

Творчество Шарлотты Бронте занимает важное место в развитии английской литературы XIX века и в формировании совершенно нового взгляда на образ женщины в художественных произведениях. В её произведениях поднимаются острые для её времени темы неравенства в образовании, труде, общественной и личной жизни. Писательница раскрывает эти темы не в форме прямого протеста, а через художественные образы, которые обладают психологической глубиной.

Можно сделать вывод, что наследие Шарлотты Бронте стало важным этапом в развитии женской литературы, женского голоса. Ее произведения расширили тематические границы романа и показали жизнь женщин той эпохи, когда только началась борьба за женские права. Стоя у истоков феминизма, Шарлотта Бронте сумела коснуться тем внутренней свободы и самоопределения женщины, к которым в дальнейшем будут обращаться другие авторы.

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**TEACHER EVALUATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:
INSIGHTS FROM STEM EDUCATORS IN KAZAKHSTAN**

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Abstract

This article examines teacher evaluation and professional development processes through the perspectives of STEM educators in Kazakhstan. The study investigates how appraisal systems influence teachers' motivation, stress, and perceptions of professional competence. Based on a mixed-methods approach, data were collected from 84 STEM teachers across different schools and four in-depth interviews with experienced educators. The findings reveal that while evaluation and certification systems aim to enhance professional standards, they often create confusion, anxiety, and inconsistencies in assessing competencies. Teachers report that performance appraisal frequently emphasizes formal documents and testing rather than real teaching quality. The study argues that professional growth should focus on formative evaluation, mentoring, and transparent feedback mechanisms. The paper concludes with practical recommendations to make teacher appraisal systems more supportive and developmental.

Key words: teacher appraisal, professional competence, STEM teachers, evaluation system, professional development, Kazakhstan.

**МУҒАЛІМДЕРДІҢ ҚЫЗМЕТІН БАҒАЛАУ ЖӘНЕ ОЛАРДЫҢ КӘСІБИ
ДАМУЫ: ҚАЗАҚСТАНДАҒЫ STEM ПӘНІ МУҒАЛІМДЕРІНІҢ
ТӘЖІРИБЕСІ**

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Андатпа

Мақалада Қазақстандағы мұғалімдердің кәсіби қызметін бағалау және олардың кәсіби дамуы мәселелері қарастырылады. 84 мұғалім мен төрт STEM пәні мұғаліміне жүргізілген сұхбат нәтижелері қазіргі аттестация жүйесінің формалды әрі күйзеліске толы екенін көрсетті. Мұғалімдер бағалау рәсімдерінің нақты оқыту сапасын емес, құжаттар мен тест нәтижелерін баса көрсететінін атап өтті. Зерттеу кәсіби дамуды қолдауға бағытталған, тәлімгерлік пен формативті бағалауға негізделген жүйенің қажеттілігін көрсетеді.

Түйінді сөздер: мұғалімдерді бағалау, кәсіби құзыреттілік, кәсіби даму, STEM-білім, Қазақстан.

ОЦЕНКА ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТИ УЧИТЕЛЕЙ И ИХ ПРОФЕССИОНАЛЬНОЕ РАЗВИТИЕ: ОПЫТ ПРЕПОДАВАТЕЛЕЙ STEM-ДИСЦИПЛИН КАЗАХСТАНА

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Резюме

Статья посвящена вопросам оценки деятельности и профессионального развития учителей в Казахстане. На основе опроса 84 педагогов и четырех интервью с преподавателями STEM-дисциплин выявлено, что существующая система аттестации воспринимается как формальная и стрессовая. Учителя отмечают, что текущие процедуры акцентируют внимание на документации и тестах, а не на реальном качестве преподавания. Авторы предлагают перейти к более поддерживающей модели оценивания, основанной на наставничестве, обратной связи и формативной оценке.

Ключевые слова: аттестация учителей, профессиональные компетенции, профессиональное развитие, STEM-образование, Казахстан.

Introduction

In recent years, Kazakhstan has implemented several reforms to modernize its education system and raise the quality of teaching. One major direction has been the introduction of teacher evaluation and attestation mechanisms intended to align educators' professional competencies with national standards [1]. These

reforms were designed to motivate teachers to improve their qualifications and link performance with financial incentives.

