



Evaluation of Guidance Teachers' Guidance Competence and Professional Development Processes

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Article Info

ISSN (online): 2582-7138

Volume: 06

Issue: 03

May - June 2025

Received: 11-04-2025

Accepted: 13-05-2025

Page No: 1736-1744

Abstract

This study aims to evaluate guidance teachers' guidance competence levels and attitudes towards professional development processes. The changing structure of education systems requires students' increasing psychosocial needs and multidimensional crisis environments, the professional roles and competencies of guidance teachers. Guidance adequacy not only includes the theoretical knowledge, but also multifaceted professional equipment such as effective communication skills, commitment to ethical principles and openness to development. In this context, in the study, the competences that guidance teachers should have are defined within the theoretical framework; The applications in Türkiye and the guidance systems in countries such as Finland, USA, Canada and New Zealand have been examined. The findings from the literature screening and the current research on the field show that guidance teachers are mostly engaged in administrative duties in Turkey, that they have difficulty in implementing their competences and that they cannot systematically participate in their professional development processes. In international practices, the roles of guidance teachers are defined more clearly, their professional development is supported by legal obligations and guidance services are carried out more systematically. At the end of the study, it is recommended that the task definitions of guidance teachers in Türkiye should be clarified, the creation of a competence system based on ethical and professional standards and that institutional structures that support continuous professional development should be strengthened.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54660/IJMRGE.2025.6.3.1736-1744>

Keywords: Guidance Teacher, Guidance Competence, Professional Development, Psychological Counseling, Education System, In -Service Training, International Comparison

1. Introduction

Guidance teachers have a basic role in the student -centered approach of contemporary education systems. They aim to support students' academic, social-emotional and career development while performing developmental, preventive and healing guidance functions. In this context, the professional competences that guidance teachers should have and the process of developing these competences are of great importance. Guidance services in Turkey started to be implemented for the first time in the 1950s, but it was possible to gain a professional identity in the 1980s (Korkut, 2007) ^[11]. Today, guidance teachers working in schools affiliated to the Ministry of National Education are mostly faced with versatile duties such as individual counseling, crisis intervention, exam orientation and regulating parent-student relations. However, these task definitions are becoming uncertain from time to time, and there are situations in which teaching and psychological counseling roles are involved. This may directly affect the professional competence of guidance teachers. Throughout the world, the guidance teaching profession is defined by more systematic structures. For example, in the US, the "School Counselor Competencies" certificate published by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) is determined in detail (ASCA, 2019). In Finland, guidance teachers have to study at a master's level and their duties are limited only to guidance services. In this context, the system in Finland offers a clear structure that prevents role complexity (Sultana, 2011) ^[17].

The aim of this study is to examine how guidance teachers develop guidance adequacy and how they develop this competence. A comparison will be made in the light of both the practices in Turkey and the world examples; In particular, how professional development processes are reflected in the performance of guidance teachers will be evaluated.

Guidance teachers are not only academic; It takes a multidimensional task that supports their emotional, social and cognitive development. In the modern education approach, student success is evaluated in a holistic way with not only grades, but also with the psychological goodness of the student, social relations and future plans. At this point, the role of the guidance teacher covers developmental guidance, preventive interventions and crisis management areas, unlike classical teaching. The duties of guidance teachers in Turkey are determined by the Regulation on Guidance Services of the Ministry of National Education dated 2017. Accordingly, guidance counselors are obliged to monitor students' individual development, to support career planning, to identify risky behaviors early and to direct directing to the relevant units when necessary. In practice, however, it is seen that guidance teachers are used for frequent seizures, to do documents or to do administrative duties related to discipline (Özyürek, 2009) ^[16]. This puts their real psychological counseling roles in the second place. For example, in a field research conducted in Ankara, 62 %of the guidance teachers spent at least half of their weekly time with administrative duties (Kaya & Güven, 2020) ^[8]. This directly affects the effectiveness of guidance services in the education system. Developed by ASCA on the roles of guidance teachers in the USA, the model envisages that this occupational group will work in three basic fields: "Academic Development", "Professional Orientation" and "Personal/Social Development". This triple structure aims to develop the school climate and strengthen the student as an individual (ASCA, 2019). Guidance teachers also systematically follow cases, are included in multi -stakeholder teams and participate in one -to -one studies with parents. In the UK, experts with the title of "School Counsellor çalıştır prioritize the psychological goodness of the students and conduct psychotherapy -based consultancy services in schools. The supervision of these experts working in government -backed schools is done by independent professional associations (eg British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy -BACP) and is not confused with the task of teaching. In Finland, a career guide is compulsory in each school and these people work independently of the curriculum. They provide guidance in a wide area from the professional orientations of the students to social support needs (Sultana, 2011) ^[17]. In this country, social acceptance of the roles of guidance teachers is also high and the profession requires specialization at the graduate level. As can be seen, the role of guidance teachers in the education system varies from country to country. While guidance teachers are expected to perform psychological counseling duties within the system, this role is mostly limited to administrative duties and guidance services. However, world examples reveal that guidance teachers have more specialized, independent and versatile roles. For this reason, it is clear that in Turkey, it is clear that the definition of the profession of guidance teaching, the prevention of role conflict and the professional task areas should be strengthened.

