

**Novice Teachers' School Culture Experiences: A Study of Three Secondary Schools
in Kazakhstan**

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Nassikhath Bukenbayeva

This letter now confirms that your research project titled...

Novice Teachers' School Culture Experiences: A Study of Three Secondary Schools in

Kazakhstan

(a) has been approved by the Graduate School of Education Ethics Committee of Nazarbayev University.

You may contact your preferred research site and commence your participant recruitment strategy.

Yours sincerely,

Munya Hwami, PhD

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Abstract

Novice Teachers' School Culture Experiences: A Study of Three Secondary Schools in Kazakhstan

The induction period for beginning teachers constitutes a critical phase in professional development, often determining long-term career satisfaction and effectiveness in the classroom. However, numerous studies found that teachers are most likely to leave the profession in the first three years of their practice, which can lead to many problems for both schools and the nation. Thus, this study explored the experiences of novice teachers in three secondary schools in Kazakhstan, examining how different school cultures impact their professional lives. In this qualitative study, nine novice teachers from different types of school (private, mainstream, autonomous) participated in a semi-structured interview and shared their experiences of school cultures, motivations for entering the profession, and challenges they encountered. Findings revealed significant tensions between teachers' initial motivations and the realities of institutional constraints, including bureaucratic overload, hierarchical leadership structures, and inadequate support systems for novice teachers. In addition, while collaborative culture was identified as an ideal model in theory, it was not widely practiced across these schools. Practical implications suggest the need for policy reforms that formalize mentorship programs and reduce teachers' non-instructional burdens.

Keywords: school cultures, novice teachers, autonomous schools, mainstream schools, private schools

Аңдатпа

Бастауыш мұғалімдердің мектеп мәдениетімен тәжірибесі: Қазақстанның үш орта мектебін зерттеу

Жаңадан бастаған мұғалімдер үшін кіріспе кезең кәсіби дамудың маңызды кезеңі болып табылады, көбінесе ұзақ мерзімді мансаптық қанағаттану мен сыныптағы жұмыс тиімділігін анықтайды. Алайда, көптеген зерттеулер көрсеткендей, мұғалімдер өз тәжірибесінің алғашқы үш жылында кәсіптен кетеді, бұл мектептер үшін де, жалпы ел үшін де көптеген мәселелерге әкелуі мүмкін. Осылайша, бұл зерттеуде әртүрлі мектеп мәдениеттері олардың кәсіби өміріне қалай әсер ететінін анықтау үшін Қазақстанның үш орта мектебінде жаңадан бастаған мұғалімдердің тәжірибесі зерттелді. Бұл сапалы зерттеуде үш түрлі мектеп түрінен (жеке, жалпы білім беретін және автономды) тоғыз бастаушы мұғалім жартылай құрылымды сұхбаттарға қатысып, мектеп мәдениеті, мамандық таңдаудағы мотивтер және олар кездескен қиындықтар туралы өз тәжірибелерімен бөлісті. Зерттеу нәтижелері мұғалімдердің бастапқы мотивациясы мен институционалдық шектеулердің шындықтары, соның ішінде бюрократиялық шамадан тыс жүктеме, иерархиялық көшбасшылық құрылымдары және жаңадан бастаған мұғалімдерге қолдаудың жеткіліксіздігі арасындағы айтарлықтай қайшылықтарды анықтады. Сонымен қатар, ынтымақтастық мәдениеті теорияның идеалды моделі ретінде танылғанымен, бұл мектептерде кең таралмады. Практикалық және теориялық тұжырымдар тәлімгерлік бағдарламаларын ресімдейтін және оқытуға қатысы жоқ мұғалімдерге жүктемені азайтатын саяси реформалардың қажеттілігін көрсетеді.

Түйінді сөздер: мектеп мәдениеті, бастауыш мұғалімдер, автономды мектептер, Жалпы білім беретін мектептер, жеке мектептер

Аннотация

Опыт школьной культуры начинающих учителей: Исследование трех средних школ Казахстана

Вводный период для начинающих учителей представляет собой важнейший этап в профессиональном развитии, часто определяющий долгосрочную удовлетворенность карьерой и эффективность работы в классе. Однако многочисленные исследования показали, что учителя, покидают профессию в первые три года своей практики, что может привести ко многим проблемам как для школ, так и для страны в целом. Таким образом, в данном исследовании был изучен опыт начинающих учителей в трех средних школах Казахстана, чтобы выяснить, как различные школьные культуры влияют на их профессиональную жизнь. В этом качественном исследовании девять начинающих учителей из трех различных типов школ (частных, общеобразовательных и автономных) приняли участие в полуструктурированных интервью и поделились своим опытом о школьной культуре, мотивах в выборе профессии и трудностях, с которыми они столкнулись. Результаты исследования выявили значительные противоречия между первоначальной мотивацией учителей и реалиями институциональных ограничений, включая бюрократическую перегрузку, иерархические структуры руководства и недостаточную поддержки начинающих учителей. Кроме того, хотя культура сотрудничества была признана идеальной моделью в теории, она не получила широкого распространения в этих школах. Практические и теоретические выводы указывают на необходимость политических реформ, которые формализуют программы наставничества и уменьшат нагрузку на учителей, не связанную с обучением.

Ключевые слова: школьная культура, начинающие учителя, автономные школы, общеобразовательные школы, частные школы

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

1.1 Introduction

The chapter introduces the study on novice teachers' school culture experiences in three secondary schools in Kazakhstan. The upcoming section will provide information about the study's background, explaining the rationale for this research by exploring teachers' critical role in society and the significant stressors affecting their well-being and retention, particularly among novice teachers in Kazakhstan. The problem section will highlight the practical issues the study aims to resolve, such as the high attrition rates among new teachers. Additionally, the research purpose and questions will clarify the study's objective and guide research methodology and data analysis. Finally, in the significance of the study section, the potential implications of the research to policy and practice will be addressed in order to improve teacher retention and job satisfaction, ultimately contributing to the sustainability and quality of education in Kazakhstan.

1.2 Background Information

Teachers determine the future course of a nation since they contribute significantly to the development of individuals and societies. Their influence extends beyond academic instruction, as they also impact students' motivation by fostering students' competence and self-efficacy in their learning journey (Johnson, 2017). They are essentially playing the role of a guide and instructor. Despite the significance of the teaching profession, it was found that teaching is considered one of the most stressful careers of the last couple of decade. Nearly half (48%) of teachers across OECD [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development] (2023) countries reported significant stress. Key stress factors include a lack of control over professional activities, standardized tasks, bureaucracy, and constant policy changes (Macbeath, 2012). These stress factors affect teachers' well-being and significantly influence teacher retention rates. Recently, it has been reported

worldwide that many teachers are leaving the profession in the first three years. It was found that novice teachers, at the beginning of their careers, are particularly vulnerable to these stress factors since they are expected to perform the same tasks as teachers with many years of practice (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). Their initial experience greatly predicted job satisfaction and teacher retention (Meristo & Eisenschmidt, 2014).

These difficulties in the first years of teaching either encourage lasting commitment to the profession or make them leave. Ingersoll and Smith (2004) On the contrary, collaboration with experienced colleagues and team teaching has been shown to be an effective way to keep teachers in the profession. The support system provided at schools is connected to the school culture. It encompasses the values, beliefs, and behaviors that characterize a school and its members, and it plays a crucial role in mitigating or creating the stress experienced by novice teachers. Supportive school cultures that promote teacher autonomy, competence, and relatedness can enhance job satisfaction and reduce turnover (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). Conversely, school cultures marked by high levels of bureaucracy, lack of support, and frequent policy changes can increase stress and contribute to higher attrition rates (Irsaliyev et al., 2019).

1.3 Problem Statement

Numerous studies found that teachers are most likely to leave the profession in the first three or five years of their practice (Ayubayeva, 2018; Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Kelly et al., 2019; Parker et al., 2009) which can lead to many problems for both schools and the nation. Wushishi et al. (2014) noted that teacher attrition imposes a significant financial burden on the country's educational systems because recruiting teachers involves costs for advertising and training. At the school level, teacher attrition increases workloads for remaining teachers, causing stress and job dissatisfaction. Doherty (2020) discovered that a heavy workload is the primary reason teachers quit their profession. This is due to

frequent changes in the curriculum, increased time spent on assessment, and greater accountability. Moreover, high turnover rates negatively impact school culture, the learning environment, and student outcomes. Research has indicated that high teacher turnover is linked to inconsistent teaching methods and curriculum delivery. Consequently, this leads to lower student achievement, as inconsistent instruction can result in knowledge gaps among students (Gallant & Riley, 2017 as cited in Doherty, 2020).

Furthermore, according to data from the OECD (2019), the average age of educators in Kazakhstan is 41, of which 18% is represented by specialists younger than 30. These figures indicate that teachers in the early stages of their careers may choose not to teach or leave the profession altogether. Inadequate support for new teachers, such as difficult assignments and lack of resources, contributes to high attrition rates in the early years of teaching (Borman & Dowling, 2008). Irsaliyev et al. (2019) also point out that over time, a high proportion of individuals who enroll in pedagogical specialties do so out of hopelessness, leading to a large number of unmotivated novice teachers.

1.4 Research Purpose and Questions

This study explores the experiences of novice teachers in three secondary types of schools in Kazakhstan, examining how different school cultures impact their professional lives. Hargreaves's (1995) forms of teacher culture theory will be used in the study. According to theory, there are four main school culture structures: fragmented individualism, balkanization, collaborative culture, and contrived collegiality. By understanding teachers' opinions about their experiences, the study provides insights into how school culture influences novice teacher stress, satisfaction, and retention. These insights can inform policies and practices designed to create more supportive environments for novice teachers. In the process the study also identified the different types of school

cultures in Kazakhstan. To achieve the study's aims, the following questions were explored:

1. What are the distinct school cultures in Kazakhstan's mainstream, private, and autonomous secondary school systems?
2. What motivates individuals to pursue teaching careers in Kazakhstan's mainstream, private, and autonomous secondary schools?
3. What specific challenges do novice teachers face when adapting to different school cultures?
4. How do different leadership styles within secondary schools in Kazakhstan influence the school climate and novice teachers' experiences?

1.5 Significance of the Study

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

The study advances Hargreaves' (1995) theory of teachers' different professional cultures by investigating how school culture influences teachers' experiences in the workplace. It fills gaps in current literature by capturing the diversity of experiences among new teachers in different school settings (private, mainstream, autonomous). Also, the use of a qualitative approach allows readers to understand the depth of complex factors influencing teachers' retention and experiences. The study contributes new knowledge on school climate and teacher well-being.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

The findings offer actionable insights for school leaders and policymakers. For school administration, the study highlights the benefits and risks of certain school cultures. School leaders can review curricula and create a more favorable school culture to improve workplace conditions. By comparing teacher experiences in different school systems, the study reveals systematic disparities that require policy interventions. The study can guide

policymakers in addressing teacher attrition by identifying which school environment is more favorable to teachers. Moreover, participants in the study can gain a better understanding of how a specific school environment influences their experiences and professional growth. Reflection helps teachers address problems by breaking down their actions and understanding their impact. This process leads to the development of new strategies and a deeper understanding of teaching practices (Çimer et al., 2013).

1.5.2 Contribution to Knowledge

The impact of school culture on novice teachers is important for developing strategies to improve teacher retention and job satisfaction. Firstly, this study can address the potential gaps in the research area. It provides insights into different school environments in Kazakhstan by capturing the in-depth diversity of experiences among new teachers in various school settings: private, public, and autonomous. Additionally, the studies conducted in Kazakhstan before focused on teachers' job satisfaction and used quantitative and mixed methods of research (Courtney et al., 2023, Irsaliev et al., 2019, Ratova, 2024). Current research used a qualitative research design to understand novice teachers' complex experiences (Maxwell, 2009).

1.6 Outline of the Thesis

The introduction chapter outlines the purpose of the study. The background section emphasizes the critical role of teachers in both society and the educational system, highlighting their significant impact on students and overall societal development. The following chapter reviews current literature on the motivations, challenges, and experiences of novice teachers within various school cultures. The methodology chapter explains the rationale behind the chosen research design, instruments, and sample. It also details the processes for data collection and analysis. Chapter 4 presents the key findings from the interviews. The discussion chapter interprets and explains these findings,

connecting them to existing literature. Finally, the last chapter addresses the implications and limitations of the research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

To get an understanding of the extent of the research problem and current literature, a literature review was undertaken. The process of reviewing the literature consisted of four main stages, that is, searching for relevant literature, identifying gaps to adjust and construct research questions, determining main themes and patterns, and outlining the structure.. The chapter explores the factors that impact teacher motivation, new teachers' difficulties, and the significance of school leadership and supportive environments.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

School culture encompasses the shared values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that shape interactions and collaboration among individuals within a school (Ismail et al., 2021). Key elements of a positive school culture such as teacher collaboration, professional development opportunities, a unified purpose, support from colleagues, and effective leadership tend to enhance teachers' job satisfaction and overall school effectiveness (Duan et al., 2018). Conversely, a negative school culture can result in inefficiency and increased staff turnover (Santiago et al., 2022).

Andy Hargreaves (1998) systematically categorizes school cultures based on the patterns of behavior and relationships that emerge among teachers. He identifies four specific cultures: collaboration, contrived collegiality, individualism, and balkanization. This study adopts Hargreaves's (1998) framework as it captures the full range of teacher interactions from isolation to deep collaboration providing a comprehensive understanding of each culture's strengths and weaknesses. This helps identify areas for improvement within school environments.

Loose (2008) defines individualism as a culture that prioritizes personal gain over collective benefit, valuing individual independence and uniqueness. However, numerous studies indicate that individualism can isolate teachers from meaningful interactions and limit opportunities for collaboration, resulting in isolation, lack of shared planning, and fewer chances for professional learning (Shah, 2022; Williams et al., 2001). In contrast, Hargreaves (1994) argues that labeling individualism as purely negative hinders a deeper discussion about its potential advantages. He identifies three types of teacher individualism: constrained individualism where teachers work alone due to external constraints; strategic individualism where teachers intentionally isolate themselves to manage their time and energy; and elective individualism where teachers choose to work independently by preference. Thus, the impact of teacher individualism varies depending on its specific form (Hargreaves, 1994).

