “Career” Perspective on Teaching

In order to reveal women’s perceptions about teaching as a career and their perspectives on administratorship, one of the topics that was handled within the scope of qualitative research is the opinions of the participants on whether or not teaching is a career profession. According to results obtained from qualitative research, approximately two-thirds of the participants (41 participants) think that teaching is not a career profession. One of the participants expressed their opinions on this issue as follows:

*I don't think a teacher would see teaching as a career profession. I don't assume that they think "it never occurred to me, I should get a promotion, pursue a career." I want to deal with my students. My goal is to raise them to come to better places and guide them. (18, Teacher)*

The majority of participants don't consider being a principal or assistant principal as a career.

In this sense, it has been stated that administratorship is not an upper step of teaching. In addition, half of the participants who are currently working as administrators stated that teaching is not a career profession. Some of the participants expressed their views on the fact that administratorship cannot be considered as a career is as follows:

*It's not a profession that's suitable for a career. The most you can be is a principal, even if you are a principal your salary is the same. (23, Teacher)*

*The most you can be is an administrator. (16, Teacher)*

On the other hand, some of the participants (21 participants) stated that a career can also be established in the teaching profession. However, few participants stated that the teaching profession is suitable for an academic career, but it is not a career profession in terms of getting a promotion in the profession. The opinions of the participants who think that teaching is a career profession are as follows:

*Yes... this profession is suitable for a career. (20, Principal)*

*It's a profession that's suitable for pursuing a career. (33, Principal)*

### **3.5.3. Willingness to Become an Administrator**

Within the scope of both qualitative and quantitative research, the participants who are not currently administrating were also asked if they want to become administrators. Only three of the 36 teachers questioned stated that they wanted to become administrators within the scope of qualitative research. The remainder of the participants (33 participants) stated that they were not willing to work.

The reasons participants were unwilling to become administrators, which will be addressed further in the study, can be understood by examining the difficulties faced by women who want to become administrators or who are currently working in administrative positions. It was observed that especially the heavy workload, the low status of the profession (additional salary and staff opportunities), job-family adaptation compared to teaching being more difficult, the idea that professional satisfaction in teaching cannot be achieved in administratorship, and the idea that individual characteristics are not suitable for administratorship lead to a reluctance when it comes to assuming administrative positions. Some of the participants' views on this issue are as follows:

*Are you at school all day long? Yes. Is it different than additional courses? No. It's not very different in terms of salary either. And on top of all that you have to deal with different people, and I don't think it has a big advantage. You have more responsibilities, but you don't really get anything in return. That's why, to be honest it's not really rational. (16, Teacher)*

*In administratorship there's confusion, when I'm a teacher I know my job, enter and exit class. (25, Teacher)*

*I never wanted to be in administration, when teaching you close the door and you're with the kids. I mean you provide the education, get along with the students, you don't put up with anyone. But when you sit here (shows the chair of the assistant principal in the room) people come, the teacher comes and says something, someone else says another thing. They come from (The Ministry of) National Education etc. They (the administrators) have to put up with more stuff... It's not like that for us. We close the door and get along with the students one way or another. (12, Teacher)*

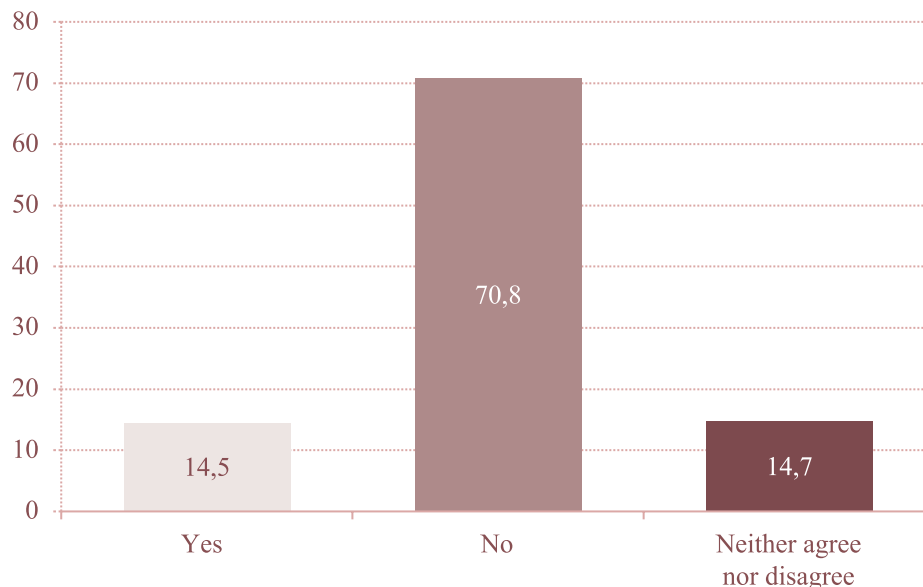
*I wanted to be with my students. Well, I thought I would become blunt in my subject and wouldn't be able to help the kids. I got an offer to be an assistant principal when I was younger, but I never really considered it. (7, Teacher)*

*I wouldn't do it in terms of maintaining a healthy family life. I think I shouldn't have to give up on family life or the other one. (10, Teacher)*

*Administratorship wants a lot of responsibility, it's not that easy. You need to have a clear head, be comfortable, to focus on that many responsibilities. Your family life needs to be stable. Or if it's like mine, I'm the one to support it and you need to have the financial conditions to take the burden off of you. If I become an administrator, I'm here the whole day. Who's going to take care of my kids? Who's going to give the economic return? If I am here five days a week who's going to do the cleaning at home? The conditions need to be made easier. (9, Assistant Principal)*

In the quantitative research, only participants who have the status of teachers were asked whether they want to be an administrator. 70.8 percent of the teachers stated that they did not want to be an administrator, 14.7 percent said they were indecisive, and 14.5 percent said they wanted to be an administrator.

Figure 16. Teachers' level of willingness to become an administrator (%)



As can be seen in Figure 16, a very limited number of participants stated that they wanted to be administrators. When asked why they wanted to become administrators 44.7 percent of the participants said they wanted to be more beneficial to the school and students, 33.6 percent said they wanted to pursue a career, 8.4 percent cited the problem of the norm staff, 13.3 percent cited other reasons. This finding is similar to the factors that motivate the participants to become administrators, who were already considered within the scope of qualitative research.

Table 19. Reasons participants want to become administrators

		<i>Reactions</i>	
		<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Why I want to be an administrator</i>	<i>I want to be more beneficial to the school and students</i>	218	44,7
	<i>My desire to pursue a career</i>	164	33,6
	<i>Norm staff problems</i>	41	8,4
	<i>Other reasons</i>	65	13,3
	<i>Total</i>	488	100,0

The reasons behind seven of the ten participants not wanting to become administrators are shown in Table 20. Within the scope of quantitative research, the reasons for the majority of the participants did not want to assume the administrative duties;

- Full-time working order (21.2 percent),
- The workload of the administratorship is heavy (18.5 percent),
- Individual perception that their personal characteristics are not suitable for administratorship (16.5 percent),
- Family responsibilities (16 percent),
- Teaching provides higher job satisfaction than administratorship (14.5 percent),
- Male-dominant social structure (5 percent),
- Administratorship does not have an additional financial return (4.8 percent) and
- Other reasons (3.5 percent).

It can be said that this finding supports both qualitative research findings about willingness to become an administrator and the results discussed in detail under the title of the difficulties faced by female teachers in terms of being administrators and the problems experienced by women administrators.

Table 20. Reasons participants do not want to become administrators

	<i>Reactions</i>		
	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	
<i>Why I don't want to be an administrator</i>	<i>Personal characteristics are not suitable for administratorship</i>	452	16,5
	<i>Family responsibilities</i>	439	16,0
	<i>The workload of the administratorship is heavy</i>	505	18,5
	<i>Male-dominant social structure</i>	137	5,0
	<i>Administratorship does not have an additional financial return</i>	132	4,8
	<i>Teaching provides higher job satisfaction than administratorship</i>	396	14,5
	<i>Full-time working order</i>	580	21,2
	<i>Other reasons</i>	96	3,5
	<i>Total</i>	2737	100,0

### 3.5.4. Reasons for Becoming an Administrator

As mentioned earlier in the study, although the number of female teachers is high, the number of women in the administration positions is quite low. In this regard, the reasons why women want to become administrators become significant. These reasons were also explored within the scope of qualitative research. The reasons why the principal and assistant principals, who are among the participants, want to be in administratorship can be listed as follows:

- Personal willingness (sense of idealism, diligence, innovation),
- Overcoming the staff problem,
- Guidance of the social environment

The first element that should be emphasized in terms of female teachers' desire to be administrators is the personal willingness defined by the participants with qualities such as idealism, diligence, a desire to succeed, and innovation. Some of the participants stated that they wanted to become administrators with the idea that their personal characteristics are suitable for administratorship and for pursuing a career. In this regard, a participant expressed their views as follows:

*Administratorship is something I always wanted. Being successful makes me happy. I'm an ambitious person. (45, Assistant Principal)*

According to the findings gathered from qualitative research, another personal feature that lies behind the motivation of being an administrator for female teachers is to be an idealist. In this sense, some participants defined themselves as idealistic people and stated that they preferred administratorship in order to be more beneficial to the school, students, and therefore the society. Some of these participants expressed the effect of the sense of idealism on the desire to become an administrator as follows:

*I'm an idealist. I like solving problems, I like to be beneficial. That's the biggest factor... When I got this kind of opportunity, I thought I could fulfill my ideas and dreams. There's no financial return or any kind of return. Because being an administrator isn't superior than a teacher it's even more troubling. I mean financially you don't get anything, only a room a desk and a chair. The only reason I do this is because I'm idealistic. Leaving a mark in life, leaving a product makes you happy because life is passing, but when everything is over, when you look back, if you couldn't produce something, if you couldn't leave anything humanity, society, young people, you have lived completely for yourself. I mean this my own idealism. I don't regret it, if I could do it again I would. I wish I had started earlier to do more things. (30, Principal)*

*Teaching wasn't very appealing. Even when I come home and sit down, I want to work. I have a lot of time on my hands and I want to do something. I want to be beneficial to people, to my community, to my country. Or yeah, if I take a look at my friends, they have six to eight hours of class and they have the week or many days off. I chose administratorship because this didn't seem right. I became an administrator because I love working. (9, Assistant Principal)*

Some participants stated that they started to administrate to overcome the staff problem. On the other hand, some of the participants stated that they were administrators, not because of their own wishes, but because of the demand and persistence of their colleagues or administrators or health problems. In this sense, there are also a few participants who stated that they got bored of the routine duties and responsibilities of teaching and considered administratorship because they thought it was more dynamic and innovative.

When all these findings are evaluated together, half of the participants, who carry out the administrative duties, prefer this task with their own individual desire. The other half was found to be an administrator for various reasons mentioned above or as compulsory. This finding indicates an important rationale for the professionalization of school administratorship. It is revealed that half of the participants performed an important task such as school administratorship due to the current circumstances, and not at their own will.

### **3.5.5. Difficulties Faced by Female Teachers in Terms of Being Administrators**

In line with the findings obtained from qualitative research, it is possible to classify the difficulties experienced by female teachers in terms of being administrators as follows:

- Individual features,
- Problems experienced in terms of work-family harmony, as it is difficult to fulfill family responsibilities,
- Having children in the young age group,

- The spousal disapproval,
- Heavy workload and full-time working order,
- Problem of merit in terms of promotion in the profession,
- Negative perspective on women administrators,
- No difference in personal rights for teachers who are administrators,
- Lack of professional school administratorship,
- Intra-gender competition.

