

## Structure and Dimensions Of Teacher Professional Identity

**Authors :** Vilma Zydziunaite, Gitana Balezentiene, Vilma Zydziunaite

**Abstract :** Teaching is one of most responsible profession, and it is not only a job of an artisan. This profession needs a developed ability to identify oneself with the chosen teaching profession. Research questions: How teachers characterize their authentic individual professional identity? What factors teachers exclude, which support and limit the professional identity? Aim was to develop the grounded theory (GT) about teacher's professional identity (TPI). Research methodology is based on Charmaz GT version. Data were collected via semi-structured interviews with the sample of 12 teachers. Findings. 15 extracted categories revealed that the core of TPI is teacher's professional calling. Premises of TPI are family support, motives for choosing teacher's profession, teacher's didactic competence. Context of TPI consists of teacher compliance with the profession, purposeful preparation for pedagogical studies, professional growth. The strategy of TPI is based on teacher relationship with school community strengthening. The professional frustration limits the TPI. TPI outcome includes teacher recognition, authority; professional mastery, professionalism, professional satisfaction. Dimensions of TPI GT the past (reaching teacher's profession), present (teacher's commitment to professional activity) and future (teacher's profession reconsideration). Conclusions. The substantive GT describes professional identity as complex, changing and life-long process, which develops together with teacher's personal identity and is connected to professional activity. The professional decision "to be a teacher" is determined by the interaction of internal (professional vocation, personal characteristics, values, self-image, talents, abilities) and external (family, friends, school community, labor market, working conditions) factors. The dimensions of the TPI development includes: the past (the pursuit of the teaching profession), the present (the teacher's commitment to professional activity) and the future (the revision of the teaching profession). A significant connection emerged - as the teacher's professional commitment strengthens (creating a self-image, growing the teacher's professional experience, recognition, professionalism, mastery, satisfaction with pedagogical activity), the dimension of re-thinking the teacher's profession weakens. This proves that professional identity occupies an important place in a teacher's life and it affects his professional success and job satisfaction. Teachers singled out the main factors supporting a teacher's professional identity: their own self-image perception, professional vocation, positive personal qualities, internal motivation, teacher recognition, confidence in choosing a teaching profession, job satisfaction, professional knowledge, professional growth, good relations with the school community, pleasant experiences, quality education process, excellent student achievements.

**Keywords :** grounded theory, teacher professional identity, semi-structured interview, school, students, school community, family

**Conference Title :** ICES 2024 : International Conference on Educational Sciences

**Conference Location :** Auckland, New Zealand

**Conference Dates :** December 02-03, 2024