Guidance adequacy is a comprehensive structure of the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that guidance teachers should have to perform their professions based on ethical, effective and scientific foundations. This competence is

based not only on theoretical knowledge, but also on practical skills, ethical sensitivity and professional development responsibility. Guidance adequacy is usually examined in four basic areas:

Field knowledge and theoretical competence, Communication and Consultancy Skills, Ethical and legal information, Clarifying and continuous learning to professional development (Korkut, 2007; Asca, 2019) ^[11].

The competence of guidance teachers in Turkey has been defined in general terms within the framework of the 2017 Guidance and Psychological Counseling Services Regulation. In addition, the Council of Higher Education (YÖK), psychological counseling and guidance (PDR) has determined the knowledge and skills to be gained in undergraduate programs. However, in practice, it is controversial to what extent these competences are applied by each guidance teacher. For example, in a study conducted by Özyürek (2009) ^[16], it was emphasized that guidance teachers in Türkiye experience a lack of psychological counseling with the individual, applying psychological measurement tools and defining risky student groups. In addition, many guidance teachers have prioritized the demands of the school administration instead of guidance principles when they faced ethical dilemmas (Kaya & Güven, 2020) ^[8]. In the US, guidance competences are clearly defined in the "School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies" document published by ASCA (2019). These standards, guidance teachers:

To have knowledge in the field of social-emotional development, To work with cultural competence, Preparing systematic intervention plans, It includes criteria such as adherence to ethical principles.

These standards are used not only at the level of job description, but also in performance evaluations. That is, this frame is taken as a criterion to determine whether a guidance teacher is sufficient. In Canada, the adequacy of guidance teachers is inspected on a state -based. For example, teachers who guided in the state of Ontario should have received consultancy training and open to constant professional development (Ontario Minist of Education, 2020). Re -educational obligation has been introduced for teachers who show inadequacy. In New Zealand, areas of ethical sensitivity for guides working as "Guidance Counsellor çıktı, such as culturally communicating with Maori students and emotional risk detection stands out (Education Council of Aotearoa, 2018). The commitment of guidance teachers to national ethical rules in this country is evaluated in license renewal processes. In Turkey, the definition of competence of guidance teachers is theoretically existed, but in practice, concrete systems for the development and supervision of these competences are limited. For example, in Turkey, a guidance teacher is not subjected to any re -proficiency assessment after starting, while in countries such as the US and Canada, these processes are followed by performance and ethical. However, in many countries, adequacy is defined not only as "knowing", but also as "to do", more emphasis on counseling skills, multicultural understanding and professional ethical values. For this reason, Turkey is recommended to restructure the guidance competences and to harmonize with international qualification models.

The profession of guidance teaching is not based on a stagnant knowledge, but on constantly updated scientific developments and social needs. For this reason, professional development is vital for guidance teachers to increase their individual competences and provide more qualified services to students. Professional development process; Beyond the

pre-service training of the guidance teacher, it can be defined as the process of renewing and developing knowledge, skills, attitudes and values during his term (Lambie *et al.*, 2011)^[13]. Students encountered by guidance teachers; Socioeconomic structure is under the influence of many variables such as family dynamics, technological interaction and mental health problems. Therefore, it is inevitable that the inadequate fixed information acquired in the past is insufficient. Developmental psychology, post-traumatic support, multicultural counseling, working with individuals with special needs is part of the professional development process. In -service trainings for guidance teachers in Turkey are presented by the Ministry of National Education in certain periods as seminars and online courses. However, most of these trainings are based on the necessity of participation and their content and effectiveness can be found inadequate by teachers (Özyürek, 2009)^[16]. For example, in a study conducted in İstanbul in 2022, 74 %of the guidance teachers stated that in -service trainings did not contribute sufficiently to their fields of work (Demirtaş & Yıldız, 2022)^[4]. Participants stated that education is mostly theoretical, and that the case examples and practice -based studies are insufficient. In addition, the participation of guidance teachers in Turkey in Türkiye is mostly based on individual efforts. Special trainings offered by universities, professional associations or psychological counseling associations are not common or cost obstacles are encountered. In the USA, guidance teachers must participate in professional development activities at regular intervals in order to maintain their licenses. ASCA (2019) requests these processes within the scope of the “Developmental Counseling Model ve and each guidance teacher demands certified training at certain times per year. In addition, professional development is considered not only as information acquisition, but also as part of the performance evaluation process. In Canada's Ontario province, guidance teachers have to participate in the “Mandator Professional Development” program for at least 30 hours per year. These programs; Crisis management is directed towards contemporary problems such as digital security, cultural competence and school -based traumas (2020). In Australia, the professional development of guidance teachers is controlled by the “Guidance Counsellors Association. Guidance teachers in this country document their experience and learning processes for a year and apply for a license renewal. Mentor support and supervision are mandatory in this process. Professional development is critical for guidance counselors to communicate more effectively with students, to realize various psychological problems early and to produce solutions within ethical limits. Especially in the face of new generation of problems such as peer bullying, social media -based anxiety, gender identity problems, classical counseling information may be insufficient. At this point, it is inevitable to have a dynamic learning process and to see the guidance profession as an area that continues to learn. In Turkey, the following improvements to be made for the professional development of guidance teachers are proposed:

Compulsory and application -based in -service trainings should be increased, Free or state -supported certified programs that guidance teachers can participate in voluntary participation should be expanded, In cooperation with universities and PDR associations, continuous training centers should be established.

2. Guidance Adequacy

Guidance adequacy is the set of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that guidance teachers should have to provide students with effective, ethical and scientific foundations. This competence is a determinant to what extent the guidance teacher performs his professional role and how to respond to student needs. Guidance adequacy in the field summer; Theoretical knowledge, counseling and communication skills, the ability to use psychological evaluation tools, ethical sensitivity, cultural awareness and continuous professional development. In this section, the definition of guidance adequacy is explained in detail; The basic elements that determine competence are classified and the applications in Türkiye and the systems around the world are comparatively evaluated. The fact that guidance teachers are in charge of guidance services in Turkey limits the effective use of competencies. On the other hand, guidance adequacy in countries such as the USA, Canada and Finland is measured based on professional standards and is supported by continuous development processes. In this context, strengthening the professional equipment of guidance teachers is also critical in terms of the quality of the education system.

One of the basic building blocks of guidance adequacy, the field knowledge of the guidance teacher, the ability to transfer this information to the application, the commitment to ethical principles in professional practices and the competence to communicate effectively. These three elements are critical for the healthy development of both the student and the school environment. Field knowledge means that the guidance teacher is equipped on fundamental issues such as developmental psychology, psychological counseling theories, measurement-evaluation, crisis intervention, professional guidance and working with individuals with special needs. This information should be not only at the theoretical level, but also to functionally available in the field. The PDR undergraduate programs in Türkiye provide a theoretical knowledge -intensive training. However, when the application is started after graduation, it is seen that guidance teachers have difficulty in transferring this information directly and effectively to the field. For example, in a study, 65 %of the teachers stated that they had theoretical knowledge of crisis intervention, but they were inadequate in practice in real situations (Demirtaş & Yıldız, 2022)^[4]. In the USA, according to the standards published by ASCA, guidance teachers are expected to specialize in certain areas: for example, special module trainings are applied in areas such as evaluating the risky behavior of the student, career counseling techniques and working with different developing individuals (ASCA, 2019).

Ethical principles constitute the router value system in the professional decisions of guidance teachers. Principles such as preserving consultant privacy, providing consent -based service, approaching with multicultural sensitivity, avoiding the conflict of interest and protecting professional boundaries guarantee the reliability of the guidance profession. One of the main references on ethical codes in Turkey is the “ethical directive ğı published by the Turkish Psychological Counseling and Guidance Association (TPDRD). However, most of this directive is not visible in the school guidance service, guidance counselors only meet ethics in university education and then this information is not reinforced (Özyürek, 2009)^[16]. In the UK, guidance teachers work within the framework of the Ethical Framework published by BACP (British Association for Counseling and Psychotherapy), and unethical behaviors may result in the

profession. It is legal obligation for guidance teachers to receive ethical awareness education every year. Effective communication skills of guidance counselors form the basis of the therapeutic relationship with students. Communication techniques such as effective listening, empathic approach, asking open-ended questions, analyzing verbal and nonverbal expressions directly affect the quality of the counseling process. It also makes it possible to work with school administrators, teachers and parents, multi-faceted and open communication and work in cooperation. Field research revealed that guidance teachers are strong in the empathic listening and communication without judgment, but they were forced in multi-stakeholding communication (especially with school administration and parents). The reasons for this are role uncertainty and administrative pressures (Kaya & Güven, 2020) ^[8]. In Finland, the communication skills of guidance teachers are measured not only with the student, but with multicultural families, special education experts and external stakeholders. The recording of the interviews with the student allows guidance teachers to evaluate themselves and develop their communication (Sultana, 2011) ^[17]. Field knowledge, ethical sensitivity and communication skills; It creates a holistic competence structure that allows the guidance teacher not only to apply the profession but to perform qualified and reliable. Each of these elements in Türkiye is included in education; However, the equivalent in the field is open to development in terms of continuity and evaluation of competencies. In the light of international good practices, it is recommended that guidance counselors be included in a systematic and controlled professional development process in these three areas.