Studies reveal that personal characteristics such as lack of self-confidence, approaching events too emotionally, indecision, not being career-oriented, not facing the difficulties of rising in a certain career, not having the desire or belief to change conditions, internalizing the social approach towards female administrators make women's career paths more difficult. (Aycan, 2005). Similarly, within the scope of qualitative research, some of the participants stated that women were not result oriented due to their emotional behavior.



According to the participants, male administrators are more advantageous in terms of assuming the duties and responsibilities required by administration positions due to their individual characteristics. The opinions of a participant regarding the difficulties women face in administratorship due to their emotional nature are as follows:

*We're emotional, men can look in a more positive manner. They are problem solvers and are more result oriented. This circumstance can be better for them. It provides better results for the class, the teacher and the administration. We feel out of sorts here. (21, Teacher)*

According to the participants, one of the biggest difficulties in participating in the administration position is the perception that it will be difficult to achieve the harmony between work and family life. Approximately half of the participants think that the combination of increased workload and family responsibilities due to administratorship will be challenging and may reflect negatively on their family life. One participant expressed this difficulty as follows:

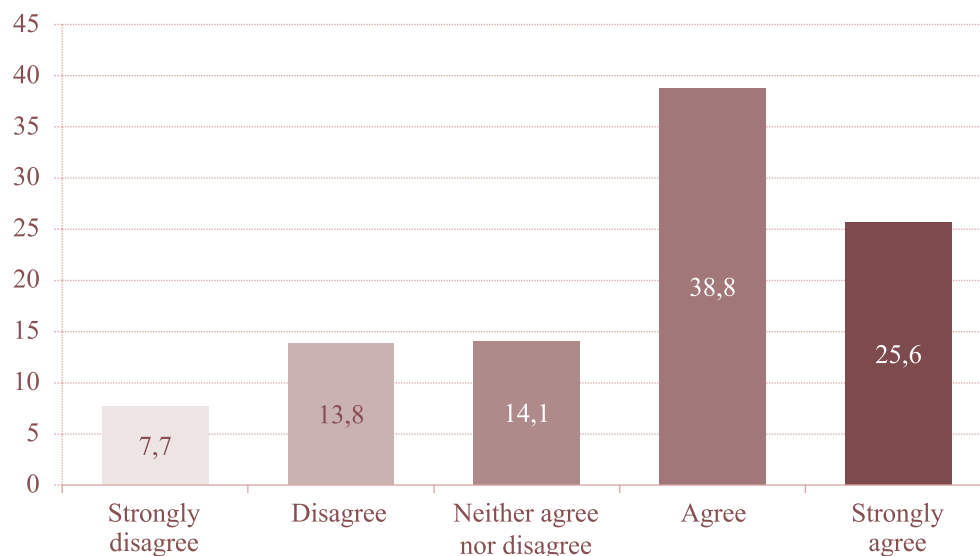
*The [female teacher rate] is over 50 percent but the rate decreases as the positions are higher. A female administrator is either unmarried, doesn't have a child or is divorced. It's usually these kinds of women. Or they have already raised their child. For example, men become administrators after the age of 35 but women think about it after 35, I*



*started after I was 35. My principal friends that I attended college with, have been assistant principals for 6-7 years, been a principal, a branch director; meanwhile I'm just gathering myself. My child grew up and my responsibilities decreased. I had as much time to work as men do. After 35, my child grew up and we put the key in his pocket. Even now we had to enroll him to a close place. I couldn't make it to my child. When I had to make a selection, I had to consider my child and my house when I was making a selection. I didn't make a selection based on where I would fulfill my ideals. I selected the school where I could make time for my family. (13, Assistant Principal)*

The issue of determining whether family care responsibilities of women affect the administration tendencies of female teachers has also been investigated within the scope of quantitative research. The rate of participants who think that their family care responsibilities make it difficult for them to be administrators is 64.4 percent. The rate of those who have the opposite opinion is 21.5 percent, and the rate of the participants who state that they are indecisive about the subject is 14.1 percent. When the quantitative research results on this issue are compared to the qualitative findings given above, it can be seen that the results are compatible. However, it can be said that the rate of the participants who have the perception that administrative duties will make it difficult to maintain a healthy work-life balance is higher compared to participants in the qualitative research.

Figure 17. The level of participation of female teachers to the statement “Women having family care responsibilities makes it difficult for them to be administrators” (%)



In addition to the perception that administratorship will make it difficult to harmonize work and family responsibilities, many participants also noted “motherhood” as a factor which renders administratorship difficult, especially for women who have children in the younger age group. A significant number of participants stated that having a child in the age of care, in other words, having an age that children are unable fulfill their basic care responsibilities, makes administratorship

difficult. The opinions of some participants which state that the relationship between mother and child should be based on solid foundations are as follows:

*If you have an infant it's an obstacle. You can't leave your infant and focus on your career. Maybe when your child grows up but not when they're young. (15, Teacher)*

*I think somebody should be with the child. That position, principal or assistant principal, could be attained but when you miss those periods of your child there's no turning back. Many development phases happen in that time period and if you're not there to witness it, there's no turning back. (28, Teacher)*

Some of the participants, who have already taken over administrative positions, also support the aforementioned views. The following participants stated that were able to become administrators because their children grew up:

*I am able to do this because my children grew up. Otherwise I couldn't have done it. Now my children are helping me. (52, Assistant Principal)*

*I can be an administrator because I raised my kids. Other people couldn't do it. A person with a young child couldn't be an administrator. We can go to school at midnight. I can do it but society's pressure, family roles disable you so it's an obstacle. (53, Principal)*

*It would have been difficult if I had young children. The children grew up and they help me, we share responsibilities. If the kids were young- my kids are a year apart- then teaching and administrating would have been very difficult. Working women traditionally have family responsibilities and they have the responsibility to fulfill the duties given. We're stuck between these two. It would have been hard to choose administration when the kids were young. (35, Assistant Principal)*

Some participants stated that being a mother, regardless of the age of the children, made administratorship difficult. These participants think that not only having children in the young age group but also having children at any age creates difficulties in terms of holding administrative positions. A participant with twins at the age of nine stated that motherhood creates difficulties for administration:

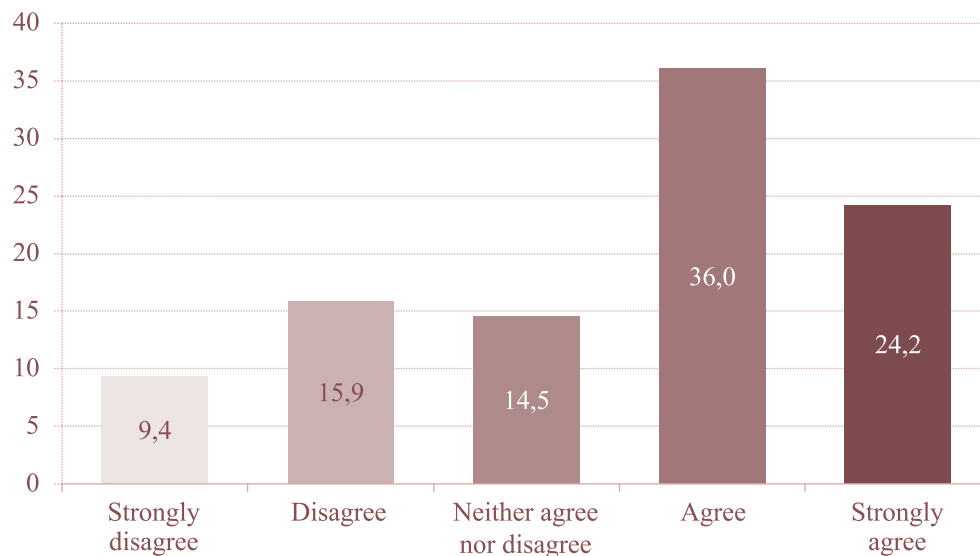
*I don't want to be an administrator. If I didn't have kids possibly. I had opportunities. I got offers but I wanted to spend time with my kids. Being a mom is an obstacle in terms of administratorship. It's hard working a full day. (66, Teacher)*

On the other hand, some participants do not think that being a mother is a challenging factor for administratorship. One participant expressed her thoughts on the subject as follows:

*It's not an obstacle it's a source of energy. Motherhood is something that keeps a woman dynamic, strong, and keeps them alive. I was unable to have a child so we had a test tube baby but if I had the chance, I would want five. You would be five times stronger. Five times more dynamic. Because nothing teaches you the things your child does. The things you learned from your kids are incomparable. (62, Principal)*

Quantitative research findings on whether having a child makes it difficult to be an administrator show that more than half of participants (60.2 percent) believe that having a child makes it difficult to be an administrator. Quantitative research data also supports these qualitative research results. The rate of participants who stated that they are indecisive in this regard is 14.5 percent, and the rate of the participants who think that having children is not a challenging factor for administratorship is 25.1 percent. Only one out of every four participants do not have the perception that having children has a challenging effect on female teachers in undertaking their administrative duties.

Figure 18. The level of participation of female teachers to the statement “Having children makes it difficult for female teachers to become administrators” (%)



Some of the participants stated that men do not want their wives to be administrators and have a negative attitude about this issue because they worry that it will negatively affect work-life balance due to the workload brought on by administrative positions. Women who want to balance their work and family life may have to make a choice and move away from the idea of being an administrator or postpone this desire.

*There are more obstacles for women. These... sometimes happens at home. Because when a man is a principal 90% of the time their wife is understanding. (31, Assistant Principal)*

On the other hand, the negative aspect of women in administration positions may pose a challenge for women to become administrators (İnandı et al., 2009). Negative judgments about women becoming administrators result in suspicion about whether women can fulfill the requirements of administratorship. Such approaches not only make it difficult for women to rise to administrative positions, but also affect the way women who have taken over their duties exercise their powers (Conner & Sharp, 1992). However, one of the areas where the situation in question is intensely seen is educational institutions (Usluer, 2000).

