

## The Ethical Perceptions of Elementary School Teachers in the Triple Perspective of Classification of Ethics

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### Abstract

The ethical classification that forms the basis for this research uses a triple classification slightly different from the traditional approaches: "Consistency", "Results"<sup>1</sup> and "Caring". With this classification it is stated that in handling the actions with an ethical approach, all three aspects are necessary. This study was conducted as a qualitative research and interview method was used to collect the research data. Study group consists of 10 volunteer elementary school teachers. The findings of the study reveal that the teachers who took part in this research took into consideration each of the factors "consistency", "results" and "caring" sometimes singly, sometimes two of them together or sometimes three of them together. In addition, it is possible to indicate that different factors come to the forefront in different incidents that have similar characteristics, indicating that in this sense there is not a simple or single ethical stance in operation. From an ethical point of view, our actions are also influenced by our society's norms, from the principles that come into existence over time and from the roles that we assume in the social domain.

**Keywords:** Ethics; consistency; results; caring; teacher perception; qualitative research

### Introduction

Because we are social beings, we live on in an absolute network of relationships with others. Thus we present actions by knowing and more often than not without being aware of the fact that our existence is subject to a constant movement. We put our actions into practice by considering various reasons: We sleep to rest, we do exercise to lose weight and we study to get good grades. However most of our actions and the relationships between our actions are not as linear or straightforward as this. Olen and Berry (1992, p.2) explain the complexity of the reasons and the relationships between the results of the reasons. As they noted we frequently find ourselves in the position to make a selection between putting something into practice or something else into practice, and our

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<sup>1</sup> In the original text the three categories are listed as Consistency, Consequences and Caring. However translation back into English from the Turkish text makes "Results" easier to distinguish from the other two.

preferences may not take us to the results we desire. Our reasons may force us to go to different directions and we can face the situation of choosing only one of these, and we prefer the right one. The other preference may mean that we preferred the wrong thing. The dilemmas between the good and the bad, the right and the wrong or the way things should be and the way things should not be take us to the concept of ethics.

In this research, the researchers aimed to evaluate elementary school teachers' attitudes in the light of triple ethics classification based on "results", "caring" and "consistency". With reference to the thoughts that teachers will present, the opportunity of determining the strengths and weaknesses of the teachers will come into existence. With the feedbacks that will be created in the light of the data received from the results of the research, the participants of the research will find the opportunity to reevaluate themselves in the context of ethical perspective and thus they will make a positive contribution with regards both to themselves and to the other stakeholders of the education circle. In addition it is thought that the results of this research will benefit the other researchers who will study in this field and will create new possibilities of dispute. In line with this overall purpose, the following research questions were tried to be answered:

1. Which one of them (consistency, caring, results) do the teachers put forward in ethical evaluation as compared to the others?
2. What are the grounds (rules, laws, norms) that teachers use in ethical evaluation?

## **Ethics**

In Greek, ethics means a good "way of existence", a wise "way of action". Ethics shape the practical existence around "good" (Badiou, 2006, p. 17). Ethics is the fullest extent of standards and values that enables us to identify what is good, right or fair, and that guides us based on our beliefs, principles and values (Ethics Resource Center, 2011). According to Starratt (2004, p. 5) ethics is a study of the underlying beliefs, assumptions, principles, values that support a moral way of life. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005, p. 10) draw attention to the origin of ethics. The word "ethics" comes from Greek "ethos" and today it comprises approved ways of acting. Ethics seems more complex than simply making right and wrong decisions (Rebore, 2001). Ethics concerns educators as it should every person who asks himself/herself the questions "what should I do?" or "will this be the right thing to do?" Therefore this requires developing an ethical perspective for every person.

Langlois (2011, p.27) states that ethics has gained more importance as organizations wanted to offer standard procedures for conflict resolutions. On the other hand ethics makes us handle and analyze human being's ethical problems in their personal and social life, make a choice between good, bad, virtue and fault in this direction, and evaluate the results of the behaviors that this choice necessitates (Aydın, 2006, p.130). Ethics handles the judgments that lie behind the ethical manners that are externalized (Nuttal, 1993; cited in Aydın, 2006, p. 14).

