Journal of Teacher Education and Lifelong Learning (TELL)

Volume: 6 Issue: 1 Year: 2024 | Research Article | ISSN: 2687-5713

Examination of The Academic Status of Geography Education in Turkish Higher Education According to the Opinions of Faculty Members[1]

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Article Info

Article History
Received: 15/02/2024
Accepted: 15/03/2024
Published: 30/06/2024

Keywords:
Geography Education,
Faculty Member Academic Status,
Content Analysis

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to determine the views of faculty members who have studied in the field of geography education on research orientations in the field. The criterion sampling method, one of the purposeful sampling methods, was used to determine the sample of this research, which was carried out in the case study design within the qualitative research tradition. Accordingly, 33 faculty members who completed their doctorate in the field of geography or geography education and have studied geography education constituted the participants of the study. A semi-structured interview form was used to determine the faculty members' views on research orientations in the field. Content analysis was used to analyze the data obtained. According to the findings of the study, 96 code expressions were generated from the opinions of the faculty members about the orientations in the field of geography education. These codes were then organized around three main themes: orientations, problems, and expectations. The main theme of orientations consisted of the sub-themes of study topics, reasons for topic preferences, research orientations, and influential events and phenomena; the main theme of problems consisted of the sub-themes of problems, rich literature, and limited literature; and the main theme of expectations consisted of the sub-themes of the future of the field and researcher profile.

Citation: Duran, Y. & Aladağ, C. (2024). Examination of the academic status of geography education in turkish higher education according to the opinions of faculty members. *Journal of Teacher Education and Lifelong Learning*, *6*(1), 111-132.

[1] This study is based on the doctoral dissertation entitled "Geography education in Türkiye in the 100th year of the Republic: a case study", which was completed on 12.12.2023 under the supervision of Author 2.

INTRODUCTION

Geography, as a synthesis science that deals with the mutual interaction of nature and human beings between science and social sciences, is a discipline area that countries should definitely benefit from in order to increase their level of development. Political, socio-economic, and technological changes emerging in the process of globalization necessitate the evaluation of geography and geography education from a new perspective (Artvinli & Kaya, 2010). In order to make an accounting of the point reached in the field of geography and geography education and to reveal the situation for the future, various works have been produced by both public institutions and researchers on various anniversaries of the Turkish Republic. There are studies on the state of geography in Türkiye in this way (Akkan, 1972; Akyol, 1943; Erinç, 1973; Gürsoy, 1974; İzbırak, 1976; Kayan, 2000, 2023; Koçman, 1999; Sekin, 1999a, 1999b; Ünlü, 1999). Apart from such periodical reviews, there are also studies that investigate the historical adventure and organization process of geography in Türkiye (Gümüşçü, 2012; Gümüşçü & Karakaş-Özür, 2016; Tümertekin, 2001).

Examining the related studies in general, it is understood that there are mostly descriptive studies that examine international trends in the field of geography or evaluate the situation in Türkiye. In addition, a study on the innovation orientations of the sub-discipline of human geography based on data and academician experiences (Özgür, 2018) also exists. However, there is no study in the literature that addresses in depth how the current situation and future orientations in the field of geography education are seen from the perspective of academics who have studied in the field.

The aim of this case study is to determine the views of the faculty members who have studied in the field of geography education on research orientations in the field. The fact that there is no study based on synthesizing the views of faculty members in the field of geography education in the literature constitutes an important justification for this research. In addition, analyzing the developments in the field of geography education to date, the level reached, making determinations about the situation we are in today, and seeing the path taken by looking back is also important in terms of making decisions for today and the future.

METHOD

Research Design

This research was designed based on qualitative research methods and techniques because qualitative research is the process of developing field-specific explanations or theories by analyzing the meanings constructed by individuals (Özden & Saban, 2017).

In this study, which aims to examine and interpret the basic characteristics of the views of the faculty members who have studied in the field of geography education in Türkiye regarding the research orientations in the field, the case study method, one of the qualitative research models, was used. According to Yin (1984, p. 23), a case study is an empirical research method in which (1) a phenomenon is observed in its own context, (2) the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are unclear, and (3) multiple data sources are used. (Cited: Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021).

Study Group

The criterion sampling method, one of the purposeful sampling methods, was used while forming the study group for the research. The criterion sampling method is the study of all situations that meet predetermined criteria, and these criteria can be determined by the researcher (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021). Based on these definitions, in order to determine the participants of this study, the criterion of having a PhD in geography or geography education and having studies related to geography education was determined. Table 1 shows the characteristics of the participants whose opinions were consulted in the study in order to determine the views of academics in the field of geography education.

Table 1. *Characteristics of the study group*[1]

Participant	*N*
Gender	
Female	4
Male	29
Title	
Professor	19
Associate Professor	12
Dr. Lecturer	2
Faculty	
Education	27
Literature	4
Tourism	1
Human and Social Sciences	1
Doctorate Subject	
Education	20
Field	13
Associate Professorship Area	
Social Sciences Education	24
Human and Economic Geography	5
Physical Geography	4
Total	33

1 This table is based on YÖK (Turkish Higher Education Council) Academic data.

According to Table 1, the participants of this study consisted of 33 faculty members working in 16 different state universities, determined according to the July 2022 YÖK Academic data.

Research Instruments and Processes

The semi-structured interview form was used as a data collection tool to determine the views of academics who contribute to research orientations in the field of geography education. In order to create the conceptual framework and prepare the interview questions, firstly, a literature review was conducted, and a question pool was determined. After determining the questions, a pilot application (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021) was conducted for this purpose, with face-to-face interviews with two faculty members who completed their doctorate in the field of geography or geography education. The pilot interviews were analyzed with the members of the thesis monitoring committee in terms of the meaningfulness and clarity of the questions and the satisfactory level of the answers given. Accordingly, the following questions were included in the interview form:

1) What are your study subjects, and what are your reasons for preferring these subjects?
2) What do you think determines research orientations in the field of geography education in Türkiye?
    a. What do you think may be the factors affecting the fact that fewer studies have been conducted in the field of geography education in Türkiye, especially before the 2000s?
    b. What are the subjects—if any—that you think are intensively studied in the field of geography education in Türkiye?
    c. What are the research topics—if any—that you think are not sufficiently studied in the field of geography education in Türkiye?
3) How do you evaluate the current situation of geography education in Türkiye?
    a. What do you think—if any—are the problems in the field of geography education?
    b. What do you think about the future of geography education in Türkiye?
4) In your opinion, how should researchers who want to work in the field of geography education follow a path to contribute to the field?

Initially, 47 faculty members from 21 different state universities who met the criteria were contacted via e-mail and/or telephone, and brief information about the desired interview was given and the form was directed. The participants of the study consisted of 33 faculty members from 16 different state universities who voluntarily completed the interview form and participated voluntarily. During the process, additional questions were asked of the faculty members via email, and communication was continued by taking into account their directions about the study. In addition, face-to-face interviews were conducted with 12 faculty members using the same form. Each form was first purified from personal data, and the faculty members were coded as P1, P2, P3, etc.