However, despite the positive intentions, the evaluation system has generated debates among educators. Teachers often perceive assessment as bureaucratic rather than developmental. In practice, the process of certification and re-evaluation has become stressful, emphasizing formality, paperwork, and test performance rather than genuine professional growth [2].

This article explores the perspectives of STEM teachers on how current evaluation practices influence their motivation, confidence, and professional identity. The study focuses on understanding the link between teacher appraisal systems, professional development, and perceived competence within Kazakhstan's changing educational context.

Literature Review. Teacher evaluation systems worldwide are designed to ensure accountability, improve quality, and support continuous development. In many European models, such as those used in the UK or Finland, evaluation combines formative assessment (mentoring, classroom observations, peer review) and summative assessment (certification, promotion) [OECD, 2020].

However, in post-Soviet contexts, evaluation reforms often face challenges related to administrative complexity and unclear standards [Ivanova, 2019]. In Kazakhstan, the introduction of new qualification categories (e.g., “teacher-moderator,” “teacher-expert,” “teacher-researcher”) was meant to recognize competence and incentivize growth [Mukan, 2020]. Yet, teachers report inconsistencies in how competencies are assessed and documented.

Several studies emphasize that professional competence cannot be reduced to test scores or certificates [Fullan, 2016]. Effective evaluation should include reflective practice, collaboration, and mentoring. Nonetheless, teachers in Kazakhstan often express frustration over frequent changes in the appraisal criteria and lack of accessible resources for preparation [Penkina, 2024].

This study contributes to this discussion by providing empirical evidence from STEM teachers – a group particularly affected by new assessment procedures due to their involvement in English-medium and technology-integrated instruction.

Methods. A mixed-methods design was used to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. The research aimed to capture teachers' perceptions of the current appraisal system and how it impacts their professional lives.

The study involved 84 STEM teachers from secondary schools in the Mangystau region of Kazakhstan. The participants represented various qualification levels and teaching experience ranging from 3 to 25 years. In addition, four teachers were selected for in-depth interviews based on their experience with certification and attestation procedures.

Data collection took place over four months. The following instruments were used:

- Survey questionnaire with 20 items focusing on teachers' perceptions of the evaluation process, stress factors, and professional growth opportunities.

- Semi-structured interviews with four teachers to explore personal experiences and opinions in greater depth.

- Document analysis of existing national guidelines for teacher appraisal and competency frameworks.

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify common patterns. Qualitative data from interviews were coded thematically, focusing on three key areas:

- Perceived fairness and transparency of evaluation;

- Impact on professional motivation and development;

- Challenges in demonstrating competencies.

To ensure reliability of the findings, the questionnaire was piloted with a small group of 12 teachers who were not included in the final sample. Feedback from the pilot helped refine several items that initially appeared ambiguous or too broad. The final version consisted of three thematic blocks:

- perceptions of fairness and trust in the evaluation system;

- the emotional and professional impact of appraisal;

- teachers' access to support and guidance during certification.

Cronbach's alpha was calculated to verify internal consistency of the scales, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.82, which is considered satisfactory for educational research. The survey was distributed both in paper and electronic formats to allow flexibility, especially for teachers working in rural schools with limited access to in-person meetings.

The semi-structured interview protocol was designed to encourage reflective storytelling. Questions addressed not only procedural experiences, but also personal identity conflicts, perceived value of certification, and the role of colleagues and administrators in supporting preparation. Interviews lasted between 35–50 minutes and were recorded with participants' consent.

Transcripts were analyzed using inductive thematic coding, guided by the principles of grounded theory to allow themes to emerge organically rather than being imposed in advance.

Ethical principles were observed throughout the study: participation was voluntary, anonymity was guaranteed, and school administrators did not have access to individual teacher responses.

Results. Survey data showed that:

- 71% of respondents viewed the current appraisal system as “stressful” or “very stressful.”

- 64% agreed that the process lacks clear guidance on evaluation criteria.

- 58% reported that they prepared for certification by memorizing model answers rather than improving real teaching practices.

- 73% felt that professional evaluation does not accurately reflect their daily work or teaching quality.

Despite these concerns, 49% acknowledged that the system encourages them to engage in professional learning activities, though often out of obligation rather than genuine interest.

