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## **Comparative analysis of the rules and conditions for teachers' performance appraisal in Kazakhstan**

The present article contains the comparative analysis of the official documents framing the terms and conditions for teachers' performance appraisal in Kazakhstani schools. The process of searching for appropriate and valid official documents regulating the performance appraisal process is scrutinized. The changes and amendments in the process of obtaining or confirming the teachers' categories are considered. All the appendices are thoroughly analyzed through the prism of full-time secondary school teachers. The minor and major amendments are presented in the form of a list with respective points and clauses to visually support the teachers and those who are interested in. The historical and comparative methods are applied and justified in the article. The findings support the point that the performance appraisal process is underestimated and is being evaluated and changed. Moreover, there are significant changes that regulate the number of attempts which highlights the teachers' fail rate and their unpreparedness to the performance appraisal.

*Keywords:* teachers' performance appraisal, teacher certification, qualification categories, education, attestation, school teachers, national qualification test, teacher training.

### *Introduction*

According to our research on Mangystau region, full-time secondary school teachers' perception and identification of the key elements of the teachers' performance appraisal system in Kazakhstan, the problem of misconception, disinformation and wrong consideration takes place [1].

This, consequently, leads to inadequate and inappropriate preparation process where teachers do not apply necessary skills and knowledge, do not attach their teaching results and achievements to their portfolios, do not pass the National Qualification Test (NQT) which is a necessary stage in the teachers performance appraisal process [2].

The result is a high teachers' fail rate that discourages teachers and makes them avoid any further attempts to obtain the higher category or even to confirm the current one [1]. Pre-service teachers and recent graduates feel frustrated and demotivated to take the National Qualification Test and other stages of the performance appraisal process.

In the present article, we have chosen the 'Rules and conditions for performance appraisal of the teachers holding positions in educational organizations that implement general educational curricula of preschool education and training, primary, basic secondary and general secondary education, educational programs of technical and vocational, post-secondary, additional education and special educational programs, and other civil servants in education and science', (hereinafter referred to as Rules), as an official document that regulates the process of performance appraisal.

The present article studies the stages of the teachers' performance appraisal as the process in official obsolete and active decrees that have been approved by the Ministry of Education and Science in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

In addition, a comparative analysis of the changes and amendments is conducted and the results are presented in the form of the table in the Conclusion part of the present article.

### *Literature review*

For conducting the comparative and historical analysis, the following works have been executed. First, the notion of the teacher performance appraisal has been studied. According to the Cambridge dictionary, performance appraisal is equal to performance assessment. Thus, we can say that, on the whole, the performance appraisal is the act of examining someone or something in order to judge their qualities, success, or needs [3]. Then we can define teacher performance assessment as the act of examining teachers with the aim of judging their professional qualities and success.

According to the documents, regulating the process of teacher performance appraisal, in the current, acting Rules, there is no any definition of the performance appraisal. However, during the comparative analysis of the obsolete versions of the Rules, we found the following definition: performance appraisal is a procedure carried out in order to determine the conformity of the qualification level of a teaching staff with qualification requirements [2]. Therefore, we could suggest defining the concept of the teacher performance appraisal as a procedure of examining teachers to confirm their qualification requirements.

In addition, we have analyzed the works of prominent scientists in research methodology to be objective and have a transparent and fair research process. Researchers compare cases to each other; they use statistical methods to construct (and adjust) quantitative comparisons; they compare cases to theoretically derived pure cases; and they compare cases' values on relevant variables to average values in order to assess covariation. Comparison provides a basis for making statements about empirical regularities and for evaluating and interpreting cases relative to substantive and theoretical criteria. In this broad sense, comparison is central to empirical social science as it is practiced today [5]. Social research is inherently comparative [6]. Researchers compare the relative effects of variables across cases; they compare cases directly with one another.

Therefore, we have chosen the two methods to conduct this study.

### *Experimental*

Our major goal is to conduct a mixed method research on teachers' performance appraisal in Kazakhstani school using:

- Qualitative method of Case Study — we are going to conduct interviews with the four teachers from Mangystau region. To formulate, use and apply interviewing questions that are relevant and appropriate, we have scrutinized the documents to elicit the main concepts and definitions regulating the teachers' performance appraisal process. During our research, the documents have been amended, which proves that our research topic is relevant and the process is being modernized;

- Mixed method of survey with questioning teachers, holders of various categories or those without any category, and further interviewing them.

To make sure that the two documents regulating the process of obtaining and confirming the qualification category are considered appropriately, we applied the historical method and the method of comparison. The both methods reveal the essence of the qualitative methodology.