## **Ethics Classification and An Alternative Triple Classification of Ethics**

Gammel (2008, p. 2) indicates that ethics is based on a triple classification in which there are descriptive ethics, normative ethics and meta-ethics. Another classification that forms the basis for this research is developed by Haynes. Different from the traditional approaches that are expressed, Haynes bases ethics on a triple classification in explaining the actual processes of becoming ethical: "Consistency", "Results" and "Caring". In this classification, it is indicated that the three aspects are necessary in handling the actions with an ethical approach. In the aforementioned classification, none of them is handled as the antecedent value but are presented as nested orientations. (Haynes, 2002, p. 29);

1. Consistency –Mind-: Consistency is a concept that makes a person internalize an application and see it as an aimed act, and that is expressed as the “subjective aspect”. In this context consistency means that ethical action is thought, chosen and shaped based on personal consistency, and as a result of these it is justifiable. If ethics is handled as moral behavior and moral judgment, consistency emerges in case of these two forming wholeness. The concept of “internalized action” is used in explaining consistency and a person putting forward the same moral behavior in all cases without discrimination is thought as an indicator consistent behavior (İpbüker, Göksel and Deniz, 2005).
2. Results (Consequences) –Body-: It is the “objective aspect” of ethics that handles ethics as externalized individual or social behavior with respect to its applications, reasons and consequences. This approach is called utilitarianism. Utilitarianism draws all the possible beneficial consequences, evaluates them against possible harmful consequences and puts the action into practice that provides “the greatest happiness or welfare for the greatest number of people” (Haynes, 2002, p. 33). In this respect the result-consistency harmony can be seen as following:

Table 1. The Harmony between Consequences and Consistency

The Subject and Internal Consistency	The Objective – The Results
1. Punishment and Obedience – personal intimate pleasure taking	Often physical, short range results that are aimed at self ego
2. Instrumental relativity	To think about the short range results of an action in a limited environment
3. Harmony with the conventions of good behaviour	The results in a small social group that imposes sanctions to behaviors that are not social
4. Preserving the community	The social worth/utility of breaking the laws or obeying them; regarding the social worth of every action – responsibility in a social system
5. Social contract	Maximizing the social good
6. Universal ethical principle	The greatest happiness for the greatest possible number of people

Source: F. Haynes, Ethics in Education 2002

3. Caring –Heart-: It is the devoting of oneself to the ones he/she cares about in a wide network of relationships without making a distinction. In order to help others the person establishes holistic relationships that grounded in sensitivity and empathy. Millet (2002, p. 5) emphasized that focusing only on results in ethical approach will be deficient and indicated that consistent behaviors towards others based on general principles will also present a limited perspective, and emphasized that devotion alone apart from these two will be inadequate from an ethical point of view.

Haynes (2002, p. 47) expressed that the caring ethic does not precede consistency or the results approach; all three are the necessary factors of a moral growth process that is based on dialogue and relationship. In Lacan’s metaphor, the circles that represent the approaches “consistency”, “results” and “caring” are so much interlocked that when one of the circles is cut off then the whole system is disintegrated or scattered:

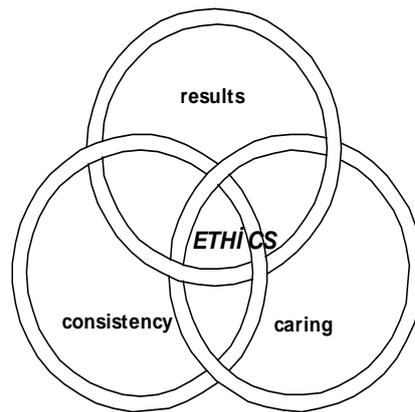


Figure 1. The Borrom Node  
Source: F. Haynes, *Ethics in Education* 2002

The Borrom node is based on the fact that none of the circles that constitute the node has any privilege over the other circles. Neither results nor consistency nor caring provide on its own the ethical base that is necessary for ethical action. All three of them constitute the essence of an ethical decision process. What has to be used as base in an ethical maturing process is the development of an altruist approach with its subjective and objective dimensions.