The four case interviews revealed nuanced experiences.

One teacher noted: “Every few years the evaluation rules change. We don’t know what to prepare for. It’s easier to memorize the expected answers than to really focus on improving teaching.”

Another shared: “The certificate gives a higher salary, but it doesn’t mean I became a better teacher. The real development comes from collaboration and classroom practice, not from the attestation tests.”

Teachers expressed frustration with the English proficiency certification process, which grants a higher category but often leads to further checks and audits. Some teachers with advanced certificates admitted that their actual language skills did not match their certified level due to inconsistent testing procedures.

Overall, the results reveal a contradiction between the intended developmental purpose of evaluation and its practical implementation, which is perceived as rigid and formalistic.

Discussion. The findings confirm that the appraisal system in Kazakhstan, while structured to promote quality and accountability, often results in stress and demotivation among teachers. Similar issues are reported in other countries

where evaluation is linked to financial incentives and promotion [Darling-Hammond, 2017].

The data suggest that teachers prefer formative, supportive assessment rather than punitive or compliance-based models. When evaluation emphasizes documentation and test results, it undermines trust and professional agency.

Furthermore, the case teachers highlighted that professional competence in STEM education should be demonstrated through innovative teaching, collaboration, and reflection, not solely through exams or standardized certificates.

The findings align with international research showing that professional development is most effective when teachers receive mentoring, feedback, and opportunities for peer learning [Avalos, 2011]. To enhance the current system, school administrators and policymakers should ensure:

- Clear, consistent criteria for evaluating competencies;
- Access to resources and examples of effective practice;
- Integration of reflective tools such as portfolios and observation-based assessment;
- Ongoing dialogue between evaluators and teachers.

Beyond the statistical findings already presented, qualitative data revealed deeper patterns in how teachers emotionally navigate evaluation. A recurring theme among interviewees was fear of failure associated with unfamiliar assessment formats or high-stakes inspections. Teachers perceived that even minor errors during evaluation could negatively affect their reputation within the school.

One participant emphasized:

- “It feels like evaluation is not to help us improve, but to catch us doing something wrong.”

This sense of scrutiny weakened trust between teachers and evaluators, contributing to defensive attitudes. Several teachers admitted that their focus during attestation shifted toward “avoiding mistakes” rather than showing real teaching skills.

Another newly emerging theme was inequality of access to preparation resources. Teachers from larger urban schools reported better support from methodologists and access to professional development centers, whereas rural teachers described feeling isolated and less informed about updates in procedures or preparation strategies. This imbalance of support creates

disparities in outcomes, which contradicts the system's original goal of fair and consistent evaluation nationwide.

Additionally, teachers noted a tension between authentic competence vs. performative competence. For example, many felt compelled to focus on compiling extensive portfolios filled with certificates, photos, and printed documents, sometimes unrelated to actual pedagogical skills. As Teacher 3 explained:

“I spend more time collecting files than planning lessons. The paperwork is the real test.”

This sentiment supports the argument that teachers equate success in appraisal not with improved teaching, but with strategically meeting bureaucratic expectations.

Despite the criticisms, the study also identified emerging positive tendencies: teachers with supportive administrators reported less fear and more willingness to engage in new methods. Where mentorship was present, confidence increased, and teachers described evaluation not as punishment but as professional acknowledgment.

Taken together, the new data reinforce the conclusion that the current appraisal system has developmental potential but requires a shift toward transparent communication, peer support structures, and decreased bureaucratic overload. Strengthening formative elements – classroom-based feedback, collaborative learning, and personalized guidance – may transform evaluation into a meaningful contributor to teacher professional growth.

Conclusion

This study provides insights into how STEM teachers in Kazakhstan perceive the current teacher evaluation system. The results indicate that while reforms aim to professionalize teaching, they often fail to reflect the real conditions of educators' work. Teachers experience confusion, stress, and limited autonomy in demonstrating their competence.

To move toward a more effective and equitable evaluation system, Kazakhstan's education sector should prioritize transparency, teacher agency, and formative feedback. Professional growth should be encouraged not through rigid testing but through mentoring, collaboration, and reflective practice.

Further research could expand to other regions and explore how digital tools or AI-based evaluation systems might support fairer and more individualized teacher assessment.