

The Occupational Prestige of Translation from Practicing and Prospective Translators' Viewpoints

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Abstract

The present study explores the occupational prestige of the translation profession from both practicing and prospective translators' viewpoints. The sample of the study included 142 translators and 115 prospective translators (translation students), who completed a survey on the occupational prestige of translation in Iran. The research incorporated two questionnaires as the instruments of the study. The first instrument was the general format of Dam and Zethsen's (2008, 2011) *Translators' Assessment of the Occupational Prestige of Translation Checklist* (henceforth TAOPT). For the second group, the questionnaire prepared by Ruokonen and Svahn (2022) was adapted and used. Based on the findings of the study, translation can be perceived as an art that draws on the knowledge, wisdom, and expertise of translators to provide the best translated target version of the materials. The results of the study disclose that while the participating prospective translators (translation students) perceived translation as a highly prestigious occupation, the majority of practicing translators displayed a more moderate perception of translation as a prestigious occupation. It was also found that participants considered translation's occupational prestige to be strongly and consistently affected by various factors. It was concluded that translation as a profession requires evolutionary steps on the part of translators and related agencies and organizations in order to elevate the status of the field into a more prestigious and professional domain.

Keywords: *occupation, prestige, translation, translation students, translators*

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1. Introduction

Based on the historical views of translation as a social activity in many contexts, translation as a profession in many societies and markets has not achieved the position it deserves; however, empirical and experimental studies have not been very diverse in proving this secondary position ascribed to translators (Dam & Zethsen, 2008; Katan, 2009; Pym et al., 2012; Sela-Sheffy, 2006). Nevertheless, in recent years, with the growth of interdisciplinary research and the introduction of sociological, economic, and psychological studies into the field of translation studies, attention has increasingly focused on translation as a profession and on investigating the social status and prestige of translators in different countries.

Translation is believed to be the activity of shifting textual or sentential elements of one language (SL) into equivalent materials of the target language (TL; Catford, 1995). Ho (2015) asserted that the translation profession involves communicating the meaning from a source-language text to an equivalent target-language text. This process bridges linguistic and cultural gaps, allowing people who speak different languages to understand and access information across borders and boundaries.

Recently, sociological studies and discussions have provided the ground for new research in the field of translation. In fact, there has been a change of direction in the research process, moving from the study of translation as a textual product to the study of people involved in the field of translation (especially translators). From the perspective of cultural studies, the most important strength of this shift is that translation is viewed as a social activity which, like other human activities, has many social forces involved in its formation and development. Such studies highlight the alternative and evolving role of translators in the current professional translation domain, to the extent that translators should be regarded and defined in terms of different roles and capacities.

However, more studies are needed to further professionalize and broaden the interdisciplinary scope of the field. According to Wolf (2010), “the newly developed approaches have shifted the attention to various research fields which so far have been partly under-researched and/or under-theorized” (p. 336). Of course, these new studies are still at an early stage, and scientific research in this direction has been conducted in only a few countries. Further horizons are also being addressed through these different and pioneering studies. For example, Nicolai’s (2014) study on the history of translation as a profession; Daniel’s (2007) investigation of the role of gender in the profession and specifically female dominance; and Chan’s (2013) study of the role of translators’ academic qualifications and the need to obtain translation certification have paved the way for a more academic and interdisciplinary approach to translation professionalism.

Undoubtedly, these findings have contributed to the field in that translation is now more widely regarded as an academic and professional discipline. Therefore, examining the perceptions of practicing and prospective translators about the occupational prestige of translation, along with the challenges and issues affecting this prestige both positively and negatively, would help pave the

way toward the recognition of translation as a profession, especially in the translation work market in Iran, which lacks specific rules or regulations.

A main problem in the field concerns the profession itself and the way it is regarded as an occupation. Translators are not required to have a specific university degree to enter the profession, except for certified translators who, in addition to holding a relevant university degree, must also pass an entrance exam. Apart from certified translators, however, it is often assumed informally that any person who knows a second language can translate and work as a professional translator (Ellerker, 2019). This disorder in the market not only leads to low-quality translations but also discourages translation students about their professional future. As a result, working on the occupational prestige of translation could be an important first step toward improving the professional status of the field.

