

**Exploring Teachers' Perceptions of the Teacher Appraisal System and Its  
Influence on Teachers' Self-Efficacy and Wellbeing**

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in Educational Leadership

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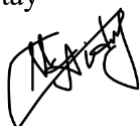
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## Ethical Approval



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Dear: Aidana Manggytay

This letter now confirms that your research project titled: "Exploring the Teachers' Perceptions of Teacher Appraisal System and Its Influence on Teachers' Self-Efficacy and Wellbeing" has been approved by the Graduate School of Education Ethics Committee of Nazarbayev University.

You may proceed with contacting your preferred research site and commencing your participant recruitment strategy.

Yours sincerely,

~~Dushon Shamatov~~

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## **Dedication**

To my lovely grandparents, Kuanyshbek Ongarbekov and Sulu Ongarbekova, for being a guiding light in my life. Your unconditional love, unwavering support, and wisdom have given me strength and shaped the person I am.

## Acknowledgments

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## Abstract

### **Exploring Teachers' Perceptions of the Teacher Appraisal System and Its Influence on Teachers' Self-Efficacy and Wellbeing**

This phenomenological case study explores how teachers perceive the teacher appraisal system and how it influences teachers' self-efficacy and wellbeing, guided by Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy and Seligman's (2011) PERMA model of wellbeing. Focusing on the lived experiences of educators within the context of one NIS school in Astana, the study seeks to understand how the perceived appraisal processes and components shape teachers' beliefs in their professional capabilities and impact their overall wellbeing.

The study uncovers a range of perspectives on the teacher appraisal system through semi-structured interviews with a purposeful sample of teachers and provides qualitative data that illuminates the interplay between appraisal purposes and components, school administrators' support, quality feedback that influence teachers' beliefs in their professional competence and wellbeing. Emerging themes highlight the importance of fairness, transparency, and equity in the system, the critical role of school administrators' support in reducing stress and enhancing motivation, the need for clarity of assessment criteria, and the quality of feedback received.

This study contributes to the discourse on educational policy and practice by highlighting the need for teacher appraisal systems that not only uphold professional standards but also enhance teacher self-efficacy and promote sustainable wellbeing.

*Key words: teacher appraisal system, teacher performance evaluation, teacher attestation, teacher self-efficacy, teacher wellbeing, teachers' perception*

## Аңдатпа

### **Мұғалімдердің мұғалімдерді бағалау жүйесі және оның мұғалімдердің өзіндік тиімділігі мен игілігіне әсері туралы көзқарастарын зерттеу**

Бұл феноменологиялық кейс-стади мұғалімдердің аттестаттау жүйесін қалай қабылдайтынын және оның олардың кәсіби өзіндік тиімділігі мен игілігіне қалай әсер ететінін зерттеуге бағытталған. Зерттеу Бандураның (1997) өзіндік тиімділік теориясы мен Селигманның (2011) PERMA игілігі моделіне негізделген. Астанадағы бір Назарбаев Зияткерлік мектебінің аясында педагогтердің өмірлік тәжірибесіне сүйене отырып, зерттеу мұғалімдердің қабылдауындағы аттестаттау үдерістері мен компоненттері олардың кәсіби қабілеттеріне деген сеніміне және жалпы игілігіне қалай ықпал ететінін түсінуді мақсат етеді.

Мақсатты іріктеме негізінде таңдалған мұғалімдермен жүргізілген жартылай құрылымдалған сұхбаттар аттестаттау жүйесіне қатысты әртүрлі көзқарастарды айқындап, аттестаттау мақсаттары мен компоненттері, мектеп әкімшілігінің қолдауы және сапалы кері байланыс арасындағы өзара байланысты ашатын сапалық деректерді ұсынады. Бұл факторлар мұғалімдердің кәсіби құзыреттілігіне деген сеніміне және олардың эмоционалдық және кәсіби игілігіне тікелей әсер етеді. Зерттеу барысында әділдік, ашықтық және теңдік қағидаттарының маңыздылығы, мектеп әкімшілігінің қолдауының стрессті азайту және мотивацияны арттырудағы шешуші рөлі, бағалау критерийлерінің анықтығы мен кері байланыстың сапасы сияқты негізгі тақырыптар анықталды.

Аталған зерттеу білім беру саясаты мен тәжірибесіне қатысты ғылыми дискурсты толықтыра отырып, мұғалімдердің кәсіби стандарттарға сәйкестігін қамтамасыз етумен қатар, олардың өзіндік тиімділігін нығайтып, тұрақты игілігін қолдауға бағытталған аттестаттау жүйелерін құру қажеттігін көрсетеді.

*Түйінді сөздер: мұғалімдерді аттестаттау жүйесі, мұғалімдердің қызметін бағалау, мұғалімдерді аттестаттау, мұғалімдердің өзіндік тиімділігі, мұғалімдердің игілігі, мұғалімдердің қабылдауы*

## Аннотация

### **Изучение восприятия учителями системы оценки их деятельности и ее влияния на самооффективность и благополучие учителей**

Это феноменологическое кейс-стади направлено на изучение того, как учителя воспринимают систему аттестации педагогов и как она влияет на их профессиональную самооффективность и благополучие. Исследование опирается на теорию самооффективности Бандуры (1997) и модель благополучия PERMA Селигмана (2011). Основываясь на жизненном опыте педагогов в контексте одной из школ НИШ в Астане, исследование стремится понять, как воспринимаемые процессы и компоненты аттестации формируют веру учителей в свои профессиональные способности и влияют на их общее благополучие.

Посредством полуструктурированных интервью с целенаправленно выбранной выборкой учителей исследование выявляет широкий спектр мнений о системе аттестации и предоставляет качественные данные, проливающие свет на взаимосвязь между целями и компонентами аттестации, поддержкой со стороны администрации школы, качеством обратной связи, которые влияют на убеждения учителей в собственной профессиональной компетентности и уровне благополучия. В ходе анализа были выделены ключевые темы, подчеркивающие важность справедливости, прозрачности и равенства в системе, решающую роль поддержки со стороны администрации школы в снижении уровня стресса и повышении мотивации, необходимость четкости критериев оценки и высокого качества обратной связи.

Данное исследование вносит вклад в дискуссию о политике и практике в сфере образования, подчеркивая необходимость систем оценки учителей, которые не только поддерживают профессиональные стандарты, но и способствуют укреплению самооффективности учителей и устойчивому благополучию.

*Ключевые слова: система оценки учителей, оценка эффективности работы учителей, аттестация учителей, эффективность учителей, благополучие учителей, восприятие учителей*

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

This thesis explores teachers' perceptions of the Teacher Appraisal System (TAS) and its influence on their self-efficacy and wellbeing in the context of one Nazarbayev Intellectual School (NIS) in Kazakhstan. The chapter begins by presenting the background and context of the study, followed by the research problem, the purpose, and the research questions. The final sections highlight the significance of the study and provide an outline of the thesis.

### **1.1 Background and Context**

#### ***1.1.1 Teacher Appraisal System and Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools***

A Teacher Appraisal System (TAS) is an essential mechanism for assessing and improving teacher competency, thereby influencing educational quality, as “quality teachers promote quality learning” (McKenzie, 2012, p. 15). Globally, countries employ diverse evaluation systems—often referred to as teacher performance appraisal, teacher effectiveness evaluation, or educator evaluation systems. In Kazakhstan, the TAS is commonly referred to as teacher attestation.

Kazakhstan inherited a centralized education system from the Soviet Union, and to this day, many aspects of teacher evaluation remain unified across the country. According to the OECD (2013), the practices and instruments involved in pedagogical attestation are critical areas of inquiry for Kazakhstan's educational research agenda.

Since gaining independence, Kazakhstan has undertaken numerous education reforms to strengthen human capital and align with global standards. One of the hallmark initiatives was the establishment of Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (NIS) in 2008 which is

an autonomous educational organization created to serve as experimental platforms for innovative pedagogy and curriculum, specifically for gifted students in grades 7 to 12 (Tajik et al., 2022).

There are currently 21 NIS schools across the country. As Shamshidinova et al. (2014) explain, NIS schools were tasked with two primary responsibilities: (1) implementing innovative, research-based practices while incorporating both international and Kazakhstani educational traditions, and (2) serving as hubs for disseminating these practices to mainstream schools. The NIS charter, under government resolution, explicitly mandates this role of scaling successful reforms (see MES RK, 2012). Thus, it is not merely incidental but a strategic mandate that NIS serves as a model and testing ground for educational innovations, including TAS.

The influence of NIS on the broader system is evident in several mainstream reforms, such as the implementation of an updated curriculum, criteria-based assessment, and teacher professional development programs. Given this influence, examining the appraisal system at NIS is critical, particularly as its practices continue to shape national education reforms.

The TAS at NIS is designed to promote continuous professional development and ultimately improve student learning outcomes (NIS, 2024). According to the system, teachers are required to undergo re-certification every five years, either to confirm their current category or apply for a higher one (Zhumukbayeva & Ablayeva, 2023). Teachers must demonstrate subject expertise and pedagogical competency (Ablayeva, 2022).

The appraisal process at NIS comprises three core components: (a) Portfolio preparation and internal evaluation by the school's attestation committee; (b) Submission of

a reflective report; and (c) Oral presentation and defense before the certification committee (NIS, 2025).

The attestation outcomes significantly impact teacher compensation. Higher qualification categories can lead to salary increases of 30–50%, whereas repeated unsuccessful attempts may result in demotion and salary reduction (Ablayeva, 2022).

### ***1.1.2 From NIS to Mainstream Schools***

TAS practices from NIS have gradually been adapted into mainstream schools. In 2018, the government adopted five qualification categories from the NIS model: teacher, teacher-moderator, teacher-expert, teacher-researcher, and teacher-master (OECD, 2020; Zharylkassyn, 2023). The sixth category, teacher-trainee, was introduced in 2022 for newly qualified graduates (MES, 2022). This staged adoption may have been due to the need for gradual implementation and institutional capacity building.

In mainstream schools, teacher-trainee is a probationary category designed to support novice teachers as they transition into professional practice. While specific responsibilities may vary, this role typically includes working under mentorship, developing teaching portfolios, and participating in induction programs. In NIS, early-career teachers follow a similar model, but often within more structured and research-informed environments.

Each higher category in the NIS framework reflects increased responsibility, pedagogical expertise, and research engagement:

- a) Teacher-moderator typically supports peer learning and implements innovative strategies;

- b) Teacher-expert designs and evaluates educational content;
- c) Teacher-researcher engages in action research;
- d) Teacher-master leads instructional innovations and mentors peers (NIS, 2020).

Although mainstream schools have adopted these titles, the tools and procedures used in their evaluations differ from those in NIS. For instance, NIS includes lesson study, action research, and reflective practice as core elements. Lesson study is a collaborative professional development approach where teachers jointly plan, observe, and refine actual classroom lessons. These components emphasize ongoing learning rather than one-time performance evaluations.

However, in December 2022, the Ministry of Enlightenment attempted to make these NIS components mandatory in mainstream schools' TAS. After resistance, possibly due to unfamiliarity, time constraints, or lack of support, the Ministry reversed this decision, declaring these elements optional (Committee for Preschool and Secondary Education, 2023). This reflects the challenge of transferring complex systems without proper contextual adaptation.

While the inclusion of mainstream developments offers important context, this thesis focuses exclusively on NIS teachers' experiences. Therefore, further elaboration on mainstream implementation is not central to the current research.

Despite reforms aiming to enhance professionalism, many mainstream teachers report TAS as unclear and burdensome (Abisheva et al., 2023). While these findings underscore the complexity of appraisal systems, this study's primary concern lies in

understanding the lived experiences of NIS teachers, who are at the forefront of educational innovation in Kazakhstan.

### ***1.1.3 The Relationship between TAS and Teachers' Self-Efficacy and Wellbeing***

Teachers are pivotal to student success, and their self-efficacy and wellbeing are vital for cultivating effective learning environments. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to perform tasks successfully (Bandura, 1997). Teachers with high self-efficacy are more likely to implement effective instructional practices and respond positively to challenges (Mojavezi & Tamiz, 2012; Palmisano, 2019).

Wellbeing, encompassing emotional, psychological, and professional fulfillment, has a direct impact on teachers' motivation and retention. One model often cited in wellbeing research is PERMA (Positive emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment), developed by Seligman (2011). Applying PERMA in schools has shown to enhance teachers' morale, job satisfaction, and instructional effectiveness (Turner & Theilking, 2019).

An effective TAS should therefore reinforce, not diminish teachers' confidence and professional satisfaction. However, appraisal systems that focus excessively on accountability can have the opposite effect, increasing stress and undermining motivation (Anderson et al., 2019; Kirichok, 2022). In contrast, Darling-Hammond (2015, as cited in Pak, 2020) argues that when TAS includes constructive feedback, reflection, and individualized support, it can be a powerful tool for improving teacher performance and wellbeing.

Given that NIS schools serve as experimental platforms for reform, understanding the relationship between TAS, self-efficacy, and wellbeing within this context is essential. If appraisal mechanisms fail to support teacher growth, it could compromise the goals of educational reform and negatively affect teacher retention and instructional quality.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Kazakhstan has made substantial progress in education through internationalization and legal reforms (Duman, 2024; Yakavets & Dzhadrina, 2014). The teacher appraisal system, formally introduced in 2000, has undergone numerous revisions, often creating ambiguity around expectations and procedures (OECD, 2020).

Abisheva et al. (2023) surveyed 8,721 Kazakhstani teachers, revealing dissatisfaction with current TAS practices: 48% held negative attitudes, and 79.3% called for procedural simplification and increased transparency. These findings emphasize the need for a system that is both effective and supportive of teachers' professional realities.

While much attention has been given to mainstream schools, there is limited understanding of how NIS teachers, who are often the first to implement policy reforms, perceive TAS. Their insights are critical for shaping future reforms and ensuring that appraisal systems enhance, rather than hinder, teacher development.

## **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this phenomenological case study is to explore the teachers' perceptions of Teacher Appraisal System (TAS) and its influence on teacher self-efficacy and wellbeing at NIS in Astana.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

1. What are NIS teachers' perceptions of the Teacher Appraisal System?
2. What are NIS teachers' perceptions of the influence of the Teacher Appraisal System on their self-efficacy?
3. What are NIS teachers' perceptions of the influence of the Teacher Appraisal System on their wellbeing?

#### **1.5 Significance of Study**

The findings of this study aim to contribute to the academic discourse by addressing a notable gap in the existing literature. While the topics of Teacher Appraisal Systems (TAS), teacher self-efficacy, and teacher wellbeing have been examined independently, there is a lack of research exploring the interconnectedness of these three dimensions, particularly within the unique context of Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (NIS).

First, this study seeks to bridge that gap by providing a deeper understanding of how NIS teachers perceive the impact of TAS on their sense of professional efficacy and wellbeing. This contribution is especially timely as Kazakhstan continues to reform its educational systems with NIS serving as a testing ground for broader national implementation.

Second, the study may serve as a platform for teacher voices that are often underrepresented in policy reform processes. In line with recent research advocating for teacher agency in shaping appraisal policies (Abisheva et al., 2023; Penkina et al., 2021; Zhumykbayeva & Ablayeva, 2023), this research takes a bottom-up approach by examining how teachers themselves experience and interpret TAS. The findings can inform

policymakers seeking to enhance the system's effectiveness and responsiveness to real classroom realities.

Third, the study has practical significance for NIS schools by offering feedback grounded in the lived experiences of their own teachers. Insights gained from this research may assist school leaders in refining appraisal practices to better support teacher development, satisfaction, and retention.

## **1.6 Outline of the Thesis**

This thesis is organized into six chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the study, outlining the background and context, problem statement, research purpose, research questions, significance, and thesis structure. Chapter 2 presents a review of relevant literature, focusing on theoretical and empirical research related to TAS, teacher self-efficacy, and wellbeing, and highlighting the connections between them. Chapter 3 discusses the research methodology, including the rationale for using a phenomenological case study design, data collection tools, participant selection criteria, ethical considerations, and researcher's positionality. Chapter 4 presents the findings from the data collected through interviews with NIS teachers and the results of the document analysis. Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the findings in relation to the existing literature, interpreting key themes and patterns. Chapter 6 concludes the study by summarizing the main findings, outlining implications for policy and practice, and offering recommendations for future research.