3. Professional development processes

Guidance teaching is not a profession that can be maintained only based on the knowledge and skills acquired at the university level. Education systems, social needs, student profiles and psychological problems are constantly changing; Accordingly, the need to be constantly updated in the roles and competencies of guidance teachers. For this reason, professional development is a dynamic, multidimensional and systematic process that guidance teachers should maintain throughout their professional lives. In this section, the importance of the professional development processes of guidance teachers is explained; Institutional structures and policies that support professional development are examined; The existing practices in Türkiye and the examples in countries such as USA, Canada and Finland are considered comparatively. In addition, the professional satisfaction of guidance teachers, burnout levels and relationships with student success are also evaluated on the axis of professional development. In Turkey, professional development is mostly based on individual efforts, limited in-service trainings and voluntary participation. However, professional development in developed countries; compulsory, systematic, application-based and based on performance. In this context, in order to make the professional development of guidance teachers in Turkey sustainable and effective, legal, institutional and academic levels should be developed at the level of holistic policies.

In-service trainings are indispensable for guidance counselors to update their professional competences and to effectively respond to the developing student needs. However, it is seen that the in-service trainings offered in Turkey contain systematic deficiencies in terms of both content, application and effectiveness levels. This creates difficulties in making guidance teachers' professional

development sustainable and restricts students' access to qualified guidance services. In-service trainings planned by the Ministry of National Education are generally presented at the beginning and at the end of the academic year or in the form of distance education based on the e-compeller system. These trainings are mostly general information-oriented, theoretical content and short-term and cannot respond sufficiently to the real application needs of guidance teachers (Korkut, 2007). In the qualitative research conducted by Demirtaş and Yıldız (2022) ^[4], the majority of guidance teachers described the in-service trainings as “repetition-based”, “non-current” and “non-field solutions” programs. 68 %of the participants stated that the trainings did not contribute to professional development. The main problems of in-service trainings:

- **Content inadequacy:** Developmental psychology, multicultural consultancy, digital bullying, post-traumatic support such as support.
- **Lack of Application:** Trainings are mostly narrated and applied methods such as case solution, role playing, supervision are limited.
- **Duration and Intensity:** In-service trainings usually last for a few days and cannot offer enough depth.
- **Motivation of Participation:** Educational is optional and the participation is made only for a certificate, it reduces the quality of learning.

A significant portion of guidance teachers in Turkey see in-service trainings as “corporate obligation” rather than personal development. Measurement, monitoring and evaluating the reflection of the gains after the training is often not. Thus, the information learned remains for a short time and the integration of the field is limited (Özyürek, 2009) ^[16]. Comparative World Examples:

- **In the USA:** In-service trainings accredited by ASCA are mandatory for guidance counselors to maintain their licenses. Trainings are based on case-based, modular system and performance follow-up. Guidance teachers must submit application reports at the end of the training (ASCA, 2019).
- **In Canada:** Guidance teachers in Ontario are obliged to participate in in-service training for at least 30 hours a year. Trainings; It focuses on issues such as school-based traumas, gender diversity, special education strategies. Participation in education is part of the performance evaluation (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2020).
- **In Finland:** In-service training is carried out with in-occupational rotation. Guidance teachers observe at least once a year in another school, join the case discussion groups and receive supervision. These processes have an impact on both professional development and professional solidarity (Sultana, 2011) ^[17].

In order to increase the quality of in-service trainings in Turkey, the following suggestions stand out:

Update the content based on the field, Structuring of the trainings based on application (role playing, case analysis, etc.), Making participation compulsory and systematic, Establishment of monitoring, evaluation and feedback mechanisms after training, The establishment of continuous development centers in cooperation with universities and professional associations.

The guidance teaching profession is not a static profession that can be maintained only with the information obtained pre-service. The developmental, psychosocial and cultural

characteristics of students are constantly changing; Social problems, digitalization, diversified family structures and new generation of behavior transforms the need for approaches and information about guidance services. For this reason, guidance teachers act as a professional who is constantly learning; scientific developments, current psychological theories and application approaches should follow (Lambie *et al.*, 2011) ^[13]. Continuous learning is the process of a lifelong information update, professional development and self-renewal of the guidance teacher. This process is not only the participation of seminars and courses; It covers multidimensional activities such as following scientific publications, sharing experience with colleagues, taking supervision, learning new advice approaches. Today, the psychological problems faced by students are much more complex and multidimensional: Digital dependence, Social media -based self -confidence problems Dilemma about sexual identity and orientation, Post -trauma stress, Deeneous specialty is required in areas such as anxiety disorders and school phobia. In this context, guidance teachers are expected to be individuals who adopt contemporary psychological approaches, not only with a “generalist yaklaş approach, but are individuals who are flexible, cultural awareness and can consult holistic counseling (Sultana, 2011) ^[17].