### **Ethics in Education**

Education is an ethical effort (Goodlad; Soder & Sirotni, 1993; cited in Clarken, 2009, p. 3). When the targets of education, values of education and the education process are considered, ethics in education confronts us as a preferential subject (Aydın, 2006, p. 45). Education can be acknowledged as an activity that aims to bring the individual in certain moral values mature that individual and make that individual approach perfection (Yayla, 2005, p. 2).

Hansen indicated that education affects ethical development in both collective and individual sense (Clarken, 2009, p. 3). It is targeted that students develop ethically advanced traits like tolerance, sharing, honesty and fair approach in classrooms with education. In other words ethics, which aims to imagine how a "good person" should be like, plays a basic role in the determining process of both education and the way education is given (Pieper, 1999, p. 125). Stefkovich and Berkley (2007, p. 212) in their comparison with other professions express that ethics is an integral part of education. Ethics is different from other professions because it is an integral part of education. It is one of the vital bases; at the center of it lays the mission of shaping the vital expectations of students. With this aspect of it ethics constitutes the spine of education. Whereas in other professions ethics is brought up as an issue in the way a job is performed.

Thus ethics has a special meaning in the sense of education. Especially at the present time the responsibility to shape the next generations are fulfilled mostly by teachers and school heads considering a lot of moral dimensions. At this point, like everybody else who asks the questions "what should I do?" or "will this be the right thing?" to himself/herself, the reality emerges that ethics also have to be the center of interest of educators (Haynes, 2002, p. 17). The term "ethics" is a fashionable term and it is possible to see it in almost every profession. Ethics in education is related to the actions which take place in the school. An ethical school environment will help to create a successful and effective school (Kocabas and Karakose, 2009). This fact reveals the necessity that in general terms the educator, specifically the teacher has to develop an ethical perspective. In this

context Langlois (2004) states that recently, more and more researchers have become interested in understanding the moral and ethical dimensions of educational practice.

Bilington (2011, p. 380-381) states that education has two general interpretations: the first interpretation sets forth the fact that the subjects taught within the framework of the curriculum of a school or a public occupational organization are determined according to the needs of the society or the economic or social needs of the state, and in this regard what is "found beneficial" becomes prominent and this gains acceptance mentally by teachers and students. For example whereas mathematics and physics are perceived as courses that are worth learning, courses like fine arts, sociology appear at the bottom of the list of priorities. In the second interpretation education is regarded as a process of maturation. It is described as a process of idea monitoring and skill developing that allows students discover both themselves and the world. The individual adopts this process not for a pragmatic reason but because as a person he/she internalizes it. In this sense both teachers and students have to believe sincerely that the activities that they run in an ethical education process and of which they are a part are valuable. It is possible to indicate that even though the student has planned the field of education he/she chose according to his/her prospective occupation, he/she has to become the subject of the process in which he/she can sincerely reveal the power of self creation. As a result Bilington (2011, p. 394) expresses that education is not a meta but it is a process and it can be ethical by transforming to a structure that makes the individual a subject.

In the process of shaping the future, the teacher faces the obligation of being an ethical role model not only by professional competence but also by his/her life style. In other words the teacher is the person who becomes integrated with his/her activities in the process of education and who reveals it in his/her life style (Pieper, 1999, p. 118). Lukovski regards developing an ethical behavior while asking the question "how can I be a good teacher?" the base of being "a good teacher". According to him the indispensable factor of being a good teacher is ethics. The ethical character of the teacher has importance in influencing the students who will constitute the social fabric of the future. When thought from the point of view of ethics, it is possible to conclude that a teacher has to be honest, compassionate, intelligent, courageous and fair (Luckovski,1997 cited in Özbek, 2003, p. 41).

When teachers fulfill their professional responsibilities, they play an ethical role both for themselves and for others whom they – based on responsibility – establish relationships with. This necessitates creating certain ethical principles and developing behaviors in accordance with these principles. Aydın (2006, p. 58) emphasizes the necessity of a teacher developing ethical behaviors of highest level in order for the teacher to earn the respect and trust of his/her students, students' parents, his/her colleagues and all the other individuals.