## **1.7 Summary**

This chapter established the foundation for the study by presenting the background and context of the Teacher Appraisal System within NIS schools in Kazakhstan. It outlined the research problem, articulated the purpose of the study, and introduced the main research questions. The chapter also justified the significance of the research, emphasizing its potential contributions to academic knowledge, policy reform, and institutional practice. Finally, it provided an overview of the thesis structure. The following chapter will critically examine the existing body of literature on teacher appraisal systems, self-efficacy, and wellbeing, and explore how these elements intersect in both global and Kazakhstani educational contexts.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **Introduction**

This chapter explores the existing body of literature on Teacher Appraisal Systems (TAS), with a specific focus on teachers' perceptions of TAS and its impact on their wellbeing and self-efficacy. Given that this study aims to investigate the lived experiences and perspectives of teachers at Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (NIS), the review synthesizes both conceptual and empirical literature to establish the theoretical foundation of the study. It introduces key constructs such as teacher self-efficacy and teacher wellbeing and discusses how these relate to TAS. Additionally, the chapter reviews the purposes of teacher evaluation, common assessment instruments, teachers' global perceptions of appraisal systems, and the study's theoretical framework, which is grounded in Bandura's self-efficacy theory and Seligman's PERMA model of wellbeing. The reviewed literature informs the study's conceptual framework and enhances understanding of how TAS can influence teachers both professionally and personally.

### **2.1 The Purposes of Teacher Appraisal Systems**

Teacher appraisal systems are considered powerful tools for enhancing educational quality, promoting professional growth, and ensuring teacher accountability. Typically, TAS serves two main purposes: formative and summative.

Formative assessment is developmental in nature, aimed at supporting teachers in improving their instructional practices through feedback, self-reflection, and goal-setting rather than judgment (Goe et al., 2008). This type of assessment often includes classroom observations, peer or supervisor reviews, and teacher self-evaluations. Darling-Hammond

(2013) emphasizes that formative assessment encourages lifelong learning by helping teachers recognize both their strengths and areas for growth, which can enhance their instructional methods. Danielson (2007) similarly views formative appraisal as a mentoring process that fosters professional dialogue and shared responsibility for student outcomes.

Summative assessment, on the other hand, is evaluative and often used to make high-stakes decisions, such as granting tenure, promotions, or contract renewals. Stronge (2010) notes that this type of appraisal typically includes administrators' evaluations, student achievement data, and performance goal outcomes. However, teachers often express concerns when TAS is overly focused on summative evaluation, which can lead to stress and feelings of being unfairly judged (Clipa, 2011). Critics argue that when contextual factors are not considered, summative evaluations risk being punitive and demotivating (Cochran-Smith et al., 2015; Kane et al., 2015; Marzano, 2012).

It is widely recognized that a balanced integration of both formative and summative components is necessary for a fair and effective evaluation system (Asamoah et al., 2024; OECD, 2013). Aligning formative feedback with summative standards promotes both teacher development and accountability. Kane et al. (2015) emphasize that feedback should serve a mentoring function, facilitating continuous improvement. This dual-purpose approach enables a more comprehensive evaluation of teacher performance and supports sustained professional growth.

## **2.2 Teachers' Perceptions of Teacher Appraisal Globally**

The literature reveals contrasting teacher attitudes toward TAS: systems perceived as supportive and growth-oriented are often viewed positively, while those seen as bureaucratic or punitive are met with resistance. Research consistently shows that fairness,

clarity, and developmental potential are key to positive teacher perceptions (Berhanu, 2024; Dal Corso et al., 2019; Mungasia et al., 2022; van Waeyenberg et al., 2022).

Berhanu's (2024) study in Ethiopian secondary schools found that when TAS was perceived as transparent and equitable, it positively influenced teacher motivation and performance. Similarly, van Waeyenberg et al. (2020) found that in Flemish schools, clearly communicated expectations from supervisors enhanced motivation and reduced burnout. Dal Corso et al. (2019) also reported a strong link between perceived fairness and teacher wellbeing, advocating for leadership training in communication and interpersonal skills to improve appraisal processes.

School leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping appraisal experiences. Sartain and Morris (2024) argue that positive school climate and instructional leadership are crucial for appraisal satisfaction. Rigsby and Butcher (2015) highlight the value of frequent, actionable feedback and open dialogue between appraisers and teachers. Clipa (2011) found that Romanian teachers favored external evaluators to minimize internal bias, but emphasized the importance of assessors being knowledgeable, objective, and able to offer practical feedback.

Studies also reveal that mismatches in perception between teachers and appraisers can undermine the effectiveness of TAS (Gibson, 2024; Pawson, 2019). In the UK, Pawson (2019) found that while administrators saw TAS as developmental, teachers largely perceived it as an accountability tool. Gibson (2024) similarly found a disconnect stemming from inconsistent feedback and vague processes. These findings underscore the importance

of clear communication and support mechanisms to ensure alignment between policy intentions and teachers' lived experiences.

Overall, the literature suggests that appraisal systems are more effective when they are transparent, participatory, and focused on development. When TAS lacks clarity and is perceived as punitive, it can hinder teacher morale and effectiveness.

### **2.3 Assessment Instruments Used for TAS**

Globally, TAS utilizes a range of instruments including classroom observations, standardized tests, portfolios, self-assessments, peer evaluations, and student and parent feedback (Borg, 2019; Ongal, 2023). In the NIS context, tools include lesson observations, student learning outcomes, portfolio development, and defense presentations. Each of these tools has distinct strengths and limitations.

Classroom Observations are a widely used tool that teachers often associate with professional growth (Fan, 2022; Marzano, 2012). However, studies indicate mixed perceptions. For example, Vietnamese teachers view observations as bureaucratic (Thi Man, 2024), while Kazakhstani NIS teachers express concern over dual-role appraisers and unclear evaluation criteria (Pak, 2020). Scholars recommend that observations be paired with student achievement data for a more balanced assessment (Abdulrazzaq, 2022; Kane et al., 2015).

Student Learning Outcomes are often contentious. While some early-career teachers see value in Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), others question their validity and worry about their negative effects on teaching quality and time (Fan, 2022; Zhao, 2017). Teachers

argue that overemphasis on standardized testing undermines the developmental intent of TAS (Elliott, 2015). A common recommendation is to incorporate multiple measures to ensure fairness and context sensitivity.

Teacher Portfolios provide a more holistic view of teacher performance by documenting accomplishments and reflecting on practice. Although portfolios are valued for their reflective potential (Danielson, 2007; Goe et al., 2008), they are also seen as burdensome and bureaucratic (Tucker et al., 2003; Zhang, 2009).

Reflective Reports are another valuable tool in teacher appraisal. While teachers recognize their potential for professional development (Gheith & Jaber, 2018; Orakci, 2021), many are hesitant due to vague expectations and insufficient feedback. In Kazakhstan, Zhumykbayeva and Ablayeva (2003) found that although NIS teachers acknowledged the benefits of reflective reports, they criticized the complexity of guidelines and unclear criteria.

These findings collectively highlight that for assessment instruments to be effective, they must be clear, fair, contextually appropriate, and supported by constructive feedback.

#### **2.4 The influence of TAS on Teacher Self-Efficacy and Wellbeing**

Recent research has increasingly focused on the effects of TAS on teacher self-efficacy and wellbeing. Jabeen et al. (2023) found that performance evaluations positively influence self-efficacy when they are supportive and improvement-focused. In contrast, judgmental or unfair appraisals diminish teachers' confidence and motivation.

The role of constructive feedback is critical. Palmisano (2019) demonstrated that respectful feedback during evaluations enhances teacher confidence, while overly critical feedback has the opposite effect. Smith et al. (2019) observed that the quality of feedback, rather than the structure of the appraisal itself, was most influential in boosting self-efficacy. Further studies link frequent and meaningful feedback to improvements in classroom management and instructional confidence (Krasniqi & Ismajili, 2022; Prado Tuma et al., 2018).

Teacher wellbeing is similarly impacted by appraisal systems. Positive perceptions of TAS are associated with feelings of pride, optimism, and job satisfaction (Sartain et al., 2024; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). In contrast, accountability-heavy systems can lead to stress, burnout, and even ethical concerns (Asamoah et al., 2024). Constructive feedback within TAS enhances professional motivation and helps foster a more positive school climate (Dreer, 2023). These findings underscore the importance of aligning TAS with practices that support both professional development and emotional wellbeing.

## **2.5 Key concepts**

It is essential to define key concepts in qualitative research because it shapes the methodology, influences how the data is interpreted and how the meaning is constructed.

### ***2.5.1 Concept of Teacher Self-Efficacy***

Much research has indicated the significance of teacher self-efficacy in teaching and learning (Rastegar & Moradi, 2016). Most definitions of teacher self-efficacy are constructed based on Bandura's cognitive theory of self-efficacy (Berg & Smith, 2016).

According to Bandura (1977, as cited in Seneviratne et al., 2019), self-efficacy is a future-oriented type of efficacy that is a belief in one's own capabilities to plan and carry out the actions necessary to manage future events. It implies that self-efficacy is an individual's opinion about their actions that lead to certain outcomes. Bandura argues that people who believe in their capabilities consider problems as possibilities to test their own abilities.

Regarding teacher self-efficacy, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) define it as teachers' perception of their own ability to bring about desired learning and engagement results in students, especially when students are unmotivated or have learning challenges. In other words, teacher self-efficacy can contribute to students' learning achievements. For example, Armor et al. (1976, as cited in Hussain and Khan, 2022) underline that teachers with high self-efficacy help students with educational difficulties.

Zee and Koomen (2016) write that many studies with different measures and definitions of teacher self-efficacy note that a teacher with a high level of teacher self-efficacy establishes the tone for a positive learning environment, plans engaging lessons that can improve students' abilities and skills, and handles misbehavior well. Consequently, in my study, the concept of teacher self-efficacy can be defined as a teacher's belief about their effective professional skills and abilities.

### ***2.5.2 Concept of Teacher Wellbeing***

The term "teacher wellbeing" is interpreted variously depending on what perspectives researchers have defined it from. Scholars tend to give a description of the term through the presence of positive indicators and the absence of negative indicators. For

example, Hakanen et al. (2006) explain teacher wellbeing through focusing on the absence of negative feelings such as burnout and stress. In contrast, according to Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017), teacher wellbeing can be characterized through job satisfaction and work engagement levels. However, focusing exclusively on positive or negative aspects may not provide a comprehensive holistic definition of the term, because all of them may contribute to overall perceived wellbeing. Moreover, Gallagher and Cartwright (2014) note that teacher wellbeing can be defined through cultural and contextual factors.

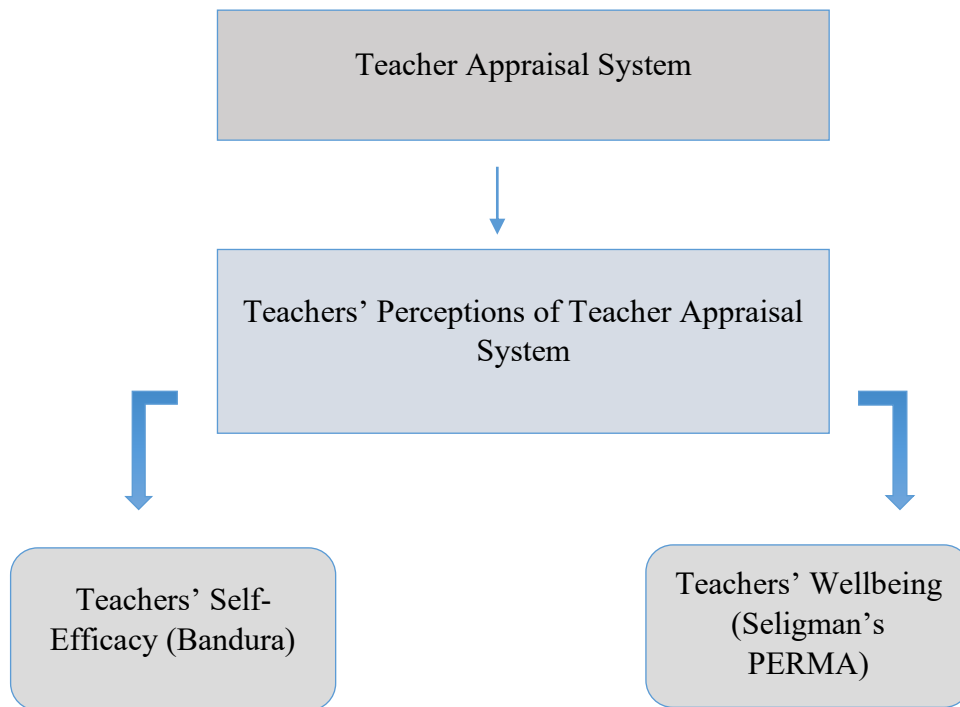
Therefore, the present research defines teacher well-being through the PERMA theory of wellbeing developed by Seligman (2011), which conceptualizes wellbeing in terms of five concepts. The first is positive emotions that involve teachers' positive emotional experience related to their job satisfaction, pride, and being recognised and valued which may influence teachers' future job performance. Moreover, experiencing enthusiasm and amusement in teaching plays an important role in reducing negative emotions such as stress and burnout (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). The second concept is engagement. According to Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017), when teachers are engaged in professional development and creating an accommodating classroom environment, they report higher levels of job satisfaction and happiness. The next concept is relationships. Fostering a strong sense of community, collaborative and supportive work environment among school members contributes to reducing overall teacher burnout and stress (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Teacher wellbeing can be enhanced when teachers see their job as meaningful and have a purpose in teaching. This was teachers can have a huge positive influence on students' present and further lives through education. Therefore, the fourth concept is meaning. And the final concept is accomplishment: teachers become more motivated, fulfilled, proud of

themselves when they achieve their professional goals and see positive student learning outcomes (Wang et al., 2018).

## **2.6 Conceptual Framework**

In this study, the phenomenon of Teacher Appraisal System and its influence on teachers' self-efficacy and wellbeing is underpinned by the concept of self-efficacy of Bandura's (1997) Social Cognitive Theory and Seligman's (2011) PERMA model of wellbeing. The first deals with how individual's beliefs in their abilities affect their motivation and performance while the second model offers a comprehensive view of wellbeing through positive emotions, engagement, relationship, meaning, and accomplishment. Together, these theories inform the interpretation of how teacher appraisal systems may impact teacher's beliefs about professional capabilities and personal wellbeing.

These theoretical perspectives are the basis for the conceptual framework of this study where the teacher appraisal system is a critical factor that influences two outcomes. The framework offers that teachers' subjective perspectives of the appraisal mediate its effects on self-efficacy and wellbeing. This framework shapes the development of the study's research questions, informs the methodological approach, and guides the interpretation of the collected data.

**Figure 1***Conceptual Framework of the Study***2.7 Summary**

This chapter was aimed at reviewing key literature related to the perceptions of teachers of the teacher appraisal system practiced in the NIS network and how these perceptions influence their self-efficacy and wellbeing. The literature review confirmed that Teacher Appraisal Systems are conducted for two primary purposes such as identifying areas for teachers' further professional growth (formative) and ensuring teachers' accountability (summative). However, research shows that these two purposes should be used together to complement each other for effective performance evaluation. Also, the review revealed that teachers perceive TAS positively when it is approached by transparency, fairness, support, and provision of actionable feedback during and after appraisal. It emerged from the review that positive perceptions of TAS enhance teachers' motivation to grow professionally,

improve job satisfaction, confidence, and engagement. In contrast, negative perceptions such as viewing the system as punitive or bureaucratic lead to stress, burnout, and reduced efficacy.

Moreover, this chapter presents the conceptual framework which is used to form research questions and methodological approach used to analyze the data collected. Through Bandura's social cognitive theory of self-efficacy, teacher self-efficacy was construed as the belief that one can influence student outcomes positively (Bandura, 1997). Wellbeing was further considered from a PERMA model which describes the emotional, cognitive, and relational aspects of teacher experience (Seligman, 2011). I evaluated commonly used appraisal instruments used in the NIS network such as classroom observations, portfolios, and reflective reports, in order to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. In the last section, the necessity of a balanced developmentally oriented evaluation practices was determined, and I presented what became the conceptual framework of the study that connects TAS with teacher self-efficacy and wellbeing.