To address the issue, some studies have identified numerous limitations regarding important factors such as the need for certification and the academic qualification of professional translators (Chan, 2013). Other studies have prioritized the establishment of professional ethical codes for translators in order to develop a more ethically driven profession (McDonough, 2011; Kafi et al., 2018). However, the field continues to suffer from a lack of prestige in many contexts, which calls for further research to address the full range of issues.

This study is significant in the Iranian context due to the unique problems faced by translators in such settings, as previously mentioned. The field is not regarded as a prestigious profession by most people, and, as reported by Abdollahyan and Nayebi (2009), translation is not even listed as a profession in their comprehensive study. Moreover, the limited number of studies addressing this issue in Iran is another reason why more research needs to be conducted. It is hoped that access to these perspectives and opinions will lead to solutions and suggestions that can improve the social standing of the translation profession in Iran.

The ultimate goal of this research is to support the translation profession (from both market and academic perspectives) in its growth, organization, and formal recognition, so that all individuals educated in this field, who are talented and interested in the profession, can work in a safe and secure environment with assurance of the social benefits of a profession, such as membership in an organizational association. Examining the results obtained from those involved in the translation process (i.e., practicing and prospective translators) can provide a clear picture of the position of translation as a profession in Iranian society. In view of these studies and the existing gap, the present research seeks to investigate the perception of translation in terms of occupational prestige among practicing and prospective translators. Furthermore, it aims to improve translation educational programs to prepare students for entering the market and to explore ways to strengthen the occupational prestige of translation.

Based on the gap identified by reviewing the literature, the following research questions are formulated to answer the issues addressed in the study:

1. How do practicing translators perceive their occupational prestige?
2. How do prospective translators (translation students) perceive translation in terms of occupational prestige?
3. Is there any significant difference between translators' and prospective translators' perception of occupational prestige of translation?

In order to better address the research questions, the paper first presents a review of the most important literature in the field, followed by an outline of the methodological rigor implemented to define the study's framework. The main findings are then presented and discussed in relation to the research questions. Finally, the findings, their implications, and several suggestions are elaborated.

2. Review of the Literature

2.1. *The Sociology of Translation*

Translation studies has evolved significantly over the years, particularly in the 1970s and 2000s, marked by cultural and ideological shifts and the rise of interdisciplinary debates. Scholars have combined structuralist and post-structuralist perspectives, aligning the field with broader developments in linguistics, particularly the pragmatic turn. As an interdisciplinary and autonomous field, translation studies incorporates diverse methodological frameworks, linguistic, cultural, and literary approaches, allowing for multiple perspectives and collaboration across disciplines.

Hornby (2006) highlights the paradigm shift in translation studies, focusing on the historical and contextual production of translations. The field has expanded beyond linguistics, recognizing that translation is not merely a linguistic process but also a social activity with cultural and ideological dimensions. This broader approach incorporates sociology, exploring themes such as cultural transfer, identity, ethics, and the influence of ideology. The inclusion of gender studies and other related disciplines further enriches the field, underscoring the evolving role of translation in a globalized world.

Translation is increasingly viewed as an agent of activism and a powerful force in shaping socio-political and cultural narratives. While there is overlap between "translator sociology" and broader translation sociology, the former focuses specifically on the role of translators within this process. Wolf (2009) and Fuchs (2009) present frameworks that emphasize the socio-cultural context of translation, examining the subjective role of translators and their impact on translation outcomes. This sociological approach has further enriched the field, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of translation as both a social and professional practice.

2.2. Translation as an Occupation

Translation, unlike traditional professions such as law or medicine, has not always been recognized as a formal occupation. Paloposki (2016) outlines characteristics of a profession, including specialized skills, education, ethical codes, and professional associations, noting that translation often lacks these formal structures. In the 1980s and 1990s, translation studies expanded beyond linguistic theories, incorporating socio-semiotic perspectives, ethics, and the effects of globalization on translation. This shift paved the way for the recognition of translation as an occupation, particularly in sociological studies that examine the status of translators and their professional identity.

Shlesinger and Sela-Sheffy (2011) explore the social status and identity of translators, while studies in specific countries, such as those by Dam and Zethsen (2011), highlight the challenges translators face depending on their type of employment. Freelancers, for example, often experience lower occupational prestige compared to company-employed translators. Kafi et al. (2018) examine the challenges facing the translation profession in Iran, pointing to issues such as market-driven dynamics and the need for professional development.