In the qualitative research some participants stated that certain prejudices that female administrators were unsuccessful, would become unsuccessful, or that women were not competent to become administrators cause female teachers to face difficulties in taking administrative positions. One of the participants, based on their own experiences, expressed the attitudes and behaviors of both their subordinates, senior administration, and the school environment (for example, parents) towards female administrators as follows:

*If there is a duty going to be given, men are usually selected rather than women. For a woman to be selected she needs to be very ahead of the man so she can be chosen. They don't want men to go home but women to. They leave all the household tasks and childrens' responsibilities to women. (32, Principal)*

The view that administrators should be men has a significant impact on families (İnandı et al., 2009). In this context, parents who want to keep their children under control think that a more serious school environment will be created with male administrators that they deem more authoritarian, or with female administrators who can act as authoritarian as men (Smulyan, 2000). In other words, parents are concerned that female administrators cannot discipline their children as much as male administrators. The experience of a participant regarding the prejudice of parents about female administrators clearly reveals this situation:

*The people who want to work with you want tasks from you. But when it comes to the office, they don't want a woman. If there is going to be a selection, you are in second place. This is a disadvantage because society's perception expects administrators to be male. The parent wants to see a male. I have an experience regarding this. Someone came and said "I want to see Mr. Principal" I said I'm the principal. I repeated I'm the principal three times. But he kept on saying "I want to see the principal." I directed him to see the male assistant principal, here you can speak to him. I mean I couldn't convince him I was the principal. (63, Principal)*

Almost half of the participants stated that the workload, which includes jobs whose status and borders are not clear and that takeaway from the core of education, are among the difficulties women face in becoming administrators. Some participants expressed their thoughts as follows:

*Just think of the teachers, there are 60 teachers. There are also parents, students, financial matters, incomes and expenses, the job description is very broad. I mean you couldn't arrange all of this even if you worked day and night. No matter what you do, they always criticize. (18, Teacher)*

On the other hand, although being an administrator brings a lot of work and responsibility, it does not make a significant difference economically and also negatively affects the willingness of female teachers to become administrators. Within the scope of qualitative research, some participants defined that there is no difference in the personal rights of the teachers who take the task of administratorship and stated this among the various difficulties that women face to become administrators. The issue of merit experienced by some participants in terms of getting promoted is another challenge for women to become administrators. A participant's statement on the subject emphasizes the importance of merit:

*There's no such thing as gender if you do the same job and possess the same diploma. What needs to be significant is merit. (65, Teacher)*

According to the results attained from qualitative research, another challenge for women to become administrators is the attitudes and behaviors of other women, which we can define as "intra-gender competition." This issue was also emphasized in the focus group meeting of female teachers, almost all of whom were administrators. According to the participants intra-gender competition arises from the fact that women do not support each other, constantly compete with each other, and sometimes try to directly challenge one another. The opinions of participants who think that intra-gender competition is an important challenge for administratorship are as follows:

*If my same gender friends learn to accept other people's (same gender) success, enjoy it, say it's one of us (20, Principal)*

*Emotions get tangled. Women don't support each other; they see each other as rivals. However, men support each other. Men are sharp witted. (22, Assistant Principal)*

*Men don't have this much rivalry amongst each other; women do. (27, Teacher)*

There are other studies showing that female teachers do not want to work with female administrators. Ernst and Young (2003) conducted a study entitled "Being a Woman at Work" in Turkey to determine the views of female workers working with female administrators and the difficulties they face. The study revealed that female employees do not want to work with female administrators, not just in educational institutions, but in other sectors as well. The rate of participants who do not prefer their own gender in administration is 40.4 percent (Ernst and Young, 2003).

### 3.5.6. Issues that Women Administrators Face

The obstacles female teachers face in becoming administrators are directly related to the problems faced by female administrators. Within the scope of interviews held with participants who currently work as administrators, it is possible to summarize the findings regarding the problems experienced by women administrators as follows:

- Workloads and responsibilities without limits,
- Bureaucratic workload,
- Insufficient institutional support in solving school problems,
- Lack of adequate in-service training in jobs requiring expertise,
- The expectation regarding personal rights is not met,
- Low status of the profession (salary, staff, etc.),
- Failure to comply with merit principles regarding getting promoted,
- Student indiscipline and parent pressure,
- Negative perspective on women administrators (problems in recognition of authority, expectation of failure, problems in terms of relations with senior administrators),
- Short rotation period,
- Intra-gender competition.

In the interviews, some participants who were in administrative positions such as principals or assistant principals stated that the burden related to work is not related to the essence of education and often requires expertise are as follows:

*Both accounting and plumbing these should be supported from the district or from outside somehow. I mean this should have been done professionally. There's an understanding that you're a principal you're going to do everything, if you're a principal you need to find a solution. I'm against this. For example, you go to the district for natural gas installations and ask how you're supposed to do it and the district says you're a principal you're supposed to do it, it's your job, do it... Whereas, they should say you should focus on teaching and the vision, we'll take care of these kinds of situations don't sweat it... Many people give up after a certain period, they leave because they get exhausted. Even now I feel tired because of the workload, the workload... If we want to make the education system better, we need to take the unnecessary burden off their shoulders. The administrators should definitely, and I mean definitely be professionalized and provide enough support and benefit from their experience, keep them... You shouldn't be asked unnecessary stuff. You tell the athlete run 100 meters fast, be first place and have a burden on your shoulder. It's not fair. (30, Principal)*

*Well we have weird jobs to do, I mean outside of school... For example, we are inspectors.*

*The principal is burdened the with problems out of their his/her own expertise. They give investigation files, it's like evaluating another school principal. It's a heavy burden that has been given to us. Think about it, inspectors do it and get paid when we do it, we continue our routine work but don't receive any payment. We regulate the dorms, the courses, and are members of many committees. Even though it looks like part of our job we're not part of the decision-making mechanism it just wastes our time in a visual manner. (62, Principal)*

*We have dorms so we have to work 24 hours. My phone rings at 12-1 at night. One of our students becomes ill or something happens. You have to take care of them. When something happens, I have to go to the dorm at that hour... I have to be called because I'm the superintendent. Besides that, I don't say oh it's Saturday or Sunday I come because I look after the dorms. A plumbing problem, water outage, or a blackout could occur. I take care of the restoration like a house. If a machine doesn't work, I help because the students are going to do laundry. You have to find a mechanic and fix it. (35, Assistant Principal)*

Findings obtained from qualitative research show that among the problems faced by female administrators— extracurricular workload as previously stated as a challenging factor regarding work—are bureaucratic duties similar to documents and projects. In this regard, some of the participants, who emphasized the quality of “school leadership” of school administrators, stated that they lost their qualifications due to these duties as follows:

*In my previous administratorship years we used to be the leader of teaching. I would pay attention to the student, the absence, we were school oriented. But after, how should I say it, after digital writing came out it's so fast paced, I mean you have to answer in an hour and leave everything aside to do so. They forget that this place is a school and there's a flow. The principal and assistant principals correspond. There's no civil servant to answer. There's no qualified employee I mean first of all we need to slow down with the correspondence. We can't deal with this much correspondence. (48, Principal)*

*Just leave administrators to deal with the students. We administrators should chat with the students pay attention to them. Sometimes I can't see the students. Plus, daily, we get a writing and they say answer in two hours. When I don't, they call me 40 times from my phone. Or they say finish it until tomorrow. Wanting information and work so quickly really damages the other things at school. It exhausts the teachers. It exhausts the administration. (20, Principal)*

One of the most frequently mentioned problems by the administrative participants during the interviews is that in-service training opportunities are not adequately provided for the jobs that require expertise, such as accounting, organizational management, occupational health and safety, and therefore a teacher cannot know. Participants who emphasized the difference between administrationship and teaching stated that they do not consider themselves enough in terms of their areas of expertise and that they have difficulty in decision-making processes:

*Administrationship differs from teaching, you need to deal with many fields of expertise, whereas we're not educated in this matter. These subjects are important and cannot be neglected. Therefore, we need to be trained. School administrationship needs to be professional. (9, Assistant Principal)*

*When you come to the administration, you deal with many areas. So, let me give you an example on occupational health and safety, it is a very big responsibility, you're not educated but they give you responsibilities. Or in financial matters, it's a topic that you need to work carefully, and you should have basic information about it, but you don't, and you deal with it. That's the difficult part of the job. (8, Principal)*

On the other hand, it is among the problems addressed by the participants that all duties and responsibilities undertaken due to the lack of a job description do not receive additional payment, and despite the excessive workload, there is no remuneration other than teaching. In other words, there is no additional income defined for the administrative task. The opinions of some participants who do not think there is a fair balance between the work done, the effort spent, and the income earned are as follows:

*I'm a physics teacher. Let me tell you something, let me go to class as a physics teacher I'd double the amount (than when I'm a principal). Whether you are a woman or a man, first of all if you're an administrator at school, you spend your whole day here, the teachers that work half a day shouldn't earn more than you. (20, Principal)*

*I don't think the salary is worth the effort and time I spend. Because if I was a teacher and I worked this intense I would earn double the amount. If I work all day and night on the weekends, I would earn a lot of money. It's not about money but besides needs nobody sees us in a prestigious manner. I mean it's not seen as a career, it's not seen as prestigious. (48, Principal)*

*The job and the salary are disproportionate. As an administrator we don't have a time concept, it's not possible. We work all day, all year. Students come for night classes at high school, they are my responsibility, it continues until 10 pm. Preschool starts at eight in the morning, at eight my responsibilities start and end at 10 pm. This salary is ridiculous. If you don't like your job and if your conscience isn't suitable for the job you would get hung up (on the salary) and wouldn't work. (62, Principal)*



Based on the opinions of the participants it can be said that another problem experienced by administrators arises from the lack of a separate law of the profession. According to some participants becoming an administrator with the appointment method and returning back to teaching when this task ends can create future anxiety. These participants emphasized the importance of merit in professional advances and the need for professional administratorship in order to solve this problem:

*Right now, it's really hard for administrators because there's no such thing as principal or assistant principal staff. If there was a staff, there wouldn't be a problem but when you get appointed, they can appoint you to a different school in Ankara like bam. Because there's no such thing as a principal staff. I shouldn't wonder what's going to happen to me. Those processes need to be clear. A person's destiny should not fall in the hands of somebody else. Appoint an administrator based on merit and trust them. Put a performance indicator and look where it takes the school. (32, Principal)*

*It's hard for the system to continue...What we expect from the (Ministry of) National Education is to improve the conditions and bring a professional administratorship system... it would increase the value. It would increase the efficiency. Right now, I'm this kind of idealistic, if it wasn't my dream it's not something to pursue. It's based completely on idealism. That's the reason why schools frequently change administrators. (30, Principal)*

*The thing we call merit and leave it to rot, is knowing the job, having work ethic, I mean they might not know the regulations but it's easy to learn, but we need administrators that can manage a crisis, have positive human relations, act flexible, decide quickly and stick with their decision. (62, Principal)*

Another challenge within the framework of administrative difficulties -as many participants have emphasized- is the profile of parents and student indiscipline. In addition to being responsible for the administration of the school as a whole and the solution of disciplinary problems in general, it can also direct the process of supporting students with personal problems. At this point, it is possible to confront students and parents. Some participants stated that the background of student discipline generally has the attitudes and behaviors of the parents so that the profile of the parents is directly reflected on the student:

*One of the most important things is the parent-student profile, you have a student, but you educate the parent as well. I mean the profile of the parent reflects on the student. I mean the student is a miniature of the parent. In this regard, the general condition of the person affects you closely. The parent-teacher association, general condition of the parents, socio-economic status, level of education etc. these could add vision and bring you forward or make you take a step back. Because sometimes, it could take weeks, they*

*have a complaint or an issue with the child and this could ruin your agenda or plan. That's why the general condition of the parent is an important factor for the functioning of the school. (20, Principal)*

*The parent profile is another challenging factor. In this school the parent profile is low, and they are uninterested. Whereas, education has three legs. We can reach the student and give the education necessary but it's not that efficient when the parents are unsupportive. (8, Principal)*

As mentioned in the obstacles for female teachers in becoming administrators, one of the challenging factors for female administrators is the negative perspective towards female administrators. Some participants stated that the school environment (teachers, staff and parents working in the school), is biased and holds the view that female administrators are not as authoritative as male administrators. Furthermore, the school environment can have difficulties in recognizing the authority of female administrators and expect failure from female administrators. Some of the participants stated their problems in this regard as follows:

*We're not used to female administrators. Even though there are female administrators, we still are unable to get used to it. They usually see women as people who come and then run away. To dismantle this image, you need to work two, three times harder. You're trying to get yourself accepted. When there's a mistake in traffic they say it's from a woman. The same thing goes for us in administration. It's like females can't deal with it or succeed. Because you deal with the school's physical conditions as well. Plumbing, cleaning, it's not just teaching. I even went up to the roof. It's tasks that women face difficulties. But if you chose to do this you have to do it. Some male teachers don't know how to open the heating boiler. But when I was the only administrator I opened and closed it by myself. I know all the stuff regarding the heating boiler. It's in my control. I don't call anyone for maintenance, I do it myself. (13, Assistant Principal)*