Haynes (2002, p. 51) emphasizes that while developing a perspective based on ethical standards or principles educators should not give away rationality. Haynes (2002, p. 51) indicates that an educator, who digested an objective standpoint in a subjective dimension which is within the framework of ethical principles and is based on responsibility, should consider the three following aspects indiscriminately in cases that he/she experiences:

- What are the long range "results" for me and others, and do the benefits of any possible act outweigh the detrimental effects of it?
- Do all the people who are effective in the situation act "consistently" with their own past actions and beliefs? In other words do they act according to an ethical principle/ethical principles that in another similar case they would like to apply? Do they do the very thing to others that they would like to be done to themselves?

- As humans, do they fulfill the needs of other people? Do they “care about” other people in the same circumstances; do they “care about” people who have feelings like themselves?

## Methodology

### The Research Model

In the research, phenomenology, which is one of the qualitative research methods, is used. Phenomenology focuses on the phenomena about which we are aware but do not have a thorough and detailed understanding. Phenomena can confront us in different forms like events, experiences, perceptions, tendencies, concepts and situations in the world we live. In our daily lives we can encounter these phenomena in different forms. However this acquaintance does not mean that we gain a clear understanding about the phenomena. Phenomenology forms an appropriate basis for the studies that aim to research phenomena which we have experienced and which we cannot reason or speak easily (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008; 72).

### The Study Group

The study group of the research was constituted using “maximum variation sampling” which is one of the “purposeful sampling methods”. The aim in the maximum variation sampling is to constitute a relatively small sample and reflect maximally the variety of the individuals who can become a party to the problem worked on in this sample. In the sampling based on maximum variation, there are no generalizations (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008, p. 109).

The study group of the research is comprised of teachers who are selected from the elementary schools in the city of Istanbul, in the county of Avclar. Four of the teachers who participated to the research are female and 6 of them are male. The study group consists of volunteer elementary teachers who were chosen randomly among five different schools. The most important criteria in participant selection process was the willingness of teachers. Seniority of teachers varies between 2 - 21 years. Moreover, the participants’ were informed that their names were not going to be mentioned in the research so they could answer the questions sincerely. The names were encoded as teacher 1, teacher 2,3,4 and the real names of the participants were known only to the researchers.

Table 2. Demographics of the Participants

Participants	Age	Gender	Branch	Seniority
Teacher 1	27	F	Classroom teacher	3
Teacher 2	32	M	Classroom teacher	8
Teacher 3	35	F	Classroom teacher	11
Teacher 4	26	F	Maths teacher.	2
Teacher 5	38	F	Turkish teacher	13
Teacher 6	33	M	Classroom teacher	9
Teacher 7	29	M	Classroom teacher	7
Teacher 8	34	M	Science teacher	13
Teacher 9	37	M	Technology design teacher	14
Teacher 10	44	M	English teacher	21

## **Data Collection Tool**

The interview method was used in data collection process. Interview is the most frequently used data collection method in qualitative researches (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008, p. 119). In the interview, cases which are suitable for the purpose of this research are used as a base and these cases were taken from the book "The Ethical School" by Felicity Haynes. These cases were adapted to Turkey and structured accordingly, and then an interview form was generated. The researchers scheduled visits to the workplace of teachers. Each participant was visited in their schools and they were informed about the research. The interview forms were given, and then collected.

While conducting qualitative research, the researchers may have some problems in insuring validity and reliability. There are some useful strategies that help researchers to eliminate these problems. Creswell (2007, p. 207-209) suggests some strategies to ensure the authentication, and trustworthiness of qualitative studies, These are (a) building trust with participants; (b) triangulation; (c) peer review or debriefing; (d) negative case analysis; (e) clarifying researcher bias; (f) member checking; (g) rich, thick description allowing for transferability; (h) external audits. Creswell recommends the researchers use at least two of these strategies in a qualitative study. In this research the researchers built trust with participants, used peer review and clarified researcher bias. During the data collecting process, the research steps were performed in the same way in every school for all of the participants. To be able to obtain reliable data, the participants were assured of the confidentiality with respect to their identity and views. The real names of participants remained confidential and the participants were informed that they will be able to review the findings.