Data Analysis

The content analysis method was used to analyze the interview forms. In content analysis, a cyclical process was followed for coding the data conceptually and thematically (Saldana, 2019). Since the data obtained with the forms were collected via email, they were made ready for analysis with minor text corrections in a digital environment. During the editing process, in accordance with ethical rules, the information of the faculty members and the institutions they work for was kept confidential, and the elements that could give an idea about this were eliminated. The process of subjecting the data obtained through the interview form to content analysis was carried out in four stages: (1) coding the data, (2) finding themes, (3) organizing the codes and themes, and (4) defining and interpreting the findings (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021). Accordingly, 96 code expressions and three themes with these codes were formed. While determining the themes, the interview form questions prepared according to the purpose of the research were utilized. Then, the codes and themes obtained were tabulated and analyzed.

The reliability and validity of the results of the research are the basic criteria that increase the credibility of the research (Saban, 2008). In qualitative research, reporting the data in detail and explaining how the researcher reached the findings are important elements to ensure validity. In order to ensure reliability in coding, inter-coder agreement is required (Creswell, 2016) and utilized. Reliability for inter-coder consensus is based on Miles and Huberman's (2016, s. 64) formula, which calculates *Reliability = Consensus / (consensus + disagreement)*. In order to determine the consistency of the 96 codes obtained as a result of the analysis of the interview forms and the three themes organized according to these codes, the consensus among the coders was examined. Accordingly, the consensus was based on the acceptance of a second coder, who is an expert in the field of geography education, on the codes used on a randomly selected interview form and the themes and sub-themes created accordingly. In the reliability study specific to this research, the inter-coder consensus was calculated at 0.99.

Ethic

The research was approved by the decision of Necmettin Erbakan University Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research Ethics Committee dated 19 March 2021 and numbered 2021/170.

FINDINGS

According to the general findings obtained in this study, 96 code expressions were generated from the opinions of the faculty members regarding the orientations in the field of geography education. Ten of the ninety-six codes (*habits do not change easily, biodiversity, regional geography, values and ethics education, climate change education, history of cartography, scale development studies, measurement and evaluation, geography in social studies, sustainable development, and education*) were produced by only one faculty member. Apart from the ten statements expressed by a single faculty member, the number of faculty members representing the remaining eighty-six statements varies between two and thirty. In addition, five statements *(geographical skills, textbook analysis, concept teaching and misconceptions, metaphor, teaching methods and techniques)* were stated by the participants in two different sub-themes, and two statements *(GIS (geographic information systems) and environmental education)* in three different sub-themes. As seen in the opinions of the lecturers, these codes emphasize different dimensions of geography education. For example,

the expression of environmental education, which is included in three different sub-themes, was mentioned by some participants as a subject of study, some as a rich area of literature, and some as a limited area of literature. In addition, it is expected that the fields of study of the faculty members and the topics that they see as a limited and/or rich area in the literature are similar. For this reason, it was considered appropriate to state each sub-theme separately and to include it in the table.

The code expressions obtained from the opinions of the faculty members about their orientations in the field of geography education were grouped under three themes by using the interview form questions prepared according to the purpose of the research. These are *"orientations"*, *"problems"* and *"expectations"* (Table 2).

Table 2. *Themes related to the opinions of faculty members on the field of geography education*[1]

Theme	Sub-theme	Code	N
Orientations	Study topics	Geography of disasters (3), Human geography (2), Biodiversity (1), Regional geography (1), GIS (4), Geographical skills (2), Geography curricula (16), Use of technology in geography education (2), Environmental education (7), Values and ethics education (1), Textbook analysis (5), Physical geography (6), History of cartography (1), Concept teaching and misconceptions (3), Cultural geography (6), Metaphor (3), Literacy (3), Teaching methods and techniques (18), Teacher education (2), Measurement and evaluation (1), Geography in social studies (1), Sustainable development and education (1)	22
	Reasons for subject preference	Knowledge transfer (7), Change (4), Need (5), Desire (12), Career planning (7), Previous studies (27), Thesis topic (5), Necessity (8)	8
	Research orientations	Academic promotion criteria (5), Researcher's areas of interest (11), Outgoing researcher (2), Guidance from supervisor (4), Similar to trends in educational sciences (5), Current developments (16), Stakeholder expectations (2), According to theses and articles (6), International trends (11)	9
	Effective events and facts	Low number of field educators (17), Geography is seen only as a field (9), Associate professorship areas (3), Government policies (9), Low number of postgraduate studies (6), A recent discipline (3), Structuring in higher education (13)	7
	Theme Total		**46**
Problems	Problems	Miscommunication within the field (10), Distance between the field and field education (16), Defining the field (6), Habits do not change easily (1), Lack of geography education magazine (2), Less class hours (7), Insufficient number of in-service trainings (2), Studying stereotyped subjects (9), Quota limitation (2), Material problem (9), Lack of methodology (5), Loss of quality (4), Norm staff (10), Disconnected from stakeholders (14), Exam-oriented education system (5), Accepting students with social score (5), Insufficient use of technology (2), Studies far from practice (21), Foreign language insufficiencies (5)	19
	Rich literature	Disaster education (4), Perception, attitude, and opinion (17), Use of tools and materials (2), GIS (4), Environmental education (5), Textbook review (6), Concept teaching and misconceptions (10), Metaphor (5), Examination of curricula (15), Teaching methods and techniques (22)	10
	Limited literature	Alternative measurement tools (4), Field applications (5), GIS (9), Geographical skills (10), Philosophy of geography education (3), Special education in geography education (7), Environmental education (11), Cooperation with different disciplines (8), Climate change education (1), Material design (2), Scale development studies (1), Classroom activities (6), Technology supported applications (2)	13
	Theme Total		**42**
Expectations	The future of the field	If certain criteria are met, it will be in a better position (30), It will be better than today (3), It will be worse than today (5), It is clear that there is a long way to go (6), There will be an unplanned development (3)	5
	Researcher profile	Good command of literature (3), Good command of methodology (16), Good command of foreign language (3)	3
	Theme Total		**8**
		GENERAL TOTAL	**96**

[1] The numbers in brackets indicate the number of faculty members representing the relevant code expression.

Theme-1: Orientations

This theme consists of four sub-themes and a total of 46 code expressions that make up these sub-themes. These are *"study subjects"*, *"subject preference reasons"*, *"research orientations"* and *"effective events and facts"* sub-themes. The codes constituting these sub-themes and the opinions of the lecturers are given, respectively. Table 3 shows the study subjects of the faculty members in the sub-theme of study subjects.