## **Chapter 3. Methodology**

### **Introduction**

This chapter outlines the rationale for the methodological choices made to explore the phenomenon of the Teacher Appraisal System (TAS) and its influence on teachers' self-efficacy and wellbeing, as perceived by teachers at one Nazarbayev Intellectual School (NIS) in Astana. The chapter is organized into nine sections. The first section presents and justifies the research design, which follows with the information on the selection of the research site and sampling strategy in sections two and three, respectively. The fourth section details the data collection tools employed in the study. The fifth and sixth sections describe the procedures for data collection and analysis, along with an explanation of how the study's trustworthiness was ensured. The seventh section addresses ethical considerations, as well as potential risks and benefits for participants. The eighth section offers the researcher's statement of positionality. The chapter concludes with a summary of the methodological approach.

### **3.1 Research Design**

This study employed a qualitative research design. Qualitative research involves exploring how individuals or groups interpret, experience, or make sense of a particular phenomenon, condition, or sequence of events (Agee, 2009). It is particularly suited for inquiries that aim to uncover participants' perceptions, beliefs, and lived experiences. Therefore, this approach was most appropriate for the current study, which seeks to explore teachers' perceptions of the Teacher Appraisal System (TAS) and its influence on their self-efficacy and wellbeing.

Within the qualitative tradition, this research adopted a phenomenological case study design. The study represents a case of how the TAS is understood and experienced by teachers at one Nazarbayev Intellectual School (NIS) in Astana, particularly in terms of its impact on their self-efficacy and wellbeing.

A phenomenological case study design was selected as the most fitting approach. Phenomenology allows researchers to describe the shared meaning of a phenomenon as experienced by several individuals (Creswell & Poth, 2018), while a case study facilitates a deep and contextualized exploration of these lived experiences using multiple sources of data, such as interviews, observations, documents, and audiovisual materials (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Furthermore, case study design enables a comprehensive and detailed analysis of a specific case (Punch, 1998). Together, these approaches provided the methodological foundation for gaining in-depth insight into NIS teachers' subjective experiences and interpretations of the TAS and its perceived impact on their professional and personal wellbeing.

### **3.2 Site Selection**

One NIS school located in Astana was purposefully selected as the research site. This particular school, established in the early 2010s as part of the "20 Intellectual Schools of the First President" initiative, was designed to serve as a pilot site for testing and introducing innovative educational practices (Shamshidinova et al, 2014). The school has since played a significant role in developing and disseminating these practices throughout the national education system. It is known for its strong emphasis on research, advanced subject teaching, and the integration of both international and national curricula.

Given its central role in the NIS network and its history of innovation, this school provided a rich context for exploring teachers' perspectives on TAS. Many of the network-wide changes in the appraisal system may have originated or been piloted at this school, making it an ideal site for capturing firsthand experiences of such reforms and their influence on teachers' self-efficacy and wellbeing.

### **3.3 Sample Selection**

The study included only teachers from the selected NIS school. Purposeful sampling was used to identify participants who could provide rich and relevant data on the central phenomenon of the study (Creswell, 2014). Specifically, homogeneous sampling, a type of purposeful sampling, was employed to select participants who share similar characteristics—namely, being teachers within the same institution and having direct experience with the TAS (Creswell & Creswell, 2012).

A total of six participants were selected for this study. A small sample size is appropriate in qualitative research, especially when using semi-structured interviews, as these require considerable time and effort in both data collection and analysis (Newcomer et al., 2015). Creswell (2014) also emphasizes that a smaller sample allows for deeper engagement with participants and richer, more nuanced data. This number was deemed sufficient to allow for meaningful thematic analysis while ensuring feasibility and depth.

The criteria for participant selection were as follows: (a) Currently employed as a teacher at the selected NIS school in Astana; (b) Having worked in the NIS network for at least the past five years; (c) Having undergone TAS within the NIS network during the last five years; and (d) Willingness to voluntarily participate in the study.

## Participants profiles

According to the criteria outlined above, six teachers from NIS were selected for this study. Table 1 provides details about the study participants, with pseudonyms assigned to each of the six individuals to ensure confidentiality.

**Table 1**

*Information about Study Participants*

<b>№</b>	<b>Names (pseudonyms)</b>	<b>Gender (Male   Female)</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Overall work experience in the network of NIS</b>	<b>Last time they went through TAS</b>
1	Omar	M	Chemistry	7	2023
2	Sulu	F	English	13	2024
3	Zhanat	F	Biology	8	2021
4	Aigul	F	Economics and Global Perspectives and Project Works (previously, English)	5	2022
5	Karima	F	Chemistry	6	2023
6	Assem	F	English	6	2022

Omar is a chemistry teacher who has been working at the NIS school for 7 years. He began his career as a teacher-trainee in 2018. In autumn 2020, changes were introduced to the qualification requirements for pedagogical categories. These changes allowed teachers with a master's degree and an IELTS certificate to automatically obtain the "teacher" category without undergoing the TAS process. Although Omar held a master's degree, due to the COVID-19 quarantine, he was only able to take the IELTS in 2021. Subsequently, he obtained the "teacher" category. In the 2021–2022 academic year, Omar applied for the

teacher appraisal but was unsuccessful. In the following year (2022–2023), with a new school administration in place, he reapplied and successfully obtained the category of “teacher-moderator.” He currently holds this category.

Sulu is an English teacher and head of the English department, holding a middle management position. She has been part of the NIS network for 13 years and currently holds the category of “teacher-expert.” Her appraisal history includes an unsuccessful attempt for the “teacher-moderator” category in 2018, followed by successful applications in 2021 (teacher-moderator) and in 2023 (teacher-expert).

Ailyn is a biology teacher with 8 years of experience at NIS. She holds the “teacher-moderator” category and has successfully passed the appraisal process twice, with her most recent certification in 2022.

Aigul teaches economics, global perspectives and project work. She holds the “teacher-moderator” category and has 13 years of experience in education, though with some interruptions. Her career includes work in mainstream and private schools, a master's degree program, and 5 years at NIS. In 2022, she applied for early attestation and was successfully certified.

Karima is a chemistry teacher with 6 years of experience at NIS. She holds the “teacher-moderator” category, having passed two rounds of certification: first for “teacher” and later for “teacher-moderator.” Her most recent appraisal was in 2023, with successful certification in 2024.

Assem is an English teacher who began working at the school in 2019 after graduating from university. She initially held the status of teacher-trainee. In 2022, she

unsuccessfully applied for the “teacher-moderator” category. However, after completing her master’s program in the same year, she automatically obtained the “teacher” category. Currently, she is undergoing the TAS process again for the “teacher-moderator” category.

### **3.4 Data Collection Tools**

#### ***3.4.1 Interviews***

The primary data collection tool was a semi-structured one-on-one interview, which is designed to explore participants' subjective experiences of a phenomenon they have encountered (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). According to Cohen et al. (2018), semi-structured interviews are flexible: while they follow a pre-determined format of open-ended questions, they also allow for reordering, elaboration, or addition of new content during the interview, thereby enabling a more complete understanding of the topic.

Face-to-face interviews also allow for the observation of non-verbal cues such as facial expressions, body language, which can enhance mutual understanding and add depth to the data collected (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2010). This type of interaction contributes to a richer interpretation of participants' responses.

Interview questions were designed to explore both the structure and perceived impact of the TAS on teachers’ self-efficacy and wellbeing. The questions were pilot tested with two teachers who met the sampling criteria but were not part of the main study. Minor revisions were made for clarity.

All interviews were conducted in Russian or Kazakh, depending on participants’ preferences. Each interview lasted between 50 to 70 minutes. In total, six interviews were conducted with six participants. The interview protocol included three sections: 1) 4

questions that provided information about teachers' background experience with the attestation; 2) 12 questions that helped me understand how teachers perceive the Teacher Appraisal system in the network of NIS; 2) 14 questions that were focused on the teachers' perception of the influence of TAS on their self-efficacy and wellbeing. Sample interview questions: 1) What are the main purposes of the attestation in your organization? 2) How clear and transparent is the evaluation process? 3) What components of the attestation are the most useful for professional development? 4) What components of the attestation are the most challenging? (See Appendix D for the full interview protocol)

### ***3.4.2 Document Analysis***

Document analysis was employed to gain contextual understanding and corroborate interview findings. As Bowen (2009) notes, documents, produced independently of the research process, can help reduce bias and enhance the credibility of the study. Specifically, the "Qualification Requirements for Teachers' Professional Categories" and "Rules of Teacher Attestation" documents were analyzed. These policy documents outline the required years of experience, language proficiency benchmarks (e.g., KazTest, IELTS), and professional competencies expected of teachers. Cross-referencing this document with interview data helped identify consistencies and gaps between formal requirements and teachers' lived experiences with TAS.

### **3.5 Data Collection Procedures**

Following ethical approval, I sent an informational letter to the school principal requesting permission to conduct research. This letter outlined the study's purpose, design, participants' rights, and any associated risks or benefits. I also met with a designated gatekeeper at the school to discuss confidentiality and anonymity protocols. The gatekeeper

then disseminated a recruitment letter to all teachers via internal communication channels (see Appendix C).

Once interested participants contacted me, I held individual meetings to explain the study's aims, clarify their roles, and address any concerns about confidentiality and voluntary participation. Teachers were then provided with informed consent forms in their preferred language (Kazakh, Russian, or English). These forms were signed in duplicate, one copy for the participant and one for the researcher.

Participants were asked to choose a convenient time, location, and language for their interviews (Kazakh, Russian or English). Interviews were scheduled accordingly. Prior to starting each session, participants were reminded of their rights, including the right to withdraw from the study at any time. I also requested for the interviews to be audio-recorded, as stated in the consent form.

Participants were selected using purposeful sampling, specifically homogeneous sampling, which involves choosing individuals who share key characteristics relevant to the research focus. In this study, participants were selected according to the following criteria: (a) Were currently employed as teachers at the same NIS school; (b) Had at least five years of experience within the NIS network; (c) Had undergone the TAS process at least once; and (d) Voluntarily agreed to participate. This sampling method was appropriate to ensure the participants had relevant, comparable experiences with the TAS.

Before conducting the main interviews, the interview questions were piloted with two individuals who met the sampling criteria but were not part of the final participant group. This piloting process ensured that the questions were clear, understandable, and

appropriately aligned with the study's objectives. Based on the pilot results, minor adjustments were made to improve clarity and flow.

The interviews were conducted primarily in Russian and Kazakh, depending on each participant's language preference. The data collection took place between November 2024 and January 2025. All procedures followed the ethical guidelines of the Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Education, ensuring informed consent, confidentiality, and participants' right to withdraw at any time.

### **3.6 Data Analysis Procedures**

This section outlines how the interview data were analyzed and presents the results of document analysis. To gain a deep understanding of the participants' lived experiences of the Teacher Appraisal System (TAS) and its influence on their self-efficacy and wellbeing, I employed Moustakas's (1994) phenomenological approach, which emphasizes systematic reflection and reduction. The case study framework complemented this by allowing an in-depth exploration of these experiences within a single institutional context.

Moustakas's (1994) phenomenological method involves several key steps: *epoche* (bracketing personal assumptions), *horizontalization* (identifying significant statements), followed by *textural and structural descriptions*, and culminating in the synthesis of meaning and essence of the phenomenon. In addition, I used Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory and Seligman's (2011) PERMA model of wellbeing to guide the analysis of the second and third research questions. These theoretical lenses helped structure the deductive coding process by offering specific constructs through which to interpret participants' responses. For example, I examined responses related to self-efficacy under constructs such as mastery experiences, verbal persuasion, vicarious experiences, and

emotional states, as outlined by Bandura. Similarly, I categorized wellbeing through the five PERMA dimensions: Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment, identifying how TAS affected these aspects in participants' professional lives.

To begin the analysis, I first engaged in *epoche* by writing a researcher's reflexivity statement, in which I outlined my own experiences and assumptions related to TAS. This step allowed me to approach the data with openness and reduced the influence of personal bias (Creswell, 2013). Next, I transcribed each interview verbatim and stored the transcripts along with relevant policy documents in a secured folder on my laptop. All participants were assigned pseudonyms, and identifying information was removed to ensure confidentiality.

I used the open-source qualitative analysis tool Taguette.org to facilitate the coding process. Initial coding began with *horizontalization*, where I highlighted statements that directly responded to the research questions. For the first research question, I used inductive coding to allow themes to emerge organically from the data. For the second and third research questions, which explored the influence of TAS on self-efficacy and wellbeing, I applied deductive coding based on the theoretical constructs of Bandura and Seligman. This combination of inductive and deductive approaches ensured both openness to participants' voices and alignment with established theory.

Initially, I named codes using participants' own words (*in vivo* coding) to stay close to their perspectives. Later, I developed broader themes using mind mapping and concepts from relevant literature. I created textural descriptions by inserting direct quotes that described *what* participants experienced with regard to TAS. Then, I constructed structural

descriptions to explain *how* those experiences occurred within the specific school context, considering factors such as leadership changes, policy shifts, and institutional culture.

The final step involved synthesizing these descriptions into overarching themes that captured the essence of participants' lived experiences. To enhance credibility, I employed member-checking, where participants reviewed the accuracy of their interview transcripts and the preliminary themes to confirm that their views had been accurately represented (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Additionally, document analysis of the TAS policy and qualification requirements helped me compare the formal expectations with the practical experiences shared by teachers. This triangulation strengthened the trustworthiness of the findings by revealing consistencies and discrepancies between policy and practice (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016)

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

Before contacting schools for gaining access and initiating data collection, I completed the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) training program on research ethics and obtained my CITI certificate in June 2024. This training helped ensure that I was aware of ethical principles regarding informed consent, confidentiality, participant wellbeing, and data protection.

In accordance with the ethical standards of Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Education (NUGSE), I submitted a formal application to the NUGSE Research Ethics Committee to obtain approval for my study because the research was conducted as part of my graduate program and had to comply with institutional ethical requirements. This process included the submission of detailed information about the study's aims, procedures,

potential risks and benefits, and how ethical issues such as voluntary participation, confidentiality, and data security would be addressed. I got ethics approval in October of 2024.

Once ethical approval was granted, I contacted the school principal of one NIS school in Astana and requested permission to conduct the study at the school. An official letter describing the research purpose, procedures, and ethical safeguards was sent to the principal, who granted permission for the study to be conducted. This initial step ensured institutional support and access to potential participants.

To recruit participants, a gatekeeper from the school assigned in agreement with the principal distributed an informational recruitment letter to all teachers at the school via internal communication channels. This letter included my contact information and invited teachers who met the inclusion criteria to reach out voluntarily if they were interested in participating.

Once potential participants expressed interest, I met with each of them individually to explain the purpose of the study, the nature of their involvement, potential risks and benefits, and their rights as research participants. All participants were informed that participation was entirely voluntary, they could skip any questions they did not wish to answer, and they could withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences.

Before participating, each teacher signed an informed consent form, provided in their preferred language (Kazakh, Russian, or English). The informed consent form clearly outlined: the aim and objectives of the study; the voluntary nature of participation; their right

to withdraw at any point; how their information would be stored and protected; the use of pseudonyms in all written reports; and how confidentiality would be maintained (See Appendix B).

Although complete anonymity is challenging in qualitative research, I used de-identifiers to protect participant identities. Personal details such as names, the specific name of the school, or its precise location were not included in the thesis. Only general demographic information such as participants' gender, subject taught, years of experience, and professional category was recorded. Each participant was assigned a pseudonym (Omar, Zhanat, Aigul, Karima, Sulu, and Assem) to ensure their anonymity.

To maintain data confidentiality, all interview transcripts and related documents were stored in a password-protected folder on my personal, encrypted laptop, which only I had access to. Consent forms were stored separately in a locked location. In accordance with ethical research practices (BERA, 2018), all data will be securely stored for three years following the completion of the study and then permanently deleted.

While this study involved no more than minimal risk, it did place some demands on participants' personal time. To mitigate inconvenience, interviews were scheduled at times and in locations most convenient for participants. Additionally, participants were reminded throughout the process that they could choose not to respond to any questions they found uncomfortable.