In order to increase the reliability of the research all the researchers endeavored to gain a detailed insight regarding ethics and composed a detailed theoretical framework before the beginning of the study. Then the researchers first examined the textual data on the interview forms individually and later, they studied on the forms together and they compared their results. Lawrence Neuman (2003: 288) states that the reliability of a qualitative research can be improved by comparing the analysis of the same data by several researchers. During the analysis process the researchers sought the highest consensus to evaluate the ethical factors regarding caring, consistency and results. All the researchers spent the same amount of time for each form.

## **Findings and the Result**

In the evaluation phase "description" was used which means the interpretation of the collected data according to the preset themes, and also "content analysis" was used which enables reaching the clues that may explain the collected data (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008; 224-227).

While evaluating the participant answers regarding the cases, results are produced that are based on reasoning. While evaluating the possible reactions of the participants against ethical situations, instead of coming at definite and unchangeable judgments for the sake of reaching certain results, the effort of presenting a certain framework in the triple ethical classification perspective has been pursued.

Each presented case aims to determine which one or which ones of the three factors (consistency, caring, results) come(s) to the forefront during the evaluation of the answers about the three factors. From the point of view of the person who gives the answers, the following two questions are tried to be understood:

1. Which one or which ones (consistency, caring, results) come(s) to the forefront as compared to others,
2. The answers given contain certain grounds or not (rules, laws, norms).

In addition, the cases that are handled have the characteristics that offer the chance to make comparisons of results, consistency and caring. While some questions have the feature of putting results the more common response, the others have the feature of putting consistency or caring ahead. Nevertheless, as stated frequently in the conceptual framework of ethical classification, it is not possible to compare these factors at the point of superiority to each other in some cases, and it should not take us to the result "it is more ethical" or "it is not ethical" in every case with reference to the answer given when one of them comes to the forefront. With the answers given to the following table, it is aimed to create foresight in evaluation and to present a framework. In this sense when the answers given to the questions in the table are evaluated, they should be thought within the original dimension of the presented case. For example let us handle the first case:

"In the board meeting of teachers your manager makes some accusing interpretations. Do you take the risk of standing up to him/her?" In this case what is questioned is – when its results are considered – whether we can reveal a certain manner towards a "superior of ours" or not. In another case we could easily reveal that manner. In this case the real target is to understand whether we can present consistency or not even if the case carries a possibility of loss of power for us. That is why among the factors that are subject to preference, it is possible to be able to determine the manner that can be more positively evaluated from ethical standpoint. In this case when "consistency" is compared to "results", it is close to a more ethical manner.

On the other hand in another case this situation can become different. Let us take case number 9: "You are an elementary school teacher. One of your students' studies very hard but he/she cannot be successful. Because he/she is under the standard would you fail the student?"

In this example consistency necessitates failing every child who gets bad grades. However when results are considered, it is possible to see that waste of effort may leave negative impacts on the child that may be permanent for a lifetime. Moreover the preference of failing the child or not failing the child is closely related to "caring" factor as well. When this case is evaluated, to say "consistency is the more ethical thing" is not as clear as it was in the previous case.

As is seen, in every different case all three factors can have different values in ethical dimension. There are differing complexities of power relationships. For instance in 1, 3 and 15, the consequences of confronting a higher power need to be considered against being consistent to principle, while in 5 and 9 the respondent is in a position of power which makes the care orientation as important a consideration as the consequences. The aim of this research is to analyze the answers in terms of a complex ethical framework. In the face of these "events" the respondent will either behave habitually without thinking about the relative power of the other person or consider the consequences of differences in power.

Table 3. The Case Comparison Table in the Triple Ethics Classification Perspective