Hargreaves (1998) describes contrived collegiality as a top-down, administratively regulated form of teacher collaboration. In hierarchical school structures, teachers may comply with collaboration directives out of respect for authority rather than engaging in meaningful professional development. This type of collegiality limits teachers' opportunities to grow professionally and significantly contribute to school improvement (Flores, 2008). Hargreaves's (1994) research supports this notion, describing contrived collegiality as an inflexible and ineffective practice.

Balkanization refers to a situation where different departments within a school work in isolation, focusing solely on their subject areas, leading to minimal collaboration across groups (Hargreaves, 1994). Unlike other school cultures, balkanization fosters strong in-group loyalty while distancing itself from out-groups. Studies have found that such divisions hinder communication and teamwork, making it challenging to implement meaningful changes throughout the entire school (Ng, 2011). In line with this, Hargreaves

(1994) discovered that balkanization restricts opportunities for collaboration and stifles innovation.

Finally, collaboration is defined as an environment where teachers work together in spontaneous, voluntary, and development-oriented ways. It arises organically from teachers' shared willingness to grow and improve. Research shows that teacher collaboration generally enhances student achievement, boosts teacher motivation, and fosters a positive professional culture (Hargreaves, 2019). However, Johnson (2003) found that many teachers feel that collaboration can increase their workload due to additional meetings and responsibilities. Using this framework, the study identifies the dominant cultures in Kazakhstani schools and analyzes how systemic factors either sustain or disrupt these cultures.

2.3 Motivations for Becoming a Teacher

Teacher attrition is defined as teachers leaving the profession (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003) while teacher retention refers to the ability of educational institutions to attract and retain teachers (Fessehatsion & Peng, 2020). Motivation is a crucial factor that can contribute to the attrition or retention of teachers. For teachers who enter the profession with extrinsic motivations, such as salary and job security, maintaining enthusiasm and commitment over time may be a significant challenge. According to Courtney et al. (2023), these teachers are more prone to experiencing burnout and job dissatisfaction. If teachers do not expect the emotional and practical demands of the profession such as heavy workloads, administrative tasks, or the need to constantly engage and support students they may feel unprepared and disappointed. This gap between their expectations and the realities of the job can diminish their motivation over time, potentially resulting in stress, dissatisfaction, and burnout. However, research consistently show that intrinsic rewards, such as the satisfaction of helping students learn, personal growth, and a sense of

accomplishment are more powerful and sustainable motivators for teachers (Alvariñas-Villaverde et al., 2022; Haruana, & Millicent Sackey, 2023; Wilkesmann & Schmid, 2014). Alvariñas-Villaverde et al. (2022) indicated that extrinsic motivations are generally less influential than intrinsic motivations in the decision to enter teaching since most of teachers perceive teaching as a sense of calling and the desire to make a meaningful impact on students' lives.

Thus, those who are primarily motivated by intrinsic factors, such as altruistic motives and a genuine love for teaching, tend to exhibit higher levels of job satisfaction and commitment to the profession. Research by Irsaliev et al. (2019) supports this notion, suggesting that intrinsic motivations foster a deeper connection to the teaching role and a greater sense of fulfillment. Those teachers consider teaching as a rewarding career and they have higher confidence in their capabilities and success in the profession (Alexander et al., 2020). Similarly, the research conducted by Watt and Richardson (2007) demonstrated that factors such as job security showed no relationship between long-term engagement and teacher retention.

However, Menon and Saitis (2006) found that positive and idealistic expectations before entering profession often decrease as teachers engage in school practice. The study found that teachers with lower expectations are likely to find the reality better than expected while pre-service teachers with higher expectations about salary promotion, training and work conditions may experience disappointment and cognitive dissonance. Similarly, the study by Proost et al. (2011) reported that when teachers' expectations about their job are not met, they tend to feel emotionally exhausted. Menon and Saitis (2006) highlight that mismatch, and unmet expectation can lead to low job satisfaction and anxiety. Therefore, it is crucial for educational institutions to foster a positive school

culture and provide supportive working conditions to sustain teacher motivation and well-being, ultimately benefiting both educators and their students.

2.4 Challenges Faced by Novice Teachers

Most studies on novice teachers' experiences contain information about challenges they face regularly. One significant challenge is the lack of resources, which Ayubayeva (2018) identifies as a major barrier to effective teaching and learning. An inadequate number of tools such as teaching materials, classroom supplies, and access to technology may make novice teachers unable to meet their professional responsibilities effectively. As a result, it can amplify stress and lead to quicker burnout.

In addition to resource constraints, the absence of effective leadership and mentorship poses another significant issue since mentoring allows new teachers to develop essential teaching skills. Fantili and McDougall (2009) emphasize that with proper guidance and support, new teachers can navigate the complexities of the profession. Qanay et al. (2021) found that teachers need help in self-directed learning due to suggested gaps in pre-service training and lack of collaboration in school environments.

That leads us to the next point, which is the lack of effective induction programs that enhance the difficulties faced by novice educators. Flores (2004) points out that comprehensive induction programs are crucial for helping new teachers acclimate to their roles and develop necessary skills. Effective induction programs should contain coaching, training, peer observation and feedback, collaborative planning, and networking opportunities. These aspects ensure that new teachers develop the skills, knowledge, and confidence necessary to be effective educators.

Another critical issue is the difficulty in managing student behaviors, which Gholam (2018) identifies as a common and challenging aspect of teaching that can overwhelm inexperienced teachers. In some contexts, specific cultural and historical

factors also play a role. For instance, Qanay et al. (2021) discuss how conservative perspectives on leadership influence the absence of teacher leadership in certain post-Soviet countries. This cultural backdrop can hinder the development of proactive and innovative educational practices. Additionally, Ratova et al. (2024) highlight the absence of autonomy as a significant concern. When teachers lack the freedom to make instructional decisions and tailor their teaching methods, it can lead to frustration and reduced job satisfaction.

2.5 School Cultures

The study is based on Andy Hargreaves's (1995) work on school cultures and explores how the culture within a school impacts teaching practices, professional relationships, and learning outcomes. Teaching is deeply social, even if physically teachers alone, mentally they never are. Instructional styles and openness to innovation are affected by colleagues with whom they work (Hargreaves, 1994). Hargreaves identified different types of school cultures, such as individualism, balkanization, contrived collegiality, and collaboration. Each type has unique characteristics and implications for school leadership and teacher collaboration.

2.5.1 Individualism

The concept of individualism emphasizes autonomy, self-reliance, and individual rights. In individualistic culture, people tend to prioritize personal gain over collective benefit and value the independence and uniqueness of individuals (Loose, 2008). The root reasons for individualism in schools are mentioned in the work of Diniz-Pereira (2003). The work mentioned the focus of teacher education programs on individual lesson planning and the physical isolation of teachers in "cellular" classrooms to be the origins of individualistic culture. Moreover, Flinders (1988) identified three causes for teachers' isolation: psychological state, ecological condition, and adaptive strategy. The

psychological state refers to the lack of support and loneliness teacher feels, ecological conditions deal with the physical setup of the school that can create isolation, and adaptive strategy is chosen by teachers themselves to save time and energy for their students and instructional responsibilities without distractions from colleagues (Flinders, 1988).

However, this approach is often seen as a barrier to change and collaboration as it prioritizes the individual over the group. Teachers' isolation can significantly affect professional development and overall school performance. The research done by Hongboontri and Keawkhong (2014) at Hope University's Language Institute examining how school culture influences teachers' beliefs and behaviors indicated negative influence of individualism. It found that because of the Institutes' minimal encouragement for teacher collaboration and lack of teachers' involvement in the Institute's organized in-service training sessions many teachers rarely attended professional development event because they did not perceive them as relevant. Despite the view that individualism may not be ideal for the school climate, some teachers believe it provides them with teaching autonomy and professional support. Many value solitude for creativity and planning (Realo et al., 2002).

In schools that value individual accountability, distributed leadership is often implemented. Distributed leadership is a type of leadership that is not concentrated in one person but is shared across multiple individuals within the school community (De Lima, 2008). However, in situations with individualistic leadership, principals tend to delegate authority due to the heavy burden of being solely responsible for everything. In such environments, power distribution does not serve to empower other staff members and develop their leadership skills, but rather to avoid responsibility. As a result, this distributed power structure is not always flexible, and power dynamics remain rigid despite collaborative efforts, making participation in decision-making more symbolic than

substantive (Hodaya & Berkovich, 2023). Newly qualified teachers often face difficulties at the beginning of their careers. The presence of a mentor can significantly ease the adjustment period for new teachers, helping them navigate the complexities of their new roles and responsibilities. These programs offer new teachers the opportunity to reflect on their professional strengths and weaknesses, receive constructive feedback, and improve essential classroom skills such as time management and student behavior management (Gholam, 2018). Thus, an individualistic culture among staff can hinder the development of newly qualified teachers, leading to higher staff turnover and a lack of collaborative learning opportunities. According to the case studies of Williams et al. (2001), a novice teacher in a small primary school faced difficulties due to a culture of individualism and left the school mid-year. The teacher felt isolated due to physical separation and lack of colleague support. Even though attempts at team teaching were made, individual teachers conducted lessons by themselves, depriving new teachers of learning opportunities. Therefore, novice teachers in individualistic environments felt unsupported and challenged.

2.5.2 Balkanization

In balkanized cultures, teachers work in insulated sub-groups rather than collaboratively across the whole school. Balkanization refers to dividing teachers into fractions (Ng, 2011). Balkanized cultures have strong boundaries between sub-groups, and membership in these groups is exclusive. Thus, professional learning and knowledge sharing mainly occur within these isolated sub-groups. To study the concept of balkanization in-depth, Hargreaves (1995) conducted case study research in two different secondary schools (conventional and innovative). Lincoln Secondary School was focused on reducing the impact of traditional educational divisions and enabling staff to work collaboratively through a cohort system. The aim was to foster collaboration across

different subjects and focus on student-centered learning. Each cohort had a designated leader coordinating discussions about students and academic programs. However, Hargreaves (1995) found that conversations between cohort leaders often led to the neglect of subjects outside the core curriculum, as these were considered less rigorous by core teachers. The majority of staff and the principal determined these subjects. This perception of teachers limits opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning and growth. Despite the challenges, some innovations were made within specific subjects. However, these innovations often remained isolated and not integrated into the broader school culture (Hargreaves, 1995). Hongboontri and Liao (2021) later found that this segregation leads to a decrease in motivation to teach and even burnout.

Engels et al. (2008) caution that a relentless focus on constant innovation and improvement can have negative consequences. When teachers are constantly under pressure to meet high expectations and implement new initiatives, it can lead to stress and burnout. Therefore, while supporting teacher-led initiatives is important, school leaders must also be mindful of the workload and stress levels of their staff, ensuring that the push for improvement does not overwhelm them. Creating a supportive environment that values both innovation and well-being is crucial for sustaining teacher motivation and effectiveness.

2.5.3 Contrived Collegiality

Wang's study (2014) characterized contrived collegiality as imposed or orchestrated structures that may not align with the teachers' real needs or the context of their work. It does not involve decisions made by teachers, is compulsory, is fixed in time, and is predictable. This forced collaboration can feel inauthentic and may not lead to the desired outcomes of teaching practices. It often results in superficial cooperation, where

collegiality becomes a routine task rather than a meaningful step toward professional growth. Moreover, excessive focus on conformity can disrupt teachers' autonomy.

Ayubayeva (2018) and Flores (2004) argue that hierarchical school structures and top-down communication often result in teachers complying out of respect for authority rather than engaging in meaningful professional development. This type of structure can hinder creativity and discourage teachers from taking the initiative, as they may feel their primary role is to follow directives rather than innovate or improve their practice.

Furthermore, Ayubayeva (2018) and Flores (2004) argue that such environments limit the potential for teachers to grow professionally and contribute to school improvement in a significant way.

On the other hand, the study by Datnow (2011) provides information about more of the positive influence of contrived teacher collaboration. Teachers were provided with tools and regular meetings. Even though these meetings were administratively regulated at first, over time many teachers found value in these sessions. Teachers could engage in critical discussions, share ideas, and support one another. This shift from contrived to authentic collaboration was fostered by the trust built among teachers and the supportive structures provided by school leaders (Fitria, 2018). Mandated preparation time encourages collaboration among teachers during the school day. Wang (2014) found that intentionally structured collaborative culture in two-high performing Chinese secondary schools fostered genuine collegiality rather than superficial interactions. The effectiveness is attributed to a combination of shared commitment and mutual trust. Thus, positive interpersonal relationships among teaching staff can turn contrived collegiality into genuine (Datnow, 2017).

2.5.4 Collaborative

In collaborative cultures, teachers work together with a focus on professional development. Key characteristics of collaborative cultures include joint problem-solving, data sharing, and distributed leadership, which build trust, respect, and improve both instructional practices and student outcomes (Waldron & McLeskey, 2010). Collaborative culture allows teachers to decide which innovations to adopt and which to reject based on their goals. Research suggests that effective school leadership should support teacher-led initiatives to motivate and empower teachers (Qanay et al., 2021; You et al., 2017). When teachers are given the autonomy to lead projects and contribute to decision-making, they are more likely to feel valued and motivated. This sense of ownership and involvement can lead to a more dynamic and collaborative school culture, where the needs and insights of the teachers themselves drive professional development.

Additionally, Hargreaves (1995) mentioned that effective leadership includes praising and thanking staff and promoting rituals that bring the school together. They also encourage experimentation with cross-grade groupings and collaborative projects, supporting teachers in developing initiatives. Hargreaves' (1995) study, describes an example of collaborative culture in action is described. The principal of a small rural school worked to prevent isolation among teachers by encouraging collaboration across different grades. He promoted joint projects, such as a whole-school focus on the Olympics, which involved cooperative planning and execution, allowing teachers to work together on various activities. This approach led to a sense of unity between different age groups. Also, personalized guidance and support received in the workplace can foster a sense of competence and confidence in new educators, enhancing their teaching effectiveness and professional satisfaction. Studies by Han (2022), Kelly et al. (2019), Kutsyuruba et al. (2017), and Parker et al. (2009) highlight the positive impact of

mentorship on teacher retention. The support received through mentorship programs has been shown to reduce teacher attrition rates by addressing the challenges contributing to early career burnout and dissatisfaction. Mentorship programs help new teachers develop resilience and a stronger commitment to their profession, leading to improved student outcomes and a more stable and experienced teaching staff.