Studies such as Katan (2009b) show that while many translators are content with their work, they lack social recognition. Gender dynamics also play a role in shaping the profession, with a significant proportion of translators being women due to the flexible nature of the work (Pym et al., 2012). The issue of certification and formal recognition remains a key concern, with Katan (2009a) noting the absence of regulation in certain countries, such as Italy.

Recent research indicates that professional experience is valued more highly than academic credentials, particularly in Europe, as shown by Toudic (2012). Studies by Lagoudaki (2006) and Setton and Guo (2009) reveal that a significant portion of translation professionals are freelancers, underscoring the need for further professional recognition. Dam and Koskinen (2016) and Le (2018) suggest that while translation is seen as a semi-profession or temporary job by some, a stronger and more deliberate focus on its prioritization as a career could help strengthen its status.

2.3. Empirical Studies

Recent studies have officially recognized translation as a profession, particularly in Europe and other developed countries. Toudic (2012) emphasizes that practical experience is often prioritized over formal academic qualifications. The legal and ethical frameworks governing the profession, including certification and licensing procedures, are essential to its recognition (Weiss & Penelope, 2008). However, countries like Italy still lack formal certification systems, as noted by Katan (2009a).

In terms of gender, the translation industry remains predominantly female due to the flexibility of the profession (Pym et al., 2012). Freelance translation continues to be a dominant

mode of employment worldwide, with significant variation across countries (Lagoudaki, 2006; Setton & Guo, 2009). Studies by Dam and Zethsen (2010) and Le (2018) indicate that translation is often viewed as a semi-profession or temporary job, with some advocating for a stronger professional framework to ensure its longevity and recognition in the labor market.

Additionally, concerns about outdated curricula in translation education, highlighted by Uysal (2021) and Le (2018), underscore the need for better alignment with current industry standards and the integration of technological tools to enhance translation training.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

The sample of the study included 257 participants who completed two surveys on the occupational prestige of translation in Iran. Through random sampling, the target sample was divided into two groups: practicing translators (certified translators and freelancers) and prospective translators (students of translation). They were selected randomly to enable the researcher to capture different characteristics (e.g., age and sex) and to ensure representation of the target population of the study. The results obtained from practicing translators show that this group included 142 participants, as presented in Table 1.

3.1.1 Demographic Statistics of Practicing Translators

The results obtained from descriptive statistics show that the study's sample included 142 participants, ranging in age from 19 to 70 years ($M=37.46$). As indicated in Table 1, the sample consisted of 63 male translators (44.4% of the sample) and 79 female translators (55.6% of the sample). Thus, the total sample was nearly balanced in terms of gender distribution.

Table 1

Sample Distribution in Terms of Gender (N=142)

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	63	44.4	44.4
	Female	79	55.6	100.0
	Total	142	100.0	

According to Table 2, translators with a Master's degree comprise the largest group in the study (45.1% of the sample). They are followed by translators with a Bachelor's degree (21.8%), translators with a Ph.D. degree (12%), Master's or Bachelor's student translators (10.6%), and Ph.D. student translators (8.4%), respectively.

Table 2*Sample Distribution in terms of Educational Degree (N=142)*

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bachelor's	31	21.8	21.8
	Master's	64	45.1	66.9
	Ph.D.	17	12.0	78.9
	Ph.D. student	12	8.4	87.3
	Master's or Bachelor's student	15	10.6	97.9
	Others	3	2.1	100.0

As Table 3 shows, the majority of respondents work as freelance translators (53.5% of the sample). Others work either as certified translators (24.6% of the sample) or in a combination of both roles (19.6% of the sample), respectively.

Table 3*Sample Distribution in terms of Translation Certificate (N=142)*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Freelance	76	53.5	55.1	55.1
	Certified	35	24.6	25.4	80.4
	Both	27	19.0	19.6	100.0
	Total	138	97.2	100.0	
Missing		4	2.8		

Based on Table 4, 43.7% of the participants had over 10 years of experience in the translation profession. Additionally, 28.9% had between 5 and 10 years of experience, and the remaining 27.5% had less than 5 years of experience.

