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The Role Of The Teacher In The Era Of Artificial Intelligence: Expectations, Autonomy, And Pedagogical Decision-Making

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Abstract:
Background: *The rapid entry of Artificial Intelligence into education is changing the way pedagogical decisions are taught, evaluated, and made. Teachers are invited to integrate digital tools, while maintaining their pedagogical role and professional identity. In the Greek context, the debate on AI is linked to issues of training, autonomy, and institutional support. This study explores teachers' expectations for the professional development in the age of AI, as well as their perceptions of professional autonomy and pedagogical decision-making.*
Materials and methods: *The survey was conducted with an anonymous self-report questionnaire, which was distributed electronically to Primary and Secondary Education schools throughout Greece. 506 teachers participated. The questionnaire included twenty closed-ended statements, divided into two thematic sections: expectations and professional development, as well as professional autonomy and pedagogical decision-making in the age of AI. with descriptive and inductive statistics. Variations based on demographic and occupational characteristics were examined, as well as the correlation between the key variables.*
Results: *The results show that teachers generally maintain positive expectations about the role of AI in their professional development. They recognise its contribution to improving teaching, fostering innovation and shaping new perspectives of professional identity. At the same time, they clearly state that the ultimate responsibility for pedagogical decisions should remain with the teacher. AI is accepted as a supporting tool and not as a substitute for human judgment. Significant differences can be found in relation to ICT knowledge and AI training. Training is associated with higher expectations of professional development, but also with a more critical attitude towards the limits of technology. In addition, there is a positive and statistically significant correlation between professional growth expectations and a sense of professional autonomy.*
Conclusions: *The study shows that teachers do not reject AI. On the contrary, they want to use it creatively, conditionally and with clear pedagogical boundaries. Its successful integration requires systematic training, institutional guidance and ensuring professional autonomy. AI does not replace the teacher; it redefines his/her role in an environment where human judgment, Empathy and pedagogical responsibility remain in focus.*
Key Word: *Artificial Intelligence, education 4.0, educators, expectations, professional development, autonomy and pedagogical decisions*

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I. Introduction

The rapid evolution of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is gradually transforming education, influencing teaching, assessment, and pedagogical decision-making. In the context of Education 4.0, teachers are invited to utilize intelligent digital tools, while maintaining their human and pedagogical role[29]. The international literature shows that teachers recognize the added value of AI, particularly in the personalization of learning and the adoption of innovative teaching practices [1, 41]. At the same time, concerns are expressed about the ethical and social implications of technology and the changing role of the teacher[29].

In the Greek educational context, teachers perceive AI as a beneficial tool and declare a relatively high readiness for its integration. However, concerns about the impact on the learning process, decision-making, and pedagogical relationship remain intense[31, 44]. The need for continuous training and clear institutional guidance emerges as a decisive factor for the safe and effective use of AI[42, 19]. At the same time, the automation of processes leads to a redefinition of the educational role and professional identity, with increased demands on digital and pedagogical skills[15].

At the pedagogical level, teachers expect that AI can substantially improve teaching, mainly through the adaptation of content and pace to the needs of each student[6]. Adaptive platforms, educational games, and smart assistants are thought to enhance participation and the development of higher-level skills, such as critical thinking and creativity[20]. At the same time, delegating repetitive and administrative tasks to AI frees up time for more meaningful pedagogical activities[13]. Particular importance is also given to learning analytics tools, which support the reflection of teaching practice and informed pedagogical decision-making[7]. In this context, AI is perceived as a support tool rather than a substitute for the teacher[15].

At the organizational level, educators anticipate the creation of learning communities around AI, with a focus on collaboration, exchange of practices, and collaborative training[1]. Such structures are considered critical for reducing resistance to change, which is often associated with fear or occupational fatigue[43]. At the same time, AI is expected to support innovation in school, through new teaching approaches and early data-driven interventions[26, 24]. Although concerns about data security and privacy remain[21], the prevailing view is that AI can act as a driver of pedagogical innovation, when combined with human skills, such as empathy, communication and pedagogical judgment[42].