Table 3. *Study subjects' sub-theme*

Nr	Code	*f*	%	Valid Percentage (%)[1]
1	Teaching methods and techniques	18	2,77	20,22
2	Geography teaching programs	16	2,47	17,98
3	Environmental education	7	1,08	7,87
4	Physical geography	6	0,92	6,74
5	Geography of culture	6	0,92	6,74
6	Textbook review	5	0,77	5,62
7	GIS	4	0,62	4,49
8	Geography of disasters	3	0,46	3,37
9	Concept teaching and misconceptions	3	0,46	3,37
10	Metaphor	3	0,46	3,37
11	Literacy	3	0,46	3,37
12	Human geography	2	0,31	2,25
13	Geographical skills	2	0,31	2,25
14	Use of technology in geography education	2	0,31	2,25
15	Teacher training	2	0,31	2,25
16	Biodiversity	1	0,15	1,12
17	Regional geography	1	0,15	1,12
18	Values and ethics education	1	0,15	1,12
19	History of cartography	1	0,15	1,12
20	Measurement and evaluation	1	0,15	1,12
21	Geography in social studies	1	0,15	1,12
22	Sustainable development and education	1	0,15	1,12
	Total	**89**	**13,71**	**100[2]**

[1] Valid percentage indicates the percentage value within the relevant category.

[2] The numbers in the table may not sum to the total due to rounding.

Faculty members' views on the relationship between geography and culture:

- "Within the scope of cultural geography issues, I also publish in this field within the framework of the relationship between geography and culture, the effects of the environment on culture and the efforts to reveal the cultural richness of Anatolia." (P7)

- "I am working on the use of traditional children's games and proverbs in geography teaching in the subject area of the effect of geography on cultural activities and the use of these factors during geography teaching." (P18)

The statements of the participants emphasize the impact of geography on cultural activities. These statements are intended to examine the effects of geography education on human life and cultural heritage. Geography education can be used in shaping cultural activities and teaching traditional games and proverbs.

Faculty members' views on geography education and teaching methods:

- "The most important reason why I am more interested in curricula, textbooks and geographical skills is to be able to contribute to the level of competence in these subjects and to provide guiding results for improvement suggestions and updates in the process. In addition, I think that curricula and textbooks are the main sources for geographical awareness and knowledge transfer." (P1)

- "As part of my doctoral thesis, I am studying physical geography topics such as climate and soil, as well as topics in the field of geography education on how geography lessons should be taught, how curricula should be examined and how teaching methods and techniques should be applied." (P8)

- The statements of the participants focus on geography education and teaching methods. These statements include topics such as curricula, textbooks, instructional technologies, and the development of geographical skills. They also cover areas of study such as the teaching of geography, the examination of teaching programs and the application of teaching methods and techniques.

Faculty members' views on geography education research and basic orientations:

- "Examination of geography curricula, concept studies in geography teaching, basic orientations in geography education research, perceptions of geography." (P33)

Participants' testimony addressed issues such as the examination of geography curricula, concept studies in geography teaching and the main trends in geography education research.

Evaluating the participant statements related to this sub-theme, it is emphasized that geography education is a multifaceted discipline, and that field and education studies should be carried out together. Based on the views of faculty members, geography education is a dynamic and interactive field that aims to make sense of cultural heritage and enrich educational processes.

Table 4 shows the opinions of the faculty members on the sub-theme of reasons for subject preference.

Table 4. *Subject preference reason's sub-theme*

Nr	Code	*f*	%	Valid Percentage (%)[1]
1	Previous work	27	4,16	36
2	Request	12	1,85	16
3	Necessity	8	1,23	10,67
4	Knowledge transfer	7	1,08	9,33
5	Career planning	7	1,08	9,33
6	Need	5	0,77	6,67
7	Thesis topic	5	0,77	6,67
8	Change	4	0,62	5,33
	Total	**75**	**11,56**	**100**[2]

[1] Valid percentage indicates the percentage value within the relevant category.
[2] The numbers in the table may not sum to the total due to rounding.

According to According to Table 4, it can be stated that both personal and institutional factors are effective in influencing the thesis topic preferences of the researchers.

Faculty members' views on academic careers and research motivation:

- "... enrolling in the geography department at the undergraduate level and then my desire to research..." (P19)
- "... I started to work in geography education with the warnings and suggestions that if we did not publish in the field of geography education as well as human geography, we would not be able to get staff, especially in the process of restructuring of education faculties after 1997." (P24)

The statements of the participants show their willingness to pursue an academic career and research in the field of geography education. These statements include academic backgrounds and research motivations such as undergraduate education, norm staffing regulations and related obligations, and doctoral thesis topics related to the reasons for faculty members' subject preferences.

Faculty members' views on technological developments and geography education:

- "Since I am interested in technology and geography education, I carry out my studies in this context. Of course, technology continues to turn into a very big medium day by day... The most important reason for this is, of course, to establish a connection between geography education and technological applications and to achieve harmony." (P25)
- "... my reason for working is that there is a need in the field, and the field is open to innovations..." (P28)

The statements of the participants emphasize the impact of technological developments on geography education and the interest in innovations in this field. These statements include the integration of technology into geography education and the effect of the needs and changes in this field on the reasons for subject preference.

Faculty members' views on studies and orientations in the field of geography education:

- "Since the field of geography education constitutes my field of associate professorship, geography education constitutes my main field of study... However, since the program where my staff is located is social studies, some of my studies have naturally shifted there." (P33)
- "In the beginning, I was writing on every subject where I saw a gap. My master's and doctoral theses are about teaching methods. But in recent years, I have focused on skill teaching." (P10)

The statements of the participants include the reasons for their orientation towards the field of geography education. These statements cover topics such as teaching methods, skills teaching, understanding and evaluation of geography, student views, and current trends. Accordingly, the reasons for the subject preference of the faculty members are affected by various dynamics, especially the thesis topic and previous studies.

Evaluating participant views on this sub-theme, it is seen that the factors affecting the reasons for faculty members' subject preference are affected by various factors such as academic appointment and promotion, research motivations, practices in educational processes, and social perceptions. Accordingly, faculty members tend to continue their academic careers in the field of geography education in line with the interests and skills they gained during their undergraduate and/or graduate education. In addition, the desire to include technology in the process of geography education is effective in faculty members' choice of research topics. It is aimed at developing innovative approaches to improve the quality of geography education and contribute to the development of geographical awareness. Another reason for preference is that faculty members work to draw attention to the importance of geography education based on the view that geography does not receive the value it deserves in society.

Table 5 shows the opinions of the faculty members on the sub-theme of research orientations.

Table 5. *Research orientation's sub-theme*

Nr	Code	*f*	*%*	Valid Percentage (%)[1]
1	Current developments	16	2,47	25,81
2	Areas of interest of the researcher	11	1,69	17,74
3	International orientations	11	1,69	17,74
4	According to theses and articles	6	0,92	9,68
5	Academic promotion criteria	5	0,77	8,06
6	Similar to orientations in educational sciences	5	0,77	8,06
7	Counsellor guidance	4	0,62	6,45
8	The prolific researcher	2	0,31	3,23
9	Stakeholder expectations	2	0,31	3,23
	Total	**62**	**9,55**	**100[2]**

[1] Valid percentage indicates the percentage value within the relevant category.
[2] The numbers in the table may not sum to the total due to rounding.

According to Table 5, research orientations in the field of geography education are influenced by both personal and institutional factors as well as social and global dynamics.