The study also offered potential benefits to participants. By reflecting on their experiences with the TAS, participants had the opportunity to gain new insights into how the appraisal system affects their teaching efficacy and personal wellbeing. This reflective

process may promote professional growth and self-awareness (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Furthermore, to acknowledge their valuable contribution, a small token of appreciation, a notebook and pen, was given to each participant after the interview. These tokens were distributed in a way that preserved participants' anonymity.

### **3.8 Researcher's Statement of Positionality**

I, Aidana Manggytay, am the author of this thesis, acknowledge and articulate my positionality as a researcher. I recognise the importance of reflexivity in qualitative research and am committed to transparency regarding my own subjectivities and experiences that may shape this study.

My personal experiences, both within and outside the academic realm, have played a role in developing my research interests. My research topic "Exploring the Teacher's Perceptions of the Teacher Appraisal System and Its Influence on Teachers' Self-efficacy and Wellbeing" emerged from my own experience.

I have been shaped by professional development programs that the Autonomous Educational Organization "Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools" offers. As I worked in the NIS network as a teacher, I have many colleagues who have shared their viewpoint on the issue under investigation. I am aware that this may lead to biased assumptions about the outcomes of the current research, and I will make explicit efforts to address these throughout the research process.

Personally, I could not pass the attestation successfully at NIS in 2022. This makes me have an insider perspective which may hinder a researcher seeing a bigger picture (Mercer, 2007, as cited in Darwin Holmes, 2020, p. 6). I acknowledge that it may influence the way I perceive and interpret the teachers' perspectives on the TAS and its influence on teachers' self-efficacy and wellbeing.

In this study, I adopt a constructivist (interpretivist) paradigm because I acknowledge that the way researchers interpret the meaning depends on their own background (Creswell & Poth, 2018). My ontological stance acknowledges that the reality of TAS is constructed by NIS teachers' different experiences and “there is no objective reality” (Krauss, 2005, p.760). Epistemologically, I aim to uncover subjective meanings that NIS teachers attribute to their experience (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 24).

As the researcher, I acknowledge that I am not a neutral observer. My position as a teacher, my philosophical position as a constructivist, and my prior experiences in NIS inevitably impact the framing of research questions, data collection strategies, and the interpretation of findings.

In conclusion, this statement of positionality serves as a declaration of transparency and self-awareness. By recognizing and addressing my positionality, I aim to contribute to the credibility and rigor of this research.

### **3.9 Summary**

This chapter presented the methodology used to explore the phenomenon of the Teacher Appraisal System (TAS) and its impact on teachers' self-efficacy and wellbeing in one NIS school in Astana. The research design and rationale were discussed, including the choice of a phenomenological case study approach. The site selection, sampling strategy, data collection tools (semi-structured interviews and document analysis), and data analysis procedures were also explained. Finally, this chapter outlined how ethical considerations, risks, and benefits were addressed to ensure the integrity of the research. In the following chapter, I present and discuss the findings of the study.

## Chapter 4: Findings

### Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study. Drawing on the data collected through individual interviews with six teachers from a Nazarbayev Intellectual School in Astana, the findings are organized according to four key themes that emerged from the analysis: (a) the perceived purposes of the Teacher Appraisal System (TAS); (b) teachers' perceptions of TAS; (c) the instruments used within the TAS framework; and (d) the influence of TAS on teachers' self-efficacy and wellbeing. Moreover, the results of the document analysis are presented in this chapter.

### 4.1 The Purposes of Teacher Appraisal System

The participants in this study recognized attestation as a significant process; however, their reasons for engaging in the Teacher Appraisal System (TAS) varied. Based on their responses, four primary motives for TAS emerged: (1) reinforcement of professional development, (2) assessment of teachers' qualifications, (3) formality, and (4) salary increase. While the first two purposes were generally perceived as the objectives of the organization, the third and fourth were identified as teacher-driven motivations.

Several participants viewed TAS as a mechanism for supporting professional growth. Karima, a chemistry teacher with six years of experience, remarked:

In general, this is a very important process both for the teacher and for the organization in which the teacher works. It allows an objective assessment of the teacher's professional growth. On the other hand, it motivates the teacher to develop.

Omar, another chemistry teacher, echoed this sentiment, stating: "The main goals of certification are to improve the qualifications of teachers, evaluate their performance, and improve financial conditions."

An important finding was the perception that the organization's aim is to assess teachers' performance and provide opportunities for horizontal promotion through TAS, especially given the limited availability of leadership roles. Vertical advancement was seen as less attainable due to the small number of managerial positions. As Sulu, an English teacher with thirteen years of experience in the NIS network, noted: "There are more than 200 teachers in the school and only 5 positions in top management."

She emphasized that TAS serves as a form of horizontal career progression, offering teachers a sense of advancement without requiring them to move into administrative roles. She explained: "Teacher attestation is necessary as it gives teachers the opportunity to grow, but not in a vertical direction. That's what we call it: horizontal growth. That is, you grow horizontally." Sulu's perspective highlights the value placed on the development of expertise and the enhancement of knowledge and skills within the same professional role.

#### ***4.1.1 TAS as a Tool for Professional Growth***

All six participants emphasized the role of teacher attestation (TAS) in enhancing professional growth and qualifications. They viewed attestation as a meaningful challenge that motivates teachers to develop professionally and improve their teaching practices. For instance, Omar, a chemistry teacher, described TAS as a powerful mechanism for upgrading his qualifications, skills, and overall competencies. He believes that attestation pushes teachers beyond merely delivering content, encouraging them to continually refine their

teaching methodologies. According to him, without the stimulus provided by attestation, teachers risk stagnating in their practice. Omar explained:

Attestation contributes to the comprehensive development of teachers. If you do not apply for attestation, then you will simply be a lesson giver (*urokodatel*). And when you successfully pass attestation, then you want to move forward—motivation to do something else appears, new ideas appear.

Omar's reflection suggests that a teacher who does not engage with TAS might limit themselves to basic instructional delivery, whereas successful attestation can ignite a desire to innovate, pursue further qualifications, and grow within the profession. It becomes a source of confidence, encouraging teachers to explore new pedagogical strategies and invest in continued learning.

Similarly, Sulu, an English language teacher with extensive experience in the NIS network, highlighted how TAS provides structure for her professional growth. She noted that the attestation process helps by establishing specific goals and timeframes, which supports her productivity and focus: "I need specific goals, specific dates, some time limit in which I must do a certain amount of work in order to achieve some results." Sulu's comment underscores the importance of goal-setting in the TAS process. From her perspective, the clear expectations and deadlines serve as catalysts for sustained professional engagement and achievement.

Together, these perspectives illustrate how TAS is perceived not merely as an evaluative procedure, but as an opportunity for meaningful growth, reflection, and motivation in teachers' professional journeys.

#### *4.1.2 TAS as Formality*

While all participants acknowledged the formal importance of teacher attestation (TAS), several of them viewed it primarily as a procedural requirement rather than a genuine driver of their professional development. These participants reported being intrinsically motivated and committed to personal and professional growth, regardless of whether they were undergoing attestation. Aylin, a biology teacher with a teacher-moderator category, expressed this sentiment clearly: "I do not do it for the sake of attestation. I work for myself, for my students, for my happiness. And after that, it flows into my portfolio."

This statement suggests that, for some teachers, TAS is a process that formalizes and documents achievements they have already pursued independently. Similarly, Aigul, an economics teacher with diverse teaching experience, noted: "There are teachers who develop themselves, take courses, work with colleagues, and participate in projects. They don't need any attestation; they already have results."

These views highlight that for intrinsically motivated teachers, attestation serves more as a bureaucratic step to recognize the work they are already doing, rather than a catalyst for improvement.

However, other participants acknowledged that while TAS may feel formal for highly motivated teachers, it plays a valuable role in encouraging development among those who may not take initiative otherwise. For example, Assem, an English teacher, remarked:

When you go through attestation, you always check what you did against the requirements of attestation. So, teachers try their best to match them. Even those who usually do not do an extra job. They get out of their comfort zone.

This perspective suggests that TAS can serve as an external motivator, prompting teachers to reflect on their practice and stretch beyond their usual routines to meet professional standards.

Sulu, a department head, added a more strategic interpretation. She referred to TAS as: “An opportunity to manipulate people in a certain way, so that they do certain things that we need, as a department, as a school, as she/he needs for her/himself.” She emphasized that the criteria within TAS frameworks are designed to align teacher behavior with school-wide objectives. For example, teachers are expected to support student success in academic competitions or scientific projects as part of the attestation criteria. As she noted, this encourages teachers to improve the quality of student learning outcomes as part of their own advancement: “TAS makes teachers work better with students because in order to obtain a higher category, there are certain criteria which compel teachers to teach students, so their students take places in the Olympiad or scientific project contests.”

In summary, while TAS may be perceived as a formal procedure by some, it simultaneously acts as a mechanism for accountability and strategic alignment, especially for motivating teachers who may not otherwise prioritize professional development or student achievement.

#### ***4.1.3 Assessment of Teachers' Qualification***

Several participants emphasized that one of the core purposes of the Teacher Attestation System (TAS) is the formal evaluation of teachers' qualifications and competencies. In their view, the attestation process serves as a mechanism for the school to assess how much a teacher has developed professionally and whether their qualifications

justify salary increases. This links TAS not only to teacher development but also to institutional accountability regarding financial compensation.

Aigul reflected on the evaluative nature of attestation, stating: “The main goal is to understand how much a person has grown in his/her area, because this is also about increasing salary of teachers. It is kind of a test before you get promoted.” This implies that attestation acts as a gatekeeping process, validating professional progress and determining eligibility for promotion and financial benefits.

Participants also highlighted the consequences of not meeting attestation standards. According to school policy, if a teacher fails attestation twice consecutively, their professional category can be downgraded, leading to a reduction in salary. This possibility places additional pressure on teachers to perform successfully in the TAS process. Karima explained: “If you fail the mandatory attestation once, you remain at the same level that you have. If you fail the next time, your level is reduced to the previous one. Your salary is also reduced.” This comment reflects a concern that TAS is not only a tool for recognition but also a high-stakes assessment mechanism. It introduces a layer of financial insecurity, especially for teachers who rely on salary increments to support their livelihood.

Thus, while TAS is intended to promote professional growth, it simultaneously functions as a formal appraisal to ensure that salaries are aligned with competence and performance levels.

#### ***4.1.4 Salary Increase***

All participants acknowledged the financial dimension of teacher attestation, noting that a significant motivation for applying for a higher category is the associated salary

increase. Although TAS is framed by the organization as a means for professional growth, many participants indicated that financial incentives are a major — and sometimes the primary — motivating factor for teachers. Omar provided a striking example of this when he prioritized preparing for TAS over accepting a prestigious six-month internship in the United States through the Bolashak program: “The difference between salaries of a teacher and teacher-moderator is approximately 95,000 tenge, and America will not run away — it can wait. I would rather improve my financial conditions, my financial level.” This decision underlines how financial stability or gain can outweigh even significant professional opportunities.

Other participants similarly acknowledged the financial motivation behind applying for TAS. Aylin commented: “The main goals, well, to be honest, are the salary. Because the work you do, you will do.” Her point suggests that while teaching duties remain constant, attestation allows for financial rewards without necessarily increasing workload. Omar echoed this sentiment: “You work the same way as you worked, but you will start to earn more.”

Assem also linked her motivation to financial needs, particularly in the context of losing her student stipend: “I wanted to increase my salary and risked applying for early attestation. My goal was to considerably increase my finances because that year I would graduate from the master's programme and stop receiving monthly stipends.”

Sulu, who occupies a middle-management role, affirmed this general perception by stating that teachers often undergo TAS with the primary goal of increasing their salary.

Despite the institutional goal of fostering internal motivation for professional growth, participants' responses reveal that the salary increment remains a decisive and practical consideration. This aligns with existing literature suggesting that extrinsic motivators such as salary can significantly influence participation in professional development programs (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Firestone, 2014).

In summary, the salary implications of TAS play a substantial role in motivating teachers to engage in the process. While professional growth is acknowledged as important, financial incentives appear to be a critical factor in teachers' decisions to apply for attestation.

## **4.2 Teachers' Perceptions of Teacher Appraisal**

### ***4.2.1 The Critical Role of School Administrators***

Participants consistently emphasized the crucial role of school administrators in shaping their attestation experiences. Given recent changes in school leadership, participants drew comparisons between past and present administrators, highlighting that the new leadership provided significantly more guidance and support. This support, they explained, contributed to lower stress levels and a greater sense of confidence during the TAS process.

All six participants noted that the current administrators were more proactive in offering personalized assistance, with Assem explaining that they "helped every candidate develop their personal trajectory of improvement." In contrast, she recalled her first attestation attempt as frustrating due to a lack of clarity and minimal support. Although all necessary documents were made available via email, the absence of structured explanations left her feeling overwhelmed. Assem noted that she was not even aware that a designated

vice-principal was meant to guide candidates through attestation, a fact she only discovered once the new administration took office.

Sulu echoed these sentiments, saying that the previous school leaders simply forwarded documents without offering clarification or training. In comparison, the new administration organized weekly group sessions, one-on-one consultations, and practical support. Omar described how this shift changed the experience dramatically: “They provide full support from start to finish.”

This support included detailed assistance with reflective reports, trial presentations, and regular reminders about important deadlines. For example, Omar noted that they received “lessons once a week and suggestions on what to improve” in their reflective writing. Sulu added that teachers were given “five sessions on how to write a reflective report,” and Karima appreciated being consistently reminded about submission deadlines.

Aigul shared a telling example of how the absence of support during her previous attestation caused confusion. Although she had submitted her application at the start of the academic year, she did not receive guidance until much later, when she was suddenly asked to submit her draft report. Like others, she admitted she “did not know what a reflective report was.” While the previous administration attempted to address this by organizing an online seminar led by an AEO representative, participants agreed this was insufficient. Sulu and Aigul commented that, under the new leadership, feedback from school-based trainers improved the quality of teachers’ reflective reports and contributed to more candidates receiving positive evaluations.

Aigul also noted that trial presentations which are now a regular practice did not occur during her attestation. In contrast, current candidates had already completed “two or three trial presentations,” a level of preparation she believes would have benefited her cohort. Assem, comparing her first and current experiences, noted a significant reduction in stress and expressed confidence in her likelihood of success this time.

Karima reflected on the increased competency and organization of the current administration. While she found their expectations demanding, she acknowledged the value of having structured guidance: “It is stressful when they demand to follow deadlines, but in the end, you understand that you have everything for a successful outcome.” Sulu also emphasized the importance of accessibility, stating that under the new leadership, she always knew whom to approach with questions.

In summary, participants viewed the current school administrators as significantly more supportive, knowledgeable, and involved in the TAS process. This support helped reduce anxiety, improved preparation, and contributed to more positive experiences compared to the previous leadership.

#### ***4.2.2 Fairness and Equity***

Participants were also asked whether they perceived the TAS process as fair and equitable across different subject areas, gender, and age groups. While most participants acknowledged that the formal requirements of attestation appear equal for all teachers, several raised concerns about the actual implementation, especially regarding subject-specific biases and gender disparities. Sulu shared her concern that subject inequality persists in TAS evaluations. She argued that teachers of certain subjects, particularly

physical education and English, face limited opportunities for advancement to higher categories such as “teacher-expert” or “teacher-researcher.” She stated:

Teacher attestation committee won't give you an expert category because you are a teacher of such a subject. For example, they don't give experts to physical education teachers... Supposedly in this subject you can only grow to a certain level. Well, supposedly physical education is not such an important subject.

She also expressed frustration about systemic barriers faced by English language teachers in attaining higher categories. Despite the presence of science teachers with “teacher-researcher” status, she noted that none of the 22 schools in the NIS system had an English teacher with this category: “There are 22 schools in the system, none of them have an English teacher with a category of teacher-researcher. This is the failure of the system... This is biased.”

In addition to subject-based inequities, some participants raised concerns about gender-based favoritism. Sulu observed that male teachers often receive more informal support and encouragement from school leaders, based on the belief that men need to be retained in the predominantly female profession: “I know some cases when men received more support. I can cite them word by word [the words of school leaders]. ‘Men should be supported. There are a few men. So, they should be supported.’ I think it is unfair and improper.”

Assem shared a similar sentiment, noting that her male colleagues appeared to be promoted more easily despite not working harder: “When I compare myself with my male colleagues, I see that they do not work harder than me, but they get promoted easier. Even for the administrative positions. Seems like they are afforded special treatment.”