*Another issue is that we communicate with assistant business lines that men are found profoundly. As a female administrator, we have difficulties in terms of wording and speaking. There are problems in agreeing... When I first started being an administrator, there was a perception that I couldn't pull the job off. I dealt with this perception. Everybody was waiting to see when I would leave the job or make a mistake. People weren't very used to a female administrator, society sees administrators as men, today we are kind of over it, we progressed in this matter. (30, Principal)*

*Of course, there is a perception that (administrators) they are male. Because women are seen as more emotional and weaker. They think they'll reflect it to work. (59, Principal)*



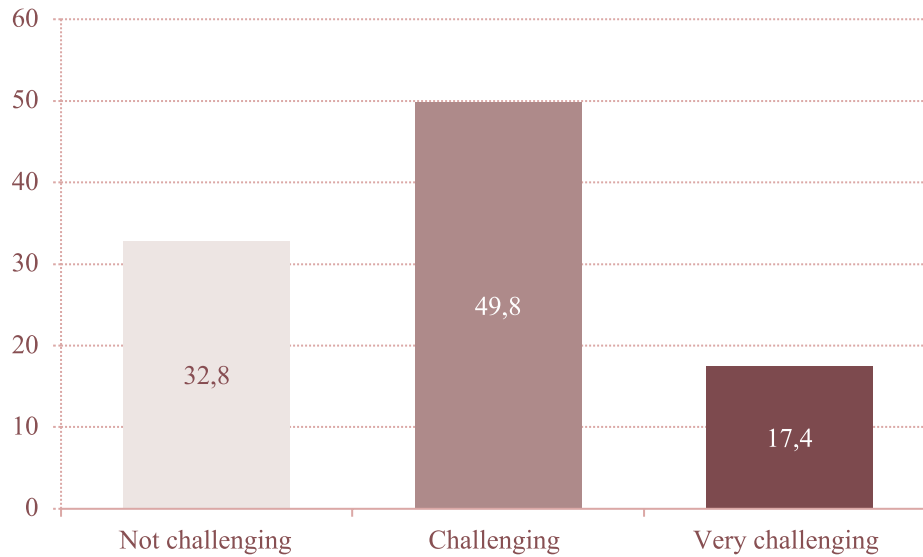
As can be seen from the participant statements above, some participants have to display a “masculine” attitude when using their duties and powers due to the negative viewpoint towards female administrators. A large number of women exhibit “masculine” attitudes in order to be accepted, appreciated, or supported in institutions where they take over administrative positions (Conner & Sharp, 1992; Simpson, 1997).

Some of the participants who assumed the administrative role expressed that one of the issues they experienced was the rotation period being very short. In this sense, the participants stated that in the short rotation period, just when they start getting to know the school, parents, students, in short, the school environment and start becoming efficient their appointment process to another school may occur.

*What's on all of our agenda is the appointment of a principal for four years. After four years, it's my third, I spent the first two years to the fullest, now it's my third. So, you start forming projects, learn the school, progress the school, form a team etc. and after that, maybe next year I won't be here. It doesn't matter female or male, this is how it is. Teachers can stay at the same school for 20-25 years but an administrator for only four and then faces rotation, I mean the teacher says I've seen so many principals...*  
(63, Principal)

Based on qualitative research findings, the problems faced by female administrators were also addressed within the scope of quantitative research. In the qualitative research, the opinions of the quantitative research participants on the issues that stand out in the context of these problems were consulted. The participants were asked whether the conflict of work-life balance challenged them in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities related to administratorship. According to the data from Figure 19, while 67.2 percent of the administrative participants said that work-family life conflict is a challenging factor, 32.8 percent said it is not. As previously mentioned, participants who work as administrators state that their spouse or their children complain that they have limited time to share to with their families due to the workload, creating difficulties in terms of work-life balance. In the quantitative research almost seven out of ten participants stated that work-family life conflict is a challenging factor, supporting this finding.

Figure 19. Challenge level of women administrators in conflict of work-family life (%)



According to the findings obtained from the quantitative research, the most challenging factor for administrative participants is the full-time working order. 81.5 percent of participants who hold administrative positions stated that full-time working order is a challenging factor. 18.5 percent are of the opinion that it does not cause difficulties for themselves. This finding supports the qualitative research findings regarding both the obstacles preventing female teachers from becoming administrators and the problems faced by female administrators.

Figure 20. Challenge level of full-time working order on female administrators (%)

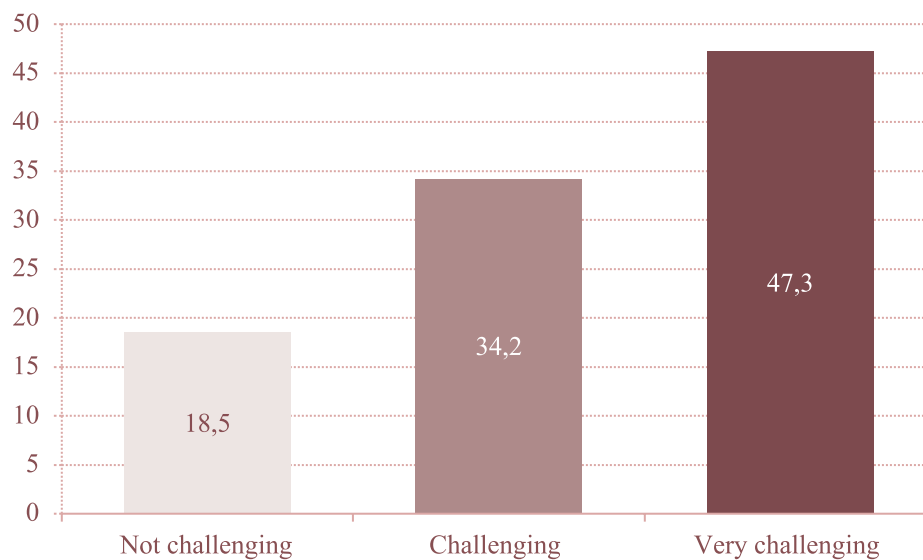


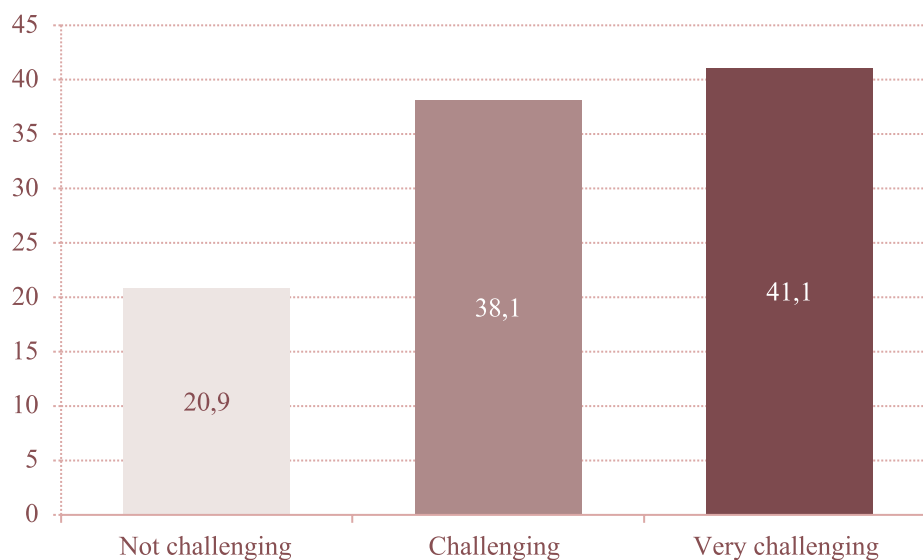
Table 21 shows the distribution of the challenge level of the full-time working order for female administrators according to the age variable of the youngest child in terms of participants with children. As can be seen in the table, as of the youngest child's age, under 4 years of age, full-time work is more challenging for administrative participants who have children than those with a child in other age groups. This finding can be explained by having at least one child in the age group, where the participants have relatively more care responsibilities.

Table 21. Distribution of the challenge level of full-time working for female administrators according to independent variables (%) and chi-square analysis results

	<i>Full time working order</i>			$\chi^2$	<i>sd</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>Not challenging</i>	<i>Challenging</i>	<i>Very Challenging</i>			
3 years and under	14,3	31,0	54,8			
4-5 years old	3,8	51,9	44,2			
6-13 years old	21,5	25,4	53,1	23,28	8	,003*
14-17 years old	21,4	35,7	42,9			
Ages 18 and over	27,9	37,7	34,4			

Within the scope of quantitative research, the ratio of participants who hold administrative positions and stated that they had difficulties due to the heavy workload of administratorship is 79.1 percent. It can be said that almost eight out of ten participants have difficulties due to the heavy workload of administratorship. Within the scope of quantitative research, the most challenging factor for administrative participants after full-time working order is the heavy workload.

Figure 21. The challenge level on female administrators regarding heavy workload of administratorship (%)



As can be seen in Table 22, where the challenge level of the workload of the administratorship is analyzed according to the age variable of the youngest child in terms of participants with children, it is seen that the youngest child under the age of four, those who have children in early childhood, or in the 14-17 age group. In other words, for administrative participants who have children in their teenage years the high workload is more challenging than the other participants with the youngest child in other age groups. For the administrative participants who have children in early childhood as of the age of their youngest child, higher care responsibilities and workloads on the one hand can negatively affect the harmony between work and family life. Similarly, it is normal for excessive workload to be considered more challenging for participants who have children in the age group of 14-17, where the teenage period and the preparation for the university exam are intertwined.

Table 22. The distribution of the challenge level of heavy workload for female administrators according to independent variables (%) and chi-square analysis results

	<i>The workload of the administratorship is heavy</i>			$\chi^2$	sd	p
	<i>Not challenging</i>	<i>Challenging</i>	<i>Very Challenging</i>			
3 years and under	15,7	36,1	48,2			
4-5 years old	12,7	56,4	30,9			
6-13 years old	21,7	36,4	41,9	19,32	8	,013*
14-17 years old	12,5	32,1	55,4			
Ages 18 and over	29,0	41,9	29,0			

### 3.6. Job Satisfaction

It is accepted that teaching creates a higher level of stress for employees compared to other professions (Kumaş& Deniz, 2010). The main reasons for this situation are conflicts between teachers and students due to discipline, school-family conflicts, high class sizes, inadequate physical conditions, excessive extracurricular work load due to heavy bureaucratic work, low social support, insufficient salary levels, problems in job promotion, the insufficiency of participation in rewarding and decision-making processes. These problems lead to the emergence of stress, anxiety, and burnout while also it leading to decreased job performance and job satisfaction (Celep, 2003).

Within the scope of qualitative research, almost all of the teachers and administrators who participated in the research stated that they are satisfied with their work and love their work. Participants expressed that they would choose the teaching profession again if they had a chance to choose one more time. Some participant statements on this subject are as follows:

*I love my job. I get the chance to witness the children's innocence, their communication, and positivity. At the base of every profession there is teaching. Teachers raise doctors, engineers. (22, Teacher)*

*Psychologically I have a lot of satisfaction, it makes me very happy, I do my job without dragging my feet. I love it. It's like when my student is successful it's as if it's my success and I'm very glad. (47, Principal)*

*If I had the chance to choose again, I would be a teacher again. I even enjoy the stress. Succeeding connects me to life. You know the saying "being faithful to your country" that's really important. (26, Teacher)*

The reasons why participants are satisfied with their work can be listed as follows:

- Making the job feel that they are beneficial to people (the teaching profession creates positive emotions in the person),
- The job offering the opportunity to be together with children,
- The spiritual satisfaction of the job is high,
- The feedback received is positive,
- Providing the opportunity to fulfill your dreams.