The historical method is used by the means of examining past version of the document, analyzing the acting rules, and drawing conclusions and making predictions about the future. We have gathered data, analyzed data, and analyzed the sources of data [6].

The method of comparison in Humanities and Social sciences is one of the frequently used methods. In our own time, due to certain historical developments like the enormous increase in communications, technological advances and the immanent intensification of internationalisation tendencies, comparative research, especially cross-national comparison, has increasingly being receiving much attention and, as a result, the bulk of contemporary human and social sciences abounds with examples of comparative approaches [7].

Thus, to compare the two processes indicated in the obsolete and acting Rules, we have chosen the historical and comparative methods of the qualitative methodology to ensure the transparent process of further interviewing Mangystau region secondary school teachers about teachers' performance appraisal.

The content analysis was conducted to analyze the Rules and previous versions of the documents: the words «qualification», «category», «requirements» were detected and examined through the prism of secondary school teachers answering the following research questions:

RQ1 — Who is responsible for the teacher performance appraisal process at schools?

RQ2 — What are the stages to confirm/obtain a category?

RQ3 — Who and how often needs to take the performance appraisal?

To find the necessary document or documents regulating the process of teachers' performance appraisal, we searched the Adilet database (<https://adilet.zan.kz/>) as this is the trustworthy source of any legal documents in Kazakhstan.

In the 'search' field we have typed the word «attestatsiia» in Cyrillic which means «performance appraisal» in the Russian language. The search showed 1643 documents with the phrase «performance appraisal». The option of choosing the acting document shortened the number of items to 775. The two first pages do not relate to teachers. The third page starts with the Decree on making amendments into 'Rules and conditions for performance appraisal of the teachers holding positions in educational organizations that implement

general educational curricula of preschool education and training, primary, basic secondary and general secondary education, educational programs of technical and vocational, post-secondary, additional education and special educational programs, and other civil servants in education and science'. The decree leads us to the link where the Rules are placed.

The Adilet system has tabs that allow us to view all the editions and their dates. The initial version of the Rules was approved by the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated January 27, 2016 No. 83. Registered with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan on February 29, 2016 No. 13317.

Then we had eight Orders on making changes and amendments into the Rules. In 2020, there have been implemented two changing processes — on April 7, 2020 and on May 14, 2020. We will compare these two documents regarding the process of teachers' performance appraisal.

The following significant changes and amendments have been implemented.

Clause 3 defines the performance appraisal commissions at each appropriate levels: «in educational organizations, education departments of districts (cities), education departments of regions, Nur-Sultan, Almaty and Shymkent cities, in an authorized body in the field of education (for republican subordinate organizations), in the authorized bodies of the relevant industry» [2].

Clauses 7 and 8 are amended and regulate the process at the field state bodies:

«Performance appraisal of teachers at educational organizations of field state bodies is carried out by attestation commissions of educational organizations and field state bodies» [2].

In addition, the Rules regulate the situations when there is a lack of certified and qualified specialists at these field state bodies.

In the absence of qualified specialists in the field bodies, the head of the educational organization shall apply for the certification of teachers to the educational administration [2].

As for teachers' qualification categories, they remain the same: pedagogue, pedagogue-moderator, pedagogue-expert, pedagogue-researcher, and pedagogue-master. However, the requirements for obtaining or approving the categories have been amended.

According to the latest version of the Rules, the percentage of the correct answers in the test defining the subject content becomes lower for teachers applying for «researcher» and «master» qualification categories — 65 % and 70 % instead of 70 % and 80 %, respectively. At the same time, the requirements for taking the test module on Pedagogical and Methods of teaching have become more demanding with an increase by 5 % at each qualification category instead of stable 30 % in the obsolete version of the Rules [2].

One more significant change into the Rules indicates the graduate students taking the NQT. Starting from 2021 calendar year, graduate students of pedagogical majors have to take the NQT to be hired to educational organizations. These changes refer to Bachelor, Master and Doctorate students having completed their education.

The process of the performance appraisal of teachers is carried out at least once every five years, for top managers — persons who are head of educational organizations — once every three years.

To obtain or approve the qualification category after the process of the performance appraisal, a teacher takes the national qualification test.

National qualification test is carried out on time, according to the statement of the teacher.

Reception of applications from teachers is carried out at least 15 calendar days before the test starts. As for heads of educational organizations, they should send the statement at least 30 calendar days before testing.

