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Classroom Teachers' Awareness of their Civil and Professional Rights and Freedoms in Context of Educational Law Literacy

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ABSTRACT

This research was carried out with the aim of determining the awareness of the primary school teachers towards the rights of the owners in context of educational law literacy. The research group consists of 428 primary school teachers who work in schools in the city center of Kırıkkale and determined using the criterion sampling technique. The research is designed in accordance with the qualitative research approach and has a holistic single case study design. In the process of obtaining research data, the questionnaire form and the semi-structured interview form were used. The analysis of the research data was carried out using the content analysis method. As a result of the research, it was concluded that primary school teachers have less awareness about the rights based on teaching professions. In addition, it has been observed that teachers do not have enough discrimination awareness about the rights they have due to the basic human rights and teaching profession. So we can say that research findings shows that teachers' educational law literacy profiles are not expected and should be improved. In the research, it has been concluded that teachers need professional law-related education and education of human rights. As a result of the research, these findings have been discussed from various perspectives and some suggestions which are based on reality have been put forward.

Key words: Rights And Freedoms, Awareness of Professional Rights, Awareness of Personal Rights, Educational Law Literacy, Classroom Teachers, Education of Human Rights, Law-related Education

INTRODUCTION

Human beings have always had a dynamically changing social life. They are the major objects of existence on a large (the world) or small scale (the society in which they live), and therefore, their fundamental rights and freedoms are equally important. Human rights are shared values that should be upheld by each because no one can live like a human in the absence of human rights (Bayraktar & Koyuncu, 2017). In other words, intensifying social relations and expanding communication and interaction beyond the limits of time and space due to advances in technology and globalization have made it more inevitable for people to become aware of their rights and responsibilities (Karagözoğlu, 2017). In recent years, some of the most controversial debates have been justice, democracy, education, and fundamental human rights and freedoms and their violations (Özbek, 2017). It is a fact that fundamental human rights and freedoms are becoming more and more important in modern democracies and for governments that intend to make great efforts to democratize (Köküsarı, 2011).

Fundamental human rights and freedoms are the focal points of numerous efforts in all this change because they are among the most debated issues. International law sees human rights as the legitimate interventions of a state and as a part of the universal law by which almost all nations are supposed to abide (Özbek, 2017). The conviction that all peoples and powers will, at some point, adopt human rights as the dominant discourse is the manifestation of a utopic idea that prevailed in the past and will be prevailed in the future. Therefore, it would be more appropriate to state that human rights are not concrete and clear concepts specified and recognized by all, but they change and flourish every day on an abstract, intellectual, and theoretical basis (Yeşilçayır, 2019; Bayraktar & Koyuncu, 2017). The restrictions, abuses, and violations of fundamental human rights and freedoms make this discourse conceivable for us. Respect for human rights is a common problem of all countries that believe in democracy, freedom, and the rule of law (Şahin & Üstüner, 2014). Actions and policies carried out by people or state authorities taking refuge in human rights to achieve their goals are the primary sources of these problems. In other words, defining fundamental human rights and freedoms too broadly or narrowly or using them as a means to an end is one of the greatest and most dangerous fallacies. In other words, the fact that people define things in their interests within

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the framework of human rights erodes the binding power of human rights and makes this discourse ordinary (Şahin & Üstüner, 2014).

Fundamental human rights and freedoms are a global issue. The goal is to integrate them into both international and domestic legal norms, to protect and promote them with specific provisions, and to turn them into cultural elements adopted by societies and individuals because although the discourses on human rights are increasingly voiced in the international arena, human rights violations are also becoming a growing global problem (Yeşilçayır, 2019). Fundamental human rights and freedoms are guaranteed to everybody, irrespective of race, language, religion, faith, and region. However, those rights should be put into practice because conventions and constitutions fall short of securing them (Yeşilçayır, 2019; Köküsarı, 2011). One way to put them into practice is through education. Instead of just monitoring human rights violations and imposing penal sanctions on offenders, we should show regard to the significance of education to raise people's awareness of human rights to prevent violations/crimes (Yeşilçayır, 2019). Human rights encompass citizenship, political, social, economic, and cultural rights protected by international and national legal norms. If the new generations are unaware of their rights, they are likely to have difficulty expressing their values and protecting and defending even their fundamental rights, such as their rights to education and work (Gözütok et al., 2007). In other words, we think that everyone should learn and adopt the fundamental human rights and freedoms from an early age through cognitive and affective methods. Human rights violations worldwide show that putting the provisions and decrees in national and international conventions into practice is only possible with people who are aware of their rights, freedoms, and responsibilities (Karagözoğlu, 2017). We would like to state that it is of paramount significance for nations and policy-makers to adopt the principles of modern democracy and translate the culture of human rights into social and political reality because how developed and modern a nation depends on its respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms, equality, pluralism, and norms of law and how much its citizens recognize and how accurately they interpret them (Özbek, 2017; Gürel, 2016).