Some contemporary approaches that guidance counselors should apply for their professional development are as follows:

- **Solution -oriented short -term therapy (SFBT):** It is a student -centered and reinforcement -based approach that can obtain effective results despite time limitation in the school environment.
- **Cognitive Behavioral Counseling (CBT):** Exam anxiety, negative thought patterns, low self -confidence can be applied in areas such as. It is effective in terms of performance anxiety commonly seen in students in Turkey (Kaya & Güven, 2020) ^[8].
- **Mindfulness -based intervention:** It gives positive results especially in adolescents, especially in adolescents in cope with attention deficit, anxiety, anger management and stress. It is a current and scientific approach that guidance teachers can use in group studies.
- **Trauma Information Approaches:** It is an ethical and sensitive approach to work with students with experiences such as domestic violence, migration, disaster and abuse. Considering earthquake and refugee problems in Türkiye, it is of great importance.

Most of the guidance teachers in Turkey cannot be included in a systematic continuous learning process after starting the profession. Among the reasons for this: Lack of Corporate Support, Difficulty access to current sources and publications, The trainings remain more superficial or formal, There is not enough time (Demirtaş & Yıldız, 2022) ^[4].

Many guidance teachers use academic groups or online individual courses on social media for professional development; However, this process is mostly marched with unplanned and personal initiative. International good practices:

- **In the USA:** Guidance teachers certified by ASCA must receive continuous vocational training at certain times per year. An important part of the trainings is updated according to contemporary counseling theories and the changing needs of the students (ASCA, 2019).

- **In New Zealand:** The professional development of guidance teachers focuses on sensitivity to cultural diversity (especially Maori communities) and trauma -based practices. Teachers' development process is based on supervision, group reflex and experience transfer (Education Council of AOTAROA, 2018).
- **In Finland:** Continuous learning process is supported by structured re -education programs, application centers and teacher exchange programs. Guidance teachers are obliged to attend at least one scientific congress per year.

The ability of guidance to respond to the needs of the age and providing qualified services depends on the adoption of continuous learning awareness. Suggestions for the institutionalization of this process in Turkey: Modular continuous training programs with current approaches should be prepared by the Ministry of National Education, Supervisions should be applied in cooperation with universities, For the professional development of guidance counselors, non -duties should be recognized for certain periods per year, and Scientific resources translated into Turkish on current psychological approaches should be increased, Digital networks should be created for guidance teachers' experience sharing.

It is a critical mechanism for guidance counselors to evaluate, develop and provide services within the framework of ethical standards in the professional development process. Supervision is not only a monitoring process for new consultants; professional reflection, emotional durability development and a structured form of learning that encourages colleagues (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Supervision is a planned interaction process to evaluate and improve the professional practices of the counselor (in this context), which is carried out under the guidance of a more experienced profession. The main objectives are: Review of the methods used in the counseling process, Recognizing ethical dilemmas and developing solutions, Sharing the emotional burden of the consultant and reducing the risk of burnout, Increased awareness of the consultant and deepening the competence.

Supervision Types

- **Individual Supervision:** One -to -one assessment and guidance sessions between the guidance teacher and the supervisor.
- **Group Supervision:** Structured sessions with participation of more than one guidance teacher, including case analyzes and experience shares.
- **Peer Supervision:** The process of mutual feedback -based learning between colleagues at the same level of experience.
- **Self-Reflection (Self-Reflection):** Guidance teacher's own work registration, report, diary, etc. Evaluation by means.

In Turkey, guidance teachers are not obliged to receive supervision after graduation. Supervision training at the undergraduate level is often limited to a limited number of cases; When they go to the field, guidance teachers work without a control or mentoring system to review their practices. Problems: Supervisor is not assigned at the institutional level, Supervision is usually confused with administrative control, Not systematically made peer evaluations, The absence of the habit of evaluating the guidance teacher's own practices.