Table 4*Sample Distribution in terms of Years of Experience (N=142)*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below 5 years	39	27.5	27.5	27.5
	Between 5-10 years	41	28.9	28.9	56.3
	More than 10 years	62	43.7	43.7	100.0
	Total	142	100.0	100.0	

3.1.2 . Demographic Statistics of Prospective Translators (Translation Students)

The results obtained from descriptive statistics (Table 5) indicate that the study's sample included 115 participants, ranging in age from 12 to 54 years (M=24.78, SD=5.94)

Table 5*Sample Distribution in Terms of Age (N=115)*

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
age	12	54	24.78	5.948	2.528	.226

As demonstrated in Table 6, the sample included 29 male (25.2 % of the sample) and 86 female (74.8 % of the sample) participants.

Table 6*Sample Distribution in terms of Gender (N=115)*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	29	25.2	25.2	25.2
	Female	86	74.8	74.8	100.0

According to Table 7, Bachelor's students comprise the largest group in the qualitative phase, accounting for 61.7% of the participants. They are followed by Master's students (21.8%), translators with a Master's degree (7.8%), translators with a Bachelor's degree (4.3%), Doctoral students (3.5%), and translators with a Doctoral degree (0.9%), respectively.

Table 7*Sample Distribution in Terms of Educational Degree (N=115)*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bachelor's student	71	61.7	61.7	61.7
	Master's student	25	21.7	21.7	83.5
	Doctoral student	4	3.5	3.5	87.0
	Bachelor's degree	5	4.3	4.3	91.3
	Master's degree	9	7.8	7.8	99.1
	Doctoral degree	1	.9	.9	100.0

As shown in Table 8, 20% of the participants were authorized translators, while 80% were non-authorized.

Table 8*Sample Distribution in Terms of Translation Certification (N=115)*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Authorized	23	20.0	20.0	20.0
	Non-authorized	92	80.0	80.0	100.0

The majority of the participants were students, comprising 69.6% of the sample; however, 18.3% of the participants worked in a field other than translation. Furthermore, 3.5% of the participants were unemployed at the time of the study, and the remaining 8.7% did not fall into any of the mentioned categories.

Table 9
Sample Distribution in Terms of Job Status (N=115)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	studying	80	69.6	69.6	69.6
	working in a field other than translation	21	18.3	18.3	87.8
	unemployed	4	3.5	3.5	91.3
	other	10	8.7	8.7	100.0
	Total	115	100.0	100.0	

3.2. Instruments and Validation Procedure

The research incorporated two questionnaires as the instruments of the study. The first instrument was the general format of Dam and Zethsen's (2008, 2011) *Translators' Assessment of the Occupational Prestige of Translation* (TAOPT) checklist for Danish business translators, with questions designed by the researcher for use with the first group. The questionnaire included 30 items on a six-point Likert-type scale and covered four main themes, gathering necessary information in the form of opinion statements as follows: general translator prestige and status; salary and income; education and expertise; visibility or fame; and power and influence.

Originally, TAOPT was a 30-item, six-point Likert-type scale. In the pilot test, 25 translators (certified and freelance), ranging from 26 to 67 years old, responded to the TAOPT ($M=41$, $SD=12.04$). Six items in the checklist were negatively worded and required reverse scoring before further analysis. This was done in SPSS by transforming 6 on the Likert scale to 1, 5 to 2, 4 to 3, and vice versa. According to Field (2013), negatively worded items are typically used to prevent response bias. The checklist items (1–30) were scanned for unusual response patterns and missing values. All items were answered acceptably, with no instances of identical response patterns and no missing responses in the raw data.

The next step was to check the data for statistical outliers. After computing the z-scores, they were scanned for extreme, probable, and potential outliers. According to Field (2013), in normal distributions, no extreme outliers should occur, and nearly 95% of the scores should fall within the acceptable range; the remaining 5% (or less) can be potential or probable outliers. To detect outliers, Field's (2013) syntax was run in SPSS. The results showed that more than 95% of all cases fell within the normal range ($z < 1.9$), and only 3% were probable outliers ($1.9 < z < 3.2$).

After the TAOPT was administered to the participants ($N=142$), the internal consistency was estimated using Cronbach's alpha. The obtained value for the reliability of the whole instrument was 0.73, which, according to many researchers (e.g., George & Mallery, 2010; Taber, 2018), is fairly acceptable. The total reliability, as well as the reliabilities of the TAOPT subscales, are presented in Table 10.