To create a society with a great capacity to achieve those goals, the pillars of society with specific duties and status should first possess those skills and manage public life in a way that encourages people to develop them. To put it differently, democracy and human rights are possible only with an established rule of law and citizens who have adopted pluralism through education in general and in school in particular (Kayhan & Yıldırım, 2014). School administrators and teachers are primarily responsible for achieving that goal because they are indispensable in carrying out education and shaping society (Köse, 2016). After parents, teachers play a critical role in children's development. How sensitive society is to democracy and human rights is positively associated with how sensitive its teachers are to them (Çarıkçı & Er, 2010). Children spend much time with their teachers and learn a lot from them. Teachers should be aware of human rights and be good role models for children to turn them into citizens who are cognizant of their rights and capable of putting them into practice and advocating them openly. Conscious and equipped teachers who know and fight for their rights can solve their legal problems and promote individual or systemic progress. On the other hand, teachers who are unaware of their rights cannot put them into practice or cannot fight against violations of their professional or individual rights and cannot help their students to develop practical values and skills, resulting in dissatisfaction hindering the development of the system (Yeşilçayır, 2019; Esen et al., 2011). At this point, we would like to state that if we are interested in providing students with democratic educational environments and turning them into citizens who know and enjoy their rights and respect the rights of others, then we should first make sure that teachers are eco-friendly, active, and broad-minded citizens who respect human rights, cherish differences, recognize their rights and responsibilities, and believe in democracy (Gürel, 2016; Samancı & Yıldırım, 2015; Karatekin et al., 2012).

Due to their public servant status, instructional culture, and low legal literacy, teachers are not fully aware of human rights and not fully competent in addressing human rights violations and teaching their students their rights. However, the most important way of using human labor effectively in public administration is to encourage public servants to develop skills (Aydın & Çamur, 2019). The Turkish education system designates the limits of what teachers can and cannot do and monitors their performance. The education reforms put into effect to date have fallen short of addressing teachers' rights in educational activities and expanding their decision-making scope and room for maneuver and demoted their status and revoked some of their rights, let alone improve them (Göker & Gündüz, 2017; Öztürk, 2011). Under these circumstances, it is questionable whether teachers are aware of their civil and professional rights and freedoms. Teachers cannot turn their students into citizens who are conscious of human rights unless they are aware of them (Gözütok et al., 2007). Educators should be aware of fundamental human rights and freedoms and be role models for their students. Society should be provided with positive role models for its citizens to respect human rights and pave the way for positive changes. This is the only way of making sure that both students and teachers are knowledgeable and aware of their fundamental rights and responsibilities (Akyüz, 2018; Şahin & Üstüner, 2014).

In this point we can say it is closely related to educational law literacy subject. It is should understanding one of the literacy areas of law literacy. According to this literacy area educators should have sufficient knowledge of law on subjects specific to their professional field. As a matter of fact, it is possible to consider the level of literacy that teachers have in terms of constitutional rights, personal rights and professional rights and freedoms. It is possible to deal with the rights, freedoms and areas of responsibility of the persons (administrators, teachers, students, parents and other employees) in educational processes within the scope of education law literacy (Hareket, 2018). In parallel therewith, Karaman

Kepenekçi (2011) stated that all education administrators are required to have legal education in order to be able to manage the organizations they work with in accordance with the rules of law. In this direction, as one of the educational elements, education administrators are required to take courses such as education law and school law as well as basic law courses in which general law knowledge is given. At this point, the awareness of teachers and school administrators regarding both personal and professional rights and freedoms can be expressed as a requirement of educational law literacy.