In the study conducted by Demirtaş and Yıldız (2022) ^[4], 81

% of the guidance teachers stated that they did not receive supervision during their professional lives. This can prepare the ground for occupational blindness, burnout and ethical violations. International good practices:

- **In the United States:** ASCA recommends guidance teachers to receive at least 10 hours of supervision a year. The supervision process directly affects performance evaluation and promotion. Usually structured group supervisions are also applied through online platforms (ASCA, 2019).
- **In the UK:** British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) members require that every professional in the consultation process to receive supervision at least once a month. Supervision is recorded and kept under the supervision of the Vocational Ethics Committee.
- **In Finland:** Guidance teachers in schools participate in the supervision of university -based consultancy twice a year. These supervisions focus on case analysis, personal emotional loading and the context of professional ethics (Sultana, 2011) ^[17]. In addition, supervision groups where guidance teachers can share experience with each other are common.
- **Effects of Supervision:** Increases occupational competence: it provides the recognition and correction of errors made in application.
- **Ethical application improves awareness:** Ethical dilemmas encountered can be handled with a professional perspective.
- **Reduces the emotional burden:** especially the traumatic case -working guidance teachers reduce the risk of burnout.
- **It gives the habit of self -assessment:** professional self -awareness develops.
- **Suggestions for Türkiye:** The participation of guidance teachers at least once a year should be legally encouraged to participate in the structured supervision.

Supervision units should be established within the district/provincial guidance research centers. A senior "Professional Consultant" (Mentor) should be appointed to the newly appointed guidance teachers and a 1 -year monitoring program should be applied. Supervisions should be structured not only for performance assessment, but within the framework of professional development and ethical support. "Supervisor Training Programs" should be organized in cooperation with universities and qualified experts should be given to the field.

4. Methods

This study is a literature scanning study made by the compilation and examination of the literature on guidance teachers' guidance adequacy and professional development processes. Literature screening is the process of systematic collection, analysis and evaluation of the scientific literature on a particular subject (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). Based on the analysis of previous researches in the field of guidance, the study aims to draw a general framework about the competence and professional development processes of guidance teachers through the findings of these studies. In this study, scientific articles, theses, books and reports published at national and international levels of guidance adequacy and professional development processes were scanned. The literature screening was performed using the following databases:

Academic resources such as Google Scholar, ERIC

(Education Resources Information Center), Jstor, Scopus, YÖK Thesis Center, Scientific articles that can be accessed through international magazines and books, Reports and documents published by the Turkish Psychological Counseling and Guidance Association (TPDR) and the Ministry of National Education.

In the literature screening process, the studies obtained were subjected to thematic analysis. In this analysis, the relationships between different concepts and practices related to the professional development of guidance teachers were determined and the change and development of these concepts over time were examined. The findings obtained are examined under the main themes:

- **Guidance adequacy:** Factors affecting the professional competences of guidance teachers, educational and psychological competences, professional role definitions.
- **Professional development processes:** difficulties faced by guidance teachers in professional development processes, in -service trainings and career development opportunities.
- **Supervision and Support:** The role of supervision in professional development of guidance teachers, supervision processes and attitudes of guidance teachers towards these processes.

For each theme, the findings of previous researches were analyzed and similarities and differences were identified.

During the data analysis process, the data obtained from the scanned literature were evaluated based on qualitative content analysis method. Content analysis allows systematic analysis of themes, concepts, repetitive expressions and relationships in documents (Krippendorff, 2018). The following steps were followed in the study:

- **Coding:** Keywords and themes in the selected studies have been issued and open coding was made for each study.
- **Theme development:** The resulting codes are grouped around similar themes and the main themes have been developed.
- **Comparison of themes:** Each theme is compared with the findings of different studies and similarities and differences have been analyzed.
- **For the validity of the research:** Data Source Diversity: Data obtained from both domestic and foreign sources have been used
- **Internal validity:** It is achieved by comprehensively scanning the literature and using different data sources,
- **Reliability:** The coding process was carried out by two independent researchers and the compliance rate between them was found to be 90 %.

In order to increase the external validity of the study, it was compared with the literature in the field of findings and focused on the themes whose overall validity is confirmed. In this study, only published and accessible resources were used. During the data collection phase, compliance with ethical rules were provided and resources were correctly referred to. No personal data were used, so the participant consent or ethical committee approval is not required in the study.

5. Findings and Comments

In this section, guidance teachers' guidance competence levels, the frequency of participation in professional development activities and the difficulties they face and the

support they need to overcome these difficulties are presented. In the analysis based on literature screening, important results have been achieved in the professional competence and development processes of guidance teachers. Although the participants generally have reached a certain level in terms of professional competence, restrictions in accessing professional development opportunities and various support needs emerge as important obstacles in the implementation process. The examination of the adequacy levels of the guidance teachers varies considerably according to the findings in the literature. In general, guidance counselors are directly associated with professional competences, education levels, professional experiences, individual skills and in-service trainings they receive after training.