However, teacher collaboration still can carry negative consequences if implemented incorrectly. Johnson (2003) found that teachers feel collaboration increased their workload, due to more meeting and responsibilities. Some teachers even felt pressured to conform, reducing individual freedom in teaching approaches. Also, the study by Goldstein (2015) identified that collaboration not scheduled during work hours which made it difficult for some teachers to combine with their daily responsibilities.

2.6 Summary

The literature review chapter established the theoretical and empirical foundation for the study by examining key themes related to school cultures, teacher motivation, challenges in the adaptation process, and a variety of leadership styles.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The chapter outlines the overall strategy for conducting the study, including details about the research design and specifying how data were systematically collected and analyzed to address the following research questions:

1. What kind of school cultures exist in the three different secondary school systems (mainstream, private, and autonomous) in Kazakhstan?
2. What are the primary motivations for individuals entering the teaching profession in Kazakhstan's mainstream, private, and autonomous secondary schools?
3. What are novice teachers' distinct challenges in adapting to these varied school cultures?
4. How do different leadership styles within secondary schools in Kazakhstan influence the school climate and novice teachers' experiences?

Using semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection instrument, the study obtained data from nine teachers from different mainstream, private, and autonomous secondary schools.

3.2 Research Design

The present study aimed to understand the experiences of novice teachers by exploring how school culture affects their practices. Considering the research purpose, a qualitative research design was chosen. Qualitative researchers' main interest is "in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 6). Similarly, Hennink et al. (2019) highlighted the possibility of identifying issues from participants' perspectives and understanding their interpretations of phenomena as an important feature of qualitative research. In short, the qualitative method fits when the

researcher wants to interpret and understand the experiences of participants in depth (Sandelowski and Barroso, 2007, as cited in Kim, 2020).

A basic qualitative research design was selected for this study since it suits purpose of my study, which is exploring the experiences of novice teachers in three different school types. To be more specific, Merriam (2009) indicated three main purposes of basic qualitative research: finding out how people interpret their experiences, exploring how people construct their knowledge, and understanding the connections between the experiences and meanings. This research design allows flexibility for adjustments based on findings, unlike other qualitative designs with predefined guidelines (Kahlke, 2014). The focus can be refined by reflecting on what is interesting or useful and the researcher can explore nuances in the participants' experiences. Therefore, methods and samples are adaptable based on unexpected data that might arise during the data collection.

3.3 Research Instrument

Semi-structured interviews were used as the primary instrument for gathering data from nine teachers in this qualitative research. A semi-structured interview is a qualitative research method that blends prepared questions with “how”, “why”, or “describe” questions to elicit detailed responses (Adams, 2011). Since interviews “allow us to enter into the other person’s perspective” (Patton, 2015, as cited in Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 426) I was able to obtain in-depth insights from participants about how school culture impacts their professional lives in their respective schools.

Moreover, interviews can be flexible and adaptive. Thus, semi-structured interviews were used to collect precise and detailed data from participants. During the interviews, depending on the interview flow, both format and questions can be modified (Ary et al., 2013), allowing the interviewer to ask additional questions for clarification and specifying the previously mentioned statements such as “why?”, “could you specify?” or

“describe”. Also, using semi-structured interviews is useful in providing opportunities for in-depth exploration of some responses (Creswell & Guetterman, 2018). The semi-structured format allowed for an open-ended conversation where participants could reflect on their experiences, while I could ask follow-up questions to clarify or explore a specific topic in greater depth.

The interview protocol consisted of a set of core questions designed to elicit responses on the following themes: relationships within the school, motivations for becoming a teacher, changes in expectations, school culture and adaptation process, and career outlook

3.4 Research Sample

The participants of the study were novice teachers with less than 3 years of teaching experience, currently employed in one of the selected schools. Participants were taken from three different types of schools: mainstream, private, and autonomous. The teachers taught a variety of subjects, including foreign languages, science, and mathematics. This allowed for a comparative analysis of how school culture may vary across different educational contexts.

Table 1
Demographic Data of the Participants

N^o	Participant Codes	Gender	Workplace	Subject	Years of Experience
1	Ainur	Female	Private School	English Language Teacher	1 year
2	Mariyam	Female	Private School	Korean Language Teacher	6 months
3	Aliya	Female	Mainstream School	English Language Teacher	2 years

4	Zhanar	Female	Autonomous School	Biology and Chemistry Teacher	3 years
5	Dameli	Female	Autonomous School	English Language Teacher	6 months
6	Kasym	Male	Private School	English Language Teacher	3 years
7	Moldir	Female	Mainstream School	English Language Teacher	3 years
8	Aruzhan	Female	Mainstream School	English Language Teacher	2 years
9	Anel	Female	Autonomous School	English Language Teacher	1 year

Malterud et al. (2016) described qualitative studies as beneficial when they are focused not on numerical input but on new knowledge and insights. Thus, nine participants were selected for this study using a purposeful sampling method. Purposeful sampling involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups with significant experience with a particular phenomenon (Palinkas et al., 2015 as cited in Creswell & Clark, 2011)-in this case, the experiences of novice teachers in school culture. According to Patton (2015) as cited in Merriam and Tisdell (2016), purposeful sampling is employed to select individuals or cases that can provide rich, detailed, and contextually grounded insights. Another critical feature of purposeful sampling is the opportunity to choose participants with specific characteristics or experiences that are essential for my research. In my study, I needed participants who have relevant experiences as a novice teachers and insights to provide meaningful contributions.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

The data collection process began in November 2024 after I received ethics clearance from the NUGSE Ethics Committee. I specifically sought out novice teachers from three different types of schools to participate in semi-structured interviews, where

they could share their experiences and perspectives on adapting to school culture, the challenges they faced, and the support they received. To reach potential participants, I contacted the schools through email and sent a letter of invitation describing my study, its aims, and proposed timeline (see Appendix D). After getting official agreement I went to schools and met up with principals or school administrators to discuss detailed data collection procedures. School leaders recommended willing teachers themselves.

I assured teachers of confidentiality and emailed them a consent form (see Appendix B) to confirm their participation in the interviews. Participants had the option to choose their preferred language English, Kazakh, or Russian for the interview, as well as the location. Some interviews were conducted face-to-face in comfortable, convenient spaces outside of school, while others were held virtually due to logistical constraints. During the interviews, I asked teachers to reflect on specific aspects of their school environment, including their relationships with colleagues, interactions with school leadership, and their overall sense of belonging within the school (see Appendix C). I sent participants the interview questions in advance, allowing them to decline any questions they found uncomfortable. Each interview lasted between 30 and 55 minutes and was audio-recorded with the participant's consent. I made sure to create a comfortable and confidential setting to encourage participants to discuss their personal experiences openly.

3.6 Data Analysis Procedures

After collecting the data, I analyzed it using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis framework. Thematic analysis is a qualitative research method that helps identify, analyze, and interpret patterns of meaning within qualitative data. One advantage of thematic analysis is its versatility; it can be applied to a wide range of research questions, sample sizes, and data collection methods (Braun & Clarke, 2016). The framework

consists of six key phases: familiarization with the data, generation of codes, search for themes, review of themes, naming themes, and report production.

The analysis process began with transcribing the interviews to get familiar with the data. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), transcribing effectively immerses the researcher in the data, as it requires close attention to detail when comparing transcripts with the original audio recordings. Each interview transcript was read multiple times to proofread and gain a deeper understanding of its content. Next, I manually grouped the responses according to each interview question. Conducting manual data analysis allowed for meaningful interaction with the data, as I re-read and manually coded the transcripts (Mattimoe et al., 2021). This organization involved categorizing the data based on the specific questions posed during the interviews. By structuring responses this way, I could compare participants' answers on the same topic, which facilitated the identification of common themes. Subtopics were named after research questions.

The identified themes and subtopics were then reviewed and refined to ensure coherence and relevance. This step involved checking the themes against the coded extracts and the entire dataset to confirm their validity. Themes that did not align well were either redefined or discarded. For example, themes such as “novice teachers' relationships with their colleagues” were dismissed due to my focus on four main research questions. This iterative process ensured that the final set of themes provided a comprehensive and accurate response to the research questions.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Since the study's sample consists of in-service novice teachers with working experience, all participants were aged 18 and above, making it minimal-risk research. However, Creswell (2018) mentioned ethical considerations researchers should consider

when working with human subjects. Even though the study will not involve a vulnerable population, the participants' private information will be kept confidential.

All participants received an informed consent form, outlining the purpose of the research, the procedures involved, and any potential risks or benefits. They were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time. Furthermore, to ensure the safety of the participants, this study will be subject to approval by the GSE Ethics Committee.

3.7.1 Anonymity

Crow and Wiles (2008) defined anonymity as the condition in which the identity of participants is not known or cannot be traced back to them. To achieve that Davidson (1996) stated that in research, participants' names and personal identifiers need to be removed or masked so that their responses cannot be linked to them directly. Thus, the research assigned pseudonyms (names) to participants instead of using their real names.

3.7.2 Confidentiality

Confidentiality involves managing and safeguarding participants' data so that it is not disclosed to unauthorized individuals or entities (Cohen et al., 2007). The obligation is to protect participants' information from being shared beyond the research context or without permission (Wiles et al., 2008). To ensure confidentiality, physical data is stored securely in locked cabinets and digital data are encrypted and password protected. According to Welland and Van Den Hoonaard (2003) keeping confidentiality involves only responsible data management.

3.8 Summary

In this chapter, the research design and methods are described, outlining the qualitative approach and rationale for choosing semi-structured interviews. It explained the selection of participants (novice teachers with less than three years of experience) from three secondary schools in Kazakhstan, the data collection procedures, and how thematic

analysis was applied to interpret the interview data. Ethical considerations, such as informed consent, confidentiality, and ensuring participant welfare, were also discussed.

The next chapter presents the findings from the study.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 Introduction

This study explores the experiences of novice teachers in three secondary schools in Kazakhstan, examining how different school cultures impact their professional lives. More specifically, it identified the different types of school cultures that exist in three different secondary school systems in Kazakhstan. This chapter presents the findings of the study, which aimed to answer the following four main research questions:

1. What are the distinct school cultures in Kazakhstan's mainstream, private, and autonomous secondary school systems?
2. What motivates individuals to pursue teaching careers in Kazakhstan's mainstream, private, and autonomous secondary schools?
3. What specific challenges do novice teachers face when adapting to different school cultures?
4. How do different leadership styles within secondary schools in Kazakhstan influence the school climate and novice teachers' experiences?

The primary method used in the study was semi-structured interviews, which consisted of a total of 11 questions (refer to the Appendix). The data were analyzed using a qualitative approach, allowing for the identification of emerging themes that formed subsections in the analysis. This chapter presents four interconnected themes that emerged from the interviews: school cultures, novice teachers' motivations for becoming educators, reasons for selecting specific types of schools, and leadership styles at different institutions.

4.2 School Cultures

The data collected through interviews with teachers revealed a range of perceptions about school cultures, highlighting both the similarities and differences across these school

types. Identified school cultures are 1) Private school cultures: collaboration and individualism; 2) Mainstream school cultures: contrived collegiality and individualism; 3) Autonomous school cultures: collaboration with a degree of contrived collegiality.

4.2.1 Private School Cultures

Ainur, working at a private school, described the school culture as one rooted in collaboration, emphasizing inclusive governance, where all decisions are made collectively with the involvement of both teachers and administration. Ainur shared,

We have a friendly atmosphere in our school. The relationship between teachers and school administration is very good because there is no such thing as authoritarian governance. All decisions are made collaboratively, and all important issues are discussed together. So, I would say collaborative.

However, the other two participants described an individualistic work environment, contrasting sharply with Ainur's description of a collaborative atmosphere. Mariyam mentions feeling isolated, particularly when entering the staff room, which was described as uncomfortable and unwelcoming,

I got used to sitting in the same office alone, and when I started going into the staff room, for example, just from the door, the atmosphere was so uncomfortable that I didn't want to go in there... I would say the environment is individualistic since new teachers had to find their place and adapt themselves without any assistance.

This experience suggests that while the overall school environment is collaborative, there are still challenges related to personal adaptation and integration for newcomers. Kasym reflects the presence of Balkanization within their school. He noted that while teachers generally worked within their departments, there was little cross-departmental collaboration. On this, Kasym commented,

I would describe the school culture as Balkanized. Collaboration wasn't that strong. Different departments worked only within their groups and rarely interacted with each other. I didn't feel weird because when there's nothing to compare it to, you don't know what's better, what's good, but only after that, when we're already used to it, and already somehow, I started communicating well with other departments, I realized that it turns out to be better to interact with others.

This section focuses on the culture within private schools described by the interviewed teachers. The data reveals both the collaborative nature of decision-making and governance, as well as the challenges posed by individualism and departmental isolation.

4.2.2 Mainstream School Cultures

One of the dominant themes in mainstream schools is the prevalence of contrived collegiality, where collaboration among teachers is often required by the administration rather than stemming from personal interest or a shared desire for professional growth. Aliya describes the school's collaborative efforts as being primarily driven by administrative directives, noting that the administration forces teachers to collaborate: "I would say that it's more contrived collegiality. The administration of our school forces teachers to collaborate and work with each other."

This notion of forced collegiality is further highlighted by Aruzhan, who explained that teachers only collaborate when there is an external motivator, such as the implementation of a new program or task that requires teamwork:

If there is any order from the administration, for example, a program, then the teachers will work together. If you need to do something in common, then the teachers will work together. But if you want to work together, I don't know, it's

probably possible to do this, but it still depends on the teacher's motivation.

Because it brings more paperwork which teachers don't want to deal with.

A related theme that emerged from the responses is the concept of Balkanization, or the division of the school into separate, siloed departments that operate independently from one another. Aliya discussed and explained: "Also, it's kind of a balkanization too. For example, all departments like science department, English department they work inside their groups but not with each other, but it is maybe because there are like 150 teachers." Moldir also had similar views and said,

I think we tend to have a very distinct hierarchy in our school. We have veteran teachers, and then we have teachers who are between 30 to 40 years old, and then we have younger teachers, novice teachers. There's a distinct hierarchy. And we cannot really communicate with each other because we have different mindsets about work, about work-life balance, about responsibilities, about job allocation, and about duties allocation. For example, we as novice teachers think that we need to have a work-life balance, we need to do our only job, which is teaching, and we cannot be assigned to other responsibilities and jobs. But veteran teachers and senior teachers think a little differently. They think that we are younger, and we can engage with different activities in school, that we can devote ourselves fully to the school.