When applying for qualification testing, teachers choose the language of delivery. The following languages are available: Kazakh, Russian, Uyghur, Uzbek and Tajik. This ensures diversity for teachers from different places depending on the language of instructions. Then the teacher chooses a date, time and gets acquainted with the instructions for conducting national qualification testing, which is prepared by an organization determined by the authorized body in the field of education.

After a teacher's application is embedded into the database, a teacher receives a test pass. The total time of the national qualification testing is 210 minutes, for Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics and ICT teachers the time for being tested is prolonged. These STEM teachers will have 240 minutes due to more time necessary for calculations.

To ensure transparency and objectivity during the national qualification testing, the audience and the place of each teacher at the sites are provided with a video surveillance system. This proctoring system is also a change into the acting Rules. If there are the facts of violation of the rules during the national qualifi-

cation testing, as well as those found during the viewing of the video, regardless of the deadline, an act is drawn up and the results are cancelled [2].

When the teacher enters the building of the testing point, his identity is identified on the basis of an identity document and a pass. When conducting national proficiency testing, it is not allowed to leave the classroom without the permission and accompaniment of the attendant, talk to each other, change from place to place, exchange materials, take materials out of the classroom, bring them into the classroom and use objects (textbooks and methodological literature, digital smart equipment) [2].

When teachers sit at their places, before the test starts, an audio recording is started according to the rules of conduct during testing. Representatives of the authorized body in the field of education participate in the national qualification testing as observers.

### *Results and Discussion*

The previous obsolete version of the Rules and the current one have much in common. The key definitions, concepts and procedures remain not changed. However, in the new edition of the Rules, a detailed explanation of certain points when passing certification has been worked out, which previously caused many questions and a difference in interpretation. The significant changes are presented below.

A person who can take the national qualification test is a teacher. Moreover, a teacher can take the test:

- 1 (one) time per calendar year — free of charge;
- and repeatedly 1 (one) time during a calendar year — on a paid basis in the amount of not more than 1 (one) monthly calculation index (hereinafter — MCI) of the corresponding calendar year;
- teachers applying for early certification 1 (one) time during a calendar year — free of charge;
- trial test (at the request of the teacher) — on a paid basis during the calendar year in the amount of not more than 0.5 MCI;
- students of institutions of higher and / or postgraduate education in pedagogical areas who have mastered at least 200 academic credits:
  - 1 (one) time per calendar year — free of charge;
  - graduates who graduated from the organization of technical and professional, higher and/or postgraduate education in pedagogical (specialties) areas:
    - 1 (one) time per calendar year — free of charge;
    - heads of educational organizations, methodological offices (centers) in a calendar year 1 (one) time — free of charge;
    - repeatedly 1 (one) time during a calendar year — on a paid basis in the amount of not more than 1 (one) MCI of the corresponding calendar year;
    - trial (at the request of the head of the educational organization) — on a paid basis during the calendar year in the amount of not more than 0.5 MCI.

If the teacher (the head of the educational organization (methodological office (center)) for the next certification for the assignment (confirmation) of qualification categories, did not score points for the declared category during the certification period January-May (August-December), the qualification category remains until the expiration its term, then the qualification category is reduced by one level lower. This qualification category remains until the next certification period August-December (January-May).

In the next certification period, August-December (January-May), the teacher (the head of the educational organization (methodological office (center)) submits an application to the certification commission of the corresponding level for the assignment (confirmation) of the originally declared qualification category.

If the teacher (the head of the educational organization (methodological office (center)) has not submitted an application in time for the next certification for the assignment (confirmation) of qualification categories during the certification period August-December (January-May), the qualification category is reduced to the qualification category «teacher». This qualification category remains until the next certification period August-December (January-May).

In the next certification period, August-December (January-May), the teacher (the head of the educational organization (methodological office (center)) submits an application to the certification commission of the appropriate level for the assignment (confirmation) of the category corresponding to the qualification requirements.

In the event that a teacher who has a «second», «first», «highest» category did not score points for the declared category during the certification period January-May (August-December), the qualification category

remains until the expiration of its term, then it decreases to the category «teacher». This qualification category remains until the next certification period August-December (January-May).

In the next certification period, August-December (January-May), the teacher submits an application to the certification commission of the appropriate level for the assignment (confirmation) of the category corresponding to the qualification requirements.

In case of violation of the Rules for conducting testing or detection of a prohibited subject during the NQT, the teacher (the head of the educational organization (methodological office (center) is deprived of the right to undergo certification for a period of five years (the heads of the educational organization — for three years)) decreases to the qualification category «teacher» (head — to the qualification category «head of the educational organization») [2].

### Conclusion

RQ1 — Who is responsible for the teacher performance appraisal process at schools?