This study aimed to determine how aware classroom teachers were of their civil and professional rights and freedoms in context of educational law literacy. To that end, the study sought answers to the following questions:

1. How aware do classroom teachers think they are of their fundamental rights and freedoms?
2. How is their self-assessment of their awareness of their rights and freedoms?
3. How important and necessary do classroom teachers think it is to have knowledge and awareness of fundamental human rights and freedoms?
4. What do classroom teachers think about law-related education and education on fundamental human rights?

METHODOLOGY

Research Approach

Creswell (2014) defines qualitative research as a type of research in which the researcher develops questions and research steps, collects data in participants' settings, analyzes them inductively, and interprets the results. This study employed a single case-holistic design, which allows the researcher to collect information on individual, organizational, social, and political events (Yin, 2009). The sample consisted of classroom teachers who had not attended a preservice or in-service training, seminar, or project on law and/or fundamental human rights and freedoms and had not faced an administrative investigation or prosecution related to the research subject. The primary goal of case research is to explore, describe, and interpret a situation, person, or phenomenon as it is (Paker, 2015). In this study, the single case-holistic design was the method of choice because it aimed to determine how aware classroom teachers were of their civil and professional rights and freedoms.

Research Group

The study was conducted in the last quarter of 2019. The sample consisted of 428 (262 women; 166 men) classroom teachers of primary schools in Kırıkkale/Turkey. Participants had 7 to 31 years of employment. They were recruited using criterion sampling, which is a purposive sampling method used to draw a sample that satisfies a set of predetermined criteria (Büyüköztürk et al., 2011). The inclusion criteria were as follows:

- Not having attended a preservice or in-service training, seminar, or project on law and/or fundamental human rights and freedom
- Not having faced an administrative investigation or prosecution related to the research subject
- Not having received legal guidance/consultancy about fundamental rights and freedoms.

Data Collection Tools and Data Collection

Data were collected using a questionnaire with seven open-ended questions and a semi-structured interview form consisting of five items. According to Patton (2014), open-ended questions seek to grasp what people think without the limitations and predictions of predetermined categories. Interview, which is the primary data collection method in qualitative research, can also be used in multiple method research. Interviews help the researcher explain results and integrate participants' perspectives with them (Robson, 2015).

The first stage of data collection was recruiting participants based on the above criteria. The second stage was to conduct a pilot study and make revisions to the questionnaire based on feedback. Data collection lasted six weeks. Based on the analysis of the questionnaire results, 37 participants were recruited (based on the criterion of maximum diversity) to conduct face-to-face interviews. First, a pilot study was conducted, and the five-item semi-structured interview form was finalized based on feedback. Each interview lasted 48 to 81 minutes. The interviews were transcribed in four weeks. Table 1 shows the data collection process in detail.

Analyzing of Research Data, Legitimacy, Confidence and Ethical Issues

Qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis. According to Berg (1998), content analysis is used to systematically interpret interviews and field notes that are overlooked or deemed inappropriate for analysis. The data were discussed in two categories: (1) civil and (2) professional rights and freedoms. The study took the necessary steps to adhere to ethical principles and to ensure high validity and reliability.

A lawyer in administrative law and human rights, an educator in human rights, citizenship, and democracy education, and a linguist assessed the data collection tools before data collection to achieve high validity and reliability. Pilot studies were conducted on a similar group to check the clarity and intelligibility of the data collection tools, which were then revised and finalized based on feedback. According to Glesne (2014), the sample population for a pilot study should be similar to the intended targeted population.

All interviews were audio-recorded to avoid missing data (Merriam, 1998). Prior to data collection, informed consent was obtained from participants. Direct quotations were used to provide an accurate and coherent picture of participants' views.

Classroom teachers who had reservations about participation or were unwilling to participate were not included in the sample. The names of participants and schools were not specified, but instead, all participants were assigned codes, such as (P1, P2, P3, etc.) to ensure confidentiality and protect their anonymity. Two independent researchers in the field of human rights and administrative law also analyzed the data to increase validity and reliability. Creswell (2014) argues

that independent researchers should be involved in a qualitative research process to approach data from different perspectives and increase validity. Therefore, two independent researchers encoded the data. There were a few points where the coders disagreed on interpretation. Therefore, interrater reliability was calculated using the formula (Figure 1) suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994). The interrater reliability in this study was 89.8%.