<b>Cases</b>	
1	In the board meeting of teachers your manager makes some accusing interpretations. Do you take the risk of standing up to him/her?
2	You would like to resign from teaching in order to make more money by doing a private job. But in order to earn the bank promotion that will be delivered in March, you postpone your resignation to April 1 <sup>st</sup> . The manager trusts you on the April 23 <sup>rd</sup> Children's Day organization. Would you mention the manager your intention to resign?
3	You hit the inspector's car in the parking lot by accident. Would you leave a note on the inspector's car and take the blame for the accident?
4	A parent wants to join your class claiming that his/her intellectually slow child will develop his/her social skills and self-respect seriously. However your class is already crowded. Would you allow the child join your class?
5	A poor student of yours wears a watch and you suspect that it is stolen. Would you ask how he/she got the watch?
6	A colleague of yours goes into depression. He/she acts in a really unpleasant way. Would you keep him/her at arm's length until he/she gets well?
7	You are to be appointed as a manager. However you are required to resign from the employee union that you are a member of. Would you accept this?
8	A teacher friend of yours to whom you owe a favor wants you to raise his/her child's exam grades artificially. Would you accept that?
9	You are an elementary school teacher. A student of yours studies very hard but he/she cannot be successful. Would you fail the student because he/she is under the standard?
10	A teacher friend of yours goes out of town without getting permission. The manager calls you. He/she says that there is an urgent message to your friend. Would you tell the manager how and where he/she can reach your friend?
11	You and your best friend teach in the same field. You learn that limited number of teachers will be appointed for a project in your field that will have a high return. Would you tell this to your friend?
12	You learn that a member of staff is HIV positive. Would you inform the management of the school?
13	You have no physical illness but you have an emotional burnout. Would you receive a report from a doctor not to go to work?
14	You have twin siblings in your class. One of them is successful and the other one is not that successful. Would you change the grades of the less successful one for him/her not to feel inferior to his/her sibling?
15	One of the highest ranking officials in your education system added a degree to his/her CV that he/she did not own. The official is an effective person who has dedicated himself/herself to his/her profession for many years. Would you inform the press?

### The Evaluation of the Factors Consistency, Results and Caring According to the Factors Coming to the Forefront

When the answers given regarding the cases are evaluated, it is observed that different factors come to the forefront for every case. When a general evaluation is performed, it is possible to say that the participants gave the answers to one of the factors according to the characteristic of the case. The table constituted according to the answers is as follows:

Table 4. Consistency (Co), Results (R), Caring (Cr), The Evaluation of the Factors According to the Factors Coming to the Forefront

Case No	RCoCr		RCo		CrCo		CrR		R		Co		Cr	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	f	%	F	%	f	%
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	70	3	30	-	-
2	1	10	-	-	1	10	3	30	2	20	1	10	2	20
3	1	10	-	-	1	10	-	-	2	20	6	60	-	-
4	1	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	70	-	-	2	20
5	1	10	1	10	-	-	4	40	-	-	4	40	-	-
6	1	10	-	-	1	10	1	10	5	50	-	-	2	20
7	-	-	-	-	1	10	1	10	2	20	6	60	-	-
8	-	-	1	10	-	-	-	-	3	30	5	50	1	10
9	-	-	1	10	-	-	3	30	2	20	-	-	4	40
10	-	-	1	10	-	-	4	40	1	10	3	30	1	10
11	2	20	-	-	5	50	-	-	2	20	-	-	1	10
12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	90	-	-	1	10
13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	90	1	10	-	-
14	1	10	1	10	-	-	1	10	2	20	4	40	1	10
15	-	-	1	10	-	-	-	-	6	60	-	-	3	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>39.3</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12</b>

When the table is analyzed, it is possible to observe that the factors that come to the forefront in the answers regarding the cases present diversity. The expressions that are put forward:

- I. Reveal that for every question every individual gives answers by putting forward different factors. For example in the second case when the expressions that every individual put forward are evaluated in this direction;

*"Yes because if I don't report then I would let him/her down and I would feel guilty."*  
(Teacher 1)

*"Yes, until that day he/she should find somebody."* (Teacher 2)

*"Yes. If I am responsible in an organization then I would say in advance that I would resign so that they can make the necessary arrangements. I cannot leave other people in a difficult situation for my own interests."*(Teacher 4)

From the answers, it is possible to observe that in the first expression "caring", in the second one "result" and in the third one "result-consistency" come to the forefront. This can also be seen in the answers given to the other cases.

As an exception the answers given in the cases 1, 12 and 13 put forward certain factors. The expressions used in these cases are result oriented.