RQ2 — What are the stages to confirm/obtain a category?

RQ3 — Who and how often needs to take the performance appraisal?

The first research question reveals the audience who are able and required to take the performance appraisal process at schools: currently, the phrase «performance appraisal of pedagogical staff» has been changed to «performance appraisal of pedagogues». «Pedagogues» are defined in the Decree «Ob utverzhdenii Perechnia dolzhnostei pedagogov» by the Minister of Education and Science as of 15 April, 2020. The list of persons qualified for this concept is extended and comprises the head of school departments, military service teachers and principals. The responsible person is not officially determined, however.

The RQ2 reveals that there are two main stages in the performance appraisal:

Taking the National Qualification Test;

Taking the procedure of performance appraisal itself, including but not limited to submitting a portfolio with teachers' results, learners' achievements, professional development certificates, identification documents.

Both stages can differ a little depending on the qualification category.

The third research question reveals that there are significant changes in taking the performance appraisal procedure. One of these changes is that graduates who graduated from the organization of technical and professional, postgraduate or higher education in pedagogical specialties, including those who graduated with excellent marks, are hired after successful completion of the NQT. For these graduates, the qualification category «teacher» is assigned by the attestation commission of the educational organization after passing the stage of complex analytical generalization of the results of activities after three or four months in the corresponding attestation period.

The findings prove that the issues of teachers' performance appraisal are of high relevance: the amendments are being implemented from year to year. The teachers' concerns are taken into account and the audience to take the performance appraisal is being extended.

The findings show that the further mixed method research on perception of teachers' performance appraisal is needed and can result in the methodology-related recommendations for teachers, school administration and university/college teachers dealing with pre-service teachers.

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### Қазақстандағы мұғалімдердің қызметін бағалау ережелері мен шарттарына салыстырмалы талдау

Мақалада қазақстандық мектептердегі мұғалімдерді аттестациялау ережелері мен шарттарын реттейтін ресми құжаттардың салыстырмалы талдауы берілген. Аттестациялауды реттейтін қолданыстағы және мерзімі өткен ресми құжаттар мұқият зерттелді. Біліктілік санаттарын алу немесе растау ережелері мен шарттарының өзгерістері және толықтырулары талданды. Құжаттар мен олардың қосымшаларын талдау барысында Қазақстандағы жалпы білім беретін мектеп мұғалімдерінің көзқарасы негізге алынды. Кез келген кішігірім және маңызды өзгерістер, мұғалімдер мен басқа да мүдделі тараптарды көрнекілік қолдау мақсатында тиісті тараулар мен тармақтарды көрсете отырып, тізім түрінде ұсынылды. Мақала жазу барысында тарихи және салыстырмалы зерттеу әдістері қолданылды. Алынған мәліметтер педагогикалық кадрларды аттестаттаудан өту үдерісінің жеткілікті бағаланбағанын растайды. Оның үстіне, мұғалімдердің үлгермеушілік пайызы мен олардың аттестаттауға дайын еместігін көрсететін аттестаттау әрекетін реттейтін құжаттарға елеулі өзгерістер енгізілді.

*Кілт сөздер:* мұғалімдерді аттестациялау, біліктілік санаты, педагогтерді аттестациялау, білім беру, аттестаттау, мектеп мұғалімдері, ұлттық біліктілік тесті, мұғалімдерді дайындау.

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### Сравнительный анализ документов, регламентирующих аттестацию педагогов в Республике Казахстан

Статья содержит сравнительный анализ официальных документов, регулирующих правила и условия аттестации учителей казахстанских школ. Тщательно проведен поиск актуальных действующих и утративших силу официальных документов, регулирующих процесс аттестации. Рассмотрены изменения и дополнения к правилам и условиям получения или подтверждения квалификационных категорий. Произведен анализ приложений к документам с точки зрения учителей общеобразовательных школ Казахстана. Любые незначительные и существенные изменения представлены в виде списка с указанием соответствующих пунктов и статей для визуальной поддержки учителей и иных заинтересованных лиц. Авторами применены и обоснованы исторический и сравнительный методы. Полученные данные подтвердили, что процесс прохождения аттестации педагогических работников недостаточно оценен. Более того, в документы внесены существенные изменения, которые регулируют количество попыток прохождения аттестации, что подчеркивает процент неудач учителей и их неподготовленность к аттестации.

*Ключевые слова:* аттестация учителей, квалификационная категория, аттестация педагогов, образование, аттестация, школьные учителя, национальный квалификационный тест, подготовка учителей.

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