The response focused on the experiences of mainstream schoolteachers, highlighting how administrative staff influenced collaboration and the challenges teachers encountered in building relationships. Both Aliya and Aruzhan mentioned that while teachers are required to work together, this collaboration often feels forced rather than stemming from genuine interest. Moreover, even when teachers are willing to collaborate, as noted by Aliya and

Moldir, they tend to collaborate mainly within their departments and rarely extend this collaboration beyond their specific subject areas.

4.2.3 Autonomous School Cultures

In autonomous schools, collaboration is generally a strong component of the school culture, but it is often mixed with elements of contrived collegiality, where collaboration is sometimes imposed by administrative tasks rather than arising from voluntary engagement.

On this issue, Zhanar shared,

Our foundation is generally collaboration mixed with contrived collegiality because sometimes administrators give tasks, and we must work together without us wanting that. However, the tasks are always completed well and in a timely manner. Because we have a sense of responsibility and respect for each other.

Dameli mentioned the shift in their perspective over time,

I think it's somewhere between collaboration and contrived collegiality, if I'm not mistaken, because we do have a lot of teamwork, and we have several tasks and responsibilities that we must do in pairs or in groups... I think it was at the very beginning, contrived, but later, like, I came to the understanding that it's really necessary, and we don't really, how to say, we're not really against doing that, we see the benefits of that.

Despite the relatively high degree of collaboration within departments, there is still an element of balkanization that exists between different academic areas. Anel points out that, within their department, collaboration is frequent and robust. However, there is a significant difference in the way that different departments within the schoolwork, leading to a sense of separation or balkanization. This view can be seen in the following extract:

Within our department, we collaborate a lot. However, there is a degree of balkanization between departments. Other departments follow the national

curriculum, while we create our own. They're more focused on content delivery, while we are more abstract in our approach (Anel).

The three teachers from an autonomous school were interviewed and they expressed differing opinions about the school culture. Zhanar mentioned that the foundation of the school culture can sometimes feel imposed. Teachers are required to collaborate on tasks assigned by administrators, even if they may not feel motivated to do so. In contrast, Dameli described her experience as contrived, but over time, she came to appreciate the necessity of collaboration. Aruzhan highlighted the concept of a balkanized culture, where differences in curriculum lead to limited interaction between departments.

4.3 Novice Teachers' Motivations for Becoming a Teacher

Across the different school types, motivations for becoming a teacher can be categorized into several key themes. Several novice teachers report being inspired by their personal experiences with role models in education, whether through family members, mentors, or great teachers they encountered. For example, Ainur shared: "I studied in the lyceum for gifted children, there I saw examples and they were my role models".

Similarly, Zhanar felt motivated by the mentorship and creative examples set by teachers:

My teachers showed me that if I have some knowledge in my brain and if I can be creative, if I can gather information and analyze information, I can do more than be just a regular person. And since I was an A student, I tried to share my knowledge, and they showed me that if you're sharing your knowledge, it's even better. So, I think that's the path they showed me, and the path is actually very similar to teaching. So that's why I chose to be a teacher, and that's how my teachers affected me.

Another participant emphasized the influence of professors at the university: "At first, I thought maybe it wasn't my way. But after that, there were some great professors

who kindle your love for it. And you know, I thought I'm probably going to be a teacher, I like it” (Mariyam).

For several novice teachers, entering the profession was influenced heavily by family expectations and the perception of job stability. Aliya mentioned that their parents played a significant role in their decision to pursue teaching:

My father told me to become a teacher, so I don't have a story that's like others have. I mean, I've never seen myself teaching or I've never wanted to be a teacher, so I only had to choose my career when I was 17, and my father told me to be, so I became one. He reasoned that by saying that teaching is like an immortal profession it means like I will always have money and a job that was the reason.

Moldir had a similar experience and shared, “Initially, I didn't want to become a teacher. I became a teacher because that was my parents' choice, because our society, teaching job is mostly considered a job for girls, for women, for females.” Similarly, Anel’s parents, both of whom were teachers, emphasized that teaching would provide a stable career with guaranteed employment.

My parents are teachers. My father was an ICT teacher, and my mother is a chemistry teacher. They said it’s easier to find jobs in teaching than in other fields. Initially, I wanted to study translation, but there was more competition. Teaching seemed like a safer choice.

Data from this study also showed that most of the participants chose teaching as it was easier to get in. Since most of the participants are English language teachers, their choice of profession was dependent on the subject that was easy for them. Mariyam said: “At first, I did it purely because languages were easy for me. and I liked learning languages, I liked learning English. I also learned Korean with a tutor at school”.

Dameli chose teaching because of her confidence in her English skills:

When I was about to apply, I think one of the most important factors was the fact that at school I was learning English intensively. I was just like, okay, English is going to be easy if I take it as a fifth subject on the UNT.

Moldir expressed her love for English. Having limited options, she decided:

I became a teacher because I was in love with the English language. I really loved learning English. And I didn't know any other jobs that are related to English as I was teaching. Being an interpreter was not an option because it's not a popular job or a highly paid job in my region, at least. Also, being an interpreter is not considered a stable job. Also, we've heard some negative experiences of being an interpreter. So, that's why teaching seemed like a very stable, safe job for me.

Lastly, Kasym entered the profession due to practical considerations such as perceived job security and fewer opportunities in other fields:

I did very poorly at school, and my parents said, "Well, let him become a teacher," and they sent me to college. I studied there, and eventually it turned out that after I started going to university. Slowly, I became interested in the educational field. It was during my bachelor's degree when I realized that I liked teaching the most.

A few teachers, like Aruzhan, were motivated by a desire to make a social impact and contribute to changing lives. She was struck by the inequities she observed among students during her practice teaching. She remembered:

In the second year, we were at school practice. I noticed one student who was somehow ignored by everyone, the whole class, and the teachers. I just wanted to see what it's like. And after about three days, I came up to the homeroom teacher, I said, you have one student there, he sits alone, always alone, no one answers him, the other children literally laugh at him. It struck me a little bit because the teacher says that the children there are divided among themselves according to their socio-

economic background, it turns out. Someone has a cool mom there, and the dad also works in such a great position, and so they shared it with each other, and this child, it turns out, his parents are not like that, not the same, in their opinion. They didn't bully him, after all, like some kind of separation happened. After that, I thought, it's interesting, it needs to be changed. And that's all. After that, I realized that I really wanted to become a teacher, not only just to teach, but also to educate and bring up children in some way.

Mariyam also shared her opinion:

We learned cool teaching methods at the university that made me think that I can be different from the teachers I had at my school. One who will motivate students. For example, we had so many teachers at school, but out of all the 11 years of school, I can only name two teachers that I can call great teachers.

4.4 Reasons for Choosing Autonomous/Mainstream/Private Schools

Teachers' decisions to work in autonomous, mainstream, or private schools in Kazakhstan are shaped by a mix of personal circumstances, professional aspirations, and practical considerations. The reasons for choosing each type of school reveal distinct attitudes toward career goals, workplace conditions, and broader educational ideologies. Below are the primary reasons cited by novice teachers for selecting each type of school, along with insights into how these choices align with the characteristics of each school type.

4.4.1 Private Schools

Participants viewed the private school as offering better working conditions, which ultimately led to their choice. Ainur indicated: "I had 2 options when I was looking for job, mainstream or private. Because of better conditions private school offered me such as advanced facilities, supportive environment, and student-centered education I have chosen

private.” Kasym specifically mentioned the superior conditions of private schools compared to public schools, which he described as being outdated and inadequate:

When I was studying, I realized that my university instilled one thing in me. It's not only important where you work but in which place your work, meaning in a modern campus with all the conditions made, you feel comfortable visually, and you realize that this is becoming the norm for you. After that, we went to schools that were built in the Soviet era, where, you know, everything is old and creaky. Place also affects your satisfaction, as I understood, and after that, I realized that I did not want to work in the public sector and chose a private school.

Another prominent reason was mentioned by Mariyam, who found an opportunity to teach Korean an advantage:

I did it quite by accident, just because there was a vacancy for a Korean language teacher. It turns out that this is the possibility that I can teach Korean; that is, it never occurred to me that, for example, Korean could be taught in schools. That's why I submitted my CV right away.

4.4.2 Mainstream Schools

Some teachers mentioned uncertainty as the main reason for choosing a workplace.

Moldir's decision to join a mainstream school was largely due to the circumstances the COVID-19 pandemic had caused:

I didn't want to work in school at all, first. But I happened to graduate during COVID-19 in 2020. And at that time everything was closed. I initially thought I would be working in private tutoring centers or English teaching schools or something like that. But they were all closed. The only things that were working were schools. So, I printed out my CV, and I was in a rush because it was a time of

instability. I went to different mainstream schools that were hiring. I didn't know what times were ahead.

Family connections were said to be the primary reason for Aruzhan, who decided to choose a mainstream school. She answered,

In the very first year, I was already sure that I was going to pursue my master's, but one of the requirements was 2 years of experience. I kind of thought it would take at least one year of work to get the documents tomorrow, the requirements to fit. And I was going to Almaty in general, but because of some, let's say, family problems, I stayed in my hometown and literally worked for a year. But it helped me a lot because my parents are also teachers, and they, well, compared to other teachers my age, it's much more difficult for them because they don't understand a lot of things. And thanks to the fact that my parents are teachers, they guided me very well.

Aliya chose a mainstream school largely due to friendships with colleagues working at that institution: "The first reason was that I have a lot of friends working at this school and this was the only reason. And it was a good reason, of course".

4.4.3 Autonomous schools

Zhanar explained,

Since I'm an alumnus of NIS, I have always dreamed of working as a teacher. I always dreamed of being a teacher in my own school, in my alma mater. And I think that was the idea that my own teachers instilled in me. So, it was my mission overall to be an NIS student and then to prepare other NIS students.

Dameli had a different reason for entering her school:

I had been working for the same company, for the same language school, for more than I should have, so I wanted some change of scenery, maybe. I wanted to

experience teaching in schools, in the usual schools, so I think that was one of the reasons. Another reason is that I enrolled in the MSc program as well, and my previous workplace, my previous employer, wouldn't allow me to work and study at the same time, so I also had to find some other place to work. So, all of these are the equal constituents of my decision.

Anel's choice of an autonomous school was largely accidental. She initially had no expectations but had a positive first experience, which shaped their outlook toward their job:

A friend suggested submitting my CV here, and I did, without expecting to get the job. When they offered me the position, I had zero expectations. That's why my first experience was so positive it exceeded my non-existent expectations. Now, I can see some of the negatives, but my initial positive experience helps me overlook them.

4.5 Challenges Faced by Novice Teachers

Classroom management was a common challenge for novice teachers. Many teachers, especially in their first year, mentioned difficulties in maintaining order and effectively engaging students: "I struggled working with some students. I didn't properly know classroom management" (Ainur).

Mariyam also shared the difficulties she faced because of class management. She explained:

There's really a lot you do not know about the class management. That is, it's something that you start to sort out on the spot. And ... they said they would help with everything, but in the end... I mean, I didn't understand what I needed to do.

This problem is intensified in classrooms with diverse student needs (e.g., students with special needs or challenging behavior). Kasym discussed the challenge of working with

students who have special needs, particularly autistic students, with little preparation or support:

There were children who had autism. Unfortunately, during my bachelor's degree, I didn't have any special inclusive education courses specifically for working with students with special needs. No one in my school could help. There were mostly people who were also learning this in the process because they hadn't experienced it and hadn't studied it before, either.

Challenges mentioned by the interviewees mostly concerned lack of induction and mentorship in their schools. At times, mentors were assigned only on paper, meaning that the induction program did not happen. Thus, a lot of novice teachers faced challenges when completing simple tasks. For example, Moldir reported:

My adaptation was very difficult. The one thing that scared me was the bureaucracy and the lack of a proper induction process for the profession. Again, it was a time of instability during COVID-19. I wasn't assigned a mentor at all. But it was on paper. But I didn't have a mentor. So, I've encountered multiple difficulties.

Such as not knowing what to do. And not knowing how to fill out the documents.

This was confirmed by Aliya, who said: “Novice teachers are assigned to experienced teachers, but my mentor was, if I'm not mistaken, a Kazakh language teacher. She never helped me. I guess it's because we're from different departments and she didn't have any time”. Next, Aruzhan also pointed out a lack of mentorship in her school:

When I arrived, they told me that I would have a mentor. But after some time, they told me I wouldn't have a mentor. Well, what was the reason? Some years, it turns out that they paid money to mentors, and to some they didn't pay. Also, many tasks. Each mentor prepares some kind of folder. A full folder as big as they've

been working on for a month, a whole year. What is it again? It's a paper thing again.

The absence of induction programs can later lead to challenges in the workplace. This is particularly challenging for novice teachers who are still unfamiliar with the required administrative tasks. For instance, Moldir said,

I remember I had a deadline to submit one document. But I didn't know how to write it and I asked people. They were not giving me proper answers. So, I was heading home and crying. Telling my mom that I'm going to quit. So, I would say that bureaucracy might be one of the aspects that makes adaptation to the school more difficult.

Anel remembered that she had gone through a similar situation. She said,

Experienced teachers sometimes forgot to explain small but important things. I didn't know that I had to deal with some documentation, and experienced teachers did not mention that because they had gotten used to these processes. They thought that every teacher knew what to do. But I didn't. I made mistakes because of that, but at the end they helped me correct them.

Similarly, Aruzhan mentioned,

There were problems with documentation in the first place. In the university, we didn't have courses that taught us that. There were also problems with teaching methodology. Here, for example, are some topics. I didn't have enough scientific content. Even now, I still face difficulties, I will not hide it.

While Dameli had difficulties in adapting to the teaching profession: "When I just came, I remember my first working day, I had six lessons in a row, and that was really hard mentally and physically, because everything was new for me".