The entry of AI directly affects the teacher's professional identity, as it changes roles, skills and perceptions of teaching. In the early stages, many teachers experience a fear of substitution and loss of the pedagogical relationship[34]. Tools such as genetic models and automated assessment systems are often perceived as limiting pedagogical control, especially when introduced without the involvement of teachers in their design[36]. The tension between support and replacement is a key element of the transformation of professional identity in the age of AI[35, 36].

However, the professional identity is not abolished, but reshaped. AI works complementarily, reinforcing the role of the teacher as a facilitator, facilitator and guide of learning[25, 33]. Teachers with adequate training and digital literacy report an increased sense of autonomy and effectiveness, while rigid and supervised frameworks intensify insecurity[35, 36]. Central pedagogical values, such as empathy, moral judgment, and quality of relationship with students, remain irreplaceable and are being redefined in technologically enriched environments[36].

A key issue in this transition is the professional autonomy and pedagogical responsibility of teachers. The ultimate pedagogical and moral responsibility for learning remains human, even when leveraging AI systems[4, 41]. The literature converges that AI should act supportively rather than directionally, with a clear distinction between automated suggestions and human judgment[4]. Professional autonomy, consent and control thus emerge as basic conditions for the acceptance of AI in school[16, 27, 28].

In this context, the successful integration of AI requires human-centered and democratic frameworks, which ensure the active role of the teacher in making pedagogical decisions and addressing critical ethical issues, such as data protection and algorithmic bias[2, 23, 37, 38]. The teacher thus emerges as a key mediator between the human pedagogical crisis and the technological capabilities of AI, with a decisive role for its responsible and pedagogically effective use in school.

Based on this theoretical framework, a key question addressed in this research study concerns teachers' perceptions of their role in the age of Artificial Intelligence, focusing on their expectations for their professional development, their professional autonomy and pedagogical decision-making. Specifically, through Thematic Unit B "Expectations and professional development of teachers in the age of AI" where the expectations of teachers are explored teachers about their professional development in the era of Artificial Intelligence. At the same time, their perceptions of the role of AI in the transformation of teaching practice and their professional identity are captured. Also, through Thematic Unit C "Professional autonomy and pedagogical decision-making in the age of AI", teachers' perceptions regarding their professional autonomy and pedagogical decision-making in the context of the possible use of Artificial Intelligence are explored.

Thus, the research questions are formulated as follows:

- What are teachers' expectations regarding their professional development and the role of Artificial Intelligence in improving educational practice?
- How do teachers perceive their professional autonomy and pedagogical decision-making in the context of the possible use of Artificial Intelligence?
- Are there differences in expectations and perceptions of professional development in the age of AI in relation to their demographic and professional characteristics (Gender, Years of service, Level of education, Level of education, ICT knowledge, AI training)?
- Do perceptions of professional autonomy and pedagogical control with regard to AI differ according to the demographic and professional characteristics of teachers (Gender, Years of service, Level of education, Level of education, ICT knowledge, AI training)?

- What is the relationship between teachers' expectations for their professional development in the era of Artificial Intelligence and their professional autonomy and pedagogical decision-making in the context of its utilization?

II. Material And Methods

The purpose of this research was to explore the role of the teacher in the era of Artificial Intelligence, focusing on their expectations for their professional development, their professional autonomy and their pedagogical decision-making. In particular, the study examines how teachers perceive the transformation of their teaching practice and professional identity through the use of Artificial Intelligence, as well as the boundaries between human pedagogical judgment and automated suggestions, in the context of a human-centered and pedagogically responsible integration of technology in the school.

The study was conducted within a quantitative research design, involving the collection of primary data from the field. The data collection process took place between January and February 2026. Participant selection was based on non-probability sampling, as teachers participated through an open electronic invitation and voluntary response. This approach falls under the commonly used form of convenience sampling, as described in the research methodology literature[5, 8, 9].The data collection was done with the Google Forms platform and the statistical analysis and processing was carried out with the IBM SPSS v29 statistical software package.