Faculty members' views on the development of educational research and new approaches:

- "I think a development or change in the field of education can play a driving role here. For example, a change in the curricula or the publication of a textbook can shed light on the study of these issues. Another factor is that similar studies can be integrated into the field of geography by taking more pioneering studies in field education (such as science education) as an example. In particular, academics with good foreign language skills or high contact with abroad are trying to bring new fields of study in Europe or America to our country (Türkiye) by taking them as reference." (P33)

- "I think that research trends are shaped according to the theses and articles produced in the field. I observe that there are changes in research areas after the publications of a few prominent researchers who pioneered the field and brought different perspectives or method-techniques to the field. Especially when there are several publications on a subject, we see that many similar studies are carried out quickly in terms of method and literature." (P1)

The statements of the participants emphasize the development of research in the field of geography education and the impact of popular topics. These statements show that geography education research has gained momentum since the early 2000s, popular and current issues are frequently addressed in research, and new approaches are integrated into the field by influencing other disciplines.

Faculty members' views on academic orientation and career goals:

- "In my opinion, the first determining factor is the curiosity of the researchers. In addition, providing the necessary points for career advancement is also an important reason that cannot be ignored. Another factor can be expressed as academic incentive. Lastly, in my opinion, the prestige that qualified publications can provide can be expressed as an important reason." (P14)

- "Research tendencies are mostly based on academic concerns. Master's or doctoral thesis topics consist of studies that are feasible and do not take much time, where tried methods are selected or methods tested by others are used. This situation restricts new developments or knowledge production. Post-doctoral or associate professorship studies are studies carried out to fulfil academic promotion criteria. It is seen that experimental and long-lasting studies are avoided." (P30)

The statements of the participants indicate that the guidance of academic advisors, researchers' curiosity, career goals and academic incentives are effective in the selection of research topics. These statements explain that academic appointment and promotion criteria have an important role in shaping research orientations.

Evaluating the participants' views on this sub-theme, it is seen that various factors such as academic career goals, developments in the field of educational sciences, current issues, guidance of supervisors and personal interests affect the research orientations of faculty members. Accordingly, faculty members consider factors such as appointment and promotion criteria and academic incentives when choosing research topics to achieve career goals such as academic promotion and gaining prestige. Innovations and changes in the field of educational sciences play a driving role in the process of faculty members' selection of research topics. In addition, popular topics in the field of educational sciences in general are another factor that faculty members consider when choosing their research topics. These topics may change depending on the trends and current events in the field and may affect the interests of researchers.

Table 6 shows the opinions of the faculty members on the sub-theme of effective events and phenomena.

Table *6.* *Effective events and phenomena sub-theme*

Nr	Code	*f*	%	Valid Percentage (%)[1]
1	Low number of field instructors	17	2,62	28,33
2	Structuring in higher education	13	2	21,67
3	Considering geography only as an area	9	1,39	15
4	Government policies	9	1,39	15
5	Low number of postgraduate studies	6	0,92	10
6	Associate Professorship fields	3	0,46	5
7	A recent discipline area	3	0,46	5
	Total	**60**	**9,24**	**100[2]**

[1] Valid percentage indicates the percentage value within the relevant category.

[2] The numbers in the table may not add up to the total due to rounding.

According to Table 6, faculty members generally stated that administrative decisions and the resulting legislative changes were effective on the events and phenomena affecting the field of geography education.

Faculty members' views on restructuring of education faculties and increasing the importance of field education:

- "There are many variables. For example, the educational policies of the country, the incorporation of faculties of education into the body of the Council of Higher Education (YÖK) also affect scientific research in this field. However, at this point, although faculties of education were incorporated into YÖK in 1982, it took years for educational research to become widespread. The restructuring of faculties of education with the 1997 reform is a turning point here. Here, it was an important turning point that habits do not change easily, but when the necessity arose, field education studies started to be emphasized." (P7)

- "Especially in the period before 2000, geography education was a neglected field and the fact that the lecturers working in the geography teaching department did not know the field of geography education very well and did not carry out studies in this field was effective, but afterwards, with the compulsory education studies, the studies in this field moved to another dimension." (P16)

The statements of the participants show that the restructuring of the faculties of education played an important role in the increase of the studies in the field of geography education. In these statements, it is stated that the programs of faculties of education were changed with the Turkish National Education Development Project (MEGP), field education gained attention and a new era started in the field of geography education.

Faculty members' views on the popularization of postgraduate education and its acceptance as an associate professorship field:

- "The reason for the low number of publications before 2000 is that postgraduate studies in the field of geography education are not carried out and geography is seen only as basic branches such as physical and human. Because in Türkiye, geography education master's and doctorate degrees started in the early 2000s and associate professorship degrees in geography education generally started after 2010s." (P1)

- "With the acceptance of the field of geography education as an associate professorship field by YÖK, I think there has been an increase in the number of studies in this field. In the previous periods, there was no deficiency in geography education. Because it was accepted that those who had knowledge could teach it. I also have studies in the field of physical geography; however, being in the field of geography education has directed my studies to this channel. As a result, with the establishment of educational sciences institutes, studying education has become a necessity and the number of studies on geography education has increased." (P4)

The statements of the participants include that geography education master's and doctoral degrees in Türkiye started in the early 2000s and that the acceptance of geography education as an associate professorship field by the Council of Higher Education (YÖK) has led to an increase in the number of studies in this field. In these statements, it is shown that academic career opportunities and the widespread use of postgraduate education have an effect on the increase in the number of studies in the field of geography education.

Faculty members' views on educational policies, access to resources and pure studies:

- "Previously, more pure studies were carried out. Journals publishing in the field of geography education were also few and access to resources was very difficult compared to today. Later, with the faculties of education and institutes of educational sciences, the number of educational studies increased a little bit by necessity." (P8)

- "I think that both the number of universities and the number of academics in those years were effective on this situation." (P14)

- "The fact that geographer academics prefer field studies and do not show sufficient interest and care in geography education and even find geography teaching unimportant..." (P29)

The statements of the participants indicate that the developments in the field of geography education

were affected by variables such as educational policies, difficulty in accessing resources and the prevalence of pure studies, and then the number of geography education studies necessarily increased with the faculties of education and educational sciences institutes. In addition, it is stated that factors such as geographer academicians' preference for field studies and not showing enough interest in geography education, finding the field of geography education insignificant, and the small number of universities and academicians also affect the field of geography education.

Evaluating the participant views on this sub-theme, it is seen that the factors affecting the development of the field of geography education include the restructuring of education faculties, the increase in the importance of field education, the widespread use of postgraduate education in the field, its acceptance as an associate professorship field, the personal tendencies of academicians and educational policies.

Theme-2: Problems

This theme consists of 3 sub-themes and a total of 42 code statements forming these sub-themes. These are *"problems", "rich literature"* and *"limited literature"* sub-themes. The codes constituting these sub-themes and the opinions of the faculty members are given, respectively.

Table 7 shows the opinions of the faculty members on the sub-theme of problems.