The prominent findings

- **Educational Competence:** Most guidance counselors have completed academic guidance and psychological counseling programs. However, some studies reveal that guidance teachers experience deficiencies in practical skills, even though they find sufficient theoretical knowledge in the field of guidance (Güven & Kaya, 2020)^[8].
- **Communication and Interaction Skills:** The competences of guidance teachers about effective communication with students and to interact with families in general are generally positively evaluated. However, some studies emphasize that these skills require continuous development and that some teachers are forced (Demirtaş & Yıldız, 2022)^[4].
- **Professional Role Definitions:** There have been concerns that guidance teachers are not fully defined. Many guidance teachers not only provide consultancy services, but also say that they have to respond to students' psychological support needs.

The frequency of participation in the professional development activities of guidance teachers generally remains low levels. According to the studies in the literature, the majority of guidance teachers participate in in-service trainings and professional development programs several times a year, but the frequency and quality of this participation is not deemed sufficient for professional development.

The prominent findings

- **Frequency of Participation:** Many guidance teachers stated that annual in-service trainings are limited and short-term. The majority of in-service trainings in Turkey are in the form of general information and in-depth development in the field of guidance is not targeted (Özyürek, 2009)^[16].
- **Areas of Expertise:** Psycho-Pedagogical Counseling, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Techniques and Post-Traumatic Support include the fields where guidance teachers need more professional development opportunities. In addition, it was observed that they did not receive education in digitalization and contemporary psychological approaches.
- **Access Difficulties:** Many guidance counselors have stated the lack of time as the most important obstacle that makes it difficult to participate in professional development activities. The intense workload within the school limits the participation of guidance teachers in the development activities.

The difficulties faced by guidance teachers are often concentrated in areas such as time management, professional insulation, inadequate institutional support and individual burnout. These difficulties make it difficult for guidance teachers to improve their professional competences.

The prominent findings

- **Time Management:** Time management is one of the most difficulties faced by guidance teachers. Many guidance teachers have to carry out different responsibilities such as in-class education, individual counseling and group therapy at the same time.
- **Vocational Isolation:** The vast majority of guidance counselors have inadequate interaction and experience with their colleagues. Most of the time, guidance teachers who work alone are faced with a sense of professional loneliness because they do not have a supervision or colleague support they receive psychological support.
- **Inadequate Corporate Support:** Guidance teachers stated that they did not receive sufficient support from the school administrations and education system. In particular, budget restrictions, lack of supervision and limitation of educational opportunities are among the most expressed problems (Korkut, 2007)^[11].
- **Need for support:** Guidance teachers need a great need for supervision, psychological support, peer support and corporate education opportunities. It has been concluded that professional supports that will support their professional development and make them more equipped should be increased.

The professional competences of guidance teachers are generally satisfactory; However, the difficulties and developmental needs encountered in education processes require further increase in professional competences. Continuous education and supervision support plays an important role in increasing the professional competence of guidance teachers. In particular, it is seen that more support should be provided to increase participation in in-vocational trainings, strengthen the cooperation between institutions and to eliminate the feeling of loneliness of guidance teachers.

6. Argument

In this section, the findings obtained will be discussed by comparing with the existing literature. In addition, the professional competences of the guidance teachers, development processes and difficulties in accordance with the difficulties they face will be made for practices and educational leadership and relationships with school administration will be discussed. The findings obtained were compared with the similar studies found in the literature about the competence levels of guidance teachers, the frequency of participation in professional development activities and the difficulties encountered.

- **Proficiency Levels of Guidance Teachers:** Findings show that guidance counselors generally have a positive opinion on competence levels. However, it is emphasized that there are deficiencies in applied skills and psychological support. In a study conducted by Demirtaş and Yıldız (2022)^[4], although guidance teachers have theoretical knowledge, it was stated that application skills should be developed. The findings of the obtained support support this view. Although they consider themselves sufficient in issues such as guidance

teachers, communication skills and effective relationships with students and families, they experienced deficiency in special techniques such as post-traumatic counseling and cognitive behavioral therapy.

- **Frequency of Participation in Vocational Development Activities:** It was found that the frequency of participation in the professional development activities of the participants was low. In the studies of Korkut (2007) ^[11] and Özyürek (2009) ^[16], it was stated that the frequency of participation in in-service trainings and vocational development programs was limited. This finding reflects a problem arising from time and budget restrictions in the education system in Türkiye. The findings show that guidance teachers need more opportunities in professional development processes.
- **Difficulties and Support Needs:** Problems such as vocational loneliness and inadequate corporate support in the findings were similarly expressed in the studies conducted by Güven and Kaya (2020) ^[18] and Demirtaş and Yıldız (2022) ^[4]. Guidance counselors stated that assistance such as colleague support and supervision in schools are missing. In the literature, it was stated that guidance teachers had to respond to corporate and psychological support needs, beyond providing individual counseling services.