In addition to these, there were also participants who stated that the positive school climate increased job satisfaction. Some participants stated that high job satisfaction is closely related to doing the profession with love. They also stated that this situation facilitates the harmony between work and family life.

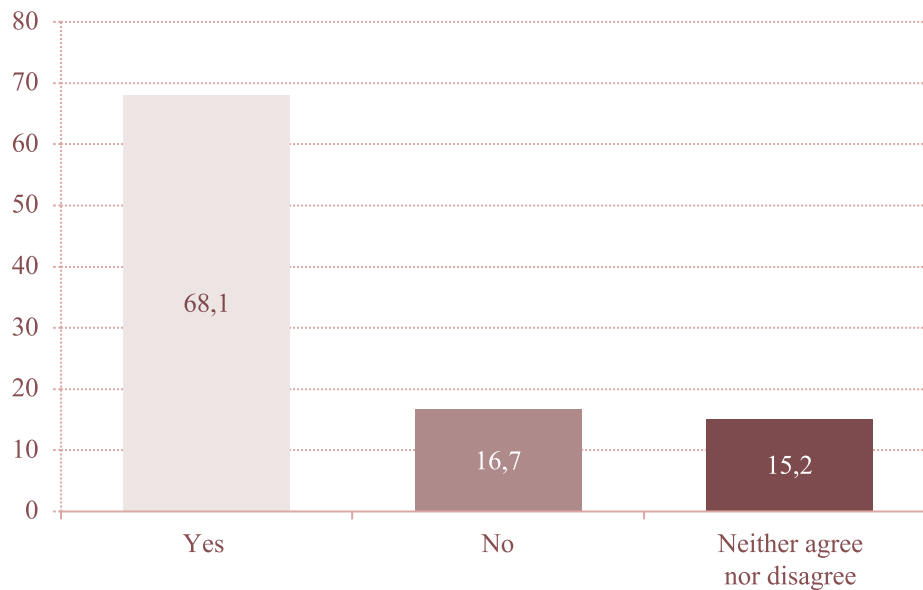
Only three participants stated that they were not satisfied with their job and one participant stated that they were indecisive regarding the issue. The reasons behind the dissatisfaction of the participants in question are as follows:

- The problems experienced in terms of work-family harmony and inability to fulfill their home responsibilities due to the wearing of the work,
- Additional bureaucratic responsibilities, in other words, the extra-curricular workload being challenging,
- The undisciplined behavior of students to force the teacher,
- Routine of the work,
- There is no relationship between job performance and salary level,
- Nursery, etc. limited social rights.

It has been observed that some participants who currently hold administrative positions or who have had administrative experience in the past do not think similarly about administratorship, although their job satisfaction is high in terms of teaching. It is possible to say that the reason for this dissatisfaction in administratorship is the workload.

Job satisfaction was also questioned within the scope of quantitative research and it was seen that 68.1 percent of participants stated that they would choose the teaching profession again if they had the opportunity to do so. Nevertheless, 15.2 percent of participants stated that they are indecisive about this issue and 16.7 percent stated that they would not choose the teaching profession if they had the chance. When the results obtained in the “Teaching Profession and Status of the Profession” study are evaluated in terms of gender we can see that 46.8 percent of female teachers indicated that they would choose the teaching profession, 20.3 percent were indecisive, and 32.9 percent said they would choose another profession if given the chance (Yurdakul, et al., 2016). It can be said that the job satisfaction of female teachers in the scope of the research has increased compared to the female teachers participating in the “Teaching Profession and the Status of the Profession” study in this matter, which can be directly associated with job satisfaction. Findings from the study show that job satisfaction is higher among female teachers compared to male teachers.

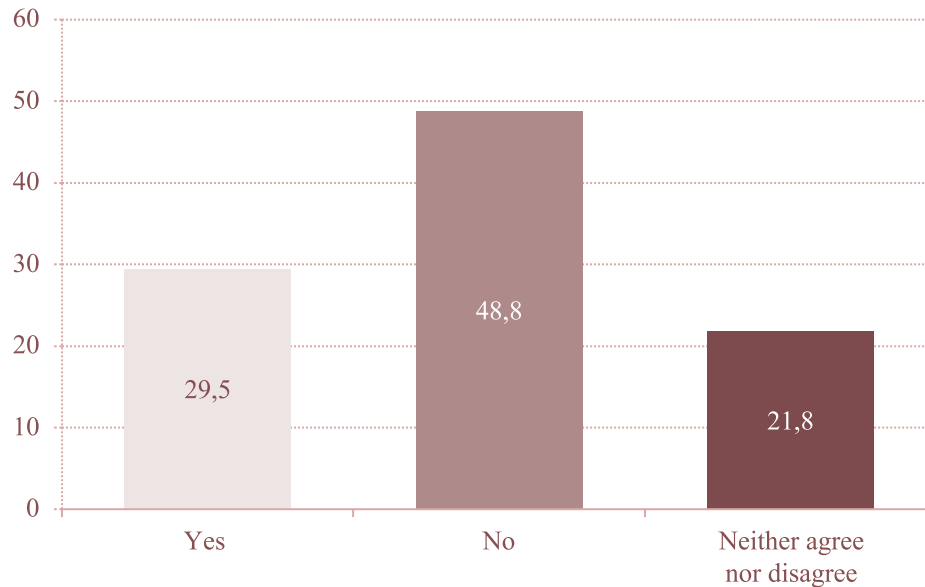
Figure 22. If you had a chance to choose again, would you choose the teaching profession? (%)



Another study investigating teachers' job satisfaction levels shows that there is a significant difference in job satisfaction levels of teachers in terms of gender (Kumaş & Deniz, 2010). According to these findings the job satisfaction of female teachers is higher than those of male teachers. This situation can be explained by socio-economic and socio-cultural reasons such as the perception of the livelihood of the house as the primary responsibility of the man and the social perception that the teaching profession is more suitable for women (Kumaş and Deniz, 2010).



Figure 23. Would you like your own child to be a teacher? (%)



When the answers given to the question directed to the participants “Would you like your child to be a teacher?” are analyzed regarding job satisfaction and their view of the profession in general, it can be seen that although 29.5 percent of the participants support their child being a teacher, 48.8 percent responded negatively and 21.8 percent are undecided. Results obtained from the “Teaching Profession and Status of the Profession” study (2016) show that the rate of female participants stating that they will support their children becoming teachers is 35.3 percent. When findings obtained in both studies are compared it is seen that the rate of the participants who support their children to become teachers is decreasing. When all these issues and the previous findings are evaluated together when there was an opportunity to choose again, it can be said that the participants who stated that they would choose the teaching profession again had a negative answer to this question and instead of directly associating it with their job satisfaction and addressed a career expectation better than their own for their kids



**WORKING LIFE OF  
FEMALE TEACHERS**  
Findings and Suggestions

4

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF FEMALE TEACHERS IN WORKING LIFE**



One of the objectives of this study is to contribute to the development of policies aimed at improving the situation of female teachers in working life. The opinions of participants were also taken into consideration within the framework of the development of these policies. In this section, policy suggestions that can contribute to the improvement of the number of female teachers in administrative positions and the situation of female teachers in working life are discussed.

#### **4.1. Policy Suggestions for Improving Work–Life Balance**

Policies aimed at harmonizing work and family life aim to balance work life and family life and try to resolve conflicts between work and family life by reorganizing work hours and order, workplace practices and workplace culture (Aydın, 2011). These policies create positive effects on women's employment, support the strengthening of the family, and form the basis of a healthy society. In this regard, it is crucial to increase and diversify policies that will prevent conflicts between the “productive” role women undertake in the labor market and the role of the “mother” that gives birth and raises future generations.

Within the scope of both qualitative and quantitative research, participants were asked about their opinions on policies that might be effective in eliminating, or at least reducing, the problems experienced by female teachers in terms of work-life balance. As stated earlier in the study, the biggest problem female teachers face regarding work-life balance is the fulfillment of care responsibilities of children in the young age group. Considering the rate of participants who think that being a mother is a challenging situation for administration, it is possible to say that the policies in question are important in increasing the currently low number of female administrators in Turkey. In line with the findings obtained from qualitative research, the policy recommendations that the participants think may be effective in fostering a healthy work-life balance can be listed as follows:

- Popularizing nurseries,
- The establishment of kindergarten facilities for early childhood learning in every school and ensuring that the children of teachers can benefit from said facilities
- Opening institutional nurseries within the Ministry of National Education,
- Providing tutoring opportunities in schools for older children (teacher children),
- Monetary aid provided by the state (caregiver and nursery support),
- Increasing paid maternity leave periods,
- Flexibility in class schedules.

Almost three out of every four participants stated that popularizing nurseries would both reduce the problems teachers face in terms of work-life balance and strengthen their tendency to become administrators. Some participants suggested the establishment of nursery facilities directly in the schools they are currently working at. Female participants that do not have social support in terms of care responsibility including early childhood and have to receive service from the market emphasized the importance of having their children in the institution they work in, in an close and easily accessible environment they can trust. They also stated that the establishment of nurseries/ kindergartens in schools will positively affect the safe bonding process between the mother and the child and will facilitate the recommendation for breastfeeding especially of children under the age of two. Participants with this view expressed that they think these facilities will be beneficial not only for female teachers, but also for male teachers who work in the school and have children in the relevant age group and families living in the region.

One out of three respondents stated that monetary aid provided by the state for the nurseries or caregivers can improve problems related to work-life balance. Considering the opinions of various participants regarding the insufficiency of the salary levels, it can be said that the participants have a strong demand for the state to provide or support childcare services rather than the market.