Table 7. *Problems' sub-theme*

Nr	Code	*f*	%	Valid Percentage (%)[1]
1	Studies far from practice	21	3,24	15,56
2	Distance between field and field education	16	2,47	11,85
3	Disconnected from stakeholders	14	2,16	10,37
4	Miscommunication within the field	10	1,54	7,41
5	Norm cadre	10	1,54	7,41
6	Study of stereotyped topics	9	1,39	6,67
7	Material issues	9	1,39	6,67
8	Fewer lesson hours	7	1,08	5,19
9	Defining the area	6	0,92	4,44
10	Lack of methodology	5	0,77	3,7
11	Exam-orientated education system	5	0,77	3,7
12	Admission of students with social score	5	0,77	3,7
13	Foreign language deficiencies	5	0,77	3,7
14	Loss of quality	4	0,62	2,96
15	Lack of geography education journal	2	0,31	1,48
16	Insufficient number of in-service trainings	2	0,31	1,48
17	Quota restriction	2	0,31	1,48
18	Insufficient utilization of technology	2	0,31	1,48
19	Habits do not change easily	1	0,15	0,74
	Total	**135**	**20,80**	**100**[2]

[1] Valid percentage indicates the percentage value within the relevant category.
[2] The numbers in the table may not add up to the total due to rounding.

According to Table 7, the opinions of the faculty members about the problems in the field of geography education can be expressed as problems related to secondary school geography courses, university geography courses, criteria for admitting students to the programs, academic structure, quality of studies, quality of researchers and legislation.

Faculty members' views on academic career and norm staffing problems:

- "The fact that a large part of geography educators have to work in faculties of education, especially in social studies education department programs, and the other part in faculties of science and literature." (P11)

- "Those with a doctorate or associate professorship in geography education may not be able to work in geography teaching departments. Since most of the faculty members work in social studies programs, they have to move away from geography education over time or, at best, they have to work on geography areas within social studies." (P33)

The statements of the participants include problems such as the inability of those who have a doctorate and/or associate professorship in the field of geography education to work in geography teaching departments and, accordingly, the fact that a large part of geography educators have to work in faculties of education, especially in social studies education department programs, and another part in faculties of science and literature, and that faculty members working in the field do not look favorably on geography education studies and do not contribute to these studies. Therefore, these statements draw attention to the academic career and norm staffing problems that affect the quality and quantity of studies in the field of geography education.

Faculty members' views on communication and cooperation problems in the field:

- "I think the biggest problem is the lack of unity and solidarity among geography field education teachers. This situation creates deficiencies in field education and makes geography unowned. In addition, it can be said that the fact that geography is still shown as a rote learning course or that it cannot be removed from this image is an important problem of geography education." (P9)

- "One of the most important problems of geography and geography education is that academics in these fields cannot meet on a common ground. This situation causes the resources in the field not to find the value they deserve. In fact, if a common path is formed, both the importance of geography education and the importance of the resources in the field will be better understood. This situation causes geography education to be perceived as less important and more unnecessary every year. In the last 15 years, the weight of geography in secondary education programs has decreased and the number of questions and its impact in university exams have decreased. It has also led to the removal of the "general geography" course, which is very important for classroom teaching programs. To summarize briefly, the studies produced in the field cannot find the value they deserve due to the disconnections and conflicts between the researchers in the field. This situation causes the importance of geography education to be negatively affected." (P14)

The statements of the participants show that one of the most important problems of the field is the lack of unity and solidarity among academics in this field. For this reason, it is emphasized that in order to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the studies in the field of geography education, the problems of communication and cooperation within the field should be solved.

Faculty members' views on the problems of conducting innovative and current studies:

- "In general, it is a serious problem that the studies carried out in the academy are published as a continuation or similar to each other. We cannot offer something new specific to the field." (P21)

- "The limited number of studies in accordance with the trends by closely following the current and world developments in the field of geography education, the insufficient number of geography educators in the departments, and the excessive time allocated to courses and education" (P32)

In the statements of the participants, there are problems such as the fact that the studies carried out in general are the continuation or similar publications of each other in the academy and that they cannot offer something new specific to the field. In these statements, it is stated that the necessary conditions should be provided for the studies in the field of geography education to be innovative and up to date.

Academicians' views on education system and teacher training problems:

- "No matter how much effort is made, no matter how much improvement is made in measurement and evaluation techniques, for various reasons, geography education is not in the triangle of interest-cause-effect and information cannot be taught permanently. For example, even in portfolio preparation and project-based education, the desired development cannot be achieved because students present data as copy-paste from internet sources." (P22)

- "I think that the fact that some of the subjects of geography are included in science but taking students with social scores according to the YKS (Turkish University Exams) result causes problems. I think that

students should be admitted to the geography department with at least equal weight scores." (P3)

- In the statements of the participants, there are negative effects on geography teaching departments due to the gradual decline in the place of geography in the education system and the resulting problem of assignment, and the fact that although some subjects of geography are included in science, according to the results of YKS, students are admitted with social score. These statements show that the field of geography education is affected by the decisions regarding the education system and teacher training and development processes.

- Faculty members' views on the lack of value given to geography education by stakeholders:

- "The field of geography education is experiencing a development that is disconnected from stakeholders, unplanned and dependent on individuals." (P26)

The statements of the participants include problems in the field of geography education, especially that geography is related to all kinds of social and science fields that we can think of such as education, planning, medicine, and culture, but this situation cannot be demonstrated. In these statements, it is expressed that the necessary efforts should be made to ensure that the studies in the field of geography education are communicated to stakeholders and valued.

Evaluating the statements of the participants, it is seen that the problems experienced in the field of geography education are largely due to factors such as academic appointment and promotion processes, inadequate communication and cooperation within the discipline, inability to conduct innovative and up-to-date research, teacher training system and stakeholders' perception level of geography education.

Table 8 shows the opinions of the faculty members on the sub-theme of rich literature.

Table 8. *Rich literature sub-theme*

Nr	Code	*f*	*%*	Valid Percentage (%)[1]
1	Teaching methods and techniques	22	3,39	24,44
2	Perception, attitude, and opinion	17	2,62	18,89
3	Examination of teaching programs	15	2,31	16,67
4	Concept teaching and misconceptions	10	1,54	11,11
5	Textbook analysis	6	0,92	6,67
6	Environmental education	5	0,77	5,56
7	Metaphor	5	0,77	5,56
8	Disaster training	4	0,62	4,44
9	GIS	4	0,62	4,44
10	Use of tools and materials	2	0,31	2,22
	Total	**90**	**13,87**	**100[2]**

[1] Valid percentage indicates the percentage value within the relevant category.
[2] The numbers in the table may not add up to the total due to rounding.

According to Table 8, based on the opinions of the lecturers, it is seen that most of the subjects intensively studied in the field of geography education are related to teaching processes. This situation poses a problem for the development of the field of geography education because, the field of geography education is not a field limited to teaching processes. In this field, it is also important to follow current developments, to examine the epistemological and ontological dimensions of geography science, to investigate the philosophical and historical foundations of geography science. It is thought that these issues are important to increase the scientific quality and depth of the field of geography education.