Table 10*Reliability Indices of TAOPT Subscales*

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Status/ prestige	.538	5
salary / income	.736	6
Education/ expertise	.355	9
Visibility/ fame	.206	6
Power/ influence	.042	4
TAOPT	.730	30

As for the second group, comprising prospective translators (translation students), the questionnaire prepared by Ruokonen and Svahn (2022) was adapted and used. The study employed a Likert scale ranging from 1 (very low) to 6 (very high). The reliability of the second instrument was confirmed based on information from the piloting phase, which indicated that the reliability of the scale was suitable ($\alpha=.77$).

The two instruments used in this study are complementary, as applied and demonstrated in Ruokonen and Svahn (2022). In fact, the questionnaire prepared by Ruokonen and Svahn (2022) was an adaptation of Dam and Zethsen's (2008, 2011) questionnaire. The rationale behind selecting these two instruments is that the results would highlight the importance of collecting comparable data and analyzing even seemingly similar perceptions in various contexts, as this could shed light on the role of translation in different societies and lead to more established translator education and organization.

3.3. Research Design

The study follows a survey design aimed at investigating participants' perceptions of the occupational prestige of translation in Iran. It employs a quantitative phase that utilizes questionnaires to collect data from participants in order to gain insights into their prevalent perceptions regarding the variables of the study. After gathering and analyzing the quantitative data, the results were used to better identify the research gap and provide more general knowledge of the research problem. Finally, the findings were analyzed and presented in greater detail through various available methods of data analysis to offer a more in-depth understanding of the issue.

3.4. Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaires were administered to the target groups, who were briefed on the process for completing them. Each questionnaire took approximately 15 minutes to complete. The necessary data was collected both in person and through an online survey prepared and distributed via the Porsline platform. The reasons for using this platform included accessibility and convenience, cost-effectiveness, time efficiency, broader reach, anonymity, and honesty. In addition, online tools often provide real-time response tracking and immediate notifications,

enabling researchers to monitor participation and follow up if needed. They are also environmentally friendly, reducing paper usage and making the process more sustainable.

The acquired data was then forwarded to the data analysis procedure. After collecting the quantitative data, it was analyzed using descriptive statistics and statistical indicators to examine participants' perceptions of the occupational prestige of translation in Iran. SPSS software was used to generate the descriptive statistics. Finally, to answer the research questions, quartile estimation and comparison were applied.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Occupational Prestige from Practicing Translators' Viewpoints

To provide a valid answer to the first research question (i.e., "How do practicing translators perceive their occupational prestige?"), the total scores of the respondents on the occupational prestige scale were calculated and then divided into four equal quartiles. The results, summarized in Table 11, showed that 19.7% (28 respondents) regarded their occupation as highly prestigious, while 28.9% (41 respondents) perceived translation as a slightly prestigious occupation.

Table 11

Occupational Prestige Quartiles (N=142)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<= 79.00	41	28.9	28.9	28.9
	80.00 - 86.00	33	23.2	23.2	52.1
	87.00 - 94.00	40	28.2	28.2	80.3
	95.00+	28	19.7	19.7	100.0

It was also revealed that the remaining 51.4% of the participants held a more moderate perception, with a tendency toward a more positive view of translation as a prestigious occupation.

4.2. Occupational Prestige from Prospective Translators' (Translation Students) Viewpoints

To provide an appropriate response to the second research question (i.e., "How do prospective translators (translation students) perceive translation in terms of occupational prestige?"), the data from prospective translators (translation students) was calculated. As indicated in the following table, the total scores of the prospective translator participants ranged from a minimum of 28 to a maximum of 58, which strongly highlights students' perception of translation as a highly prestigious profession. Moreover, the resulting mean score of the study

(41.29) is higher than the midpoint between the two possible extremes (30), indicating that prospective translators (translation students) perceive translation as a prestigious occupation.

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics (N=115).

	Range	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Skewness		Kurtosis		
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error	
Total Occupational Prestige Score	30.00	28.00	58.00	41.29	.57	6.19	.279	.22	-.502	.44

Here, the results of the prospective translators' (translation students) perceptions of occupational prestige are presented. As shown in the following table, the first quartile, which includes scores below or equal to the mean of 36, comprises only 25.2% of the participants, while the remaining 74.8% scored above the midpoint between the possible extremes (12 and 60).