1. The answers given in the case are as follows:

*"It depends on the situation. If I am seriously accused in front of everybody and if I am right then I stand up to him/her."*(Teacher 9)

*"It depends on the situation. If my manager's grounds are right then I agree. Partially I question his/her intention."*(Teacher 10)

*"It depends. If he/she is not right then I stand up to him/her."*(Teacher 2)

"Result" oriented answers in the same direction are seen in the cases 12 and 13 as well:

*"Yes, because a life-threatening danger for hundreds of people is in question."*(Teacher 4)

*"Yes, the necessary precautions should be taken."*(Teacher 8)

*"Yes, it is necessary to pay attention with regards to the children's health."*(Teacher 1)

*"Yes, I need to be peaceful."*(Teacher 2)

*"Yes, I already cannot be productive."*(Teacher 3)

II. It is possible to observe that generally the answers given present one factor, and the answers given by presenting two or three factors are about 25% of all the answers. This state can be interpreted as 'ethically being one way comes to the forefront in handling the events based on the triple perspective'. In this sense some of the answers given are as follows:

4th case: *"It depends. It would also be important that I decide the extent of the aggressive behaviors of the slow learning child."*(Teacher 1) -result oriented-

7th case: *"No, it happened to me in my career and I did not resign."*(Teacher 3) -consistency-

9th case: *"No, I would make him/her pass the course by giving his/her in-class performance grades high. For me the important thing is that the student strives to do something, to put effort and labor."*(Teacher 4) -caring-

### **The Evaluation of Whether the Answers Contain Certain Grounds (Rules, Laws, Norms) or Not:**

When the answers given to the cases are analyzed, it is possible to observe that different grounds come to the forefront for every case. When generally evaluated, it is possible to indicate that the

participants gave answers that use different grounds as base according to the characteristic of the case. The table that is constituted according to the answers is as follows:

Table 5. The Evaluation of Whether the Answers Contain Certain Grounds (Rules, Laws, Norms) or Not:

Case No	Principle		Social Norm		Altruism		Individual Utility		Utility of the Majority	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	2	20	-	-	-	-	8	80	-	-
2	3	30	3	30	2	20	2	20	-	-
3	7	70	1	10	-	-	2	20	-	-
4	1	10	1	10	2	20	2	20	4	40
5	1	10	4	40	5	50	-	-	-	-
6	1	10	-	-	4	40	5	50	-	-
7	8	80	-	-	-	-	2	20	-	-
8	6	60	-	-	-	-	2	20	2	20
9	2	20	-	-	8	80	-	-	-	-
10	3	30	-	-	7	70	-	-	-	-
11	3	30	1	10	2	20	2	20	2	20
12	-	-	-	-	3	30	-	-	7	70
13	1	10	1	10	-	-	4	40	4	40
14	5	50	1	10	2	20	2	20	-	-
15	2	20	-	-	-	-	2	20	6	60
Total	45	30	12	8	35	23.3	33	22	25	16.6

11th case: *"Yes, I would want one of us to take the project whoever would be more useful and more successful. I would not do such a thing."*(Teacher 4) - altruism-

2nd case: *"In this case I would not resign."*(Teacher 10) -principles-

15th case: *"No if the official is a successful, objective and competent person."* (Teacher 3) - maximum benefit or greatest good for the greatest possible number

5th case: *"No, because the devil looks after his own. He/she would lie anyway. I would give special attention to him/her. I would get in contact with his/her parents. I would make a speech in the classroom about how wrong these behaviors are without hurting anybody, without giving any names, and I would make him/her understand his/her fault. I would monitor the student's behaviors closely."*(Teacher 4) -social norm-

2nd case: *"Yes, nobody is irreplaceable."*(Teacher 3) -individual utility-

Moreover when the results that the two tables reveal are examined altogether, it is possible to state that there is a relationship between the triple ethical perspective factors and the grounds. Therefore it is possible to indicate that the same factors come to the forefront in the answers based on the same type of grounds. From this point it is observed that:

1. In the answers which the consistency factor came to the forefront, answers that are connected to principles and social norms are given.
2. In the result oriented answers, the individual and social utility grounds came to the forefront.
3. The altruism ground forms the basis to the answers that carry the caring factor.