[Reliability = (number of agreements) / (number of agreements + number of disagreements)*100]

All in all, utmost attention was paid to maximize validity and reliability and conduct research according to ethical principles.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results were discussed under four headings (Figure 2), and quotations were presented in separate tables and discussed in detail.

During the analysis of the research data, the findings obtained from the questionnaire form consisting of open-ended questions and face-to-face interviews were analyzed holistically. For this reason, this holistic understanding was preserved in the presentation of the findings.

Civil and Professional Rights and Freedoms According To Teachers

This section addressed how aware classroom teachers were of their civil and professional rights and freedoms? Table 2 shows participants' professional rights. While some participants knew about their professional rights, most of them addressed fundamental rights and freedoms that were irrelevant to their professional status. For example, they talked about the right to travel, the right to freedom of thought and expression, the right to education, and the right to privacy, even though those rights were not directly related to their professional status. However, some participants mentioned

Table 1. Information of data collecting process

Data Getting Tools	Participant Information			Application Format	Number of Transactions & Duration
	Sex		Professional Seniority		
	F:262	M:166	7-31 Years		
Questionnaire form composed of open ended questions			428	Survey Application (Direct)	36 6 Weeks
Semi-structured interview form			37	Face to Face Interviews	37 Interviews 48-81 min.

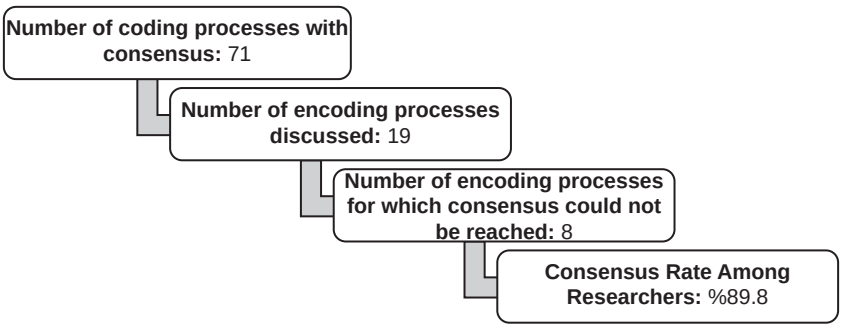

Figure 1. Interrater Reliability

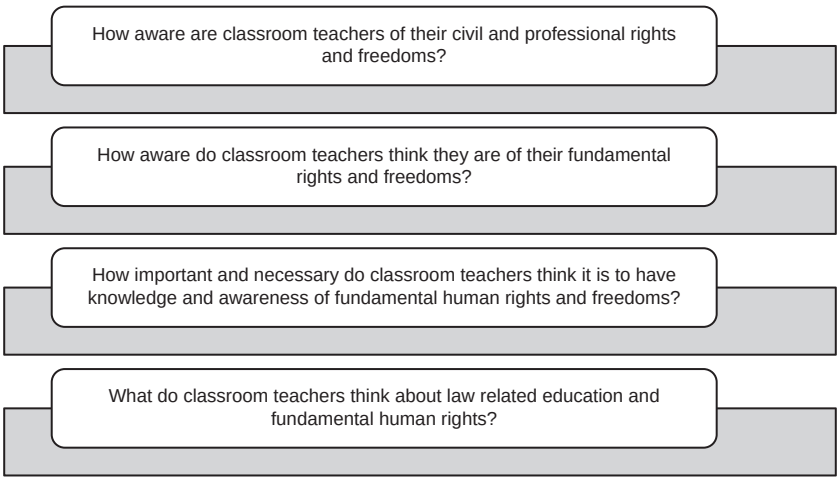

Figure 2. Headings for Results

Table 2. Professional rights and freedoms expressed by classroom teachers

Professional rights and freedoms	*f*
1. Annual Leave and Excuse Leave	102
2. Retirement	96
3. Monthly (salary) and Additional Course Fee	94
4. Right to Legal Remedies, Complaint and Petition	93
5. Right to Union Membership	90
6. Weekend and Public Day Holiday	66
7. Not Working Outside of Working Hours	63
8. Benefiting from Social Areas (Housing, Teachers House, etc.)	60
9. Social Security and Health Service	57
10. Right to Safeguarding of Job	51
11. Right to Respiration and Duty Limit	48
12. Birth, Family and Aid-Assistance in case of Death	45
13. Right to Education	42
14. Social Life Rights (Travel Discount, museum discount, etc.)	42
15. Travel and Allowance Rights	35
16. Right to Appointment	30
17. Withdrawal from Civil Service	28
18. Protection Against Drudgery and Mobbing	27
19. In-Service Training	25
20. Right to Take Green Passport	24
21. Right to Freedom of Thought and Expression	24
22. Privacy of Private Life	23
23. Right to Travel	23
24. Right to Work in Private Institutions	22
25. Right to Information	22
26. Setting Up a Course Center	21
27. Equality and Fair Trial	21
28. Be Free	20
29. Right to Respect	19
30. Data Security and Protection of Personal Data	18
31. Freedom of Clothing	9
32. Right to Strike	9
33. Applying Disciplinary Sanctions	9
34. Right to Rest	8
35. Right to Promotion	8
36. I do not know my professional rights	21
37. I have no additional rights provided by my profession to me	15