These reflections suggest that while TAS is officially designed to treat all candidates equally, biases related to subject area and gender still influence the fairness of outcomes. This aligns with previous research indicating that equity in teacher evaluation systems is often challenged by informal dynamics and subjective interpretations of merit (Donaldson, 2012; Rorrer & Skrla, 2005).

In conclusion, participants' experiences indicate that despite formal efforts toward equality, perceptions of inequity persist in the TAS process. These concerns highlight the need for ongoing monitoring and policy adjustments to ensure a more equitable appraisal system for all teachers.

#### ***4.2.3 Perceptions of School-Level Evaluation: The Easiest Component***

The analysis of participant responses reveals that the school-level component of the teacher attestation system (TAS) is generally viewed as the easiest stage. Teachers found this stage significantly less stressful than the reflective report and the final defense before the external commission. This perception stems largely from the familiar setting in which it takes place—within the school environment, among colleagues and administrators. This stage includes two main components: (a) Open lessons, observed by colleagues and school leaders; and (b) Portfolio submission, followed by an internal decision on whether to recommend the teacher's candidacy for the proposed category.

Participants noted that open lessons are particularly effective due to the quality of feedback provided. Aylin remarked: "In most cases, the school decides in favor of the teacher," suggesting that the internal committee often supports teachers' candidacy, especially when formal criteria are met.

Another reason for the perceived ease of this stage is that the school-level attestation committee personally knows the teacher and their work. Assem explained that the portfolio contains quantitative data, such as student exam scores, Olympiad winning students, and certificates, which are clear indicators of teaching effectiveness. Karima added that this stage is straightforward because “you teach your lessons, your students pass exams, and it shows the quality of teaching.”

Sulu acknowledged that while a teacher’s reputation might informally influence judgments, formal criteria, including professional behavior, ethical compliance, and documented student achievement, play a central role in the evaluation. Thus, the existence of clear, quantifiable indicators helps make the process more transparent and predictable.

### **4.3 Assessment Tools in the Teacher Attestation Process**

#### ***4.3.1 Classroom Observation: A Valuable and Constructive Tool***

Participants identified classroom observations which are often referred to as “open lessons” as one of the most constructive and effective components of TAS. These lessons are familiar elements of a teacher’s routine, particularly in January and February, when administrators and colleagues regularly visit classrooms.

Karima highlighted that observers use checklists to assess various teaching aspects, such as planning, delivery, and assessment methods. After a series of lessons, these observers provide written evaluations that are included in the teacher's portfolio. As Omar described, teachers receive individualized feedback after each observation, which guides improvements for future lessons. For instance, Omar recalled being advised by a school administrator to use greater differentiation in his lessons to meet the teacher-moderator

standards. He emphasized that such feedback not only improved his instructional skills but also positively impacted his self-esteem and classroom atmosphere. Similarly, Aylin shared that she consistently receives detailed, useful feedback during this stage and enjoys welcoming observers into her lessons. Assem, currently undergoing attestation, noted that feedback from her open lessons has clarified areas for improvement, making the process more developmental than evaluative.

#### ***4.3.2 Reflexive Report: The Most Challenging Component***

In contrast to classroom observation, participants widely regarded the reflective report as the most demanding and stressful component of TAS. Writing this report takes often over two to three months and was described as a source of ongoing anxiety, with Omar stating: “Thoughts about it constantly bother you and create a background anxiety in your head.” Key challenges include:

**Anti-Plagiarism Issues.** Passing the anti-plagiarism check is a major concern, particularly for teachers in scientific or technical fields, where discipline-specific terminology often increases textual similarity. Karima, a chemistry teacher, noted that even original work can be flagged for plagiarism due to common formulations. This barrier can prevent candidates from even reaching the final stage of attestation, which many found disheartening and demoralizing.

**Lack of Clarity in Assessment Criteria.** Participants also criticized the vague and ambiguous assessment criteria. Although the reflective report is evaluated against specific benchmarks, teachers often lack clear guidance on how to meet them. Omar suggested that success in this component requires strong language and analytical skills, skills not all teachers have. Sulu, despite teaching research-based subjects, reported failing the reflective

report due to unclear expectations. Teachers point out the lack of skills in analyzing, interpreting, and structuring material in written form, which makes it difficult to meet the requirements for a reflective report. Teachers despite demonstrating professional competence commonly encounter challenges when attempting to convert their teaching experience and knowledge into analysis-based written texts.

Omar who has trained the winners of International Olympiads, thinks that it is unfair that “the reflective report result takes up 33.3% of the overall outcome of attestation which is a very high share.” In his opinion, to write a good reflective report, one must be a language specialist. However, Sulu, who teaches English and Global Perspectives and Project Works confessed:

Despite the fact that I check students’ essays daily and teach a subject related to research activities, I was unable to achieve a passing grade. Perhaps this is due to the fact that the criteria remain vague, and it is not always clear what exactly needs to be reflected in the report.

Sulu wondered how it was possible that she graduated from a research university, where she constantly submitted good reflective writings and was unable to gain a passing grade for a reflective report at attestation.

Aigul added that reflective report is evaluated against certain criteria, but teachers need more interpretation of them. Assem shared that her colleague received 3 points out of 12, even though her colleague relied on the help of the expert who completed a special course on writing and assessing reflective reports in the NIS network. It means different experts can understand and interpret the assessment criteria differently.

**Poor Quality of Feedback.** Another concern was the subjectivity and lack of transparency in how reflective reports are assessed. Participants noted that feedback is often generic, repetitive across candidates, and fails to offer actionable guidance. Sulu remarked that some feedback appeared to be “copy-paste,” even for reports written in vastly different styles. One participant, who serves as an assessor, admitted that assessors often lack training on how to provide meaningful feedback.

Karima raised the issue of assessor qualifications, questioning whether evaluators are subject matter experts. She proposed that assessors' backgrounds should be disclosed to candidates for greater transparency. Sulu supported this, adding that reports should be evaluated by practicing educators with relevant expertise.

Despite these challenges, participants agreed on the value of reflection itself. Aigul noted that the process taught her how to analyze and improve her teaching practices. However, the assessment format and feedback mechanisms were criticized as insufficiently supportive, leading many to describe this component as emotionally exhausting and academically demanding.

#### **4.4 Influence of TAS on Teachers' Self-Efficacy and Wellbeing**

##### ***4.4.1 Changes in Self-Efficacy***

Teacher self-efficacy, which is the belief in one's ability to manage classrooms and positively influence student learning, is deeply affected by TAS. Participants described a dual impact: successful certification boosts confidence and motivation, while failure can significantly undermine professional identity.

**Positive Effects: Confidence and Motivation.** Most participants stated that success in attestation affirmed their professional competence. Omar, who initially failed but later passed, admitted that he nearly left the profession after his first failure. He explained that his inability to gain even a basic category at NIS, despite preparing international Olympiad winners, left him questioning his worth as a teacher. However, passing on his second attempt significantly restored his confidence and reinforced his belief in his capabilities.

Participants also described attestation as a motivator for growth. Sulu referred to it as a moment of “self-praise,” while Aylin saw it as proof of her professional identity. Karima added that success brought a sense of relief and renewed motivation, affirming that she was “doing the right things.”

**Increase in Internal Motivation after Successful Certification.** For some respondents, passing the attestation is associated with a transition to a new level of professional self-perception. Receiving a new category forms a new benchmark for the teacher, below which she/he is not ready to fall either in terms of the quality of work or in terms of self-perception: “attestation gives a chance to put mark “the box” as completed and you feel proud of yourself” (Sulu), “it’s a self-praise” (Aylin).

Aylin stated that the realization of becoming one level higher makes you more confident in one’s competencies as it is “a confirmation of what kind of teacher you are.” She also noted that while preparing documents for portfolio many teachers realize their accumulated achievements that reinforces their belief in their abilities as a teacher. So, passing certification is often accompanied by a rethinking of one's own professional path

and achievements. Teachers describe this process as a moment when it becomes possible to see the volume and quality of the work done, which directly affects self-esteem.

Karima supported this view and said, “after a successful attempt you feel relieved, and you get motivated to work further and get more confidence that you are doing right things.”

**Negative Impact of Unsuccessful Assessment on Self-Efficacy.** Along with the positive effects associated with successfully passing the assessment procedure, another trend which is clearly visible in the interviews is a decrease in teachers' self-efficacy in case of failure. The study participants emphasize that negative assessment results can have a significant destabilizing effect on professional self-perception and cause doubts about their abilities.

**Undermining Confidence and Professional Self-Esteem.** Participants who failed the attestation on the first try or had similar experiences in their environment emphasize that such failure directly affects their self-confidence. It is noted that the feeling of “failure” is often perceived as evidence of professional inferiority. “I wanted to quit... Because you start to doubt: maybe you don’t meet the requirements? Maybe you’re not a good teacher?” (Sulu). Such experiences indicate a strong personal involvement in the process and a high level of responsibility, where failure is interpreted not as a temporary difficulty, but as an existential challenge to professional identity.

Consequently, it has a long-term emotional impact and decreases motivation. “It was psychologically difficult. Afterwards, I couldn’t decide for a long time to apply again” (Assem). Some participants emphasize that even long after the failure, its consequences

remain. In this case, attestation becomes a factor of internal tension and anxiety, and the desire to participate again significantly weakens. As some participants noted the reason of such consequence is “the feedback provided by external assessors which usually just informs the result of the attestation: successful or unsuccessful.” They also noted that the rapport and tone in which the assessors provide feedback is offensive. Sulu and Assem shared that the manner of feedback was “humiliating.” Teachers made suggestions to train external assessors to give constructive feedback so the burden and stress from failure at attestation would be reduced.

#### ***4.4.2 Effects of Attestation on Teacher Wellbeing: A PERMA Model Perspective***

The teacher evaluation system at Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (NIS) has a complex and multifaceted impact on teachers' professional and personal wellbeing. The analysis of interviews reveals that participants assess the influence of the Teacher Attestation System (TAS) through both positive and negative experiences, affecting various dimensions of their wellbeing. To conceptualize these effects, the PERMA model proposed by Seligman (2011) is used, which includes five core dimensions of flourishing: Positive Emotion (P), Engagement (E), Relationships (R), Meaning (M), and Achievement (A).

**Positive Emotions.** Positive emotions related to attestation are typically linked to its successful completion. Teachers described feelings of relief, satisfaction, and even euphoria upon passing all stages. Sulu characterized her reaction as “a situation of success, euphoria, a chemical process.” Aylin noted, “When you defend yourself, you are certified—it’s a big burden off your shoulders,” while Omar added, “When you pass attestation successfully, it is nice, as if your energy was returned.”

However, the predominant emotional state throughout the preparation process is marked by stress, anxiety, and fatigue. Assem, who failed attestation, noted that “teachers feel uncertainty and fear of possible negative consequences” throughout the year. Omar echoed this sentiment: “You walk around full of stress for a whole year asking yourself whether you’ll pass or not,” adding that the ongoing tension “eats a person up a little bit from the inside.”

Karima described the stress of presenting in front of experts as particularly intense, while Sulu, a veteran with 13 years at NIS, shared that the defense process can be humiliating due to the behavior of some attestation committee members. According to Assem and Sulu, it is not uncommon for candidates to leave the defense “in tears.” Aigul, despite being confident in public speaking, suggested eliminating the defense stage altogether, arguing that a teacher’s achievements are already evident in the portfolio.

These experiences indicate a dual emotional impact, where short-term positive emotions following success are often overshadowed by long-term stress and emotional strain during the process.

**Engagement.** Attestation requires a high level of engagement from teachers, pushing them to reflect more critically on their practices. Omar stated, “Attestation requires engagement. I started paying more attention to things I had previously ignored.” Teachers agreed that the process encourages self-assessment and deeper professional awareness.

However, the intensity and time demands of the process often lead to emotional overload. Sulu explained, “When you are being certified, everything is mixed up: lessons,

the report, and life. It's very difficult to combine all this." Omar added, "I forgot about my personal life, my relatives. All I thought and was passionate about was work."

Thus, while attestation can foster professional engagement, the lack of structural support and work-life balance can result in emotional exhaustion and professional burnout, negatively affecting teachers' overall wellbeing.

**Relationship.** An essential element of wellbeing is professional relationships that form a sense of collaboration and belonging to a team. Many participants noted that colleagues provided significant support, which helped reduce anxiety and create a sense of belonging to a professional community. Omar said that he was more confident in the second time thanks to support he received from the new school leaders. Aylin, a biology teacher emphasized that "a positive moment of attestation is collaboration. There is always a colleague who supports and helps." Karima, a chemistry teacher supported that "teachers who have undergone the attestation successfully share their experience.

However, there are some social consequences and a negative change in attitudes from colleagues in case of failure. Some teachers note that the status of "failed attestation" can affect the distribution of roles in the school and management's perceptions. Karima said that "failure greatly undermines a teacher's authority among colleagues." Aylin supported that "when a person fails, people start talking about him. And this affects... They look at him differently". Aylin explained it with a specific example of her colleague who plagiarized her/his own reflective report and earned a bad reputation. She said that it was accompanied by a public reminder of violations when the administrators emphasized his name all the time during every meeting. Thus, unsuccessful certification can have not only internal but also

external consequences, influencing the professional climate and the sense of belonging to the team. However, Assem who failed attestation said that she did not feel a changed attitude towards her reputation. She said that she “was not criticized or judged. The only thing was that colleagues did not believe how I could not acquire a higher category.”

Nevertheless, the findings emphasize the need to create a safe and supportive environment in which mistakes are perceived as a point of growth, and not as a final verdict on professional competence.

**Meaning.** Meaning in activity is seen as the awareness of the importance and significance of one’s work. Teachers emphasize that educational activity has high value because it influences the present and future of students. Assessment can enhance this feeling if it is perceived as recognition of the teacher’s contribution to the development of students. Omar confessed that after successful pass he understood that he “was doing something useful.” He felt that he wanted to support his students more. Aylin said:

Even if there are bureaucratic nuances, you know, my career means something, I don't just come from lesson to lesson. So, it's something more than a lesson. It's something more than you as a teacher. You are a teacher, a leader, a colleague.

Thus, meaning is enhanced when the assessment procedure is associated not so much with reporting, but with the teacher’s personal mission: to teach, inspire and influence the lives of students.

**Achievement.** Attestation in the NIS system is closely linked to achieving professional goals, career advancement and recognition of merit. Teachers note that the requirements of attestation align with their professional goals. In case of successful completion of the attestation, TAS not only brings satisfaction, but also increases motivation

to continue developing. Omar believes “It’s like recognition that you have achieved something. You tell yourself – yes, I did it.” Aylin added: “The very realization that you have become a level higher makes you not want to go down...”

Therefore, the perception of the impact of the appraisal system on the professional well-being of NIS teachers through the PERMA model demonstrates both opportunities and risks. When transparent criteria, adequate support, and a developmental focus are on place, evaluation can enhance positive emotions, stimulate engagement, strengthen relationships, enhance a sense of meaning, and acknowledge achievement. However, in the absence of these conditions, the positive potential may be lost. This highlights the need to design evaluation processes with an eye to their impact on teachers’ internal well-being and their ability to maintain sustainability and satisfaction in the profession.

#### **4.5 The Results of the Document Analysis**

##### ***Qualification Requirements for Teachers’ Professional Categories***

I used a document analysis of the qualification characteristics of teachers at Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (NIS) in order to identify substantive differences in the characteristics for teachers at different stages of their career and assess the role of attestation in their professional development. The study included a comparative analysis of regulatory requirements and responsibilities for five levels of professional gradation of teachers: NIS teacher, teacher-moderator, teacher-expert, teacher-researcher, and teacher-master.

One of the key criteria for professional growth is the requirements for work experience in the NIS network which vary for levels, except for categories of teacher-trainees and teachers. Fluency in Kazakh and English plays an important role, which means

that teachers also must advance the levels of language proficiency according to the pedagogical category requirements.