Table 13

Distributions of Occupational Prestige Scores

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<= 36.00	29	25.2	25.2	25.2
	37.00 - 40.00	29	25.2	25.2	50.4
	41.00 - 46.00	30	26.1	26.1	76.5
	47.00+	27	23.5	23.5	100.0
	Total	115	100.0	100.0	

Thus, the results disclose that the participating students perceive translation as a highly prestigious occupation.

4.3. Answering the Research Question Three

To address the third research question (i.e., "Is there any significant difference between practicing and prospective translators' perception of the occupational prestige of translation?"), descriptive statistics for the two groups were elicited and compared to determine differences in their perceptions.

As shown in Table 13, from the perspective of prospective translators (translation students), 19.7% (N=28) of practicing translators regarded translation as a highly prestigious occupation, while 23.5% (N=27) of prospective translators considered it highly prestigious. This indicates that the two groups' perceptions differed, with more translation students viewing the profession as highly prestigious.

Moreover, 28.9% (N=41) of practicing translators perceived translation as a slightly prestigious occupation, whereas 25.2% (N=29) of prospective translators held this view, indicating that a greater proportion of practicing translators regarded the occupation as slightly prestigious.

Table 14

The Differences between Practicing and Prospective Translators' (Translation Students) Perceptions of Occupational Prestige

Translators	Frequency	Percent	Translation Students	Frequency	Percent
<= 79.00	41	28.9	<= 36.00	29	25.2
80.00 - 86.00	33	23.2	37.00 - 40.00	29	25.2
87.00 - 94.00	40	28.2	41.00 - 46.00	30	26.1
95.00+	28	19.7	47.00+	27	23.5

These findings indicate that more prospective translators (translation students) regarded the profession as a highly prestigious occupation, while more practicing translators perceived translation as a slightly prestigious occupation. Therefore, the third research question, stating that “There is no significant difference between practicing and prospective translators’ (translation students) perception of the occupational prestige of translation,” is safely rejected due to the observed differences between the perceptions of practicing and prospective translators.

5. Discussion

In this section, the results of the study, including the data obtained from the questionnaire items, are discussed and compared with findings previously reviewed in the literature. The first research question examined practicing translators’ perceptions of occupational prestige. The results from the practicing translators’ questionnaire indicated that more than half of the participants held moderate perceptions of translation as a prestigious occupation, with a tendency toward a more positive perception.

The findings align with results from previous studies (e.g., Gentile, 2018; Gentile & Albl-Mikasa, 2017; Hayes, 2017), which identified translators’ occupational prestige as an influential factor in shaping their personal, social, and professional image. According to Gentile (2018), professional prestige is a crucial factor influencing translators’ professional image and how they are perceived in the business world. He further noted that translators’ views on professional prestige are shaped by societal values assigned to different professions and by the professional status of individuals within their fields. Essentially, professional prestige reflects how individuals perceive their profession based on external evaluations. Hayes (2017) also pointed out that the rise of virtual life and its societal impact have influenced perceptions of prestige and its development.

Aly’s (2018) study further contributed to understanding the mental and physical processes of translation from both translators’ and non-translators’ perspectives regarding the occupational prestige of the profession. Similarly, the findings of Katan (2009) are fully supported by the current study, as he found that translators were generally satisfied with their profession despite perceiving themselves as lower-autonomy professionals. This finding is echoed by other researchers (e.g., Liu, 2011, 2013; Setton & Guo Liangliang, 2011), who reported high job satisfaction, strong self-

perception, and overall job-related happiness among translators, largely because many participants viewed translation as both a satisfactory and prestigious profession.

Regarding prospective translators' (translation students) perceptions of occupational prestige, the study found that participants considered prestige to be strongly and consistently influenced by various factors. These included payment, knowledge and skillfulness, meritocracy, and the recognition and valuing of translation, all of which play key roles in enhancing the profession's status. Conversely, factors such as lack of expertise, insufficient education, low societal awareness, inadequate remuneration, limited attention to translation, and the absence of institutional or organizational support were identified as major elements that undermine translation's prestige. The results also indicated that meritocracy, increased awareness of the market and the profession, competitive income, and active support and recognition of translation and qualified translators are vital measures stakeholders can take to enhance the profession's prestige.