One of the most important policies in terms of the harmonization of work and family life is the provision of quality, low-cost or free, childcare and preschool education services that are geographically accessible and compatible with working hours. The state that can provide such services with these qualifications. There is a strong demand for the public to supply quality but cheap or free childcare services (Boğaziçi University Social Policy Forum, 2009). Performing childcare services by the kindergartens with the above mentioned characteristics in each neighborhood will facilitate alleviate the problems experienced by female teachers and the access of social groups with limited access to these services. Considering that the insufficiency of care and education services in early childhood negatively affects the cognitive and social development of children, it would not be wrong to say that geographical access is easy, and the promotion of low-cost or free nurseries will have positive effects on child welfare and development. Thus, contributions will be made to combating social inequalities as a whole. The demand for improving nursery facilities was expressed by some participants as follows:

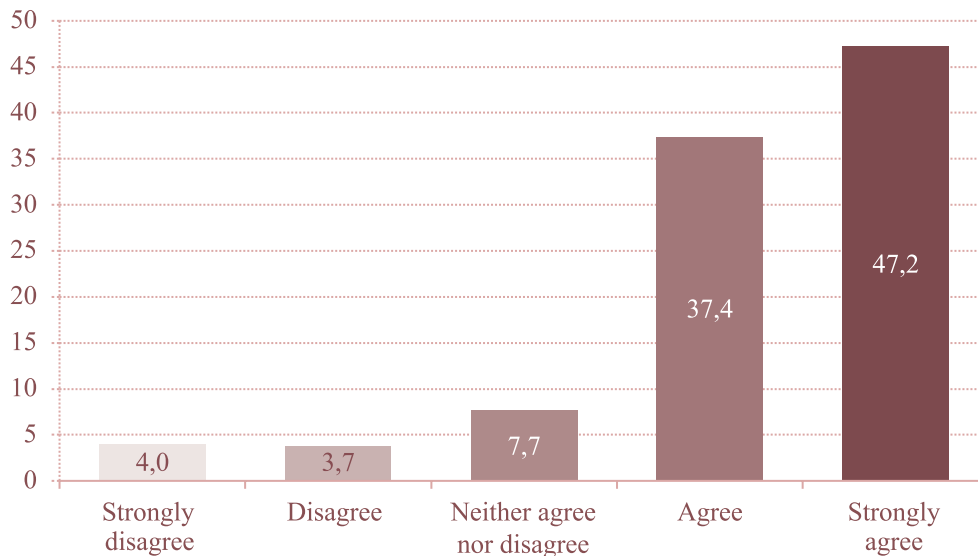
*The biggest problem women are facing are the children. They have nowhere to leave the children especially if their family isn't in the same city... when there's a meeting their order turns upside down. Even if there's a minor extra thing because you have nowhere to place the child you can't do anything. I definitely support nurseries. Flexible working hours don't seem very rationale. I think the most ideal support is ones about children.*

(16, Teacher)

*Nurseries make the job easier. I went through a lot about this. The nursery prices are very high in the region I'm at. The municipality has nurseries. You can't enroll them because there are limited vacancies. And I have twins. Hospitals, municipalities have nurseries. There are suitable nurseries for teachers in every region. Nursery prices are 1.200-1.300 Turkish Lira. It might be 500-600 for teachers. We suffered from this a lot. When children come to the school age, I benefitted from the financial incentives provided by the government. Right now, teachers can use it. Not just nurseries but school time is also an issue. (66, Teacher)*

The views of participants on the importance of popularizing nurseries in terms of increasing work-family harmony were also questioned within the scope of quantitative research. The rate of participants who think that expanding nurseries in neighborhoods in terms of being easily accessible will contribute to the harmonization of the work-family life of female teachers is 84.6. At least eight out of ten participants think that popularizing nurseries is an important policy in terms of harmonizing work-family life, supporting qualitative research findings. 7.7 percent of participants stated that they were indecisive on this issue, and 7.7 percent think that popularizing nurseries will not contribute to a healthy work-life balance.

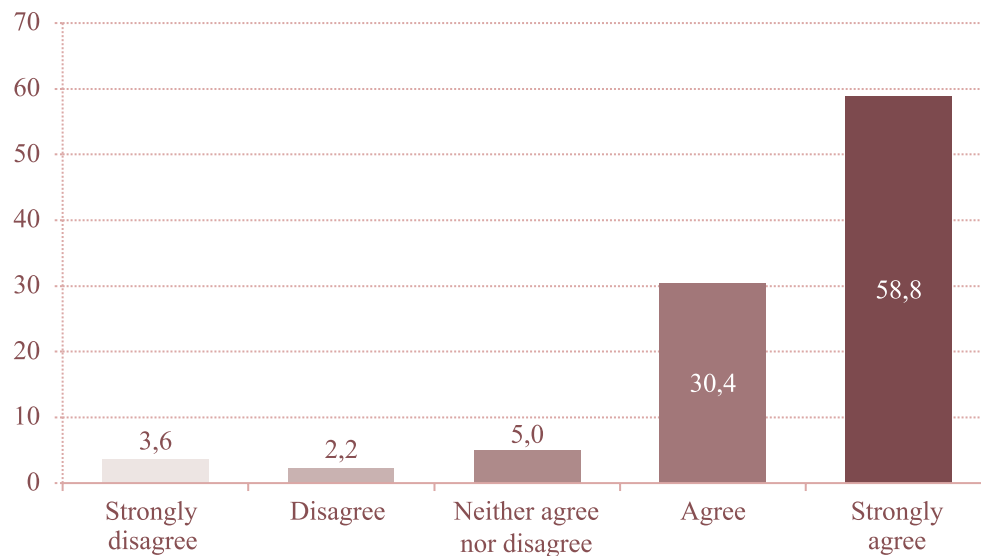
Figure 24. The level of participation of female teachers to the statement “Extending nurseries in neighborhoods contributes to the harmonization of work-family life of female teachers” (%)



Based on qualitative research findings, one of the issues undertaken within the scope of quantitative research is what the participants think about the opening a nursery / kindergarten in each school for the benefit of teacher's children in order to ensure the harmony between work and family life. As seen in Figure 25, the rate of the participants who think that opening a nursery or kindergarten in every school for the benefit of the teacher's children will contribute to the harmonization of the work-family life of female teachers is 89.2 percent. Based on this finding, it is possible to say that nine out

of ten participants support the opening of a nursery or kindergarten in each school. While the rate of the participants who stated that they are indecisive in this matter is 5 percent, only 5.8 percent of the participants think that opening a kindergarten or kindergarten in every school for the benefit of teacher's children will not contribute to ensuring the work-family harmony of female teachers.

Figure 25. "The level of participation of female teachers (%) to the opening of a nursery / kindergarten in every school for the benefit of the teacher's children contributes to the harmonization of the work-family life of female teachers."



Some women can plan to withdraw from active working life when they have children from the beginning or stop working after having difficulties in fulfilling their job and childcare responsibilities together (Ministry of Labor and Social Security and UNICEF, 2013). In this regard, the scope and duration of paid and unpaid maternity leave is extremely important. Within the scope of qualitative research, some of the participants (17 participants) suggested extending the paid maternity leave period and improving the conditions for using breastfeeding leave. According to the participants, an extended period of paid leave, especially after childbirth, will make it easier for the mother to take care of her child. One factor that should not be overlooked is that the extended duration of paid and unpaid maternity leave also has the potential to permanently and adversely affect the prospects and opportunities to return to work (Ministry of Labour and Social Security and UNICEF, 2013).

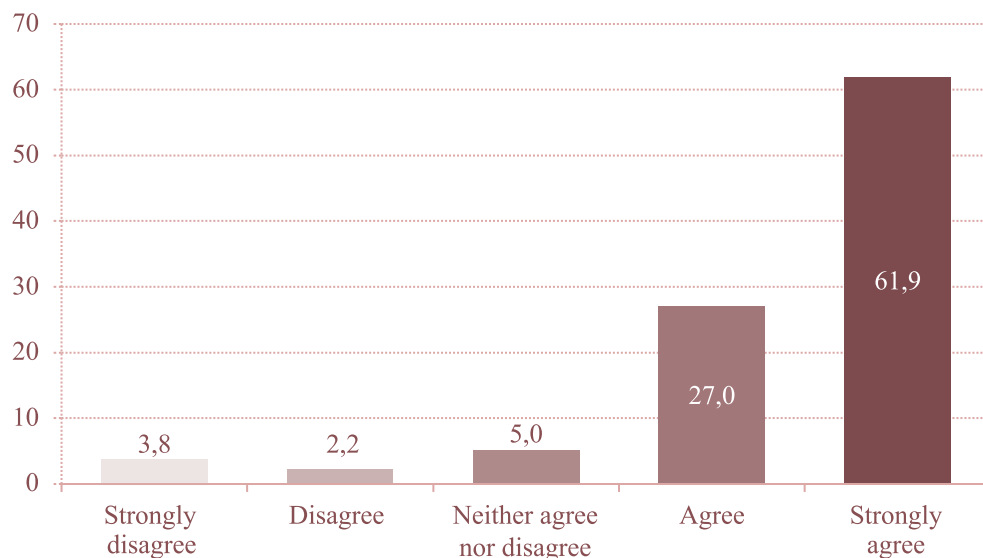
Some participants emphasized the importance of developing tutoring centers in their own schools for their children who have passed the age of nursery but still cannot be alone at home after school. Some of the participants stated that for this reason they had to send their children to private schools providing full-time education and this situation was a compelling factor on the family budget. The statements of some of the participants on this matter are as follows:

*I enrolled my child in a full-day private school. It's a financial burden. I don't know whether I'll teach class in the morning or afternoon. But if my child is safe here... My friends that have children attending school half a day also send them to tutoring centers. (46, Teacher)*

*There are nurseries for workers in other institutions. The children of teachers don't have this opportunity. There should be nurseries at school. The teacher's mind should be clear, they're doing an important job. The teacher shouldn't worry about a caregiver. There should be tutoring rooms for older children as well. (24, Teacher)*

As mentioned earlier, qualitative research has shown that one of the issues that may contribute to enhancing the harmony between work and family life is the state's cash support (nursery assistance, caregiver assistance, etc.). According to quantitative research results the rate of participants who think that the state monetary aid, such as nursery and caregiver support, will contribute to the harmony of work-family life of female teachers is 88.9 percent. Similar to the level of participation in the policy proposal on the promotion of nurseries, almost nine out of ten participants think that the monetary aid by the state to early childcare responsibilities will have a positive impact on work-family life harmony. Thus, the Supporting Women Employment Through Home Based Child Care Project carried out with the European Union which supports nurseries and caregivers for women who are currently in the employed private sector and fulfill certain conditions in Turkey has attracted a significant amount of people. It is clear that an application similar to these support mechanisms given for women working in the private sector will be highly demanded by female teachers employed in the public sector. 5 percent of participants state that they are undecided about the subject and 6 percent think that the monetary aid in question will not have an effect in terms of work-family life harmony.

Figure 26. The level of participation of female teachers in the statement that the state provides cash aid such as nursery aid, caregiver assistance, and female teachers contribute to the harmonization of work-family life (%)





#### **4.2. Other Suggestions for Improving the Status of Female Teachers in Working Life**

As stated earlier, quantitative research findings reveal that the most challenging factors in the work lives of teachers are discipline problems at school, salary levels, extracurricular workload (such as paperwork and projects), parent pressure, class size, administrators' approach and relations with colleagues. Qualitative research findings support these results. Similarly, PISA results, one of the international evaluation programs, show that discipline problems at school and in class affect student performance negatively. Classrooms and schools with more disciplinary problems have more negative results in learning because it is difficult for students to focus on the lesson because teachers spend more time to create an environment suitable for learning (OECD, 2011, 2019a).

According to quantitative data discipline problems were stated as a challenging factor by 80.9 percent of teachers. The causes of disciplinary problems encountered in schools, finding out which schools such problems concentrate on, and whether this situation is specific to these schools should be investigated and multidimensional suggestions should be developed to solve discipline problems. Reducing these problems will contribute both to improving the situation of teachers in working life and to improving the quality of education in general.

Findings from quantitative research show that almost eight out of ten teachers stated salary levels as a challenging factor for work. Despite the improvements made in this regard in recent years, salaries of teachers in Turkey is still below the OECD average (Çelik et al., 2019; Educators Trade Union, 2013). Therefore, it is possible to say that improving teacher salaries will be an important step in improving the working conditions of female teachers.

Both quantitative and qualitative research findings reveal that extracurricular workload, which covers bureaucratic work related to projects carried out with paperwork, is one of the most challenging factors for teachers. As mentioned earlier in the study, school administrators emphasized that the work within the scope of extracurricular workload is mostly repetitive that this kind of work significantly limits the time and energy that both administrators and teachers devote to education. The coercive aspect of extracurricular workload has also been addressed in other studies (Educators Trade Union, 2019). Therefore, it would be beneficial for MoNE to review the work in question so that both teachers and school administrators can focus more on education and training.