the rights they were entitled to by their professional status, such as annual leave, retirement, compensation for additional courses, union rights, maternity leave, family allowance, and green passport. Few participants were also aware of disciplinary action, promotion, opening a course, and protection against mobbing and forced labor.

Table 3 shows the participants' views of their civil rights and freedoms. Some participants referred to negative or positive rights, such as the right to live, the right to education, the right to health care, the right to property, and the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. However, very few participants addressed some fundamental rights and freedoms, such as the inviolability of residence and property, the right to public service, protection against forced labor, etc. All in all, although participants were aware of some of their fundamental rights and freedoms (the right to live, the right to freedom of thought and expression, the right to vote and to stand as a candidate at elections, the right to education, etc.), they were not fully knowledgeable and aware of their human rights and freedoms. Some participants even had their rights confused with duties because they talked about paying taxes and declaring assets when asked about their rights.

Table 3. Personal Rights and freedoms expressed by classroom teachers

Personal rights and freedoms	*f*
1. The Right To life	303
2. Right to Freedom of Thought and Expression	270
3. Right to Elect and Be Elected	213
4. Right to Education	210
5. Right to Health	171
6. Housing and Property Right	165
7. Right to Travel	147
8. Right to Legal Remedies, Complaint and Petition	144
9. Freedom of Thought and Faith	111
10. Right to Body Immunity	99
11. The Right of Privacy	93
12. Right to Participate	90
13. Equality and Right to Fair Trial	84
14. Right to İnformation and Communication	78
15. Be Free	57
16. Right to Security and Protection	54
17. Right to Adequate Nutrition	51
18. Right to Enter Public Service	48
19. Birthright	45
20. Right to Labor	42
21. Right to Proprietary and Title by Descent	24
22. Right to Marriage and Divorce	21
23. Salary and Additional Course Fee	18
24. Personal Development Right	15
25. Burden of Tax	15
26. Not Forced Labor	12
27. Pension Right	10
28. The Right to Have Fun	9
29. Declaration of Property	8
30. Right to Job Security	6
31. Freedom of Clothing	4
32. Right to Leave	3
33. Right to Housing Immunity	3
34. Right to Rest	2

How Aware do Teachers Think they are of their Fundamental Rights and Freedoms?

Most participants made statements indicating that they were not fully aware of their fundamental rights and freedoms. The following are direct quotations from participants (Table 4):

How Important and Necessary do Teachers think it is To have Awareness of Human Rights and Freedoms?

Almost all participants stated that they found it important and necessary to have knowledge and awareness of fundamental human rights and freedoms because they believed that teachers were important role models and pillars of society who helped children develop positive character traits and learn and defend human rights in the classroom environment. The following are direct quotations from participants (Table 5):

What do Classroom Teachers Think about the Need of Educational Law Literacy?