The opinions of the lecturers who emphasized the scope and content of the subjects studied in the field of geography education are as follows:

- "Curricula, book reviews, opinions and perceptions of students, teachers or prospective teachers on various geography themes, method-technical applications and their experimental results, and topics such as geographical information systems." (P33)

- "Learning-teaching methods, teaching programs and textbooks constitute an important part of research in the field of education." (P26)

According to the statements of the participants, it is seen that the opinions and perceptions of stakeholders (students, teachers, prospective teachers) have an important place in the studies carried out in the field of geography education.

The opinions of the lecturers who emphasized the strategies, methods and techniques used in the field of geography education are as follows:

- "In fact, we see that certain methods are tried on different subjects rather than a specific subject and that there is a lot of survey type studies." (P30)

- "The effect of teaching, methods, techniques and strategies on academic achievement is widely studied." (P28)

The statements of the participants show that methods, techniques, and strategies are the most important subjects that are considered to have a rich literature used in the field of geography education.

Evaluating the statements of the participants, it is seen that more qualified, original, and contributing research should be carried out in the field of geography education instead of studying similar and screening subjects.

Table 9 shows the opinions of the faculty members on the sub-theme of limited literature.

Table 9. *Limited literature sub-theme*

Nr	Code	*f*	*%*	Valid Percentage (%)[1]
1	Environmental education	11	1,69	15,94
2	Geographical skills	10	1,54	14,49
3	GIS	9	1,39	13,04
4	Collaboration with different disciplines	8	1,23	11,59
5	Special education in geography education	7	1,08	10,14
6	Classroom activities	6	0,92	8,7
7	Field applications	5	0,77	7,25
8	Alternative measurement tools	4	0,62	5,8
9	Philosophy of geography education	3	0,46	4,35
10	Material design	2	0,31	2,9
11	Technology supported applications	2	0,31	2,9
12	Climate change training	1	0,15	1,45
13	Scale development studies	1	0,15	1,45
Total		**69**	**10,63**	**100[2]**

[1] Valid percentage indicates the percentage value within the relevant category.
[2] The numbers in the table may not sum to the total due to rounding.

It is thought that more research on the subjects in Table 9 will contribute to the diversity of subjects in geography education and increase the quality and effectiveness of the field.

The opinions of the faculty members regarding the subject areas in which they stated that there is a limited literature in the field of geography education are as follows:

- "Alternative measurement tools and their use in geography education, technology-supported applications, studies on the philosophy of geography education, quasi-experimental studies revealing the effects of alternative methods and techniques used in geography teaching on academic achievement." (P33)

- "I think that issues related to technology integration in education will become more important in the future. Issues related to the active inclusion of mobile phone applications in lesson processes are among the first areas that come to mind. The use of projectors, interactive whiteboards, AR, and VR are among the topics that I think have not been sufficiently studied. I also think that in-service trainings and studies to provide teachers with the use of web tools are not sufficiently studied. Virtual reality studies will become very, very important for geography education like medical education. Such technologies will provide great convenience

especially in teaching the subjects that are difficult to teach to the students." (P4)

Evaluating the statements of the participants, it is seen that there is a limited literature on alternative assessment and evaluation methods, technology supported geography teaching, geography curricula, metacognitive skills and gifted students, geographical skills, environmental education and practices, field studies. Most of these subjects, which are studied in a limited number in the field of geography education, are also open to innovation. This situation poses a problem in terms of dynamism and subject diversity in the field of geography education because, the field of geography education should not be limited to stereotyped subjects but should also include new approaches and interdisciplinary connections.

Theme-3: Expectations

This theme consists of two sub-themes and a total of 8 code expressions that make up these sub-themes. These are *"the future of the field"* and *"researcher profile"* sub-themes. The codes forming these sub-themes and the opinions of the faculty members are given, respectively.

Table 10 shows the opinions of the faculty members on the sub-theme of the future of the field.

Table 10. *Future of the field sub-theme*

Nr	Code	*f*	%	Valid Percentage (%)[1]
1	In a better position if certain criteria are met	30	4,62	63,83
2	It is clear that there is a long way to go	6	0,92	12,77
3	It'll be in worse shape than it is today	5	0,77	10,64
4	It'll be in better shape than it was today	3	0,46	6,38
5	There will be an unplanned development	3	0,46	6,38
	Total	**47**	**7,24**	**100**[2]

[1] Valid percentage indicates the percentage value within the relevant category.
[2] The numbers in the table may not sum to the total due to rounding.

The opinions of the faculty members who stated that teaching methods, techniques and approaches will affect the future of the field of geography education are as follows:

- "The question "How can we improve geography education in the current situation/conditions?" needs to be answered with the participation of all stakeholders. Geography education will be better than the current situation by providing learning environments where students are active, activity-based teaching, teaching by doing/experiencing in out-of-class teaching environments and learning to learn strategies are used." (P27)

- "As in the case of teaching geomorphological subjects, geography education is in a constant renewal. As a result, this field is a dynamic field of study. Therefore, I think that new fields of study will emerge in the future and will replace only the studies on the application of teaching principles and methods or the studies on the examination of curricula. I think that especially the developments in the field of educational technologies will create many new study topics for geography education." (P3)

The statements of the participants indicate the role of changing teaching methods and technology in geography education. Accordingly, the importance of developing new educational technologies and methods for geography education is emphasized.

The opinions of the faculty members who stated that academic development and research topics will affect the future of the field of geography education are as follows:

- "My suggestion to young researchers is to carefully examine the trend of studies in the field of geography education. Most of the studies are a repetition of each other. There are still significant deficiencies in skills education and value education. I think there is a need for qualified studies on this subject. In order to produce qualified studies on geography education, a good knowledge of the field is also needed. Since those who do postgraduate education in field education tend to move away from the field, the studies conducted tend to shift to the field of educational sciences. In order to train good geography educators, strong field knowledge and methodological knowledge are needed. Another issue is that the articles of the researchers are on a wide

variety of subjects. Increasing the number of researchers who concentrate on certain subjects as much as possible will also increase the quality." (P10)

- "My most important recommendation for new researchers who want to contribute to the field and develop themselves in this field is to take the challenge and turn to areas where there are fewer studies in the national literature and continue their professional development in these areas. Unfortunately, it does not contribute to oneself and the field to work on the same subjects by taking the easy way out. In addition, following the international literature closely and giving the necessary importance and priority to the subjects in the field of geography can be another recommendation." (P1)

Evaluating the statements of the participants, it is seen that in order to conduct qualified studies in the field of geography education, it is necessary to have good field knowledge and methodological knowledge. In addition, it is emphasized that it is important for researchers who want to contribute to the field of geography education to focus on problem solving instead of descriptive studies.

