

Professional Identity Formation and Development from Teachers' and Teacher Candidates' View

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In this study, teachers' and teacher candidates' perception of professional identity - described as integration of one's own personal knowledge, belief, behavior, norms and values with standards provided by teacher training institutes on teaching- has been examined. The study was designed as a phenomenological study. Understanding the professional identity perception of those people who are responsible for education, making explicit the significant points of their professional life, knowing their decision-making process and their source of motivation will make it easier for teacher training institutes to give more desired outputs. Besides examining the professional identity of teacher candidates will guide them by determining the important issues in their mind at the very beginning of their career. From this point of view it is aimed to reveal prominent factors in the process of professional formation and development and to discuss what teacher training institutes can do for missing points. The answers were provided for these questions: How teacher candidates having different educational background perceive professional identity? Is there any change on teacher candidates' professional identity perception after being a teacher? Which points are important in the process of professional identity formation for teacher candidates? What can teacher training institutes do for teachers' professionalization? To answer these questions three different groups were examined separately: students who receive training in four year license programs; students of initial teacher training programs; and teachers who worked in public schools between 2-5 years. Purposeful sampling methods were applied to determine the study group. Data were collected using focus group interview technique and semi-structured interview form developed by the researchers. In the analysis of the data content analysis technique was used. The qualitative data were analyzed separately on the basis of questions. The answers to each question were categorized to meaningful categories and coded. Two researchers and two other experts coded the data separately and the results were compared to provide reliability. The results of the study reveal that there are some differences on professional identity formation between the students who receive training in four year license programs and students of initial teacher training programs; professional identity development is a continuous process; teachers' social and cultural backgrounds and teaching experiences are important for professional development. Additionally it can be stated that teacher training institutes need to have programs which can guide student-teachers professionalization journey.

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