

Teacher Profiles in a School Improvement Project in Kazakhstan: A Cluster Analysis of Perceptions and Professional Differences

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to determine teacher typological profiles depending on their perception of the school improvement project and to reveal socio-professional differences between cluster groups. The research design is quantitative. The study is descriptive and analytical. A sample of 2,582 teachers from secondary schools in the Republic of Kazakhstan participated in this study. The data collection instrument was a questionnaire with six scales assessing the project's awareness and knowledge by teachers, perception of the project content and its importance, personal significance for professional development, the project's effect on school level, provision of support and resources, barriers to implementation. The data were analyzed by descriptive statistics, K-means cluster analysis, one-way ANOVA, and contingency table analysis (cross-tabulation).

As a result of cluster analysis, three teacher typological profiles were determined: "Positive teachers" (55.8%), "Medium involvement teachers" (32.9%), "Negative teachers" (11.3%). Teachers of the positive cluster gave high ratings on all studied scales, and teachers of the critical cluster significantly lower ratings on scales that talk about the effectiveness of the project and the level of support provided. There were statistically significant differences between clusters according to school location, teachers' age, and professional category. Teachers working in urban schools were predominantly in the positive cluster, and teachers working in rural schools were represented mainly in medium involvement and negative clusters. In addition, older teachers and teachers with a higher professional category were characterized by a more critical attitude towards the project. No significant differences were discovered by gender.

Thus, we can conclude that teachers differ in their perception of school development projects and that professional and contextual factors should be taken into consideration during educational reforms and school improvement projects implementation.

Keywords

Educational policy, educational reforms, teacher perception, cluster analysis, targeted schools, school improvement, Kazakhstan.