The opinions of the faculty members who stated that institutional cooperation will affect the future of the field of geography education are as follows:

- "I am hopeful about this issue. I think it would be necessary and useful for Turkish Ministry of National Education (MEB) and universities to act together and carry out universal studies at the international level. But if MEB and universities continue to be disconnected, everyone will continue to ask which geography you are from, and geography and geography education will gradually become ordinary rather than being an important science or subject." (P24)

The statements of the participants emphasize the importance of institutional cooperation in the field of geography education. In addition, by developing the capacity of institutional cooperation in the field of geography education, it may become possible to develop holistic solutions to local, regional, and global problems and to demonstrate the social benefit of geography education.

The general evaluation of the field of geography education and the opinions of the faculty members regarding the expectations for the future are as follows:

- "Geography was once devalued and discredited in the world. However, I can say that it has started to gain value again with the recent disasters, climate changes, and the increase in problems such as war, turmoil, migration and asylum-seeking in the world. I think that geography and geography education will be valued and respected in Türkiye after a while." (P9)

- "Geography is the ancestor of sciences. As long as human life continues in the world, we have to try to recognize and understand the world. This applies to the whole world. Geography will continue to exist as a popular science when geography educators plan their education to meet the needs of people. However, if they continue to teach place names, the need for geography education will disappear thanks to the developing technology." (P2)

Evaluating the statements of the participants, it is seen that they include different perspectives on the future of geography education. While some participants presented a hopeful perspective on the development of geography education, others expressed concern that the field may lose its importance. However, it is seen that the views of the participants generally converge on issues such as renewal of teaching methods and techniques, diversification of research areas and institutional cooperation. Suggestions and expectations for the future of the field focus on the need to make efforts on various issues in order to preserve the value of the field and to be at a higher level than today.

Table 11 shows the opinions of the faculty members on the researcher profile sub-theme.

Table 11. *Researcher profile sub-theme*

Nr	Code	*f*	*%*	Valid Percentage (%)[1]
1	Good command of methodology	16	2,47	72,73
2	Mastering the literature	3	0,46	13,64
3	Good command of foreign languages	3	0,46	13,64
	Total	**22**	**3,39**	**100**[2]

[1] Valid percentage indicates the percentage value within the relevant category.
[2] The numbers in the table may not sum to the total due to rounding.

The opinions of the lecturers regarding the knowledge of research methods are as follows:

- "Firstly, they should follow the publications made in countries with developed geography education. Afterwards, they should adapt them to the realities of our country, but they should not take them exactly. In addition, rather than theoretical studies, I suggest that they should focus on practical studies in schools and studies that teachers can easily turn into reality in classrooms." (P15)

- "First of all, I recommend them to do in-depth reading on scientific research methods. The most common mistake is to move away from the field. We encounter geography education studies without geography in them." (P13)

Participant statements emphasize the importance of young researchers to complete their deficiencies in research methods and to use various methods such as action research and long-term studies in research.

The opinions of the lecturers regarding the knowledge of the literature are as follows:

- "The studies should be analyzed well, and problems should be identified to solve the problems. Based on this, new study topics can be determined. Applying scientific research methods and geographical methodology in accordance with the rules and meticulously will increase the validity and reliability of the results. I think that the application of the subjects and methods studied not only in the field of geography education but also in different fields of education in geography education and examining the results will contribute to the development of the field. In addition to all these, I can state that the international context of geography education is an issue that researchers who want to contribute to the field should not overlook." (P3)

- "Young researchers who will work in this field should learn their field very well. First, they will learn the subjects they will teach and then they will study how to teach them. In other words, they will study both education and field. Apart from this, they have to give importance to applied studies and try new methods or new ways of teaching." (P30)

The participant statements in this area focus on the field knowledge of young researchers. Accordingly, young researchers should have in-depth knowledge in their field, learn the subjects they work in very well and increase their level of expertise, and for this purpose, they should have a good command of the relevant literature.

Faculty members' views on foreign language knowledge are as follows:

- "They should definitely improve their foreign languages, increase their foreign connections, and do joint work in projects and publications." (P33)

- "Firstly, foreign studies should be examined, and a trend analysis should be made. The last 10 years of reputable geography education journals in the world should be carefully analyzed." (P16)

According to the statements of the participants, a good command of a foreign language can provide young researchers with the opportunity to both improve their field knowledge and to take part in various tasks in international studies.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the general findings obtained in this study, 96 code expressions were generated from the opinions of the faculty members regarding the orientations in the field of geography education. The code expressions obtained from the opinions of the faculty members about their orientations in the field of geography education were grouped under three themes: *"orientations"*, *"problems"* and "*expectations"* by using the interview form questions prepared according to the purpose of the research. Under the theme of orientations, there were four sub-themes: *"study subjects"*, *"reasons for subject preference"*, *"research orientations"* and *"effective events and phenomena"* and codes expressing them.

In the sub-theme of reasons for topic preferences, the lecturers stated that they were mostly influenced by previous studies and/or determined the study topics according to their wishes. Scientific research starts with a problem, and the aim is to find a solution to this problem. In determining the research question (problem), the situations we encounter in our daily lives, the practices we do, or the findings of previous studies in the literature or various theoretical frameworks can be the sources (Büyüköztürk et al., 2020). In this context, it was determined that the lecturers were determined by previous studies, requests, and needs while determining their subjects.

In the sub-theme of research orientations, faculty members stated that research orientations in the field of geography education are generally formed under the influence of current developments, researchers' interests, and international orientations. In Yavan's (2005, p. 27, 2019, p. 121) study, in which he comparatively analyzed Türkiye's international publication performance in geography (1945–2015) using the Web of Science database (with the last ten years between 2005 and 2015), he stated that the internationalization level of Turkish geography is extremely low; however, a positive process has started in recent years, albeit partially.

In the sub-theme of effective events and phenomena, the faculty members stated that the administrative organization and the legislative changes that developed accordingly were effective on the events and phenomena affecting the field of geography education. They stated that the low number of field educator lecturers affects this discipline the most, and then the structuring in higher education affects the field. In relation to this, issues related to the fact that geography is only seen as two subfields of human and physical geography and that it is a recent discipline area were also mentioned.

The opinions of the faculty members consisted of three sub-themes under the theme of problems, namely *"problems"*, *"rich literature"* and *"limited literature"*. The opinions of the faculty members regarding the problems in the field of geography education can be generally expressed as problems related to secondary school geography courses, university geography courses, criteria for admitting students to the programs, academic structure, quality of studies, quality of researchers, and legislation. Faculty members stated that the most common problems are studies far from practice, the distance between the field and field education, and being disconnected from stakeholders.

Comparing the codes obtained from the opinions of the faculty members regarding the rich literature and the limited literature, it is seen that the topics of GIS and environmental education are included under two sub-themes. This situation shows that the faculty members have different views on these issues. This situation can be interpreted as requiring further discussion and research on the role and importance of geographical information systems and environmental education in geography education.