According to the findings, some important inferences can be made about the professional development and competence of guidance teachers:

Increasing occupational development opportunities: More access to guidance teachers' professional development opportunities should be provided. It should be emphasized that in-service trainings should be more comprehensive and long-term and it will be beneficial to organize in-depth trainings in cognitive and psychological counseling fields. Trainings should be given in modern fields such as digital literacy and trauma consultancy for guidance teachers in schools.

Strengthening Supervision and Peer Support: Guidance teachers should have more opportunities especially for supervision and colleague support. For this reason, regular supervision sessions and peer support groups between colleagues should be established in schools. Such supports are important for guidance teachers to prevent professional burnout and provide more effective counseling services.

Corporate Support and Improvements: School administrations should take into account the problems of guidance teachers' time management and workload and make appropriate arrangements in this regard. In addition, more resources should be allocated by government and school administrations in order to overcome obstacles such as budget restrictions and inadequate educational opportunities.

According to the findings, educational leadership and school administration play an important role on the professional development and competencies of guidance teachers.

Role of Educational Leadership: The role of educational leadership of school administrators directly affects the professional development processes of guidance teachers. The fact that school administrators have a supportive leadership approach to guidance teachers will increase their professional development and competence. In addition to improving the communication skills of teachers and other school staff, leadership in education can be an important factor in guiding guidance teachers by creating a cooperation-based learning environment.

School Administration and Distribution of Resources:

School administrations should offer opportunities for the professional development of guidance teachers and guide the educational budgets accordingly. Effective distribution of these resources can alleviate the workload of guidance teachers and help them to participate in their training processes. The fact that school administrators attach importance to the professional development of guidance teachers will also make positive contributions to the general success of the school.

In this section, findings on the professional competences and development processes of guidance teachers are compared with the literature and suggestions for applications that can be removed from these findings are presented. Supporting the professional development of guidance teachers plays an important role in increasing the general success in education. In cooperation with educational leadership and school administration, guidance teachers can develop more effectively.

7. Conclusion

In this section, the results of the literature screening on the professional development and competence of guidance teachers will be summarized and various suggestions will be made. Strategies to support the professional development processes of guidance teachers, inter-institutional cooperation and policy proposals will be emphasized.

According to the findings, the support of guidance teachers through in-service trainings is an important part of their professional development. However, the frequency and content of the trainings attended by guidance teachers is inadequate in general. In this context, the professional development of guidance teachers should be supported continuously and comprehensively.

8. Recommendations

Continuity of in-service training programs: Regular and comprehensive in-service training programs for guidance counselors should be developed. These trainings should not only be limited to theoretical knowledge, but also include practical skills. In particular, in-depth education opportunities should be provided in areas such as psycho-pedagogical counseling, cognitive behavioral therapy techniques and post-traumatic consultancy.

9. Specialized Training Programs: Guidance teachers should be trained about current psychological approaches, and digital literacy training should be given to the digitalized education system.

In order to support the professional development of guidance counselors, it is of great importance to strengthen the inter-institutional cooperation. Different actors such as school administrations, universities, guidance and psychological counseling associations should contribute to the development processes of guidance teachers.

10. Recommendations

University and School Cooperation: Universities should organize education seminars, workshops and comprehensive guidance programs in regular cooperation with school guidance teachers. Such programs allow guidance teachers to have information about current approaches and scientific developments.

Cooperation with Guidance Associations: Incident with guidance and psychological counseling associations in Türkiye and throughout the world, it should be ensured to increase the opportunities for occupational development.

This cooperation strengthens the social networks of guidance teachers and encourages the sharing of experience.

Inter -Institutional Education Support: Local Governments and Education Ministries can organize mutual education programs for guidance teachers and benefit from the best examples of application throughout the country. The development of guidance teachers for professional development processes is one of the most important steps in this field. In policies, guidance counselors should be adopted a more comprehensive approach to the educational processes and the importance of school administrations to guidance services should be increased.

Recommendations

Increasing the status of guidance teachers: It should be emphasized that the professional roles of guidance teachers should be defined more clearly and be among the priority support groups in educational policies. It is important to clarify the task definitions of guidance counselors and to support these tasks effectively by school administrations.

Increasing in -service training budgets: In educational policies, it should be argued that the budgets allocated for the in -service training of guidance counselors should be increased. More shares of educational budgets should be allocated to meet the educational needs of guidance teachers. **Continuous Professional Development:** In educational policies, it should be stated that continuous professional development processes should be created for guidance teachers. This process will meet the needs of guidance teachers to adapt to changes in education and to obtain information about current psychological approaches

As a result, the professional development of guidance teachers is a direct effective factor on the psychological and academic achievements of the students. Therefore, the continuous support of guidance teachers through in -service trainings can be made more effective with corporate cooperation and a strong educational policy. Improvements in the education system will strengthen guidance counselors both their individual professional development and the guidance services in schools, thus ensuring that students get a healthier education experience.

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