One of the important difficulties that teachers face in business life is parental indifference or pressure. Participants evaluated this problem both in terms of the attitude of parents who want to be too involved in school processes as they are "very relevant" and the communication problems they have with parents who are "uninterested" in the education of their children. Carrying out studies that will improve school-family communication and collaboration in this regard will make a significant contribution to reducing the pressure both teachers and school administrators feel.

Another challenging factor in quantitative research, is class size. Although significant improvements have been made in the number of students per classroom in recent years (Çelik et al., 2019), studies conducive to decrease the class size in the regions where it is particularly high and in the schools where the academic achievement level is low will decrease the workload of the teachers and will therefore have positive results in terms of the quality of education.



Both qualitative and quantitative study findings reveal that another challenging factor in teachers' work lives is the attitudes and behaviors of the administrators. The teachers stated that the empathetic attitudes of the administrators are very important for them in the planning process of the lesson programs to facilitate their family care responsibilities and in other situations where breastfeeding leave or permission is required. The findings of the study revealed that most school principals behave with understanding in this regard, but are still some problems. Making more formal arrangements for school administrators to meet such demands of teachers in a way that will not hinder education and training will contribute to increase the harmony between female teachers work-family life.

In the interviews conducted in qualitative field work, the participants listed some other issues that they encountered in business life and thought finding solutions were needed:

- Reorganizing the working conditions of preschool teachers, increasing the employment of assistants/support staff due to the continuous education and training activities carried out in this context.
- Providing teachers easiness in taxation.
- Assessment of the early retirement option, especially for pre-school and classroom teachers, taking into account the wear rate.
- Providing 3600 additional indicator.

An important part of these suggestions is also included in the report titled "Problems of Education Employees and Suggestions for Solutions" (Educators Trade Union, 2019). It is seen in the report that improving the working conditions of pre-school teachers and improving co-teacher practice, 3600 additional indicators and putting into practice the implementation of wear-out for all teachers. The findings of this study also reveal how important the implementations in the specified issues will be.

Finally, when an evaluation is made out of all participants serving as pre-school teachers during the interviews as part of qualitative research, the need for support staff stands out. According to the Ministry of Education statistics in 2019, in order to support the physical capacity of preschool education with 49 thousand 730 classrooms and 68,365 preschool teachers, and increase the quality of education provided and to decrease the wear levels of all teachers working in this field, approximately 100 thousand support staff should be employed. However, there is a need to define the roles, responsibilities and roles of the support staff currently employed to perform various support services in schools.

#### **4.3. Professional School Administratorship Practice in Increasing the Number of Women in Administration**

Findings from qualitative research reveal that the development of professional school administratorship and school administratorship are extremely important for female administrators. In this context, the main demands of the participants are improving the status of administrators, reducing the workload that is not related to the essence of education, clarifying the job definition so as to focus on the school and students, being the leader of the education, giving in-service trainings on administrative tasks, and making appointments on the basis of merit. Some participants stated that school administratorship should be professionalized as follows:

*Professional school administratorship should be formed. For example, administrators... should be supported with in-service training. When they leave and become teachers again, the experience and expertise they gained during the job and consequently the human capital becomes useless. (8, Principal)*

*This job needs to be professionalized. People who have desire, vision and merit should be an administrator. In addition, in-service support and structural support should be provided. (31, Principal)*

Since the 1980s, school administrators started to be considered as instructional leaders aiming to improve learning environments and teacher behavior in schools. At the same time, it has been observed that effective schools are schools where principals focus on curriculum and education rather than administrative duties (Lashway, 2002). The concept of instructional leadership has remained up to date in the last 30 years, but significant changes have occurred in its original definition. Traditionally the roles of school leaders include tasks such as setting clear goals, developing the school climate, coordinating curriculum activities and managing education (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986; Lashway, 2002). According to results obtained from research on the subject, the main characteristics of effective school leaders are as follows (Krüger & Scheerens, 2012):

- They are directly related to school and students' education,
- Continuously checking teachers' classroom performance, learning processes and student success,
- Creating a school climate and work environment that will enable all students to learn.

Numerous studies on school leadership have shown that effective school leadership has important implications for students' academic achievement both directly and indirectly through school organization and culture (Witziers, Bosker, & Krüger, 2003). However, effective school administration affects students' academic success much more indirectly by influencing other school variables (Hallinger & Heck, 1998).

On the other hand, it is seen that school leadership has an important place in the international education policy agenda. In fact, the importance of school administration has been emphasized in many international reports and policy and application suggestions have been developed for effective school leadership. In the report, which was one of the said reports and prepared by OECD in 2008, it was emphasized that school leadership has a key role in increasing the efficiency of schools through teacher motivation, capacity and school climate, and recommendations were provided to countries to develop effective school leadership (OECD, 2008). Accordingly, the main OECD proposals for the development of school leadership can be listed as follows:

- School leaders' responsibilities should be determined (all over) with a focus on teacher and learning.
- The leadership task should be distributed both within and among schools.
- Skills of school administrators should be developed in order to increase the effectiveness of school leadership.
- School leadership should be transformed into an attractive profession.

It is seen that similar goals related to school administration have been set up in TALIS 2018, another study by OECD, and various policy suggestions have been developed to achieve these goals (OECD, 2019b). The first of the goals and policy suggestions addressed at TALIS 2018, which was implemented with the participation of 48 countries and economies, focusing on teachers and school principals, is to ensure that school principals use most of their time for instructional leadership. In this context,

- Review of school principals' roles, responsibilities and work schedules,
- Setting clear professional standards and promoting instructional leadership for school principals,
- Building capacity for instructional leadership,

- Directing the teachers who have capacity for instructive leadership to the job,
- Providing pre-service preparatory training to school principals,
- It is recommended to develop mentoring programs for school principals (OECD, 2019b).

According to TALIS 2018, it is necessary to develop applications that encourage both male and female for administrationship in order to create a highly motivated and effective teacher and school principal workforce by providing appropriate working conditions. It is extremely important to determine policies in TALIS to eliminate the difficulties that female teachers face during their career. In addition, it is proposed to offer different career paths that can provide intellectual and professional satisfaction in the teaching profession (OECD, 2019b).

In Turkey many studies focusing on educational leadership found that school principals act as instructional leaders in a quite limited way (Aksoy and Işık, 2008; Gümüş and Akçaoğlu, 2013; Yıldırım, 2003). The results of this research and TALIS 2018 findings point out the fact that Turkey should develop support mechanisms to improve the communication skills of principals for the aim of an efficient administration and school climate. In this respect, the roles, responsibilities, and work schedules of school principals who carry out many duties and responsibilities in the school system should be revised. In addition, determining the professional development areas needed by teachers and school principals and presenting qualified professional development activities in these areas are also of great importance for the quality of education (OECD, 2019b).

Focusing on the problems of education administrators in Turkey “Merit and Career System for Education Administratorship “ has put forward the problematic situation of educational leadership and some suggestions on how to professionalize the administration of education. According to these suggestions;

- Qualifications and professional standards of education managers should be defined,
- Education management should be a profession, not a “second task,”
- Educational leaders should be trained before and in service,
- An objective and fair selection and appointment system should be established (Educators Trade Union, 2017).

Similar proposals are presented in the “Teaching Professional Law: Needs and Suggestions” report. In the said report, making educational leadership a career profession issues of staff, responsibilities and duties, and professional competencies and standards should be determined. In the report, it was emphasized that the personal rights of educational leaders should be determined in accordance with their duties, powers and responsibilities, their salaries/wages must be revised based on teachers’ salaries / wages, and their appointment conditions should be clarified and appointment should be carried out objectively within this framework. (Educators Trade Union, 2018). In another study titled “Problems of Education Employees and Suggestions for Solutions,” suggestions for the resolution were developed regarding the problems related to the financial rights and working conditions of education administrators. In this context, the existing four-year rotation period is proposed to be increased to eight years. However, it is seen in the report that school responsibilities, such as investigating and responsibilities for occupational health and safety, which are assumed by school administrators, but not one of their primary responsibilities, may be criticized for the setback of administrative duties and it is suggested that these responsibilities be taken from school administrators (Educators Trade Union, 2019).

In this study, it is possible to say that findings supporting the suggestions of the above-mentioned reports have been reached. In this context, qualitative research participants stated that school administrators undertake a very complex, undetermined, and sometimes expertise task that does not have anything to do with education and training but takes them away from the educational leadership position. Moreover, the participants underlined that they were “lonely” in the fulfillment of these tasks and that they did not receive sufficient support from the senior administrators. Despite all these responsibilities and workload, the participants stated that school administration does not have a separate professional status from teaching and, accordingly, the non-advantages regarding additional financial gain and staff, and also emphasized the importance of merit in the process of appointment of administrators. As can be understood from the participant’s statements mentioned above, this situation is one of the important difficulties that women who have assumed the responsibilities of family care and home face in becoming administrators, as well as preventing the effective and efficient functioning of the education system in general. In fact, while a significant part of the participants stated that they do not want to be administrators for these reasons, half of the current administrators stated that they are administrators, not for their own will, but for other reasons. Thus, in the case of professional school leadership in Turkey, this will ensure more efficient implementation and operation of the education system as well as it can be seen an increase in female teachers that tend to be administrators.





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**CONCLUSION AND  
SUGGESTIONS**





One of the important concerns for working women after entering working life due to the effects of socio-economic and cultural conditions is to simultaneously fulfill responsibilities at work and at home. A higher rate of female labor is employed in some professions where there is a social acceptance that it may be easier to keep maintain work-life balance. Since teaching has started to become professional, there is a high number of female employees. Considering that the number of female students studying in education faculties is higher than male students today, it is possible to say that many women will be employed in the teaching profession in the coming period. Therefore, it is an important issue both today and for the future to show female teachers' perspectives on the profession, the problems they face in work life, the challenging factors they face in terms of work-family life balance, and the reasons behind low levels of female representation in administrative positions despite high numbers of female teachers.

The findings obtained from this study uncover that female teachers and administrators are facing important difficulties in working life. Female teachers, whose numbers are increasing compared to their male colleagues in educational institutions, perceive their current situation in terms of work-life balance. This study has aimed to uncover which factors affect the administrative tendency among female teachers. Basic education and secondary education employees in public institutions in Turkey made up the population for the mixed research method consisting of both quantitative and qualitative research method. In the study a focus group meeting was held with the participation of the members of the Educators Trade Union Headquarters Women's Commission, and then in depth interviews were held with 65 female teachers, principals and assistant principals in five provinces consisting of Ankara, Istanbul, İzmir, Diyarbakır. According to the findings obtained from these interviews and benefitting from the related literature the questionnaire forms to be used in quantitative research were created Within the scope of quantitative research, 2 thousand 717 questionnaires were applied in 12 provinces including Ankara, Balıkesir, Bursa, Erzurum, Mersin, Istanbul, Izmir, Kayseri, Malatya, Samsun, Trabzon and Şanlıurfa. The findings obtained from qualitative and quantitative research were analyzed in a holistic perspective according to the themes determined.

According to qualitative research findings, the main four reasons female teachers choose their profession are the individual interest and liking the profession, family guidance, comfortable working conditions when compared to other professions, and the existence of a role model teacher. Results from quantitative research support these findings. The high employment of women in the teaching profession is directly related to the social perception that teaching is a more suitable profession for women. The main reason why teaching is perceived as suitable for a woman, in other words a "women's profession," is that the working order provides women the opportunity to fulfill their family responsibilities without hindering it (Tan, 1996; Fidan, İşçi ve Yılmaz, 2009) The opinion that motherhood and maternal instincts – especially in preschool and the primary education period- and the positive impact female teachers have in communicating with students also factor into this tendency.