**Table 2**

*Work experience and Language Proficiency*

Category			Teacher-trainee	Teacher	Teacher-moderator	Teacher-expert	Teacher-researcher	Teacher-master
Requirements								
Work experience in NIS network			-	-	2 years	3 years	5 years	8 years
Language proficiency	Kazakh (KazTest, Qazaq Resmi Test, NIS language level test)	subjects taught in Kazakh	-	-	B2	B2	B2	B2
		subjects taught in other languages (Russian, English, etc.)	-	-	A1	A2	B1	B1
	English (IELTS, APTIS, TOEFL, Duolingo, NIS Language Level Test)	subjects taught in English	-	B2	B1, for English teachers - B2	B2, for English teachers - C1	IELTS - more than 6.0, for English teachers - C1	IELTS - more than 6.5, for English teachers - C2/8.0
		subjects taught in other languages (Kazakh, Russian)		B1	A2	A2	B1	B2

subjects  
taught in  
Kazakh

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According to the document, it is seen that Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools implement a step-by-step system of professional growth for teachers, closely linked to the certification process. Unlike formal knowledge testing or administrative assessment, this system is built as a development trajectory that involves deepening professional activity in various areas: from methodological activity to research and international expertise. Teacher attestation in this context serves not only as a mechanism for confirming competencies, but also as an important tool for recognizing professional contributions, formalizing career growth, and disseminating best pedagogical practices. Further, I will describe main differences between professional categories of NIS teachers.

**Teacher.** The teacher at this level is primarily focused on organizing and conducting classes using modern forms and methods of teaching. Her/his responsibilities include implementing the educational program, individual work with students, preparing for Olympiads and competitions, using information and communication technologies, as well as developing a general culture and academic integrity. She/he also provides feedback, uses differentiated learning methods, and participates in the life of the school. The main focus is on the quality of the educational process and achieving educational results at the class and school level. Thus, the teacher performs a wide range of tasks aimed at ensuring high quality education and a favorable educational environment at school.

**Teacher-Moderator.** Compared to the basic level, the teacher-moderator has a more pronounced methodological and mentoring function. In addition to teaching, he/she develops educational and methodological materials, conducts project research with students, participates in the transmission of pedagogical experience on the school and the city scale. He/she also conducts training events for colleagues (webinars, master classes), provides methodological support, and acts as a coach/mentor. This level involves active participation in the methodological life of the school, as well as the first steps in external professional communication. Thus, the teacher-moderator is a teacher who combines high professional competence, methodological initiative and an active position in the development of the pedagogical community.

**Teacher-Expert.** At this stage, the teacher becomes not only the bearer of advanced educational practices, but also an active participant in the development of educational content at the AOO level. It is involved in the development and examination of training programs, textbooks and digital resources. Considerable attention is paid to the training of teachers of the region, as well as the distribution and standardization of successful practices. The teacher- expert conducts research on her/his practice, participates in conferences of the regional and republican level, coordinates educational initiatives within the network community.

**Teacher-Researcher.** This level involves deep integration into research activities. The teacher systematically analyzes, predicts and improves the educational environment, conducts scientific research, creates copyright methods and educational complexes. Its activities are actively broadcast at the republican level: through publications, participation in conferences, the development of officially approved programs. The teacher teaches

teachers, manages the research work of colleagues and introduces scientific results in educational practice.

**Teacher-Master.** Teacher-master is the highest level of qualification, at which the teacher becomes a recognized expert not only within the country, but also in the international arena. The master teacher is engaged in fundamental and applied scientific research in the field of pedagogy, psychology, education management, as well as the integration of the latest scientific data into original methods and educational programs.

A feature of this level is active participation in international scientific events: symposiums, conferences, forums, including those indexed in Scopus and Web of Science. In addition, the master teacher publishes articles in journals with a high impact factor, presenting the achievements of domestic education on the global scientific platform.

### ***Rules of Teacher Attestation***

I reviewed the document "Rules for attestation of teachers of branches of the autonomous educational organization "Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools." It is a key document regulating the attestation procedure for teaching staff in the NIS system.

It is written that the document was developed in accordance with the Labor Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Law "On Education," the Law "On the Status of a Teacher," as well as the Development Strategy of the AEO until 2035 and the Charter of the organization. The document was last updated in 2024.

The purpose of attestation is formulated as identifying the compliance of teachers with qualification characteristics based on an assessment of their professional competence, stimulating their career growth, and ensuring continuity of professional development. The

objectives of certification include: 1) implementation of the NIS mission through the development of teachers' potential; 2) improving the efficacy and quality of pedagogical work; 3) disclosure and identification of prospects for using potential opportunities of teachers; 4) stimulation of teachers for continuous education, self-education, advanced training; 5) assignment or confirmation of the level of pedagogical mastery; 6) ensuring differentiated remuneration.

The document provides two directions of classification of levels of mastery. First is a six-level model for teachers and educators with a teaching load and the second is a two-level model - for auxiliary teaching staff (curators, methodologists, educators, etc.). Since the current research is focused on the perspectives of teachers exclusively, I will further describe the structure and stages of the attestation procedure for the first group of pedagogical staff.

Teacher attestation can be mandatory (after the inter-certification period) or early (at the teacher's initiative). The terms of mandatory attestation vary: for a trainee teacher - after 2 years; for others - every 5 years.

Teacher-trainee can apply for teacher after a year of work, it is considered early attestation. Also, the automatic transition to the category “teacher” is possible if a teacher-trainee 1) has an IELTS certificate (or equivalent) with no less than 5.0 overall score (for English teachers 6.0); 2) is a graduate of Nazarbayev University, the Bolashak program, or foreign top universities; 3) is a winner of international Olympiads; 4) graduate of NIS with higher education; 5) has 2-year work experience in pedagogical work. There are 3 main components of attestation for teachers starting from teacher-trainee to teacher-researchers:

- 1) School level (attestation committee of the school makes decisions based on a teacher's portfolio and Methodological Council's feedback on her/his lessons and performance)
- 2) Independent assessment of a reflexive report (it is assessed by examination council of Center of Pedagogical Measurements)
- 3) Final stage (for teacher-experts and teacher researchers attestation committee of the AEO makes decisions based on portfolio and presentation, for teacher-trainee, teacher, and teacher-moderator (after 2024 update), the final stage is conducted by the school's attestation committee)

It is worth noting that for the pedagogical gradation “teacher-researcher,” instead of compiling a reflexive report, a teacher can present two articles in domestic or foreign scientific publications recommended by the Committee for Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The main results of scientific research can be published in issues of the Intellectual School's practice as the main (first) author, or in the inter-certification period or 1 article in the Web of Science / Scopus (CiteScore  $\geq 25$ ) as the main (first) author, during the certification period.

A teacher who applies for a teacher-master should receive an approval of the attestation committees of the school and the AEO and provide 1 article in the Web of Science / Scopus (CiteScore  $\geq 35$ ) as the main (first) author, published during the certification period.

The NIS Attestation Committee makes one of the following decisions based on the results of the assessment of pedagogical activity:

- 1) Meets the declared level. The teacher confirms all qualification requirements, receives (or maintains) the declared level of expertise. The next certification is carried out within the established time frame.
- 2) Does not meet the declared level. The teacher does not reach the required level - retains the current category. Re-submission is possible in the next period.
- 3) Does not meet and is subject to re-certification. The decision is made if the level is not met for the second time. A re-certification is scheduled in a year. In case of repeated failure, the level is lowered.
- 4) Did not confirm the current level. If the teacher does not meet the current category, she/he is given a year to improve. In case of unsuccessful re-certification, the level is lowered.
- 5) Non-participation without a valid reason. Refusal to take mandatory certification without good reason entails an automatic lowering by one level.
- 6) Disqualification from participation in the current assessment. Possible reasons:
  - a) valid (illness, maternity leave, force majeure) — the deadline is postponed;
  - b) disciplinary (plagiarism, low level of language fluency (State language and/or English) — participation is terminated, possible lowering of the level.

#### **4.6 Summary**

This chapter presented the findings of a study exploring the multifaceted experiences of teachers undergoing the attestation process at a school in Astana. Thematic analysis of the interviews revealed that the Teacher Attestation System (TAS) is perceived not only as a mechanism for quality assurance and professional development, but also as a significant factor influencing teacher motivation. While some participants reported that the process

encouraged them to improve their teaching practices, others expressed a loss of motivation or even a desire to leave the profession.

The analysis further demonstrated that, although attestation serves critical functions such as promoting professional growth and ensuring teaching quality, it also presents substantial challenges. School administrators played an essential role in guiding and supporting teachers throughout the process. Classroom observations conducted at the school level were largely seen as effective and manageable, owing to familiar environments and collegial support. However, the reflective report emerged as the most difficult component, underscoring the need for clearer assessment criteria, more constructive feedback, and assistance in navigating anti-plagiarism checks.

Teachers' experiences with attestation impacted their sense of self-efficacy and overall wellbeing, with outcomes, both successful and unsuccessful, shaping their professional confidence and emotional state. Additionally, concerns around equity across subject areas point to a need for further investigation to ensure a more balanced, transparent, and supportive attestation process for all teachers.

The next chapter provides a discussion of these findings in relation to existing literature and theoretical frameworks.

## Chapter 5: Discussion

### Introduction

In the previous chapter, I presented the findings of this study, which explored teachers' lived experiences and perceptions of the Teacher Appraisal System (TAS) within the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (NIS) network. The findings were organized thematically to examine how teachers understand the purpose of TAS, the appraisal instruments used, the available support structures, and the system's impact on their self-efficacy and professional wellbeing. In this chapter, I discuss these findings in relation to the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 and interpret them through the lens of the conceptual framework, which is grounded in Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy and Seligman's (2011) PERMA model of wellbeing.

The aim of this study was to investigate how NIS teachers perceive the TAS and how these perceptions influence their self-efficacy and professional wellbeing. The guiding research questions were:

1. What are NIS teachers' perceptions of the Teacher Appraisal System?
2. What are NIS teachers' perceptions of influence of the Teacher Appraisal System on their self-efficacy?
3. What are NIS teachers' perceptions of influence of the Teacher Appraisal System on their wellbeing?

A qualitative phenomenological case study approach was employed, involving interviews with six teachers from diverse backgrounds at one NIS school. Thematic analysis

was used to identify shared patterns and divergent perspectives across participants' experiences.

This chapter is structured around three main areas of discussion. First, I examine teachers' perceptions of the purpose, processes, and evaluation instruments of TAS. Second, I explore the influence of TAS on teachers' self-efficacy in light of relevant literature. Finally, I interpret how TAS affects teachers' wellbeing, drawing on the PERMA framework.

## **5.1 Teachers' Perceptions of TAS**

### ***5.1.1 Purpose of TAS and Teachers' Motivation***

This finding highlights the diverse perspectives teachers hold regarding the purpose of the Teacher Appraisal System (TAS). Participants identified four primary purposes: the reinforcement of professional development, the evaluation of teacher competence, bureaucratic formality, and, most prominently, the opportunity for salary increase. These perspectives reflect both institutional aims such as performance monitoring and the personal motivations of teachers, particularly those shaped by financial considerations.

This aligns with existing literature that positions TAS as serving dual purposes: summative (accountability and reward-based) and formative (development-oriented) (Goe et al., 2008; Stronge, 2010). Stronge (2010) emphasized TAS's role in evaluating teacher performance for promotions or compensation, while Darling-Hammond (2013) argued that formative appraisals support professional growth through feedback and reflection. According to the participants in this study, however, the summative dimension often

outweighs the formative in the NIS context, especially when salary increases are a major incentive.

The emphasis on financial motivation partially challenges the literature's more optimistic framing of TAS as a developmental tool. While previous research highlights the importance of developmental feedback for teachers' growth (Berhanu, 2024; van Waeyenberg et al., 2020), NIS teachers often view TAS primarily as a path to financial gain, even prioritizing it over international opportunities. This suggests that extrinsic motivators, particularly financial rewards tied to attestation outcomes, tend to dominate teacher engagement with the system.

These findings directly address Research Question 1 by illuminating the multifaceted and, at times, conflicting purposes of TAS as experienced by teachers. They underscore the need for reform efforts to balance intrinsic (growth-oriented) and extrinsic (reward-driven) motivations in order to sustain teacher engagement, morale, and long-term professional development.

### ***5.1.2 TAS as a Tool to Enhance Professional Development***

This finding reflects the perception that TAS functions not only as an indicator of existing teacher competence but also as a motivational mechanism, particularly for encouraging less proactive teachers to engage in professional growth. While some participants reported being intrinsically motivated to develop professionally, others noted that TAS serves as a structural prompt, compelling them to meet standards, set goals, and engage in more critical reflection on their practices. This interpretation aligns with the formative purpose of TAS as outlined in the literature, particularly the notion that appraisal systems can foster sustained instructional improvement when designed with a

developmental focus (Danielson, 2007; Goe et al., 2008). The reflective and goal-setting aspects highlighted by participants resonate with Palmisano's (2019) findings on the role of appraisal in deepening teacher reflection and contributing to the formation of professional identity.

However, an undercurrent of coercion is also evident in the data, with some participants suggesting that TAS functions as a mechanism of behavioral control aimed at aligning teachers with institutional goals. This aligns with Gibson's (2024) argument that teachers often perceive appraisal systems as externally imposed tools, particularly when expectations are unclear, or feedback lacks transparency and collaboration.

This finding directly addresses Research Question 1 by illustrating that while teachers recognize the developmental intentions of TAS, many perceive these as obligatory rather than empowering. This suggests a partial disconnect between the system's intended purpose and teachers' lived experiences, emphasizing the need for more collaborative, transparent, and supportive implementation to truly engage educators in meaningful professional growth.

### ***5.1.3. Administrative Support and Clarity of the Process***

One of the interesting findings is the direct influence of school leadership on the teachers' perceptions of TAS. All participants underlined that a change in school administration led to more tangible improvement in the received support and final outcomes of TAS through providing teachers with mentors who gave them constructive actionable feedback for their open lessons and reflective reports, instructing with meeting deadlines, giving suggestions what else teachers should complete to succeed at the attestation.

This finding is supported by Sartain and Morris (2024) and Rigsby and Butcher (2015) who emphasized that effective instructional leadership and a trusting school climate are critical for appraisal systems to function as tools for teacher development. When school administrators are absent or unsupportive, TAS becomes stressful and demotivating (Gibson, 2024; Pawson, 2019). On the contrary, participants in this study described the new administration as offering constructive guidance, including personalized mentoring, structured feedback, and emotional support. These factors considerably decreased anxiety and improved their confidence and trust in the process.

This finding also adds to the body of literature by showing that the quality of leadership support influences not only perceptions of fairness but also emotional resilience during TAS. Teachers under the former administration felt confused, unsupported, and overwhelmed, whereas the new leadership made the system more transparent and humane. These experiences emphasize the need for well-trained, communicative school leaders who can facilitate teacher professional growth and reduce systemic stress.

#### ***5.1.4 School Level as the Most Predictable***

Teachers consistently maintained school level review as the easiest, most helpful, and least stressful component of TAS given the quality of feedback for classroom observations, clarity of evaluation criteria, and school's supportive culture. This is in line with the research in underscoring classroom observations and peer feedback as trustworthy appraisal instruments when implemented transparently (Abdulrazzaq, 2022; Marzano, 2012). In the literature as well as in the study, teachers value timely, personalized, practice grounded feedback because it gives them opportunities for reflection and growth. The study

and literature argue that teachers are more likely to see value in reflection and growth opportunities if they receive timely, individualized, and practice-based feedback.

### ***5.1.5 Fairness and Equity***

Although many teachers perceived the school-level appraisal stage as structured and relatively supportive, concerns about inequities surfaced. The findings show that teachers in less prestigious subject areas, such as physical education or languages, felt constrained in their opportunities for attaining higher professional categories.

In addition to subject-based disparities, perceptions of gender bias were reported, with female teachers feeling that male colleagues sometimes received preferential treatment, particularly given the smaller number of men in the teaching profession. Such perceptions underscore the need for appraisal systems to be continuously reviewed to ensure fairness and inclusivity across disciplines and demographics, reinforcing findings by Pawson (2019) and broader concerns about bias in professional evaluation systems.

This study's findings demonstrate that teachers' experiences of TAS are highly dependent on the system's transparency, fairness, and the degree of inclusivity. While the existing literature primarily focuses on perceptions of fairness and transparency in teacher appraisal processes, this study identified additional concerns regarding subject-area and gender-based disparities. Teachers perceived systemic limitations on career advancement for certain subjects, as well as informal favoritism towards male colleagues. These findings answer RQ1 by highlighting areas for further research, as such biases were not extensively discussed in the existing appraisal literature.