4.6 Leadership Styles at Different Schools

The leadership styles within secondary schools in Kazakhstan play a significant role in shaping the school climate and the experiences of novice teachers. The way leadership is structured and practiced in different schools influences how teachers feel supported, empowered, or constrained in their roles, especially during their formative years. In the sections below, I analyze the various leadership styles described by teachers and how these impact their experiences in school settings.

4.6.1 Supportive Leadership:

Ainur working in a private school mentioned a supportive leadership approach, where decision-making is shared among the staff and teachers have a voice in important decisions:

I guess we call it supportive leadership, right? When the school administration is not the ones who do all the work, but the decisions are made collaboratively with us. We, as teachers, can choose something, can decide something, can be the key point when making decisions.

Also, Dameli described,

I don't think it's totally top-down, like we don't only do what the administration tells us or whatever the principal wants to do. There is always communication between the top and the down, and the administration and the principal, they talk to the staff, they listen, they do what they want, and they work in collaboration to make the whole school better.

Similarly, Kasym worked at a school where the director is open to listening to teachers' concerns, but teachers are expected to discuss matters with colleagues first before approaching management:

There are some requests you go straight to top management, meaning you can safely go to the director, talk calmly, discuss if there are any problems, difficulties, or something good. And the management has always been open to this. But, of course, if there are any requests, you will need to discuss them with your colleagues first, and then go, yes. But in general, the leadership style is such that there are some clear requirements.

4.6.2 Distributed Leadership

Zhanar described an autonomous school where leadership is well-structured and the responsibilities are clearly divided between the principal, vice principals, and department heads.

The principal of the school really knew all the ins and outs of the relationship between teachers and colleagues overall. And he has very good management skills in terms of, delegating all the responsibilities among teachers. So we had a good system. We have a good system in terms of principal, vice principal, and then we had heads, department heads. Everything is divided to each of the responsible vice principals for well-being, for, for the scientific type of job, vice principal of the academic's part.

Anel said, "It's very delegated. The principal is mostly absent, dealing with external matters. Deputies and coordinators handle the day-to-day operations. Coordinators are very approachable and responsive, even informally." Mariyam had a similar experience,

We have three main supervisors. This is the director, but he's the last person I ask for help because often I just don't have anything to ask. The second head is our academic director, who is fully engaged in educational activities at the school, the academic part. There is also a head specifically for classroom guidance.

4.6.3 Autocratic Leadership with Heavy Supervision

Aliya described a leadership style where the principal is rarely seen and only steps in for important matters, while the deputies are more authoritative, enforcing deadlines and tasks:

Our principal is just like Queen Elizabeth, you know. You never see her, and she always hides in her office. About the head teachers are like tyrants, you know?

They say, like, it's a deadline, you must do that. Even when tasks don't make sense, you must do them. Because they said so. They exaggerate the problem, and they exaggerate the importance of some things.

Contrary to that, Aruzhan mentioned: "Director and vice principals have the power. Everyone does what the director says, everyone does what the vice principal says".

4.7 Summary

This study examines the experiences of novice teachers working in various secondary school systems in Kazakhstan, including mainstream, private, and autonomous schools. The teachers shared insights into school culture, their relationships with colleagues and administration, their motivations for entering the teaching profession, the challenges they faced during their adaptation process, and their future career aspirations.

The experiences of the interviewed teachers highlight the diversity of school cultures within Kazakhstan's secondary education system. While some teachers thrive in collaborative and supportive environments, others struggle with rigid hierarchies, a lack of

mentorship, and the high demands of the profession. Schools that foster a sense of community and shared decision-making help teachers feel valued and empowered. In contrast, other schools have more rigid structures, where teachers feel pressured to conform to top-down directives, leading to feelings of isolation or stress.

Additionally, the relationships between teaching staff and school administration play a critical role in shaping teachers' experiences. Supportive colleagues and accessible leadership can ease the adaptation process for novice teachers. However, in schools with pronounced hierarchies, novice teachers often feel intimidated or unsupported, hindering their professional growth and job satisfaction.

Moreover, the leadership style within a school profoundly impacts the overall climate and teachers' experiences. Distributed leadership, where teachers are involved in decision-making processes, tends to create a more positive and collaborative environment. In contrast, authoritarian leadership can lead to a culture of fear and compliance, stifling innovation and professional growth. Effective leadership that is supportive, approachable, and responsive to teachers' needs is essential for fostering a positive school climate.

Novice teachers face several challenges, particularly in managing classroom behavior, handling administrative tasks, and navigating the complexities of school culture. The lack of clear guidance and mentorship can exacerbate these challenges. These issues indicate a need for improved induction programs and support systems for new educators.

Ultimately, the findings suggest that enhancing school climate, providing adequate support for novice teachers, and aligning leadership styles with the needs of teaching staff can improve teacher satisfaction and retention, thereby benefiting the quality of education in Kazakhstan. These findings are discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The chapter discusses the findings presented in the previous chapter, and it aims to answer the research questions exploring novice teachers' experiences of working in three different types of schools: autonomous, mainstream, and private. The purpose of the study was to explore the experiences of novice teachers in three secondary schools in Kazakhstan and examine how different school cultures impact their professional lives.

The discussion is organized around key themes that emerged from the data, including school cultures, motivations for becoming a teacher, reasons for selecting specific types of schools, challenges faced by novice teachers, and leadership styles. This chapter aims to provide a comprehensive discussion of how these factors influence the experiences and adaptation processes of novice teachers in various educational settings.

5.2 School Cultures

School culture is crucial in positively impacting teacher performance, job satisfaction, and student learning outcomes (Fitria, 2018). This section is divided into three main sections, each focusing on a different type of school: private schools, mainstream schools, and autonomous schools. The findings will be placed in the context of the broader literature to emphasize their importance and relevance.

5.2.1 Collaborative Culture

A collaborative culture is marked by strong teamwork, mutual support, and shared decision-making among teachers and administrators. In such environments, teachers feel empowered to contribute to the school's goals and are encouraged to work together to address problems and enhance teaching practices.

However, this type of culture is not commonly reported. Only one participant from a private school mentioned experiencing collaborative decision-making involving input

from administrators. This may stem from school principals not fully understanding the benefits of a collaborative culture. Waldron and McLeskey (2010) identified principals as key players in fostering a collaborative school culture. Additionally, changing school culture is a long-term process that requires a systematic approach (Pšunder, 2009).

Ainur shared the positive impact that collaboration had on her well-being, making her feel included and valued. These findings align with research conducted in publicly funded charter schools in the USA. Margolis and Nagel (2006) found that administrators play a crucial role in reducing teacher stress by providing support, acknowledging teachers' concerns, and fostering positive relationships. This support has been shown to increase teacher morale and commitment to the school (Aslanargun, 2015; Margolis & Nagel, 2006). Furthermore, a study conducted in Düzce, Turkey, among 677 volunteer teachers revealed that teachers' expectations from principals primarily revolve around human relationships, communication, and support. They value principals who are empathetic, respectful, and fair (Aslanargun, 2015). Additionally, this finding is supported by Hargreaves (1994), who argued that decentralized decision-making is essential for fostering authentic collaboration among teachers.

5.2.2 Contrived Collegiality

In contrast to a collaborative culture, contrived collegiality refers to a situation where collaboration is imposed by the administration rather than emerging organically from the teachers themselves (Wang, 2014). This type of culture was particularly evident in mainstream schools, where teachers reported being required to work together on specific tasks or projects, often without a genuine desire to do so. Contrived collegiality created a sense of obligation rather than genuine teamwork. In such environments, collaboration is often superficial, with teachers going through the motions of working together without truly engaging in meaningful dialogue or shared problem-solving. Aruzhan even

mentioned paperwork and reports being the main demotivators of working in groups as she mentioned groupwork turns into reports.

While contrived collegiality may appear to promote collaboration on the surface, it often fails to achieve the same benefits as a genuinely collaborative culture. Teachers may feel disempowered and disengaged, leading to lower morale and reduced job satisfaction (Hargreaves, 1994). Additionally, the lack of genuine collaboration can hinder the sharing of best practices and limit opportunities for professional growth. Over time, this can result in a stagnant school culture where innovation is stifled, and teachers become resistant to change.

However, experiences from participants in autonomous schools suggest that collaboration may begin as forced but ultimately evolve into something meaningful. They shared that, although they initially found collaboration to be enforced, they later recognized its benefits in lesson planning. This change was attributed to the respect and support felt among colleagues, as well as the positive interpersonal relationships among teaching staff. Wang's (2014) study highlights that a culture of professional respect and trust is crucial for supporting collaboration and collective responsibility. These findings may indicate a shift in teachers' perspectives over time. Furthermore, a study by Datnow (2011) found that administratively regulated collaboration can evolve into more genuine collaboration, where teachers challenge each other, share ideas, and engage in reflective inquiry. Zhanar emphasized that even if collaboration was initially forced, teachers consistently completed tasks in a timely and responsible manner. Fitria (2018) notes that organizational trust can enhance teacher effectiveness, which may explain why teachers in autonomous schools are able to complete tasks effectively, even when their collaboration begins as contrived. That shift in perception of contrived collegiality contradicts Hargreaves (1994), who described it as “inflexible”.

5.2.3 Balkanization

Balkanization refers to a school culture where teachers are divided into isolated groups or departments, with limited interaction between them. This type of culture was observed in all types of schools, particularly those with multiple departments or subject areas. In such environments, teachers tend to work within their own groups, with little cross-departmental collaboration or communication. Balkanization remains a significant challenge in autonomous schools, as highlighted by Anel. Different departments often work in separate groups due to varying curricula and teaching philosophies, which Hargreaves (1994) identifies as a common issue in autonomous settings. Hargreaves (1995) stated that all innovations in balkanized culture are made within specific subject areas, thus, these innovations often remain isolated and not integrated into the broader curriculum.

This fragmentation can create silos within the school, where departments operate independently and rarely share resources or ideas. In some cases, this can lead to competition between departments, as each group focuses on its own goals and priorities rather than the school's overall mission. Balkanization can have several negative consequences for both teachers and students. For teachers, it can lead to a lack of professional support and limited opportunities for collaboration, which can hinder professional development and innovation (Hargreaves, 1994). Balkanization can even foster exclusion and segregation among teachers within the same institution which leads to diminished interest in teaching, burnout, and a weakened sense of school connection and belonging (Hongboontri and Liao, 2021).

5.2.4 Individualism

Only one participant described experiences of individualism, feeling isolated from their colleagues. Moldir's feelings of being "alienated" and "not fitting in" within the

mainstream school environment highlight the negative impact of individualism on teacher morale and professional growth. This observation is supported by Hargreaves (1994), who noted that constrained individualism—which limits collaboration due to structural constraints rather than personal choice—serves as a barrier to progress.

Moldir's sense of isolation was worsened by the absence of mentorship and support, forcing her to navigate the challenges of teaching on her own. Individualism can be especially challenging for novice teachers, who often rely on guidance and support from more experienced colleagues to adjust to their new roles. Similarly, Shah (2022) pointed out that isolation results in fewer opportunities for professional learning. When teachers work in isolation, novice educators may struggle to develop the skills and confidence needed to manage their classrooms effectively.

5.3 Motivations for Becoming a Teacher

One of the significant factors influencing their choice of school was the teacher's inspiration drawn from their own teachers, motivating them to pursue similar paths. Meaning that examples set in earlier periods of life can still affect teachers' decisions. Positive role models set the example of teachers they wanted to become for students. The study by Timmerman (2009) highlights the long-term impact that secondary school teachers have in shaping future teachers' professional identities and teaching practices.

Also, not only were positive examples of school role models mentioned. It was said that teachers at schools were negative and generally not helpful. But positive examples of teaching set later changed the attitude toward the teaching career, making people want to break the stereotypes of "bad" teachers at school. This finding means that even negative experiences in the past can influence the choice. Research by Nevin et al. (2009) indicated that a major motivation for novice teachers entering the profession was the impact of former teachers. Both positive and negative experiences with these educators can shape

participants' motivations to become teachers. Additionally, the study from two teacher training centers in a Dutch university indicated that teachers with negative prior experiences might be more motivated to improve and become better teachers than those they had encountered, leading to higher effort and professional development aspirations (Fokkens-Bruinsma & Canrinus, 2013).

Some respondents indicated that their choice of teaching was primarily driven by external motivations. These participants expressed feeling compelled to pursue a teaching career due to pressure from their parents, who believed that teaching offered career stability, was suitable for girls, and was an easier degree to obtain. These parental perceptions were largely informed by the realities of the teaching profession in Kazakhstan between 2017 and 2019. According to Irsaliyev (2019), nearly 80% of teachers in Kazakhstan are female, compared to an average of 69% among countries participating in TALIS-2013. Furthermore, the PISA report highlights that academically strong school graduates tend to choose more prestigious and competitive fields. In contrast, the relatively low entry requirements for the teaching profession enable students with average or below-average academic performance to secure scholarships (Irsaliyev, 2019).

Many participants initially chose to pursue teaching due to extrinsic motivations like family influence and job security. However, over time, most described a shift in their motivations toward more altruistic reasons. They found inspiration from role models and developed a desire to change traditional views on teachers while wanting to help students. This transformation in motivation occurred during their teaching practice. Although participants began in the profession due to external factors, they eventually expressed a genuine passion for teaching and a commitment to positively impacting students' lives. Research by Whiteford et al. (2021) indicates that motivation can evolve. This transformation often results from deep engagement in teaching practices and the

development of personal and professional values. Additionally, positive experiences with students and colleagues play a significant role in this shift. Teachers who experience positive emotions and a sense of accomplishment are more likely to develop stable intrinsic motivation, as noted by Liu et al. (2018). Furthermore, the study by Watt and Richardson (2007) found that factors like job security do not correlate with long-term engagement or teacher retention. Therefore, schools need to foster a supportive culture and create conditions that enhance teacher motivation and retention.

5.4 Reasons for Choosing Autonomous/Mainstream/Private Schools

Although teachers in Kazakhstan selected autonomous, mainstream, or private schools for different reasons, their decisions were consistently influenced by three overarching factors: professional opportunities, workplace conditions, and personal circumstances.

Novice teachers at private schools were primarily attracted to better resources, modern facilities, and specialized teaching opportunities. In contrast, teachers at mainstream schools often made their choice due to external pressures, such as the COVID-19 pandemic or the influence of parents. Previous research indicated that private school teachers typically had access to adequate supplies, including basic classroom materials and technology (Forster, G., & D'andrea, C., 2009).