In line with these findings, other studies have highlighted both the positive and negative aspects of the field. Courtney and Phelan (2019) provided empirical evidence showing that translators often experience high levels of both occupational stress and job satisfaction. They found multiple sources of stress for translators, including poor treatment from agencies and clients, remuneration and self-employment challenges, uncertainty about the future, and tight deadlines.

However, translation is not without its positive aspects. Courtney and Phelan (2019) identified several sources of satisfaction, such as flexibility, autonomy, and the artistic nature of translation, which together make it a unique and appealing profession. Their study participants reported that, despite being a stressful and demanding career, translation offers a high level of job satisfaction.

The third research question compared the perceptions of practicing translators and prospective translators (translation students) and showed that, while more prospective translators regarded the translation profession as a highly prestigious occupation, more practicing translators perceived it as a slightly prestigious one. Therefore, the results indicate a significant difference between practicing translators' and prospective translators' perceptions of the occupational prestige of translation.

Studying the occupational prestige of translation from the viewpoint of society can contribute positively to describing the characteristics of translation that distinguish it as a unique social activity among other social activities, one of the purposes of a sociology of translation. The differences observed between the two groups may be due to various factors; for example, students may hold more idealistic expectations of the profession, while practicing translators may have more realistic views shaped by their professional perspectives and lived experiences.

Contrary to these findings, Aly (2018) reported more similarities than differences between professional translators' and non-translators' views on the occupational prestige of translation. Aly also found that not all components of the translation profession contribute equally to its prestige.

His study underscored the importance of examining societal views on translation and adopted a sociological approach to highlight the relevance of occupational prestige for understanding the translation process.

The socio-economic status of translators is another key factor influencing their identity and enabling them to view the profession as an independent and prestigious field, one that society should recognize as specialized and worthy of being called upon for expert work. Maintaining the high expectations of prospective translators is crucial for fostering their motivation and commitment to performing well in the profession. This can be achieved through support from authoritative organizations. At the same time, the reasons why such expectations tend to diminish after translators gain professional and lived experience should be examined, using the current study's findings to identify factors that enhance or reduce the profession's prestige.

Additionally, translators' cognitive and emotional abilities are essential in enabling them to translate effectively based on the contextual factors of both source and target languages, while also preparing them to face challenging and problematic situations that may affect them both cognitively and emotionally. The autonomy and independence of translators can also be studied as factors that shape professional identity within a broader cosmopolitan context.

Further research could investigate how translators' lived experiences reshape their expectations of the profession and how these experiences can be used to address challenges more effectively. Such research could help maintain motivation and sustain high expectations of the profession, ultimately supporting better performance and professional satisfaction among translators.

6. Conclusion

The present study sought to investigate the factors associated with the prestige of the translation profession from the perspectives of practicing and prospective translators. Based on the findings, the occupational prestige of translators is influenced by various factors, and several measures were suggested to enhance it. It is believed that translators should be valued based on merit, and therefore there is a need to support and praise qualified translators in order to improve the overall quality of the profession. It was also argued that qualified translators with expertise in the field should receive higher salaries and incomes to enable them to perform better and maintain focus on their work. Moreover, to be recognized as an independent and expert field, the translation profession requires greater awareness of the market and the profession itself, as well as support from relevant organizations.

Organizations and legislative bodies in the field of translation can use the findings of this study to address key issues that could help establish translation as a prestigious field. Such organizations have undeniable roles in granting translators power and identity, supporting them in

order to provide the public with higher-quality, specialized translations, provided that their position is acknowledged as expert and recognized as authorized entities, supported by national organizations and funding bodies.

Further research could examine how translators' lived experiences shape their expectations of the profession, building upon their professional experiences to identify ways to address challenges more effectively. This could help maintain their motivation and expectations, enabling them to perform well in their roles. Future studies could also employ other designs and methodologies (e.g., ethnography, phenomenology, or case study) to provide deeper insights into issues affecting translators and ways to improve the profession.

Finally, future research could incorporate intervening variables to provide a more comprehensive view of the field within a cosmopolitan context. These variables might include the impact of globalization on translation; the effectiveness of university courses in developing student expertise; the influence of technology and the rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in combination with machine translation, which could have significant consequences for translators' socio-economic status, local and global identity, and the future directions of the field, as well as the socio-political position of Iran in shaping the profession.

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