The Turkish higher education system has undergone a major expansion process in order to meet the demand for higher education. In this process, while the number of students has increased significantly, the increase in the number of teaching staff has remained more limited (Ozer, 2011). Similar problems are also valid in geography departments. The insufficient number of teaching staff also affects the quality of education. Lecturers' course loads increase excessively, they have to teach courses that are not related to their specialization areas, and they cannot find the necessary time for academic research. (Sezer, 2016). The way to meet the need for teaching staff is to train more PhD graduates. The number of PhD graduates in Türkiye is

quite low compared to other OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries of similar size in terms of population and number of higher education students. (Çetinsaya, 2014). In this context, in order to ensure the transfer of knowledge and experience between different generations in the academic field and to increase productivity, new entrants to academic careers should be encouraged. (Akçiğit & Özcan-Tok, 2020).

It is important that successful students are selected with equal weight scores as the student quotas to be admitted to the undergraduate programs of the department of geography education in faculties of education. (Nişancı, 2002). Despite the more than twenty years that have passed, this expectation of the faculty members regarding the selection of students for the department has not changed, and this situation remains current. It is also known that the problems related to the field have been waiting to be solved for a very long time; because the problems related to the curricula, teachers, measurement and evaluation, course materials, and textbooks in geography teaching in Türkiye have been continuing since the past. (Ilgar, 2006). In this context, there is a need for practical and problem-based studies and developments, as stated in the opinions of the faculty members.

The repeated examination of a study topic in recent studies can be seen as a problem because it should be aimed at adding innovation to the field and creating a new research agenda instead of a problem that has already been studied in the literature. Excessive study of some topics in the field of geography education may harm the diversity of that discipline. Because subjects other than certain subjects are neglected or do not attract enough attention. This situation narrows the scope of that discipline or makes it unidirectional. In this context, the fields of study that faculty members think there is a rich literature on are, firstly, teaching methods and techniques and studies that examine the perceptions, attitudes, and opinions of teachers, prospective teachers, and students at various levels on any subject.

The fact that there are areas in a branch of science where not enough studies are carried out is an expected situation in accordance with the nature of scientific developments. However, the understudy of some subjects in geography education may negatively affect the development of the field of science because the knowledge of understudied subjects remains insufficient, different perspectives cannot be developed, new methods and techniques do not emerge, existing problems cannot be solved, or new problems cannot be identified. For this reason, considering the needs of the country, conducting research in areas where there are fewer studies according to the interests and wishes of the researchers can open new horizons. In their statements, faculty members stated that there is a need for more studies in the fields of environmental education, geographical skills, and GIS in the field of geography education.

Under the theme of expectations, two sub-themes were formed: *"the future of the field"* and *"researcher profile"*. According to the opinions of the faculty members, the most frequently produced code about the future of the field of geography education is related to the fact that it will be in a better position if certain criteria are provided. Based on the opinions of the faculty members, it is understood that the criteria to be provided are practical, problem solving, making students feel its importance, compatibility with the international literature, activity-based teaching, teaching by doing or experiencing in out-of-class teaching environments, and providing learning environments where learning to learn strategies are used. In addition to this, there were also opinions expressing that the field would experience an unplanned development or that it would be in a worse situation than it is today. Therefore, it is possible to create positive and negative scenarios about the future of geography education in Türkiye.

According to the opinions of the faculty members, the characteristics that researchers who want to contribute to the field of geography education should have gathered around three codes. These codes consist of "mastering the methodology", "mastering the literature" and "knowing foreign language well". These code expressions suggest that building a better future requires innovative vision and practices in every field of education. Today, in education, as in other fields, having sustainable competitive power depends on the development and realization of innovation potential (Pehlivanoğlu, 2011). Therefore, young researchers need

to know and understand the basic concepts, theories, methods, and practices of geography and geography education. In this way, they can identify the current situation, problems, and needs of the field, produce new knowledge, and offer solutions. According to the lecturers, it is thought that the presence of researchers who have a good command of methodology will contribute to the field. Geography education benefits from all kinds of methodological designs and techniques, each of which serves a different purpose based on individuals' inquiries and research questions. (Zadrozny et al., 2016). In scientific research, methodology forms the backbone of the research. The aim of the scientific method is to ensure that scientific observations are obtained objectively (Ertekin et al., 2002). In addition, it is a compulsory approach to support and associate the subject area researched in scientific studies with the information in the literature. (Yıldız, 2022). In this way, researchers can gain scientific prestige and increase the social benefit of research. Developments in the field of geography education in our country cannot be separated from the rest of the world. For this reason, it can be stated that the researchers' good level of foreign language skills will make it easier for them to follow the publications abroad. In addition, it is important to cooperate with other disciplines and conduct interdisciplinary studies while conducting research on geography and geography education. In this way, researchers can create a scientific richness in the field, benefit from different perspectives, and enrich the scope of the research. It is thought that these opinions and suggestions of the faculty members can help young researchers develop both themselves and the field of geography education.

In the field of geography education, no study has been identified to determine the orientations and research traditions in the field by using the opinions of faculty members. Therefore, the findings of this study were compared with the findings of one study in human geography and two studies in educational administration. Accordingly, Özgür's (2018) The findings of the study have shown that concepts such as lateness, actor dependency, superficiality, limitation, mediocrity, and inadequacy or deficiency can be used to describe the current state and future of Turkish human geography. However, the research also revealed that there have been some positive changes in Turkish human geography in recent years. In addition, as a result of a study aiming to reveal how academic staff working in the field of educational administration perceive the status of the field as an academic discipline, it was determined that academics think that the field of educational administration has a complex and problematic structure. These problems are related to the characteristics of research and academics, knowledge base, professionalization, and socio-political context. (Örücü, 2006). Similarly, in this study, faculty members expressed common problems such as insufficient foreign language skills, limited academic cooperation and communication opportunities, a low number of faculty members, and a heavy workload. In a study aiming to reveal the philosophical foundations of research in the field of educational administration and the characteristics of the research tradition, four themes and related categories were identified: ontological assumptions, epistemological assumptions, teleological assumptions, and social and individual factors. Among these categories, academic appointment and promotion criteria constitute the core of the research tradition in the field (Demirhan, 2015). Similarly, in this study, faculty members stated that the criteria for promotion and appointment to faculty membership were important factors affecting the field.

To summarize, geography provides people with useful information that applies to every stage of life and confronts them with many facts about the place that are of vital importance. The observation of many of these facts provides useful information that can be used in practical life (Ardel, 1951, p. 195). In this context, it is thought that geography and therefore geography education would maintain their importance if the conditions stated by the lecturers were met because, according to some claims and beliefs, geography is not a huge set of knowledge that has no philosophical basis, is the product and scope of other sciences, includes everything, or is a dependent science that is overshadowed by other sciences and develops on them. Geography is not a dictionary or an encyclopedia that classifies various events, which are the objects of different sciences, according to region, country, and its own criteria instead of alphabetical order and presents them with explanations from other sciences. It is not terminology or a simple inventory (Tanoğlu, 1964). One of the main functions of the science of geography is to investigate the spatial relationships between events analyzed by many different sciences, and this should be done by the discipline of geography. In today's world, where events

are changing very rapidly and rapidly developing conflicts are taking place, geographical analyses that need to be made on a global scale are needed today more than yesterday (Sevgi, 1984).

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