7th case: *"No, it happened to me in my career and I did not resign."* (Teacher 3) – consistency/principle-

12th case: *"Yes, in order for the necessary precaution to be taken."* (Teacher 2) -consistency/social norm-

6th case: *"It depends on the situation."* (Teacher 2) -result/individual utility-

15th case: *"It depends on the situation. In my opinion this event (question) is a bit contradictory. In order to be sure of what a person who has devoted himself/herself to the profession and to the community has done, firstly we should know that he/she is honest. If what he/she had done were things that are only for show and he/she tries to publicize himself/herself then I would inform the press without thinking. If he/she was a person who had done very important services and really had devoted himself/herself to the society then I would not spill the beans."* (Teacher 1) -result/utility of majority-

5th case: *"As a teacher I think that I should know my students well. The better my communication with my students the better we get along well with each other. I would say that his/her watch was beautiful and ask him/her who bought it. If the student knew me sufficiently then I would believe that he/she would tell me the truth."* (Teacher 6) -caring/altruism-

### **Discussion and Suggestions**

There is a certain fact that people are required to make decisions constantly throughout their lives. Making a decision is an indicator of free will and consciousness. While making decisions people may have to live a dilemma among numerous alternatives or they may have to think the result of their decisions and the people who are going to be affected from the decision. Although there are various variables underlying decision making, ethics can be stated as one of the most important ones (Kıranlı & İlğan, 2007). When teaching profession and teachers are taken into consideration, the value of ethics become more and more significant because the ethical decisions of the teacher as a social agent influence directly the students and other school stakeholders. Despite the obvious importance of ethics not only in social life but also in educational context, it can be said that appreciation of the ethics in Turkey took place in a recent period. One concrete indication of this is a regulation about ethics issued by the Ministry of Education in 2004 (Özdemir; Boydak Özcan and Yirci, 2013). According to this regulation, the Board of Ethics for public officials was established to build and improve ethics culture, guiding the educational staff regarding ethical issues and evaluating the ethics praxis in educational contexts (Official Gazette, 2004). One of the duties of the board of Ethics is to organize in-service training programs for the educational staff all over the country. Increasing the number of these ethics training programs could be useful to help the teachers to gain an ethical insight.

The findings of the study have the characteristic that they put forward the fact that the teachers who got involved in the research consider each of the factors of "consistency", "results", "caring". According to the findings, the teachers sometimes consider one of the factors, sometimes two of them and sometimes all three of them. In addition, it is possible to indicate that in different cases having similar characteristics, different factors come to the forefront and in this sense there is a certain inconsistency. In the light of this finding it can be said that some practical lessons should be included into the teacher training programs at the universities in Turkey. This could help teachers develop a broader ethical awareness related to their professional conduct before they get into the profession. To be able to act ethically in the broadest sense requires teachers to consider all three characteristics, and they can do this only if they know about alternatives to their habitual ethical stance. Similarly, Strike (1995) believes that teachers should be educated on ethical issues that they

could possibly face when they start the profession. They must be given enough time and opportunity to think about the ethical nature and dimensions of their profession (Aijasaho; Vaismaa; Uusiautti and Määttä, 2012). That's why; we need more clarification and discussion on teachers' ethical knowledge and the values and beliefs that underlie that knowledge. A more transparent sense of ethical knowledge could provide teachers with a more comprehensive sense of professionalism and basis for renewed ethical school cultures (Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011). In this perspective currently, there is no course or lesson content in ethics in teacher training programs at the universities in Turkey. Even an open group discussion of similar cases which might arise can alert prospective teachers to different possible systems of ethical values.

Another result that is reached is that ethically our actions are affected from the norms of the society we are in, principles that are formed in time and the roles we play in the social domain. This finding shows consistency with Toprakçı and his friends' research in 2010. According to this research teachers' ethical behaviors are affected by their professional role in the society.

As a result which ethical classification the teachers will take into consideration may depend on the situations, the time, and the roles in the social domain; however it is necessary that teachers should notice the ethical dimension of the profession. Teachers should act in an ethical sensibility that could help educational process to be more effective. This ethical classification which is alternatively presented in this research can also be tested with the participation of the other stakeholders that constitute the school society.

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