

## **The Meaning of Work in Teachers' Lives: A Qualitative Study**

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**ABSTRACT** This paper, the first empirical study on Turkish teacher perspectives of work meanings, presents findings from a small-scale qualitative study. The meaning of work for teachers was analyzed through semi-structured interviews covering a number of themes including the teachers' reasons to continue working, times when work lost its meaning in the teachers' lives and possible changes for a meaningful work life. Results indicated that working portrays a multidimensional sight with both its negative and positive sides in economical, social and psychological terms for teachers. Not being valued by society, parents, policymakers and their administrators are the main reasons why teachers lose their enthusiasm and motivation. The teachers' desires for more satisfactory salary and well-equipped schools suggest that economic enhancements will make their working life more meaningful. Considering all the facts related to the teachers' work lives, they are not highly satisfied, which can lead to a decrease in their performance.