However, only one participant felt that their expectations aligned with reality. The other two respondents identified a lack of systematic training and profit motives as significant drawbacks. Meanwhile, teachers who opted for mainstream schools did not experience significant changes in their opinions after starting, as most viewed teaching as a fallback career and did not have high expectations.

Autonomous schoolteachers identified career flexibility and alumni loyalty as key motivational factors. Although they initially faced challenges with adaptation, support from colleagues helped them adjust to the school environment effectively.

5.5 Challenges Faced by Novice Teachers

Participants from private schools reported a variety of challenges, including issues with classroom management, communication gaps, and high parental expectations. At the same time, participants working in mainstream schools stated that documentation and bureaucracy were the main challenges. These findings align with a study that sampled teachers in private and public schools in India. It revealed that novice teachers in private schools face more significant challenges related to verbal communication, motivational strategies, and teaching methods compared to their counterparts in public schools (Lazar & Sikandar, 2020). Fantilli and McDougall's (2009) research indicated that novice teachers are confronted with numerous responsibilities, including paperwork and long-term planning. The findings suggest that graduates of teacher education programs leave their pre-service training with limited knowledge of documentation and bureaucracy, which results in difficulties in their later teaching practices.

One of the difficulties encountered in private schools was related to working with students and managing elevated parental expectations. It was noted that the absence of specialized training during bachelor's degrees and initial teacher training made it difficult to address the needs of some students. The research on novice teachers working in high school conducted by Irsaliyev (2019) indicated that about a quarter of participants expressed that they did not receive sufficient knowledge in the university to work at school. That finding emphasizes that novice teachers lack professional knowledge in methodology, teaching practice, communication skills, and work discipline. That issue is present not only in Kazakhstan. Widiati et al. (2018) studied the experiences of 11 novice

teachers from Indonesia and found that novice teachers felt that their pre-service education lacked sufficient pedagogical training. They struggled with class management and dealing with students' varying abilities. Thus, Qanay et al. (2021) found that teachers need help in self-directed learning due to suggested gaps in pre-service training and a lack of collaboration in school environments. Additionally, pressure to meet parental demands, such as inflating grades for business considerations, created ethical dilemmas. This finding is consistent with the literature regarding the high-stakes environment of private schools, where parents had high expectations of teachers, particularly in terms of providing help and assistance to their children (Tatar & Horenczyk, 2000).

Private school teachers described a lack of assistance from colleagues to be the main reason for these challenges describing their experience as “bad communication”, and “sorting out on the spot”. Their experience highlights a gap in the school's onboarding process and underscores the importance of effective communication in fostering a collaborative culture. Williams et al. (2001) noted that individualism in the workplace can slow down the integration of novice teachers, as such cultures often promote isolation and hinder collaboration.

At the same time, teachers working in autonomous schools also struggled to adapt to the demands of teaching while lacking experience. They had too little or no time for adaptation. The heavy workload of teaching multiple lessons in a row, establishing authority when dealing with students close in age, and navigating administrative tasks. However, these challenges did not last long since all participants working in autonomous schools received sufficient support from their colleagues and mentors. These findings emphasize the importance of mentorship in supporting novice teachers, reporting that teachers with mentors during their induction period solve challenges more effectively (Kutsyuruba et al., 2017; Shah & Jumani., 2015).

5.6 Leadership Styles at Different Schools

The leadership styles in secondary schools in Kazakhstan significantly influence the professional experiences of novice teachers, affecting their job satisfaction, sense of autonomy, and overall engagement. Supportive and distributed leadership, characterized by teachers in private and autonomous schools, creates environments where educators feel valued and involved in decision-making. Participants in these settings emphasize that decision-making and responsibilities are shared among teachers, department heads, and administrators. This decentralized approach allows teachers the autonomy to contribute to decisions related to their roles. All participants from private and autonomous schools describe leadership as approachable and understanding, emphasizing openness to discussions that help new teachers adapt. This aligns with the study by Kiliç (2020), which found that principals in private schools are more likely to adopt democratic leadership styles, fostering collaboration in decision-making.

In contrast, participants from mainstream schools described their leadership as hierarchical and autocratic, which often hindered teacher autonomy and satisfaction. This observation reflects research suggesting that task-oriented leadership, focused on strict supervision and rigid enforcement of policies, correlates negatively with communication and job satisfaction (Josanov-Vrgovic & Pavlovic, 2014). Participants reinforced this view by stating that leadership in their schools was entirely top-down, with teachers required to comply with administration directives without question. This often led to degradation of teachers' actions or assigned additional tasks unrelated to their core responsibilities. Teachers in such environments may experience higher stress and lower motivation, as noted by Margolis and Nagel (2006), who found that a lack of administrative support contributes to teacher dissatisfaction and burnout. Public school principals tend to lean

toward autocratic leadership, exerting stricter control and involving teachers less (Kiliç, 2020).

These findings highlight the critical role of leadership in shaping novice teachers' experiences. While supportive and distributed leadership fosters motivation and engagement, autocratic and rigid structures limit teacher agency and contribute to dissatisfaction.

5.7 Summary

The type of school, mainstream, private, or autonomous, plays a significant role in shaping the school culture. Private and autonomous schools tended to have more collaborative and supportive cultures, while mainstream schools exhibited more hierarchical and authoritarian tendencies.

Challenges varied across different school types, while participants from private and autonomous schools reported a variety of challenges, including issues with classroom management, communication gaps, and high parental expectations. At the same time, participants working in mainstream schools stated that documentation and bureaucracy were the main challenges. Findings highlight the critical role of leadership in shaping novice teachers' experiences. While supportive and distributed leadership fosters motivation and engagement, autocratic and rigid structures limit teacher agency and contribute to dissatisfaction.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of novice teachers in three secondary schools in Kazakhstan, examining how different school cultures impact their professional lives. This chapter provides the summary of the main findings and suggests recommendations for educators and school administrators. Moreover, it discusses the study's limitations for future researchers to consider and gives recommendations for future research.

6.2 Summary of the Major Findings

The findings reveal significant differences in school cultures, leadership styles, and the challenges faced by novice teachers in Kazakhstan's private, mainstream, and autonomous schools. In private and autonomous schools, teachers often feel more empowered and supported, with greater opportunities for collaboration and professional development. These schools tend to have more flexible structures, allowing teachers to take on leadership roles and participate in decision-making processes. Consequently, participants from these schools reported mostly positive experiences with their school cultures. In contrast, mainstream schools often have more rigid structures, with decisions made by a small group of administrators. Teachers in these schools reported feeling less empowered and more constrained by bureaucratic processes.

Regarding motivation, many teachers cited role models, such as former teachers or family members in the profession, as sources of inspiration. Others were drawn to teaching due to their passion for languages or specific subjects, while some entered the field for practical reasons or parental influence.

When it comes to the reasons for choosing a particular type of school, private school teachers emphasized the presence of modern facilities and a progressive

environment as key motivators, though they often struggle with a lack of induction support. Mainstream schools were reported to provide stability but are hindered by bureaucratic processes and insufficient support for novice teachers. In contrast, autonomous schools foster a collaborative and supportive environment that promotes the professional growth of new educators.

Additionally, leadership styles play a crucial role in shaping the school climate, with collaborative and supportive leadership proving to be more effective in creating a positive work environment. The findings reveal significant differences in school cultures, leadership styles, and the challenges faced by novice teachers in Kazakhstan's private, mainstream, and autonomous schools.

In private and autonomous schools, teachers often feel more empowered and supported, with greater opportunities for collaboration and professional development. These schools tend to have more flexible structures, allowing teachers to take on leadership roles and participate in decision-making processes. Consequently, participants from these schools reported mostly positive experiences with their school cultures. In contrast, mainstream schools often have more rigid structures, with decisions made by a small group of administrators. Teachers in these schools reported feeling less empowered and more constrained by bureaucratic processes.

Regarding motivation, many teachers cited role models, such as former teachers or family members in the profession, as sources of inspiration. Others were drawn to teaching due to their passion for languages or specific subjects, while some entered the field for practical reasons or parental influence.

When it comes to the reasons for choosing a particular type of school, private school teachers emphasized the presence of modern facilities and a progressive environment as key motivators, though they often struggle with a lack of induction

support. Mainstream schools were reported to provide stability but are hindered by bureaucratic processes and insufficient support for novice teachers. In contrast, autonomous schools foster a collaborative and supportive environment that promotes the professional growth of new educators. Additionally, leadership styles play a crucial role in shaping the school climate, with collaborative and supportive leadership proving to be more effective in creating a positive work environment.

6.3 Limitations of the Study

Although the present study successfully answered research questions, it is important to highlight and address the limitations of this study. Firstly, the study focused on novice teachers' experiences in urban settings, specifically Astana, which may not capture the perspectives of those in other regions. As a result, findings cannot reflect the views or opinions of all novice teachers in Kazakhstan. Additionally, the small sample size of nine participants may not fully capture the diverse range of experiences and perspectives within the population of interest.

Moreover, data relied on teachers' self-reported perceptions of leadership styles and school cultures, which may be subjective and influenced by personal biases or workplace dynamics. Participants might respond in ways they perceive as favorable, which may not accurately reflect their authentic experiences with school cultures.

6.4 Research Implications

The implications of this research offer valuable insights for various stakeholders involved in education. The study's findings call for actionable changes in school culture. Findings emphasize the critical role of collaboration in promoting a positive and supportive environment in schools. However, many teachers reported contrived collegiality or balkanization to take place in their schools. Thus, the study showed the need to promote genuine collaboration through interdisciplinary projects, open communication,

and collaborative decision-making. Supporting previous studies on the beneficial effects of collaboration (Kalkan et al., 2020; Qanay et al., 2021; You et al., 2017).

Also, the research identified gaps in pre-service teacher training as participants mentioned a lack of preparedness in inclusive education and handling school bureaucracy. It highlighted the need to enhance teaching education programs.

6.5 Recommendations

The study's findings reveal the importance of developing structured mentorship programs for novice teachers and integrating classroom management and inclusive education training into teacher certification programs. Also, reducing the bureaucratic burden for teachers will allow more time for instruction and professional development. Implementation of digital platforms for administrative tasks can be a great solution.

When it comes to school administration, promote and foster collaborative cultures through staff meetings or by conducting professional learning communities where teachers collaborate on curriculum, instruction, and student learning. Additionally, it is crucial to design structured onboarding programs that include classroom management workshops, peer observation opportunities, and regular check-ins with mentors. Also, principals can encourage open-door policies where teachers can voice concerns without fear of reprisal. Conducting surveys among teachers can also be useful in measuring school climate and tracking progress over time.

6.6 Directions for Future Research

In terms of research, the study suggests expanding the scope of the research. This may include incorporating different demographic groups, educational settings, or cultural contexts to enhance the generalizability of findings. Also, because of time constraints in writing a master's thesis conducting longitudinal research can provide insights into the

long-term effects of school cultures on novice teachers. Tracking participants over an extended period will help determine any lasting impacts and trends.

Additionally, future research could benefit from comparative studies that examine school cultures in different regions, institutions, or methodologies. Comparative analysis can be done between schools with strong collaborative cultures and those without to identify significant differences in retention, satisfaction, and student performance.

6.7 Personal Reflection

Writing this thesis has been more than just an academic task; it has been a journey of intellectual growth and self-discovery. As I reflect on this process, I realize that working on this research was not only about analyzing data or drawing conclusions; it was also about understanding the complexities of the educational field.

I learned that writing is rewriting. Sentences I once thought were polished later seemed clumsy, and arguments I believed to be coherent required further refinement. I came to accept that good work is not necessarily perfect. This thesis challenged me intellectually, but it also transformed me. It taught me patience with the data, with myself, and with the gradual progression of academic work.

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Appendix A: AI Declaration Form



Thesis Title: **Novice Teachers' School Culture Experiences: A Study of Three
Secondary Schools in Kazakhstan**

Declaration of the Use of Generative AI

I hereby declare that I have read and understood NUGSE's policy concerning appropriate use of AI and composed this work independently (please check one):

- with the use of artificial intelligence tools, or
 without the use of artificial intelligence tools.

(If you have used AI tools as defined in the GSE policy document, please complete the rest of this form.)

During the preparation of this thesis/examination, I used Grammarly AI to proofread and fix grammatical mistakes of my thesis.

I also declare that I

- am aware of the capabilities and limitations of AI tool(s),
 have verified that the content generated by AI systems and adopted by me is factually correct,
 am aware that as the author of this thesis I bear full responsibility for the statements and assertions made in it,
 have submitted complete and accurate information about my use of AI tools in this work, and
 acknowledge that there may be disciplinary consequences if I have not followed NUGSE's guidelines regarding AI appropriate use.

Name: Nassikhat Bukenbayeva
Date: 28.04.25

Signature: 

Appendix B: Consent Form

Introduction. You are invited to participate in a research study titled Novice Teachers' School Culture Experiences: A Study of Three Secondary Schools in Kazakhstan.

Purpose: This study aims to investigate the experiences of new teachers in three secondary schools in Kazakhstan and how different school cultures affect their professional lives. Hargreaves's (1995) forms of teacher culture will be used in the study. The primary data collection method will be semi-structured interviews, which will last approximately 40-60 minutes each.

Potential Risks: Participating in this study may lead to psychological or emotional discomfort, especially for those who have faced challenges or negative situations in the school culture. Participants may be concerned that expressing dissatisfaction with their school or colleagues could harm their professional reputation or job security. However, participants have the right not to answer questions that make them uncomfortable.

Benefits: This study aims to address the gap in understanding the impact of school leadership on new teachers' satisfaction and professional practices. Participants will have the opportunity to reflect on their experiences and gain deeper insights into their professional journey and challenges. Also, participating means contributing new knowledge.

Compensation: There will be no tangible compensation for participation. At the end of the study, participants will be provided with a copy of the research results. This will allow participants to see how their experiences and insights have contributed to the broader understanding of novice teachers' experiences in different school cultures in Kazakhstan.

Confidentiality & Privacy: All information obtained during the study will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. Anonymization techniques will be used to protect the identities of the participants. Personal information in the research records will be kept confidential to the greatest extent possible.