### **5.1.6 Assessment Tools Used for TAS**

This chapter discusses the study's findings on the assessment instruments used in the Teacher Appraisal System (TAS) at Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (NIS), comparing them with international literature.

**Classroom Observations.** Global literature highlights mixed perceptions of classroom observations, valued for professional development but often criticized as formalistic or inconsistent (Fan, 2022; Thi Man, 2024). In contrast, NIS teachers reported overwhelmingly positive experiences, appreciating consistent feedback from colleagues and administrators. Observations were seen as a natural part of teaching, supporting instructional improvement, thus highlighting the effectiveness of structured observation practices in creating developmental value.

**Student Learning Outcomes.** The literature raises concerns about using student achievement data in teacher evaluations, citing issues of fairness and validity (Zhao, 2017). While student outcomes are part of TAS at NIS, participants did not express strong concerns regarding their use, suggesting that in this context, they play a secondary role compared to other instruments like portfolios and reflective reports.

**Teacher Portfolios.** Portfolios are recognized globally for providing holistic evidence of teaching but are also viewed as administratively burdensome (Danielson, 2007; Tucker et al., 2003). NIS teachers echoed these views, acknowledging the value of portfolios for documenting professional achievements but criticizing the workload involved. Overall, portfolios were accepted as a standard part of appraisal.

**Reflective Reports.** Reflective practice is widely valued for fostering teacher development (Gheith & Jaber, 2018; Jakfar & Rahmatillah, 2023; Orakci, 2021), but

findings from this study reveal significant tensions. Reflective reports were perceived as the most challenging component due to unclear assessment criteria, burdensome anti-plagiarism checks, and generalized feedback. Particularly, the impact of plagiarism detection on technical subject teachers and doubts about assessor qualifications emerged as important concerns not previously emphasized in the literature. Despite these challenges, teachers recognized reflection as essential for improving teaching practice, although current evaluation practices limited its developmental potential.

The study confirms global trends regarding the mixed perceptions of appraisal instruments but adds important new insights about the unintended consequences of technical requirements like anti-plagiarism and the critical role of feedback quality. Effective TAS implementation depends not only on the choice of instruments but also on clear guidelines, skilled assessors, and a supportive professional environment to maximize developmental benefits.

## **5.2 Teachers' Perceptions of the Influence of TAS on Their Self-Efficacy**

The findings of this study support and extend prior research on the influence of teacher evaluation systems on teachers' self-efficacy. Consistent with studies by Jabeen et al. (2023), Palmisano (2019), and Smith et al. (2019), teachers reported that evaluation processes perceived as supportive and focused on improvement helped boost their confidence and motivation. In contrast, when evaluations were viewed as overly critical or lacking clarity, teachers experienced a decline in self-belief and enthusiasm.

In my research, successful attestation was commonly associated with increased professional confidence and a stronger sense of accomplishment. Teachers viewed certification as external validation of their efforts and skills, reinforcing their belief in their

ability to teach effectively. This echoes Palmisano's (2019) finding that encouraging and respectful feedback from supervisors can strengthen teachers' self-efficacy. Teachers noted that passing attestation prompted them to reflect on their achievements, reinforcing their motivation and professional identity. These experiences align with Smith et al. (2019), who emphasized that the quality and relevance of feedback are key drivers of teacher confidence.

However, the study also revealed significant emotional and professional setbacks among those who did not pass the attestation. Participants described failure as damaging to their self-esteem and, in some cases, a threat to their professional identity. Teachers expressed uncertainty, frustration, and a reluctance to reapply, reflecting concerns similar to those reported by Jabeen et al. (2023). Moreover, the manner in which feedback was delivered is often described as brief, vague, or even humiliating which contributed to negative emotional responses. Some teachers recommended training assessors to provide more constructive and respectful feedback to reduce stress and restore trust in the process.

This finding answers RQ2 by highlighting that teacher self-efficacy is closely tied to the tone and structure of evaluation practices. Evaluations that offer specific, meaningful feedback in a supportive manner tend to empower teachers and encourage development. In contrast, evaluations that are perceived as punitive or dismissive may harm professional confidence and reduce motivation. These results reinforce the need for reflective, growth-oriented appraisal systems that prioritize both performance and emotional well-being.

### **5.3 Teachers' Perceptions of the Influence of TAS on Their Wellbeing**

**Positive Emotions.** Literature suggests that positive emotions, such as joy, pride and satisfaction support teacher well-being and reduce burnout (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Sartain et al., 2024). Findings confirmed that teachers experienced relief and pride after

passing attestation. However, preparation brought prolonged stress, anxiety, and fatigue. This contrast reveals a more complex emotional experience than what the literature typically portrays.

**Engagement.** Professional development is generally linked to higher engagement and job satisfaction (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017). In this study, teachers were highly engaged in preparing for attestation, often reflecting deeply on their practice. However, excessive demands and limited time caused work-life imbalance and emotional exhaustion which suggests that engagement, without support, can lead to burnout.

**Relationships.** Strong collegial relationships are known to support teacher well-being (Turner & Theilking, 2019) and help teachers mitigate stress (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). The findings affirm that peer support helped teachers manage stress. Yet, failure in attestation sometimes led to reputational damage and strained relationships, indicating that social dynamics around appraisal can both support and undermine wellbeing.

**Meaning.** Teachers derive meaning from impacting students' lives (Dreer, 2023). The findings echoed this: many participants felt affirmed in their purpose when attestation was seen as recognition. Despite bureaucratic burdens, most still viewed their work as valuable and purposeful, aligning closely with literature.

**Accomplishment.** Achievement enhances teacher motivation and confidence (Wang et al., 2018). Successful attestation gave teachers a sense of progress and recognition. However, failure diminished morale and, in some cases, professional standing. The literature often overlooks these negative consequences, which were prominent in this study.

While the literature broadly supports the benefits of PERMA elements, this study shows that outcomes depend on how evaluation systems are structured. This finding answers RQ3 by demonstrating the need for appraisal systems that consider both the emotional and professional realities of teachers.

## **Chapter 6: Conclusion**

### **Introduction**

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the study's key findings, reflecting on how the research questions were addressed regarding NIS teachers' perceptions of the Teacher Appraisal System (TAS). It summarizes the ways in which TAS influences professional development, self-efficacy, and teacher wellbeing, situating these findings within the broader educational context. In addition, this chapter discusses the limitations of the study and outlines practical implications for improving appraisal practices. It concludes by offering recommendations for future research aimed at further strengthening teacher evaluation processes and supporting professional growth.

### **6.1 What Are NIS Teachers' Perceptions of the Teacher Appraisal System?**

The study reveals that NIS teachers hold complex and multifaceted perceptions of the Teacher Appraisal System (TAS). Overall, teachers recognize TAS as a potentially valuable tool for professional growth. Classroom observations, in particular, are perceived positively when accompanied by consistent, detailed feedback that guides instructional improvement. Many teachers appreciate that TAS encourages goal-setting, reflective practice, and self-assessment, aligning with broader global understandings of formative appraisal purposes. However, significant concerns also emerge. Teachers frequently view certain aspects of TAS, especially the reflective report component, as stressful, bureaucratic, and poorly supported. Strict anti-plagiarism requirements, vague assessment criteria, and a lack of meaningful, individualized feedback were major sources of frustration and

demotivation. These procedural challenges often overshadow the intended developmental aims of appraisal.

Moreover, the findings highlight that external motivations, particularly salary increases, play a substantial role in shaping teachers' engagement with TAS, sometimes at the expense of intrinsic professional growth. Teachers also expressed skepticism regarding the fairness of the system, noting perceived inequities across subject areas and a preference for supporting certain disciplines or demographics. Finally, the role of school leadership emerged as crucial where administrators provided clear, structured guidance and ongoing support, teachers reported more positive experiences of TAS. In contrast, in the absence of such leadership, appraisal processes were associated with higher levels of stress, uncertainty, and dissatisfaction.

Overall, while NIS teachers see potential value in TAS, their experiences suggest that without sufficient clarity, fairness, and support, appraisal risks becoming a technical formality rather than a meaningful tool for enhancing professional practice.

## **6.2 What Are NIS Teachers' Perceptions of the Influence of the Teacher Appraisal System on Their Self-Efficacy?**

Teachers' experiences showed that TAS can both support and undermine self-efficacy. Success in appraisal often boosted teachers' confidence, affirming their competence and motivating further growth. At the same time, challenges with certain components, particularly the reflective report, led to significant self-doubt. Difficulties with anti-plagiarism requirements, unclear evaluation criteria, and the perceived poor quality of feedback left some teachers feeling uncertain about their abilities, regardless of their actual teaching success. These findings emphasize that for TAS to strengthen teachers' self-

efficacy, the system must be transparent, supportive, and centered on genuine development rather than technical compliance.

### **6.3 What Are NIS Teachers' Perceptions of the Influence of the Teacher Appraisal System on Their Wellbeing?**

The study highlights that the Teacher Appraisal System at NIS has a complex and ambivalent impact on teachers' wellbeing. On the positive side, successfully completing the attestation process contributes to feelings of pride, fulfillment, and professional affirmation. Teachers reported enhanced motivation and a renewed sense of purpose in their work when their achievements were formally recognized through TAS.

Nonetheless, the path to attestation often places significant emotional strain on teachers. Participants described the preparation period, particularly the demands of composing reflective reports and navigating unclear evaluation criteria as a major source of ongoing stress, anxiety, and mental fatigue. Strict procedural expectations, combined with a lack of transparent feedback, were perceived as emotionally draining and, in some instances, discouraging.

The findings also underscore the critical role of school leadership in influencing the relationship between TAS and teacher wellbeing. When administrators actively supported candidates through guidance, structured feedback, and regular communication, teachers experienced lower stress levels and a greater sense of security. Conversely, the absence of leadership support heightened feelings of uncertainty and emotional burden.

In summary, while TAS has the potential to strengthen teachers' wellbeing by providing recognition and reinforcing professional identity, it can also negatively affect wellbeing when the process is perceived as opaque, overly bureaucratic, or insufficiently

supportive. Clearer procedures, stronger leadership involvement, and a more developmental focus are essential to ensuring that TAS promotes, rather than harms, teacher wellbeing.

### **Limitations of the Study**

While the study offers valuable insights, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the sample was drawn from a single school, limiting the generalizability of the findings beyond the NIS context. Second, reliance on self-reported data from interviews may reflect participants' subjective interpretations, shaped by their recent experiences or emotional responses. Finally, as a cross-sectional study, this research captures perceptions at one point in time and does not account for how views might evolve with changes in policy or leadership.

### **Implications and Recommendations**

This study offers the following implications for educational authorities in School education of Kazakhstan:

**Centering Appraisal on Professional Growth.** While TAS has both developmental and accountability purposes, the study demonstrates that teachers are more motivated and positively engaged when appraisal processes emphasize learning, growth, and instructional improvement. Appraisal policies should be consciously oriented towards supporting teachers' ongoing development rather than focusing predominantly on administrative compliance or salary differentiation.

**Improving Feedback Practices.** Teachers consistently indicated the importance of high-quality, individualized feedback throughout the appraisal process. To be truly developmental, feedback, especially for reflective reports and classroom observations should be specific, actionable, and constructive. Training assessors to deliver personalized,

detailed evaluations is essential. Providing regular interim feedback sessions before final evaluations could also reduce teacher anxiety and foster continuous improvement.

**Clarifying Evaluation Criteria and Processes.** Unclear assessment criteria, particularly for reflective reports, were major sources of teacher frustration and emotional strain. TAS frameworks should provide teachers with comprehensive, accessible explanations of expectations, including examples of successful reports and clear interpretations of grading rubrics. Reducing ambiguity would enhance fairness perceptions and support greater teacher confidence in the process.

**Rethinking Technical Requirements.** The anti-plagiarism checks, although well-intentioned, introduced unintended obstacles, especially for teachers working with technical terminology. TAS policies must be reviewed to ensure that integrity measures are appropriate to educational contexts and do not disproportionately penalize teachers based on discipline-specific writing norms.

**Strengthening the Role of School Leadership.** School administrators have a critical influence on how TAS is experienced. Schools should formalize the role of administrators as mentors during the appraisal cycle, offering structured support such as workshops on reflective writing, portfolio development, and stress management. Building strong, trust-based relationships between teachers and leaders can reduce appraisal-related anxiety and foster a more positive professional environment.

**Addressing Equity Issues.** The study revealed perceived inequities across subject areas and concerns regarding differential treatment based on gender. TAS should include mechanisms to ensure that teachers across disciplines and demographics have equal

opportunities for recognition and advancement. Clear equity monitoring and transparent communication are essential to maintaining trust and fairness within the system.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

This study provided the answers to the research questions about the perspectives of NIS teachers on the Teacher Appraisal system and its influence on their self-efficacy and wellbeing. However, conducting broader research across diverse educational systems would enhance understanding of how contextual factors influence teachers' experiences with appraisal processes. Longitudinal studies are recommended to examine how teachers' perceptions of TAS develop and shift over extended periods and multiple appraisal cycles. Comparative analyses could further identify appraisal frameworks that most effectively reconcile the dual aims of accountability and professional growth. Moreover, additional research is warranted to investigate the impact of technical mechanisms, such as anti-plagiarism software, on teachers' appraisal experiences and their professional morale.

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## Appendix A: AI Declaration Form



### **Thesis Title: Exploring Teachers' Perceptions of the Teacher Appraisal System and Its Influence on Teachers' Self-Efficacy and Wellbeing**

#### **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, Quillbot, ChatGPT, Mendeley to paraphrase quotes, citations, and sentences, to brainstorm and organise ideas, to find, organize papers and manage citations.

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: Aidana Manggytay

Date: 28.04.2025

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Aidana Manggytay', written in a cursive style.

## Appendix B: Informed Consent Letters

### INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Exploring Teachers' Perceptions of Teacher Appraisal System and Its Influence on Teachers' Self-Efficacy  
and Wellbeing

Dear participant,

#### DESCRIPTION:

My name is Aidana Manggytay. I am a Master's student in Educational Leadership Program at Graduate School of Education of Nazarbayev University (NUGSE). You are invited to participate in a **research study aiming** to understand teachers' perspectives on teacher appraisal system and its influence on teachers' self-efficacy and wellbeing at a NIS school in Astana.

You will be asked to participate in a one-on-one interview which will be recorded with your permission. Any information that is obtained during this study will be kept. All efforts, within reason, will be made to keep your personal information in your research record confidential but total confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Your personal information, research records, and data/specimens will be securely stored and maintained. Your personal information and research data will only be retained for the duration necessary to achieve the study objectives. Upon completion of the study, data will be securely archived or appropriately disposed of in accordance with regulations and institutional policies.

**TIME INVOLVEMENT:** The probable period of research is planned from November to December 2024. The interview will last for 40-60 minutes.

**RISKS AND BENEFITS:** The risks associated with this study are minimal. There may be a risk of feeling uncomfortable recalling some situations that occurred during the work process. If so, then please, remember that you can skip any question you are not comfortable with.

The benefits which may reasonably be expected to result from this study are self-reflection, more understanding of TAS, teacher self-efficacy and wellbeing and the TAS's effect on self-efficacy and wellbeing.

#### PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS:

If you have read this form and have decided to participate in this project, please understand your **participation is voluntary** and you have the **right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. The alternative is not to participate.** You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. The results of this research study may be presented at scientific or professional meetings or published in scientific journals.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

**Questions:** If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this research, its procedures, risks and benefits, contact the Master's Thesis Supervisor for this student work, Duishon Shamatov at [duishonkul.shamatov@nu.edu.kz](mailto:duishonkul.shamatov@nu.edu.kz).

**Independent Contact:** If you are not satisfied with how this study is being conducted, or if you have any concerns, complaints, or general questions about the research or your rights as a participant, please contact the GSE Research IREC subcommittee at [gse.irec@nu.edu.kz](mailto:gse.irec@nu.edu.kz).

**Researcher:** Aidana Manggytay, 2 year student MSc in Educational Leadership, NU GSE, [aidana.manggytay@nu.edu.kz](mailto:aidana.manggytay@nu.edu.kz) +7 747 188 61 11

Please sign this consent form if you agree to participate in this study.