This section addressed whether participants thought that they needed law-related education and education on their civil and professional rights and freedoms. Most participants stated that they needed education on their civil and professional rights and freedoms. The following are direct quotations from participants (Table 6):

When asked what their professional rights were, most participants referred to the right to legal remedies, the right to petition, and the right to join a union. They mostly talked about the right to legal remedies and the right to join a union. This showed that participants were more used to situations where they would have to exercise their right to legal remedies and petition. This result indicated that they were more interested in protecting their rights by themselves than through unions. Very few participants mentioned the professional rights granted to them by the Civil Servants Law No. 657, such as the right to promotion, appointment, opening a course, withdrawing, working in the private sector, and green card. This helps us understand why participants are more aware of the rights mentioned above, because teachers are forbidden to be involved in commercial activities, but they can work in the private sector for specific periods provided that they do not neglect their primary duties (Göker & Gündüz, 2017). Teachers join unions because unions defend their rights, and union membership gives them a sense of confidence, and also because they would like to keep up with the changes in legal regulations (Arslan, 2014; Berkant & Gül, 2017; Köybaşı et al., 2016). Teachers in Turkey have

Table 4. Direct quotations from participants about fundamental rights and freedoms

Participant code	Information on participant	Quotation
Teacher2	Incumbency: 12 years Sex: Female	"…When it comes to my thoughts about my rights; I can say that most people, me included, are not that aware of our rights. I sometimes find myself in a situation where I realize that my rights are being violated, but I don't know how to respond, and I feel hopeless…"
Teacher33	Incumbency:18 years Sex: Male	…As a teacher, I believe that I know my rights because, otherwise, it would mean that I was incompetent professionally and as an individual, and that would make me question whether I'm a good teacher and a good person…"
Teacher12	Incumbency: 9 years Sex: Female	"I can't say I know enough about my rights because we end up doing a lot of menial tasks that are outside our job description. We keep quiet and just do what we're told because we don't want to antagonize anybody or cause any trouble, but if we knew our rights, we would raise our voice against it…"
Teacher25	Incumbency: 21 years Sex: Male	"I can't say I know a lot about my rights; besides, I have a hard time using my knowledge and defending myself. There are a couple of reasons why that's the case; the first one is that we learn nothing about these things, not in college or in vocational training…"
Teacher11	Incumbency: 15 years Sex: Female	"I think that I know enough about my rights. Teachers must know their rights. As a teacher, I always try to improve myself about human rights, and I try hard to teach them to my students …"
Teacher8	Incumbency: 9 years Sex: Male	"I'm afraid I don't know much about human rights because I wasn't taught them when in college, and it's the same now. This is a huge drawback…because, as a teacher, I've found myself in a couple of situations where I just couldn't stand up for rights. I've tried to improve myself after going through such things, but I'm afraid it doesn't cut it…"
Teacher 23	Incumbency: 13 years Sex: Female	"As public servants, we should all know our rights and boundaries, I mean, we should know the law. I try to improve myself about it as much as I can…But I can't say I have a sound grasp of it because I didn't get a proper education, so I believe that this should be tackled…"

Table 5. Direct quotations from participants about the importance and necessity of knowledge and awareness of fundamental rights and freedoms

Participant code	Information on participant	Quotation
Teacher7	Incumbency: 13 years Sex: Female	"…We teach our students their rights, too. We think of the classroom as a small-scale society, so students can become aware of their rights at an early age, which is possible if we, teachers, know them…"
Teacher18	Incumbency: 19 years Sex: Male	"It's very imperative that we know our rights because we can't teach our students their rights and how to defend them unless we know our rights…"
Teacher31	Incumbency: 10 years Sex: Male	"…We should know our rights because when we do, we can empathize with others and defend their rights, too. Besides, we, teachers, are supposed to shape society, so we should know our rights and live by them…"
Teacher35	Incumbency: 25 years Sex: Male	"The raw material of our profession is people, so we should know a lot about our rights, and we should be sensitive to them. We have no use of people who just stand and watch their rights being violated or who can't defend them, so we should be conscious of them and be consistent about them..."
Teacher4	Incumbency: 8 years Sex: Female	"…We work with people, so, of course, we should know human rights. We touch the lives of children, who are in a stage where they develop a personality, so it's particularly important that we know our rights. We can't teach our students their rights unless we know our rights."
Teacher26	Incumbency: 8 years Sex: Male	"…We are always complaining about our rights being violated. It's mainly because we aren't taught our rights in schools… This is especially worse given that we work with children…Maybe we fail to defend their rights, too, so we, as teachers, should know our civil and professional rights and freedoms…I believe that this is also important from a social perspective…We should know our rights to have a good rapport with parents and administrators."
Teacher37	Incumbency: 17 years Sex: Female	"…We raise the next generations. We would like everybody to respect each other's rights and freedoms, but we hardly think about how to do that…but I know that it's on us. We can teach our students their civil and professional rights and freedoms only if we know them well. Above all, we can defend their rights and be role models for them…So, that's why I think we should definitely know our rights, which is also true for our lives…If we know our rights, we can defend ourselves, sometimes against our colleagues. That's the only way we can defend our rights…"