In this context, this study also investigated how the perception of the social perspective that the teaching profession is more suitable for maternal roles by female teachers. Qualitative findings show that the vast majority of participants have the view that teaching is not just a women's profession. Quantitative research results differ in this respect and reveal that six out of ten participants think that teaching is the most suitable profession for women.

Within the scope of qualitative research the participants who thought that being a woman "added value" to the profession, defined this value with a sense of dedication with maternal instinct, devotion and compassionate approach, and empathy ability. These participants emphasized that especially motherhood developed empathy, and this reflected positively on the classroom environment. In addition, it has been revealed that female teachers can more easily identify students who need support and try to help them. On the other hand, opinions have been determined that these features cause widening of the job limits of female teachers and administrators. According to the findings obtained from the quantitative research, one of two participants thought that being a woman is advantageous in terms of their profession.

One of the important findings put forward in this study is whether or not organizational citizenship behavior, which is not officially included in the job descriptions and is optional, is not rewarded in any way, but which strengthens the effective functioning of the organization, is displayed in educational institutions. According to qualitative research results, a significant portion of participants demonstrated their organizational citizenship behavior in various subjects related to education and training. Therefore, most participants who show organizational citizenship behavior have associated this behavior with whether they are women or mothers. Qualitative research findings show that the tendency to show organizational citizenship behavior is common among female administrators.

Within the scope of both qualitative and quantitative research, the main factors that female teachers define as challenging in working life are extracurricular workload, workload, indifference or pressure of parents, salary level, student indiscipline, attitude of administration, class size, school climate, and relationships with colleagues. In addition, according to the findings from qualitative research, three out of every four participants faced various difficulties in ensuring work-family harmony. The participants in question stated that they could not establish the balance between work and family life and reflected on their responsibilities at work to the home or on their responsibilities at home. Qualitative findings indicate the factors that stand out in terms of work-family harmony are marital status, number of children, having children in the small age group, social support for home and childcare, the flexible and understanding attitude of the school administration regarding schedule, and permission.

According to quantitative research results, 22.7 percent of the participants' business life affect their family responsibilities and 31.9 percent think that their job responsibilities affect family and home life negatively. Work-family harmony provides individual peace and happiness and is important in terms of increasing social peace. Problems experienced in terms of work-family harmony do not

remain at a personal level, but because of the direct effects on work and family life, it becomes an issue that concerns the society. Therefore, reducing the problems experienced by female teachers in this regard is also of great importance for the existence of a strong family and society.

Another point emphasized in the study is to determine the reasons for the low level of administration tendency among female teachers. In this regard, both the attitudes of the teacher participants to the administratorship and the difficulties faced by the administrative participants were investigated. According to qualitative research results, although most of the participants think that administratorship does not have a gender, only two out of ten participants consider women more suitable for administratorship. 36.8 percent of the participants think male teachers are more suitable for administrative work. Qualitative findings show that approximately two-thirds of the participants think that teaching is not a career profession and that the willingness to become an administrator among teacher participants is quite low. Behind the participants not wanting to be administrators is excessive workload, low status of the profession (additional salary and staff opportunities), more difficult job-family adjustment than teaching, the idea that professional satisfaction in teaching cannot be achieved in administrating, and that individual characteristics are not suitable for administration.

Similarly, quantitative research findings have revealed that a very limited number of participants want to become administrators. The main reasons for these participants to want to assume their administrative duties are the desire to be more beneficial for the school and the students, the goal of making a career, and the norm staff problem. In contrast, the reasons behind seven out of ten participants do not want to be administrators are full-time working order, heavy workload of administration, individual perception that personal characteristics are not suitable for administratorship, family responsibilities, higher job satisfaction than teaching, and no additional financial benefits.

Factors that make it difficult for women teachers to become administrators are directly associated to the problems faced by female administrators. Qualitative research showcase that the problems experienced by the participants that are administrators are workload, responsibilities without limits, bureaucratic workload, lack of institutional support in solving school problems, lack of in-service training in jobs requiring expertise, failure to meet expectations regarding personal rights, low status of the profession, non-compliance with the principles of merit regarding the promotion of the profession, students' indiscipline, parental indifference / pressure, negative outlook for female administrators, short rotation periods, and intra-gender competition. Quantitative research results also support these findings in general.

Finally, the majority of participants stated that they would choose the teaching profession again if they had a chance to choose one more time. It was seen that six out of ten participants stated that they would choose the teaching profession if they had the opportunity to choose it today. In contrast, only 30 percent of respondents support their child being a teacher.

The steps to be taken to improve the current situation of female educators, who constitute the majority of teachers (OECD, 2005; EFA Global Monitoring Report Team, 2015; UNESCO, 2015) and are one of the most fundamental determinants of the success of students and the quality of the education system as a whole, are extremely important. Based on the qualitative and quantitative findings of the study, the suggestions that can contribute to the solution of the problems faced by female teachers in working life, to increase the harmony between work and family life in terms of both teachers and women who are in the status of teachers and to contribute to the higher level of teachers' aspirations to the management levels are listed below:

1. In order to ensure work-life balance, which is one of the most challenging factors for female teachers, especially in the young age group, for female teachers who have children in need of care, nursery facilities should be popularized. For children who are in the older age group and do not go to a full-time school, tutoring centers should be generalized. Nursery facilities can be expanded by providing childcare and pre-school education services that are compatible with working hours, with high quality, low or free of charge, geographically accessible, or by opening a nursery / kindergarten in each school. Extending nursery facilities will also strengthen the family, positively affect children's cognitive and social development, and contribute to combating social inequalities. Therefore, it is safe for nursery / kindergartens to be opened especially in schools where the mother who has to get service from the market can leave their child, in an environment that she can trust, for female teachers who do not have social support in terms of care responsibilities and, including early childhood this will affect the process positively. Moreover, the dissemination of nurseries and study facilities will also increase women's courage to aspire to executive positions. This kind of practice will be useful not only for female teachers, but also for male teachers who work in school and have children in the relevant age group and families living in the region.
2. In the short-term nurseries cannot be expanded due to physical deficiencies, monetary aid should be provided by the state in the form of nursery or caregiver assistance, covering all teachers. Considering the insufficiency of the salary level for teachers, the free or low-cost nursery facility or cash support implementation to be provided by the state in terms of fulfilling childcare responsibilities will be an important social transfer.
3. In order to reduce the medical reports used by women teachers after birth, paid maternity leave periods should be extended, and the disruptions in terms of the use of breastfeeding leave should be eliminated since most teachers do not work full time. Especially after the birth, receiving reports for a long time by some of the female teachers may negatively affect the uninterrupted and high quality of education and training service. It should be ensured that the conditions related to the arrangement of paid leave periods and the use of breastfeeding leave are improved.

4. For female teachers who want to fulfill their care responsibilities in early childhood by taking a break from active working life in order to increase the work-family life harmony of female teachers, unpaid postpartum period should be increased to 3 years. Thus, the emergence of risks such as stress and burnout and the decrease in job performance due to the conflict of work-family life, especially for female teachers who do not have social support and have to take on childcare responsibilities will be prevented.
5. It should be ensured that the schedule of female teachers who have difficulties due to their childcare responsibilities should be planned in a way to facilitate these responsibilities. More formal arrangements should be made in this issue, which is currently at the discretion of administrators, in order to avoid victimization and inequality due to different approaches among administrators. This will both contribute to enhancing the work-family life harmony of female teachers and eliminate situations that negatively affect education such as frequent reports and late work / absenteeism.
6. In order to contribute to the solution of student indiscipline problems, which is another of the main factors that challenge female teachers and administrators, issues such as what the problems are, in which kind of schools and under which socio-economic conditions occur, and which students are included in the risk group should be explored extensively. The results to be obtained from such research will provide a more accurate understanding of the problem and obtain more realistic data on the way to solution; it can also contribute to improving the quality of education
7. The extracurricular workload, which is defined as the workload related to projects carried out regularly in the project schools, and various paperwork, inputs to the data processing system, which are among the challenging factors for teachers and administrators, should be reduced. Taking into account the time cost created by the aforementioned works, the Ministry of National Education should review these works so that both teachers and school administrators can focus more on education and training. Especially in order to decrease the workload of the teachers, the effectiveness of the electronic systems should be increased, and the re-entry of the existing data should be reduced.
8. Teaching should be turned into a career profession. A clear definition of staff, responsibility and duties should be made for administratorship. In this context, a professional school administratorship approach should be adopted for both effective administering, effective learning and school atmosphere. With the professional school administratorship approach, education administratorship should be a staff, not an assignment, an objective and fair selection and appointment system should be established for this, and it should be supported by pre-service and in-service trainings. In addition, the four-year rotation period should be increased to eight years in order to show higher efficiency and loyalty in the schools where school administrators are assigned. If these regulations are put into practice, it will be possible to make the educational institution administration a career profession.

9. Another step that can be taken to make administratorship more preferable by female teachers is to increase the salary levels and personal rights of administrators. The fact that the increase in working hours and workload is not reflected in the same rate of earnings affects the motivation of many female teachers to become administrators. Therefore, it is possible to say that if there is an appropriate income difference between teaching and administratorship, the motivation of women will increase. Nevertheless, responsibilities that require specialization (such as occupational health and safety, investigation) that the administrators assume without being among their primary duties should be taken from the school administrators. In-service trainings should be organized in cooperation with MoNE and unions to increase the educational leadership skills of women administrators.
10. Studies should be carried out in order to decrease class size in regions where students are commonly found and in schools with low academic achievement due to the high class size and increased workload of teachers has negative consequences for the quality of education.
11. The employment of support staff should be increased in order to solve the problems experienced by pre-school teachers due to continuous class hours. According to the statistics of the Ministry of National Education in 2019, in order to meet the needs of teachers support the physical capacity of pre-school education with currently 49 thousand 730 classrooms and 68 thousand 365 teachers, to increase the quality of the education provided and to reduce the wear levels of all teachers working in this field nearly 100 thousand support staff should be employed. There is also a need to define the roles, responsibilities and roles of the support staff currently employed to perform various support services in schools.
12. In order for the aforementioned proposals to improve the status of female teachers in working life they must be both permanent and sensitive to changing conditions. Studies should be conducted in order to monitor and evaluate the problems faced by female teachers including their demands for harmonization of work- family life and their tendency to become administrators. In this sense, impact analysis regarding policies implemented in accordance with the changing dynamics of work and family life should be made and the range of policies should be diversified according to the results that will be obtained. It is predicted that the number of female teachers in the education sector will increase continuously in the coming period. Thus, it is very important to revise policies that do not respond to the demands of the female teachers in accordance with everchanging needs. In addition, successful policies and practices should be implemented at the global level in order to increase the work-family harmony of female teachers and solve the problems they encounter in their working life.



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Teachers are the key to education. In this sense, it should not be forgotten that an education system is only as good as its primary component: teachers. Therefore, policies and practices that contribute to improving the situation of teachers are needed in order to have a good education system. As the Educators Trade Union (Eđitim-Bir-Sen), we have conducted this study in order to analyze how our female teachers perceive the teaching profession and what factors affect their job satisfaction. This study looks at how our female teachers have both increased the quality of education by expanding the boundaries of their duties and responsibilities, and how our female administrators have overcome heavy workloads by means of devotion. Through our research we had the opportunity to closely examine what difficulties female teachers faced while fulfilling their duties and trying to achieve work-life harmony under the influence of various factors. This study is useful in terms of developing policies that will contribute to the overall peace and happiness of teachers.

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