Voluntary Nature of the Study. Participation in this study is strictly voluntary, and if agreement to participation is given, it can be withdrawn at any time without prejudice.

Points of Contact. It is understood that should any questions or comments arise regarding this project, or a research-related injury is received, the Researcher, Nassikhat Bukenbayeva, +8 707 937 23 22, nassikhat.bukenbayeva@nu.edu.kz should be contacted. Any other questions or concerns may be addressed to the Nazarbayev University Institutional Research Ethics Committee, resethics@nu.edu.kz.

Statement of Consent.

I, _____,
Give my voluntary consent to participate in this study.

The researchers clearly explained to me the background information and objectives of the study and what my participation in this study involves.

I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary. I can at any time and without giving any reasons withdraw my consent, and this will not have any negative consequences for myself.

I understand that the information collected during this study will be treated confidentially.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher:

Signed _____ Date _____

Жазбаша ақпараттандырылған келісім нысаны

Кіріспе: Біз Сізді "Жас мұғалімдердің мектеп мәдениетіндегі тәжірибесі: Қазақстанның үш орта мектебін зерттеу" атты ғылыми зерттеуге қатысуға шақырамыз.

Мақсаты: Бұл зерттеу Қазақстанның үш орта мектебінде жас мұғалімдердің тәжірибесін және түрлі мектеп мәдениетінің олардың кәсіби өміріне қалай әсер ететінін зерттеуге бағытталған. Зерттеуде Харгривс әзірлеген (1995) мұғалімдер мәдениетінің формалары қолданылады. Деректерді жинаудың негізгі әдісі жартылай құрылымдалған сұхбаттар болады, олардың әрқайсысы шамамен 30-50 минутқа созылады.

Ықтимал тәуекелдер: бұл зерттеуге қатысу, әсіресе мектеп ортасында қиындықтарға немесе жағымсыз жағдайларға тап болғандар үшін психологиялық немесе эмоционалдық жайсыздықтарға әкелуі мүмкін. Қатысушылар өз мектебіне немесе әріптестеріне наразылық білдіру олардың кәсіби беделіне немесе жұмысқа орналасу кепілдігіне нұқсан келтіруі мүмкін деп алаңдауы мүмкін. Алайда қатысушылар өздеріне қолайсыздық тудыратын сұрақтарға жауап бермеуге құқылы.

Артықшылықтары: бұл зерттеу мектеп басшылығының жаңадан келген мұғалімдердің жұмысына қанағаттануына және олардың кәсіби тәжірибесіне әсерін түсінудегі олқылықтарды жоюға бағытталған. Қатысушылар өз тәжірибелері туралы ойлануға және өздерінің кәсіби жолдары мен мәселелерін жақсы түсінуге мүмкіндік алады. Сонымен қатар қатысу арқылы жаңа білім алады.

Өтемақы: Қатысқан үшін материалдық өтемақы болмайды. Зерттеудің соңында қатысушыларға зерттеу нәтижелерінің көшірмесі беріледі. Бұл қатысушыларға өздерінің жеке тәжірибелері Қазақстанның әртүрлі мектеп мәдениеттеріндегі жас мұғалімдердің тәжірибесін кеңінен түсінуге қалай ықпал еткенін көруге мүмкіндік береді.

Құпиялылық: зерттеу барысында алынған барлық ақпарат заңмен рұқсат етілген дәрежеде құпия сақталады. Қатысушылардың жеке басын қорғау үшін анонимдеу әдістері қолданылады. Зерттеу есептеріндегі жеке ақпарат мүмкіндігінше құпия болады.

Зерттеу ерікті болып табылады: бұл зерттеуге қатысу қатаң ерікті болып табылады және қатысуға келісім алған жағдайда оны кез келген уақытта ешбір алалаушылықсыз қайтарып алуға болады.

Байланысатын тұлғалары: зерттеу барысында осы жобаға қатысты қандай да бір сұрақтар мен түсініктемелер немесе зардаптар туындаған жағдайда зерттеуші Насихат Бөкенбаевамен +87079372322 тел. нөміріне, nassikhat.bukenbayeva@nu.edu.kz. Электрондық мекенжайына байланысу керек, кез келген басқа сұрақтармен resethics@nu.edu.kz. электрондық мекенжайына Назарбаев Университетінің Институционалдық зерттеулер этикасы комитетіне жүгінуге болады,

Келісім туралы өтініш.

Мен, _____,

Осы зерттеуге қатысуға өз еркіммен келісім беремін.

Зерттеушілер маған зерттеудің бастапқы ақпараты мен мақсаттарын, сондай-ақ осы зерттеуге қатысуымды не қамтитынын анық түсіндірді.

Мен бұл зерттеуге қатысуым ерікті екенін түсінемін. Мен кез келген уақытта және себебін түсіндірмей келісімді қайтарып ала аламын және бұл мен үшін ешқандай жағымсыз салдарға әкелмейді.

Мен бұл зерттеуде жиналған ақпарат құпия сақталатынын түсінемін.

Қолы: _____ Күні: _____

Зерттеуші:

Қолы: _____ Күні: _____

Форма письменного информированного согласия

Вступление: Мы приглашаем Вас принять участие в научном исследовании под названием "Опыт начинающих учителей в школьной культуре: Исследование трех средних школ Казахстана".

Цель: Данное исследование направлено на изучение опыта начинающих учителей в трех средних школах Казахстана и того, как различные школьные культуры влияют на их профессиональную жизнь. В исследовании будут использованы формы культуры учителей, разработанные Харгривзом (1995). Основным методом сбора данных будут полуструктурированные интервью, каждое из которых будет длиться примерно 30-50 минут.

Потенциальные риски: Участие в этом исследовании может привести к психологическому или эмоциональному дискомфорту, особенно для тех, кто сталкивался с трудностями или негативными ситуациями в школьной среде. Участники могут быть обеспокоены тем, что выражение недовольства своей школой или коллегами может нанести ущерб их профессиональной репутации или гарантии трудоустройства. Однако участники имеют право не отвечать на вопросы, которые доставляют им неудобства.

Преимущества: Это исследование направлено на устранение пробелов в понимании влияния руководства школы на удовлетворенность работой начинающих учителей и их профессиональную практику. У участников будет возможность поразмышлять о своем опыте и лучше понять свой профессиональный путь и проблемы. Кроме того, участие означает получение новых знаний.

Компенсация: Материальной компенсации за участие не будет. В конце исследования участникам будет предоставлена копия результатов исследования. Это позволит участникам увидеть, как их личный опыт способствовал более широкому пониманию опыта начинающих учителей в различных школьных культурах Казахстана.

Конфиденциальность: Вся информация, полученная в ходе исследования, будет храниться в тайне в той мере, в какой это разрешено законом. Для защиты личности участников будут использоваться методы анонимизации. Личная информация в отчетах об исследовании будет максимально конфиденциальной.

Исследование носит добровольный характер: Участие в данном исследовании является строго добровольным, и в случае получения согласия на участие оно может быть отозвано в любое время без каких-либо предубеждений.

Контактные лица: В случае возникновения каких-либо вопросов или комментариев относительно данного проекта или вреда в ходе исследования, следует связаться с исследователем Насихат Букенбаевой, +8.707 937 23 22, nassikhat.bukenbayeva@nu.edu.kz. С любыми другими вопросами можно обращаться в Комитет по этике институциональных исследований Назарбаев университета, resethics@nu.edu.kz.

Заявление о согласии.

Я, _____,
Даю свое добровольное согласие на участие в этом исследовании.

Исследователи четко объяснили мне исходную информацию и цели исследования, а также то, что включает в себя мое участие в этом исследовании.

Я понимаю, что мое участие в этом исследовании является добровольным. Я могу в любое время и без объяснения причин отозвать свое согласие, и это не будет иметь для меня никаких негативных последствий.

Я понимаю, что информация, собранная в ходе этого исследования, будет храниться в тайне.

Подпись: _____ Дата: _____

Исследователь:

Подпись: _____ Дата: _____

Appendix C: Interview Questions

1. How many years of experience you have got?
2. How would you describe the culture of your current school?
3. What are the core values or principles at your school? (What is the mission of the school?)
4. How would you characterize the relationships between teaching staff?
5. How would you characterize the relationships with school administration?
6. What motivated you to become a teacher, and how did you choose to work in a (mainstream/private/autonomous) secondary school?
7. Have your motivations or expectations changed since you started teaching here? If so, how?
8. How did the school culture influence your adaptation process? Were there aspects of the culture that made it easier or more difficult for you to settle in?
9. What challenges did you face when you first joined your current school? Were these challenges related to the school culture?
10. How would you describe the leadership style at your school?
11. In what ways has the leadership at your school influenced your experience as a novice teacher?
12. Where do you see yourself in the next 5 years? Do you see yourself in teaching?

Сұхбат сұрақтары

1. Қазіргі мектебіңіздің мәдениетін қалай сипаттар едіңіз?
2. Сіздің мектебіңіздегі негізгі құндылықтар немесе принциптер қандай?
(Мектептің миссиясы қандай?)
3. Педагогикалық ұжым арасындағы қарым-қатынасты қалай сипаттар едіңіз?
4. Мектеп әкімшілігімен қарым-қатынасты қалай сипаттар едіңіз?
5. Мұғалім болуға не түрткі болды және (негізгі/жеке/автономды) орта мектепте жұмыс істеуді қалай таңдадыңыз?
6. Мұнда сабақ бере бастағаннан бері сіздің мотивацияңыз немесе үміттеріңіз өзгерді ме? Олай болса, қалай?
7. Мектеп мәдениеті сіздің бейімделу үдерісіңізге қалай әсер етті? Мәдениеттің сізге қоныстануды жеңілдететін немесе қиындататын аспектілері болды ма?
8. Қазіргі мектепке алғаш келген кезде қандай қиындықтарға тап болдыңыз?
Бұл қиындықтар мектеп мәдениетіне байланысты болды ма?
9. Мектептегі көшбасшылық стилін қалай сипаттар едіңіз?
10. Сіздің мектебіңіздегі көшбасшылық сіздің жаңадан бастаған мұғалім ретіндегі тәжірибеңізге қандай жолдармен әсер етті?
11. Алдағы 5 жылда өзіңізді қайдан көресіз? Сіз өзіңізді оқытуда көресіз бе?

Вопросы интервью

1. Как бы вы описали культуру вашей нынешней школы?
2. Каковы основные ценности или принципы вашей школы? (Какова миссия школы?)
3. Как бы вы охарактеризовали отношения между преподавательским составом?
4. Как бы вы охарактеризовали отношения со школьной администрацией?
5. Что побудило вас стать учителем и как вы решили работать в общеобразовательной/частной/автономной средней школе?
6. Изменились ли ваши мотивы или ожидания с тех пор, как вы начали преподавать здесь? Если да, то как?
7. Как школьная культура повлияла на процесс вашей адаптации? Были ли какие-то аспекты культуры, которые облегчили или усложнили вам адаптацию?
8. С какими трудностями вы столкнулись, когда впервые пришли в вашу нынешнюю школу? Были ли эти проблемы связаны со школьной культурой?
9. Как бы вы описали стиль руководства в вашей школе?
10. Каким образом руководство в вашей школе повлияло на ваш опыт работы в качестве начинающего учителя?
11. Кем вы видите себя в ближайшие 5 лет? Видите ли вы себя в качестве преподавателя?

Appendix D: Letter of Invitation

Dear Sir or Madam,

I hope this message finds you well.

My name is Nassikhat Bukenbayeva. I am a graduate student at the Graduate School of Education, Nazarbayev University, and I am currently engaged in research for my master's degree program.

I am reaching out to kindly invite your school to participate in a research project called "Novice Teachers' School Culture Experiences: A study of Three Secondary Schools in Kazakhstan". This study has received approval from the NUGSE Research Committee, ensuring its adherence to the standards of academic research and ethics. The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of novice teachers in three secondary schools in Kazakhstan, examining how different school cultures impact their professional lives.

I am writing to request your permission to be allowed to engage teachers in your school in this study, which will include participating in interviews.

The interview will take 40-60 and will take place between December 2024 - January 2025. The interviews will be scheduled at a time and date convenient for the participants. All answers and results from the research will be kept strictly confidential during and after the research.

If this is possible, please could you e-mail me at nassikhat.bukenbayeva@nu.edu.kz or by phone number +7 707 937 23 22 to confirm that you are willing to allow access to your participants.

I appreciate your time and willingness to contribute to this research.

Sincerely,

Nassikhat Bukenbayeva

Менің зерттеуіме қатысушыларды тартуға арналған хат

Құрметті мектеп директоры,

Менің атым Насихат Букенбаева және мен Назарбаев Университетінің Жоғары білім беру мектебінің магистрантымын. Қазіргі уақытта магистрлік бағдарламаға арналған зерттеумен айналысып жатырмын. Жас мұғалімдердің мектеп мәдениетіндегі тәжірибесін анықтауға бағытталған зерттеу жобасына сіздің мұғалімдеріңіздің қатысуын сұрау үшін хабарласып отырмын. Бұл зерттеу академиялық зерттеу және этика стандарттарына сәйкестігін қамтамасыз ететін NUGSE зерттеу комитетінің мақұлдауынан өтті. Зерттеудің мақсаты – әртүрлі мектеп мәдениеттері жаңадан жұмысын бастаған мұғалімдердің кәсіби өміріне қалай әсер ететінін анықтау.

Зерттеуге қатысушыларды сұхбатқа тарту мақсатында сіздің мектеп мұғалімдерімен қатысушы ретінде жұмыс істеуге рұқсат беруіңізді сұраймын. Сұхбаттар 40-60 минут алады және желтоқсан мен қаңтар айлары аралығында болады. Сұхбаттар қатысушыларға ыңғайлы уақыт пен күнге жоспарланады. Сұхбат жауаптары қатаң құпия түрде сақталады.

Егер бұл мүмкін болса, маған nassikhat.bukenbayeva@nu.edu.kz электронды поштасына немесе +7 707 937 23 22 телефон нөміріне хабарласып, қатысушыларға қол жеткізуге рұқсат беретініңізді растауыңызды сұраймын.

Зерттеуге қосқан үлесіңіз үшін уақыт бөлгеніңізге алдын ала алғыс айтамын.