- I have carefully read the information provided;
- I have been given full information regarding the purpose and procedures of the study;
- I understand how the data collected will be used, and that any confidential information will be seen only by the researchers and will not be revealed to anyone else;
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason;
- With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**The extra copy of this signed and dated consent form is for you to keep.**

## **ЗЕРТТЕУ ЖҰМЫСЫ КЕЛІСІМІНІҢ АҚПАРАТТЫҚ ФОРМАСЫ**

“Мұғалімдердің мұғалімдерді бағалау жүйесі және оның мұғалімдердің өзіндік тиімділігі мен игілігіне әсері туралы көзқарастарын зерттеу”

**СИПАТТАМА:** Менің есімім Айдана. Мен Назарбаев Университетінің Жоғары білім беру мектебінде (NUGSE) Білім берудегі көшбасшылық бағдарламасының магистрантымын. Сізді Астанадағы НЗМ мектебінде мұғалімдердің мұғалімдерді бағалау жүйесі және оның мұғалімдердің өзіндік тиімділігі мен игілігіне әсері туралы көзқарастарын түсінуге бағытталған зерттеуге қатысуға шақырамын. Осы байланысты зерттеу арқылы біз мұғалімдерді қолдау және мектептердегі білім беруді жақсарту жолдарын таба аламыз.

Сізден жеке сұхбатқа қатысу сұралады, сіздің келісіміңізбен бұл сұхбат жазылады. Бұл зерттеу барысында алынған кез келген ақпарат құпия сақталады. Сіздің жеке ақпаратыңыздың құпиялығын қамтамасыз ету үшін барлық негізделген шаралар қолданылады, бірақ толық құпиялық кепілдігі берілмейді. Сіздің жеке ақпаратыңыз, зерттеу жазбалары және деректер/үлгілер қауіпсіз түрде сақталады және қолдау көрсетіледі. Сіздің жеке ақпаратыңыз және зерттеу деректеріңіз зерттеу мақсаттарына жету үшін қажетті уақыт аралығында ғана сақталады. Зерттеу аяқталғаннан кейін деректер ережелер мен мекемелік саясаттарға сәйкес мұқият архивтеледі немесе жойылады.

**ӨТКІЗІЛЕТІН УАҚЫТЫ:** Сіздің қатысуыңыз шамамен *60 минутты* уақытыңызды алады.

### **ЗЕРТТЕУ ЖҰМЫСЫНА ҚАТЫСУДЫҢ ҚАУІПТЕРІ МЕН АРТЫҚШЫЛЫҚТАРЫ:**

Бұл зерттеумен байланысты қауіп-қатерлер аз. Жұмыс процесі барысында болған кейбір жағдайларды еске түсіру кезінде жайсыздық сезімі пайда болуы мүмкін. Бұл зерттеуден күтілетін артықшылықтар: өзін-өзі сараптау, эмоциялық интеллект ұғымын және оның жұмысқа әсерін жақсы түсіну.

**ҚАТЫСУШЫ ҚҰҚЫҚТАРЫ:** Егер Сіз берілген формамен танысып, зерттеу

жұмысына қатысуға шешім қабылдасаңыз, Сіздің қатысуыңыз ерікті түрде екенін хабарлаймыз. Сонымен қатар, қалаған уақытта айыппұл төлемей және сіздің әлеуметтік жеңілдіктеріңізге еш кесірін тигізбей зерттеу жұмысына қатысу туралы келісіміңізді кері қайтаруға немесе тоқтатуға құқығыңыз бар. Зерттеу жұмысына мүлдем қатыспауыңызға да толық құқығыңыз бар. Сондай-ақ, қандай да бір сұрақтарға жауап бермеуіңізге де әбден болады. Бұл зерттеу жұмысының нәтижелері академиялық немесе кәсіби мақсаттарда баспаға ұсынылуы немесе шығарылуы мүмкін.

### **БАЙЛАНЫС АҚПАРАТЫ:**

**Сұрақтарыңыз:** Егер жүргізіліп отырған зерттеу жұмысының процесі, қауіп мен артықшылықтары туралы сұрағыңыз немесе шағымыңыз болса, келесі байланыс құралдары арқылы зерттеушінің магистрлық тезисі бойынша жетекшісімен хабарласуыңызға болады: Профессор Дуйшон Шаматов ([duishonkul.shamatov@nu.edu.kz](mailto:duishonkul.shamatov@nu.edu.kz))

**ДЕРБЕС БАЙЛАНЫС АҚПАРАТТАРЫ:** Егер берілген зерттеу жұмысының

жүргізілуімен қанағаттанбасаңыз немесе сұрақтарыңыз бен шағымдарыңыз болса,

Назарбаев Университеті Жоғары Білім беру мектебінің Зерттеу Комитетімен көрсетілген

байланыс құралдары арқылы хабарласуыңызға болады: электрондық поштамен

[gse.irec@nu.edu.kz](mailto:gse.irec@nu.edu.kz).

**Зерттеуші:** Назарбаев Университеті, Жоғары білім беру мектебі, «Білім берудегі көшбасшылық» бағдарламасының 2 курс магистранты Айдана Мангытай,  
Email: aidana.manggytay@nu.edu.kz  
Телефон: +7 747 188 61 11

Зерттеу жұмысына қатысуға келісіміңізді берсеңіз, берілген формаға қол қоюыңызды сұраймыз.

- Мен берілген формамен мұқият таныстым;
- Маған зерттеу жұмысының мақсаты мен оның процедурасы жайында толық ақпарат берілді;
- Жинақталған ақпарат пен құпия мәліметтерге тек зерттеушінің өзіне қолжетімді және мәлім болатынын толық түсінемін;
- Мен кез келген уақытта ешқандай түсініктемесіз зерттеу жұмысына қатысудан бас тартуыма болатынын түсінемін;
- Мен жоғарыда аталып өткен ақпаратты саналы түрде қабылдап, осы зерттеу жұмысына қатысуға өз келісімімді беремін.

**Қолы:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Күні:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Қол қойылған және күні қойылған осы келісімнің қосымша көшірмесі сізде сақталады.**

## ФОРМА ИНФОРМАЦИОННОГО СОГЛАСИЯ

«Изучение восприятия учителями системы аттестации учителей и ее влияния на самооффективность и благополучие учителей»

**ОПИСАНИЕ:** Меня зовут Айдана Мангытай, и я являюсь студентом магистратуры программы Лидерство в образовании Высшей Школы Образования в Назарбаев Университете.

Вы приглашены принять участие в исследовании по «Изучение восприятия учителями системы аттестации учителей и ее влияния на самооффективность и благополучие учителей». Целью данного исследования является изучение восприятия учителями системы аттестации учителей и ее влияния на самооффективность и благополучие учителей в НИШ в Астане. Исследуя эту взаимосвязь, мы можем найти способы поддержки учителей и улучшения образования в школах.

Вас попросят принять участие в индивидуальном интервью, с Вашего разрешения оно будет записано. Любая информация, полученная в ходе этого исследования, будет конфиденциальной в пределах, предусмотренных законом. Будут предприняты все разумные усилия для обеспечения конфиденциальности Вашей личной информации, однако полная конфиденциальность не может быть гарантирована. Ваша личная информация, исследовательские записи и данные/образцы будут надежно храниться и поддерживаться. Ваша личная информация и исследовательские данные будут сохраняться только в течение необходимого времени для достижения целей исследования. По завершении исследования данные будут надежно архивированы или должным образом уничтожены в соответствии с нормативными требованиями и политиками учреждения.

**ВРЕМЯ УЧАСТИЯ:** Ваше участие потребует около *60 минут*.

**РИСКИ И ПРЕИМУЩЕСТВА:** Риски, связанные с этим исследованием, минимальны. Может возникнуть дискомфорт при вспоминании некоторых ситуаций, произошедших в процессе работы. Ожидаемые выгоды от этого исследования включают самоанализ и лучшее понимание концепции эмоционального интеллекта и его влияния на работу.

**ПРАВА УЧАСТНИКОВ:** Если Вы прочитали данную форму и решили принять участие в данном исследовании, Вы должны понимать, что Ваше участие является **добровольным** и что у Вас есть право **отозвать свое согласие или прекратить участие в любое время без штрафных санкций и без потери социального пакета, который Вам предоставляли**. В качестве альтернативы можно не участвовать в исследовании. Также Вы имеете право не отвечать на какие-либо вопросы. Результаты данного исследования могут быть представлены или опубликованы в научных или профессиональных целях.

### КОНТАКТНАЯ ИНФОРМАЦИЯ:

**Вопросы:** Если у Вас есть вопросы, замечания или жалобы по поводу данного исследования, процедуры его проведения, рисков и преимуществ, Вы можете связаться с руководителям магистерского тезиса исследователя: Профессор Дуйшон Шаматов (duishonkul.shamatov@nu.edu.kz)

**Независимые контакты:** Если Вы не удовлетворены проведением данного исследования, если у Вас возникли какие-либо проблемы, жалобы или вопросы, Вы можете связаться с Комитетом Исследований Высшей Школы Образования Назарбаев Университета, отправив

письмо на электронный адрес [gse.irec@nu.edu.kz](mailto:gse.irec@nu.edu.kz).

**Исследователь:** студент-магистрант 2 курса программы Лидерство в Образовании, Высшая Школа Образования, Назарбаев Университет, Айдана Мангытай, [aidana.manggytay@nu.edu.kz](mailto:aidana.manggytay@nu.edu.kz) +7 747 188 61 11

Пожалуйста, подпишите данную форму, если Вы согласны участвовать в исследовании.

- Я внимательно изучил(а) представленную информацию;
- Мне предоставили полную информацию о целях и процедуре исследования;
- Я понимаю, как будут использованы собранные данные, и что доступ к любой конфиденциальной информации будет иметь только исследователь;
- Я понимаю, что вправе в любой момент отказаться от участия в данном исследовании без объяснения причин;
- С полным осознанием всего вышеизложенного я согласен принять участие в исследовании по собственной воле.

Подпись: \_\_\_\_\_ Дата: \_\_\_\_\_

**Дополнительная копия этой подписанной и датированной формы согласия**

**остаётся у вас.**

### Appendix C: Information Letter (a letter to gatekeeper)

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is Aidana Manggytay, and I am a MSc student at Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Education. I am currently conducting research for my thesis on the topic “Exploring the Teachers’ Perceptions of Teacher Appraisal System and Its Influence on Teachers’ Self-Efficacy and Wellbeing”. The purpose of this study is to explore teachers’ perceptions of Teacher Appraisal System (TAS) and its influence on teacher self-efficacy and wellbeing at NIS in Astana. The study will be conducted until January of 2024.

As part of this study, I plan to conduct interviews with 6 teachers from your school to gather their opinions and experiences related to the research topic. Participation in the study is entirely voluntary: teachers can withdraw at any time and have the right to skip any questions they feel uncomfortable answering. The interviews will last approximately 60 minutes at most. All data about the school and participants will be fully anonymized using pseudonyms or identification numbers to ensure confidentiality.

All collected data, including recordings, interview transcripts, and other materials, will be securely stored in password-protected files and device, and only my supervisor and I will have access to this information. The data will be used for my thesis. It is also important to note that the findings may be used in possible future studies and publications. All data will be securely destroyed three years after the completion of the research.

I guarantee that all ethical standards and procedures will be followed, including obtaining teachers’ consent to participate in the study. I am also available to provide any additional information about the research process if needed.

I would greatly appreciate your consideration of my request to conduct this study in your school.

If you have any questions, concerns, or complaints about this research, its procedures, risks, or benefits, please feel free to contact me or my research supervisor:

Researcher: Aidana Manggytay, 2-year student MSc in Educational Leadership, NU GSE, [aidana.manggytay@nu.edu.kz](mailto:aidana.manggytay@nu.edu.kz) +7 747 188 61 11

Research Supervisor: Duishon Shamatov, Associate Professor, Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Education, [duishonkul.shamatov@nu.edu.kz](mailto:duishonkul.shamatov@nu.edu.kz)

Thank you in advance for your attention to my request.

Sincerely,

Aidana Manggytay

## Appendix D: Data Collection Instruments

### Interview guide

**Research title:** Exploring Teacher Appraisal System and Its Influence on Teachers' Self-Efficacy and Wellbeing

**Research questions:**

1. What are NIS teachers' perceptions of the Teacher Appraisal System?
2. What are NIS teachers' perceptions of the influence of the Teacher Appraisal System on their self-efficacy?
3. What are NIS teachers' perceptions of the influence of the Teacher Appraisal System on their wellbeing?

**Interview questions:**

1. What subjects do you teach?
2. How long have you been a teacher?
3. What is your professional category?
4. How many times have you gone through the TAS? When was the last time?
5. Where do teachers usually get information about eligibility for TAS?
6. Who helps teachers with instructions and clarifications?
7. Who assesses teachers? Who makes decisions?
8. What do you think are the main purposes of the TAS?
9. What do decisions made in TAS affect? What usually happens if a teacher goes through TAS successfully?
10. Can describe what kind of components TAS consists of?
11. How do you perceive the criteria used to evaluate teachers in the TAS? Can you describe those criteria?
12. How would you describe the process of being appraised? Is it clear and understandable?
13. How fair and transparent is the evaluation process? In your opinion, what is the easiest part of TAS? Why?
14. What are the most challenging parts of TAS for teachers? Why?
15. How do you perceive the feedback you receive from the TAS?
16. What do you believe could be done to improve the overall effectiveness of the TAS in your school?
17. How do you think TAS has affected your confidence in teaching?
18. Does TAS motivate you to improve or change your teaching practices?
19. How do you think TAS has affected your perceptions of your effectiveness?
20. In your opinion, how does the TAS foster an environment where you can continuously improve and feel confident in your abilities? Why or why not?
21. What emotions do you experience when you undergo evaluation?
22. What aspects of TAS contribute to positive emotions?
23. In what ways has the TAS influenced your job satisfaction?
24. How does teacher evaluation affect your engagement in professional development?
25. How does TAS affect your ability to create a comfortable educational environment at school?
26. How do you rate the level of support from colleagues during the TAS process?
27. How do you rate the level of support from the school during the TAS process?
28. How does the process of TAS help you feel the meaning of your profession? Why?
29. How does the evaluation contribute to achieving your professional goals?
30. What specific achievements or results of TAS are most meaningful to you?

## Appendix E: Data Analysis – Transcripts, Coding Samples

Project info Documents

Highlights

Add a document

Aigul Edit

Assem Edit

Aylin Edit

Karima Edit

Omar Edit

Sulu Edit

Backlight

октября начали подготовку к аттестации.

Собирались один раз в неделю по рефлексивному отчету рефлексивный отчет же состоит из 4 частей. На каждую спрашивали на собраниях, что написать успел. Администраторы собирали отчеты, кто подал на модератора отдельно, на экспедиции утром тех, кто подал на модератора внимание на отчет, черновой вариант. Еще уделяли внимание на открытые уроки. Я провел серию открытых уроков. Директор по воспитательной части (-имя).

раз в две недели я давал на открытые уроки. Она (замдиректор) присутствовала. а потом после каждого открытого урока применяла дифференциацию для уровня модератора. Попробовала. есть преимущества урока, какие недостатки есть. После каждого урока провел 3 урока. Потому что первый планировали и она не обратную связь, я вносил изменения уроку. После этого был по урокам. Эта характеристика как документ тоже вносил.

Researcher: А эти открытые уроки когда проводили?

Рагич: В январе – феврале 2023 года. А первый раз когда открытый урок или не проводил вообще, честно говоря, видел, как школа поддерживает меня. В конце апреля в достижении, но я сильно начал переживать. И пошел и с методической работе, поделился, что не уверен в своем нечего переживать, у вас достаточно достижения. Даже поддерживают, АОО тоже вас поддержит. Все случилось, сказали, надо поднять уровень IELTS, потому что у меня 5

Highlight

Find tags:

- achievement
- admin
- admin wellbeing
- agree - ranging T
- challenging part - writing report
- comfortable educational environment
- demotivation 3 stage
- done improve Teaching (self-efficacy)
- easy part - school
- fail - no consequence
- failure - feeling bad
- failure - perception stupid
- failure - social pressure / shame
- fake support
- language bias
- meaning (importance) of being a teacher
- moderator - olympiad place
- poor FB helpless to improve t practice
- positive emotions related to successful results
- previous admin no support
- prof growth

Save & Close

Delete highlight