the right to form and join unions and cancel their union membership, and they enjoy that right more than they used to (Göker & Gündüz, 2017; Berkant & Gül, 2017). Some participants stated that they had no additional professional rights or did not know them even if they did and that they were even unable to exercise their fundamental rights and freedoms. This result shows that they are unaware of their professional rights and freedoms and turn to indirect means (e.g., unions) when they are subject to any violation of rights. Most participants pointed out the right to legal remedies and petition as two of their professional rights. The right to legal remedies is the right of victims of human rights violations to apply to authorities to stop the violation and compensate for the damage caused by the violation (Bayraktar & Koyuncu, 2017). However, the right to legal remedies is not only granted to teachers, because Law No. 74 of the Turkish Constitution grants that right to all persons living in Turkey by stipulating that

> *Citizens and foreigners resident in Turkey, with the condition of observing the principle of reciprocity, have the right to apply in writing to the competent authorities and the Grand National Assembly of Turkey with regard to the requests and complaints concerning themselves or the public*.

Moreover, Law No. 6501 on Exercising the Right to Petition grants the right to petition to all citizens. Therefore, it seems that classroom teachers have civil rights confused with professional rights because most of them stated that the right to petition was one of their civil rights.

Another interesting point is that some participants referred to the duty to pay taxes and to declare assets when asked about their civil rights. This result shows that those participants had their rights confused with duties. However, most participants were more aware of their civil rights and freedoms than their professional rights and freedoms. However, they were focused on some of their civil rights more than others, such as the right to live and the right to freedom of thought and expression. Article 25 of the Turkish Constitution and Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights guarantee the right to freedom of thought and expression. It is regarded as one of the cornerstones of a democratic society and indispensable for developing society and individuals (Mecit & Mecit, 2018). Therefore, the main question is whether it was only a statement of the obvious or the manifestation of the need to exercise a right that they know they have. What may answer this question is to what extent teachers can exercise their freedom of thought and expression. It should be noted that the legislations do not

Table 6. Direct quotations from participants about the necessity of law-related education and education on civil and professional rights and freedoms

Participant code	Information on participant	Quotation
Teacher3	Incumbency: 13 years Sex: Female	"…I think that teachers should definitely be provided with in-service training and projects about human rights because a society can respect human rights only if its teachers know human rights…"
Teacher30	Incumbency: 19 years Sex: Male	"…I believe that it's necessary. The teaching profession has been going down for the last couple of years, so having teachers who know their civil and professional rights and freedoms would definitely win back some of the reputation that the profession has lost…"
Teacher22	Incumbency: 10 years Sex: Female	"…I witness too many human rights violations. I think that especially my colleagues know very little about their rights, so they don't know how to respond when their rights are violated…"
Teacher29	Incumbency: 25 years Sex: Male	"… It's necessary. The teaching profession is not as highly respected as it once was. Parents look down on teachers and intimidate them and even try to discredit them when they can. That's why we should know our rights and exercise them. That's the only way we can protect the dignity of our profession…"
Teacher13	Incumbency: 8 years Sex: Female	"…I think it's definitely necessary because teachers are primarily responsible for teaching students their rights and freedoms, so they should first know their rights. Teachers raise future members of society. I mean, that's why I believe that they should be trained on human rights…"
Teacher36	Incumbency: 8 years Sex: Male	"I wasn't taught my rights in school, and now I know I could have used that knowledge. The in-service trainings are completely useless when it comes to that! We, teachers, shape the students and the whole society for that matter, and we always deal with school administrators because of the nature of our position, so that's why we should know our rights. So, we should have such trainings and projects…I think universities should do something about that…"

have too many articles that restrict the freedom of expression of public officials (Mecit & Mecit, 2018). Therefore, we can argue that most participants referred to the right to freedom of thought and expression because they know it and can exercise it. We hope that readers will see this explanation reasonable given that teachers have a huge responsibility now to play their part in helping students develop critical thinking and expression skills based on knowledge and reasoning and turning them into citizens who respect human rights and democracy (Çevik Kansu, 2017).