Құрметпен, Насихат Букенбаева

Письмо приглашение о наборе участников на участие в моем исследовании

Уважаемый директор школы,

Меня зовут Насихат и я являюсь магистрантом Высшей школы образования Назарбаев Университета. В настоящее время занимаюсь исследованием для своей магистерской программы. Я обращаюсь к вам с просьбой пригласить ваших учителей принять участие в исследовательском проекте, посвященном изучению опыта школьной культуры начинающих учителей. Данное исследование получило одобрение Комитета по исследованию NUGSE, что гарантирует его соответствие стандартам академического исследования и этики. Цель этого исследования - изучить опыт начинающих учителей, чтобы выяснить, как различные школьные культуры влияют на их профессиональную жизнь.

Я пишу вам с просьбой разрешить мне работать с учителями вашей школы для набора участников исследования - начинающих учителей, чтобы они могли принять участие в интервью. Интервью займет 40-60 минут - с декабря 2024 по январь 2025 года. Интервью будут запланированы на удобное для участников время. Все ответы и личности участников исследования будут строго конфиденциальными.

Если это возможно, прошу вас связаться со мной по электронной почте nassikhat.bukenbayeva@nu.edu.kz или по номеру телефона +7 707 937 23 22 для подтверждения того, что вы готовы предоставить доступ к вашим участникам.

Заранее благодарю вас за ваше время и готовность внести вклад в это исследование.

С уважением, Насихат Букенбаева

Appendix E: Data Analysis – Transcription Sample of Interview

Speaker 1: Hello. Please tell us about your work experience and about the school.

Speaker 2: I've been working, as I would say, for the third year at a music school.

Speaker 1: What are the core values or mission of your school?

Speaker 2: Honestly, I would not say that there is a goal for the whole school, as it usually happens often in schools, or in any other schools, like NISHK, TEL. But they are, in general, the administration, and we, the teachers, are moving in the direction of the State Educational Standard. We do what they give us. I'm not really sure about this, to be honest, but every year it changes somehow, not really, but it does. And every year there are some new rules, some new values. For example, this year we have Port d'asterbe, it turns out that it includes six values that you, as a class leader, as well as a subject teacher, also like, you will have to teach your children these values are different.

How would you describe the culture of your current school?

Well, there is no such conflict between teachers or anything else, there is no such thing between the administration. Or, most likely, I didn't feel it, because I'm kind of a young specialist, and I don't really delve into different problems that much. But, as I understand it, there are many teachers who work mainly in these regions right now, they are experienced teachers. Many of them are 10-15-20 years old, and because of this they know each other, a person. They've been working with a person for 10-15 years, 20 years, that's understandable. And between them, maybe I'll say, I noticed, say, some kind of altercation between them, let's say, not an altercation, but some kind of conflict, say, any problems, inter-competition. I do not know what kind of competition it is, healthy or unhealthy, but there is some kind of competition. It doesn't really feel like it to me, it feels good to me. Everyone respects each other, everyone responds. Yes, there are some points, but I think it's easy and without problems.

Do these conflicts occur between certain departments, or are they just personal conflicts between people?

Personality conflicts are more likely than not.

And do teachers in general, so to speak, work in a group or a collaborative? Are there such moments when you are gathered into one and you work together?

If there is any order in the Estonian stage, for example, a program that I like lately, if there is in the Estonian stage, then the teachers will work together. If you need to do something in common, then the teachers will work together. But if you want to work together, I don't know, it's probably possible to do this, but it still depends on the teacher's motivation.

How does school work most of the time?

This year I was offered to work in the Estonian department, and I'm probably going to try to work together with other teachers if I have time. Of course, I would like to have such an experience working with other teachers, but at the moment, most likely, I work alone.

There's one problem in state schools when you work together, which is that many teachers actually want to try something new, something interesting, but the problem is that it all turns into paperwork, literally. Reports, reports, reports, and this kind of demotivates teachers, and because of this, many people don't really want to even work in a group. That's because additional works on papers, yes.

Then do you also have any obligations, so to speak, other than teaching?

I'm still the homeroom teacher, yes, 7th grade, and this is like the 3rd year already homeroom teacher, yes.

And what is your job?

Well, it is... Well, you know, it's like a flow manager. Every day you gather the children, you make sure to look at who is missing, who is there, parents call, ask why they are absent, that kind of thing. It's a little distracting, actually. I think, probably, in the future I won't have it, and home rule teachers will have their responsibilities, and we subject students will do only our own work.

How would you describe the relationship with the school administration?

Depends, yes. Well, I have a pretty good relationship with the teacher, which means that the administration loves me there, if you can say that at all. Well, yes, sometimes there are conflicts, yes, it happens. Well, it depends on the person, so I don't really think you need to focus here.

Do teachers and principals often listen to teachers' opinions?

You should probably try to give your opinion first. Only then will you understand whether they are listening to you or not. Because, as we usually have, say, a meeting, yes, you can express your opinion there or something else, any questions, but that I didn't see, and I wasn't a director myself, that's it, let's do it or let's do it. This is because, I don't know, maybe this is the approach of the educational system in general, but there is a top-down, literally an order, an order, an order. Well, I think it depends on the school, on the administration. You still need to try to understand.

All right, then, in your experience, have you ever suggested something to the school administration yourself?

No, no, there was no such thing.

Okay, okay, okay. Then what motivated you to become a teacher at all?

Have you told the full story? In fact, even when we were graduating from high school, yes, in those days teaching was not a very good profession, actually. And when they used to ask you who they were studying for, I didn't want to say that I was a teacher there, and I was going to be a teacher. There was something like that, I don't know, such an attitude towards teachers, but I think it was again because of some moments, because of the clean-up days, because of some rallies that the teachers were supposed to, well, there was no authority. But after this order, I think, something changed, and the RT was also raised, all

these points. And I myself, now, think the role of a teacher is more or less good, lower than in comparison with the past. Well, I probably wanted to become a teacher. In the second year, we were at school practice, it turns out that we were sitting like, we were just doing explosives for the classroom. And I noticed one student who was somehow ignored by everyone, the whole class, the teachers, that's something like that. And I notice, I notice, well, what can I do? I'm explosive, I just wanted to see what it's like. And after about three days, a week, or something like that, three to five days, I went up to the classroom, I said, you have absolutely one student there, he sits alone, always alone, no one answers him, the other children are literally laughing. And it struck me a little bit, because the teacher says that the children there are divided among themselves according to their socio-economic background, it turns out. Someone has a mom there, somewhere there is a great master, dad also works in such a great position, and so they shared it with each other, and this child, it turns out, his parents are not like that, not the same, in their opinion, of course. And so, let's say they didn't bully him, well, most likely, they bullied him after all, like some kind of separation, not a physical one. Yes, and it turns out, after that I thought, it's interesting, it needs to be changed. And that's all, after that, I already realized that I really want to become a teacher, not only just to teach, but also to educate in some way, not to educate, but because this is the future.

You wanted to change attitude towards children.

Yes, yes, yes.

Why did you decide to work at a public school?

So, first of all, it's a good experience, actually. And actually, in the very first year, when I... I was already sure that I was going to enroll here, but it said requirements 2 years of experience. I kind of thought it would take at least one year of work to get the documents tomorrow, the requirements to fit. And I was going to Almaty in general, but because of some, let's say, family problems, I stayed in my hometown and literally worked for a year. But it helped me a lot, because my parents are also teachers, and they, well, compared to other teachers my age, it's much more difficult for them because they don't understand a lot of things. And thanks to the fact that my parents are teachers, they guided me well, very well, made some comments like that or something else, and there was always support, all that. And because of that, I understood. And also, probably, from a young age... I was the daughter of parents, not a teacher, and from a young age I saw the whole internal process of all this. And that's why it was somehow easier for me. In the second year, it was already left because I wanted to see how my research would go. I wanted to do it in my region, so I wanted to see it, and I think I'll gain some experience now.

So, what expectations did you have from working at a public school? Did you expect anything before you started working there?

Honestly, I didn't expect anything. I didn't have any expectations, I just went through the first day and that was it. Nothing like salary. I do not know, I was somehow sure. Or it made so much difference that I didn't think. It didn't matter if it was a private school or not. Yes, children are always the same in all schools, regardless of whether they are private or public.

So, do you think the school culture influenced the adaptation process? Were there any aspects of culture that made it easier or more difficult for you to adapt?

As I said earlier, my parents were teachers, so I was adapting very well. Because, first of all, all my friends who are somehow connected, they all literally cried, called me and said, well, I have such a difficult situation, yes, yes, yes. I haven't had that before, this is one time. Secondly, I think it's for sure, although I'm not hiding the fact that my parents, these here, despite the fact that there are a lot of people here, they know each other, especially the teachers. Always the same. He doesn't mess with it for me. And that's probably why no one really scolded me. That probably had an impact, too. No one really pointed it out to me. They always helped, they always listened. And the teachers, and the directors, too. This also had an impact. I think if I didn't work there, in my own city, somewhere else, it doesn't matter where exactly. No one who knows me knows anyone. I don't know any teachers, principals, or anyone else either. Then the situation would be much, much more complicated, I think.

Did you work at the same school where your parents worked?

No, the other one. Well, acquaintances, I mean, they know each other by sight. You see one person here, and here's a familiar face. You know about the information, but to approach it like this. And that's a kick-ass, just like that. You know a person, but that's it, that's it.

And what difficulties did you face when you first came to your school?

I'll remember now. There were problems with documentation in the first place. Because, again, it's already about high education, because we honestly didn't teach there. There were also problems with how to teach. Here, for example, are some topics. I didn't have enough scientific content. And even now, I will say, I mean the difficulties, I will not hide it.

Have you ever asked your colleagues for help?

Yes, I did. I've been getting some tips, interests, and interesting applications. I tried it. Colleagues, in general, were helpful tips helpful? I wouldn't say that we got together like this in some kind of office, sitting. That's what happens. And the cat is there, let's say you're sitting in the staff room and you're thinking, I have such a problem, I have, let's say, it's hard to fix there. Inclusive. In the same place. Inclusive. Or here's a topic like this, let's say you don't read the text somehow, the Russian language. Somehow you read the text there, your children read the text, and they share their experiences there, and that's why you take something. My parents are at home, after all... Well, they both have other problems. But you can also take something and collect it, and watch it, and bring something the next day.

So was the mentoring program introduced initially?

Actually, it's a very interesting topic, a mentoring program. Because when I came, they told me that I would have a mentor. But avtosanta was told after some time... Well, what did they say? Although they probably said, let's say, that there would be no mentor, because they don't get paid any money. Some year it turns out that they paid money to mentors, and some year they didn't pay, it turns out. Also many... Here extrinsic motivation is money, okay? Why? Because if you're a mentor... It depends on the school, I

don't understand what's going on there, to be honest. Because some are led by a leader, a mentor or mentoring. And even if they don't have the money, they don't get paid, but they prepare some kind of folder. A full folder as big as they've been working on for a month, a whole year. What is it again? It's a paper thing again. They gave me the first year, then they removed the mentor, then they gave me back. I said I won't do any documentation, please do it yourself. I won't. In general, there was no such mentality at all. Did not have. There was probably some kind of report on the papers, but it wasn't.

Did that make you feel unprepared?

No, I won't tell you, I'm telling you.. I don't know, I wasn't really worried or anything, I just walked into the classroom and that's it, let's teach the lesson, actually, and that's it. And the kids seem to like it, but I don't know what the outcome was after that. Well, that's it.

How would you describe the leadership style at your school?

Something else is not so dictatorial, but just like that. Everyone does what the director says, everyone does what Weiss Principus says. Yes, some teachers can express their opinions, but we are not young specialists, of course. Well, probably teachers who already have experience, they can either say something. If it's like that, but you have to, or someone was scolding someone, there was something else, such, such, such situations did not happen.

And why sometimes new teachers couldn't say something to the principal?

I don't know, it's probably something like that, well, honestly, I haven't tried it, so I can't say anything. But I can assume that they can't accept you because you're young. That's it, it's all literal. You're a young specialist, what can you say, you don't even have any experience.

Can you say that the school administration did not take the young professionals seriously?

No, I can't say that either, because we have a director, and in general, the vice press specialists there suggested something, let's do it, like from the club or something else, they will absolutely support you, absolutely, there is nothing like that. Or something else like that, look, some kind of competition, something else. Everyone, absolutely everyone supports you. I'm not offering it all because I want to do it, but I just stupidly don't have enough time right now, literally, so I only do what they give me literally, just to get everything done.

And how did the school's management influence your work experience as an aspiring teacher? Was it a positive experience, did they give you something negative?

Well, I won't say that everything is positive, yes, there were moments, but basically, in general, everything was fine, everything is fine, if you do your job well, with high quality, then you won't have any such questions now.

Then about colleagues exactly. What is your personal relationship with your colleagues? Have they affected you in any way as positively or negatively?

If these are teachers a little older than me, yes, who already have more or less experience, then mostly they influenced well, because they have experience, because they can share any moment with you, if you ask something there, something I could not understand, this, they always help you, that's a bit of a good team. And if you take teachers from my age a little bit, older than me by 5 years, or younger than me in some way, then it's also good, then it's more of a friendly connection, most likely.

Who do you see yourself in the next 5 years? Do you see yourself as a teacher?

Honestly, I don't even think about it, but I see most likely, but I would only like to teach, only do teaching, and now I have been uploaded with a class manual, also with an additional document, reports, reports, reports, reports, although they don't take up much space, yes, there is no need to think much about in fact, you can take everything electronically at once, but, again, it takes a little time and energy too, and when you're tired, yes, you come in the evening, and there are so many documents that need to be done, you know, a little bit of negative emotions, or, again, The class guide, you can sort things out with children, you can somehow make some kind of agreement with him, but with parents it's much more difficult, because somehow, as a young specialist, you don't see the role of a teacher, you don't see yourself in the role of a classroom teacher, supervisors, so there are always some disadvantages, in fact actually, you can't answer your age, your age, because you don't care without experience, because you don't know how to behave sometimes, and that's why I often, let's not say, periodically had conflicts with my parents in my class, yes, then we found some kind of a common language, but I have a little bit of it left, and here are some negative emotions, most likely, and probably it is. If there are more such moments, yes, then, most likely, I will not behave in the role of a teacher, honestly. Would you like to change your place of work in that case, maybe? Well, I guess it can probably be done, because I like some of the designs.