Another result was that most participants were unaware of their civil and professional rights and freedoms but knew that they needed to be trained on law and fundamental human rights and freedoms. Teachers should know fundamental laws and administrative laws because they work for institutions (Karaman Kepenekçi & Taşkın, 2017).

We should explain what we mean by "law related education." Rowe (1992) defines "law related education" as educational activities that raise administrators' awareness of their rights and responsibilities and provide them with basic knowledge of the law to claim their rights when they encounter any violation of rights. Participants found their knowledge and awareness of civil and professional rights and freedoms inadequate, and therefore, believed that they needed education. This is also one of the main objectives of the Turkish National Education because Article 2 of the Basic Law of National Education No. 1739 stipulates that

> *Raising all members of the Turkish Nation as citizens who know and practice their duties and responsibilities for the Republic of Turkey, which is a democratic, secular, and social constitutional state based on human rights and the fundamental principles specified by the first Articles [1, 2, 3, and 4] of the Constitution*.

Turkey is also a signatory state of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Article 13 of which states that "*The States Parties to the present Covenant…agree that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms*." Article 29 of the Universal Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the United Nations in 1989 and signed by Turkey in 1991, stipulates that "*States Parties agree that the education of children shall be directed to…the development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms*." According to Articles 7 and 17 of the Regulation on Secondary Education Institutions of the Ministry of National Education, one of the goals of secondary education institutions is to raise students to be citizens who respect democracy and human rights.

The Constitution, laws, educational regulations, and principles of the Republic of Turkey focus on democracy. Therefore, we can argue that the goal of Turkey is to turn all students into individuals who respect democracy and human rights (Gözütok et al., 2007). We think that especially basic education teachers should know their civil and professional rights and freedoms to achieve that goal. All public officials should know fundamental rights and freedoms to relate their responsibilities to human rights and ensure that their or others'

actions in public and private domains do not violate human rights. To achieve that, everyone should be provided with human rights education from an early age (Kuçuradi, 2018; Birinci, 2009) because teachers do not only teach students their rights, but are also role models for them, and therefore, to what extent children may respect human rights and democracy in the future depends on how much teachers know their rights and freedoms. The activities and disciplinary actions in educational institutions, and thus, children's awareness of human rights feed off of the experiences and initiatives of teachers and school administrators (Hareket, 2020).

Life is becoming increasingly digital, and therefore, this applies to virtual platforms as well. Teachers who know the legal repercussions of violations and damages are likely to be more aware of digital data security (Yılmaz et al., 2016), which is also supported by research. For example, Bağlı (2013) reported that, according to students, teachers covered the human rights issue superficially and without making it concrete to facilitate meaningful learning. Gürel (2016) concluded that most classroom teachers found themselves incompetent about citizenship education, resulting in numerous teaching problems. Karatekin et al. (2012) found that preservice teachers with positive attitudes towards human rights ended up exhibiting behavior that would contradict human rights and democracy. The main reason for this is that teachers are not provided with sufficient preservice and in-service training on fundamental human rights and freedoms. Research already shows that a great majority of teachers need to be educated on human rights because they do not attend panels, conferences, seminars, and discussion groups (Özbek, 2017; Gözütok et al., 2007).

CONCLUSION

It is of paramount importance that teachers know their civil and professional rights, duties, and freedoms. Teachers should exercise and defend their rights, act by their civil and professional duties, respect other people's rights, and work hard to build a public life governed by human rights to turn their students into citizens who hold the same values as them. The results show that classroom teachers are more aware of their professional rights and freedoms than their civil ones. They also have a hard time differentiating between their civil and professional rights. They find themselves uninformed and ill-equipped about fundamental human rights and freedoms but believe that they need law-related education and education on human rights. We would like to state that we need innovative ways to raise teachers' awareness of their civil and professional rights and freedoms and turn them into conscious individuals who fight not only for their rights but also for those of others. We should also encourage them to be good role models for children to raise them to be ideal citizens who know their rights and respect democracy and others' rights and freedoms.

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