Sample: The research sample of the study included a total of 506 Primary and Secondary Education teachers from all over Greece, who participated voluntarily. The sample of 506 teachers consists mainly of women (67.6%), with men accounting for 32.4%. The largest group has 21–30 years of service (33.6%), while the rest of the categories are relatively evenly distributed. The participation of primary (49.8%) and secondary teachers (50.2%) is almost equivalent. Classroom teachers make up 65.6% of the sample and administrators 34.4%. At the level of studies, the majority have a master's degree (69.2%), while smaller percentages have a basic degree (23.3%) or a doctorate (7.5%). 58.9% hold a B-level ICT certification, while 13.0% have no certification. Most of them serve in urban areas (63.2%), fewer in semi-urban areas (26.5%) and rural areas (10.3%). Finally, training in artificial intelligence appears almost equal, with about half having attended relevant training (49.4%).

The questionnaire: The questions included in the survey questionnaire are part of a wider study[40]. They consist of ten (10) closed-ended questions-statements from for Thematic Unit B "Expectations and professional development of teachers in the age of AI" and ten (10) closed-ended questions-statements with a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of .811. From for Thematic Unit C "Professional autonomy and pedagogical decision-making in the era of AI" with a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of .873. The total number of closed-ended questions is twenty (20). The overall reliability index for the 20 items was Cronbach's alpha=.912.

Statistical analysis: The data were processed using descriptive and inductive statistics, utilizing the IBM SPSS v29 software. Percentages, mean, standard deviation were calculated with the findings presented in tabular form. The regularity test of the variables was performed through the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test proving that the variables follow a normal distribution ($p>0.05$). Parametric methods were applied to analyze the correlations (Pearson, t-Test and One-Way ANOVA).

III. Results

Table 1 *Expectations and professional development of teachers in the age of AI.* Regarding pedagogical and organizational expectations, teachers appear clearly positive towards the pedagogical role of AI. Its contribution to improving the quality of teaching is highly evaluated with a Mean Value (AP)=4.03 and a Standard Deviation (SD)=.042), with more than 8 out of 10 agreeing. The attitude towards strengthening innovation in the school unit is correspondingly positive (AP=4.02 SD=.042), which shows that AI is not just seen as a technological tool, but as a lever of change. Slightly lower, but still positive, is the assessment of the role of AI in the reflection of teaching practice (AP=3.92 TA=.043) and in the functioning of the school as a learning community around AI (AP=3.77 SD=.044). This suggests that, although the intentions are favourable, there is still concern about how these practices will be implemented collectively. Particularly strong is the agreement that the future of education requires a combination of human and digital skills (AP=4.31 SD=.039), with over 86% agreeing, which shows a mature and realistic approach to AI.

Regarding the Transformation of professional identity, AI is considered to be able to enhance the pedagogical role of the teacher, albeit with a more moderate intensity (AP=3.80 SD=.046). At the same time, teachers express a strong expectation for institutional support in their professional development (AP=4.10 SD=.043), which reveals that individual disposition is not enough without an organized framework.

Continuous training in AI is recognized as a necessary priority (AP=3.75 SD=.050), although here there is a greater dispersion of opinions, which is probably associated with workload or uncertainty regarding the

content of the training. On the contrary, the connection of professional development with the ability to use digital tools is highly accepted (AP=4.13 SD=.042). Finally, AI is recognized as a factor that opens up new perspectives of professional identity (AP=4.01 SD=.043), showing a tendency to redefine the role of the teacher.

Overall, the expectations and professional development of teachers in the age of AI are assessed positively (AP=3.98 SD=.034). All the findings show a body of teachers who understand the potential of AI, wish to develop professionally, but at the same time ask for institutional support and collective structures, so that the integration of AI is pedagogically meaningful and not fragmented.

Table 1: Percentage Distribution, Average Value for Expectations and Professional Development of teachers in the age of AI

	I strongly disagree	I disagree a bit	I neither disagree nor agree	I agree a little	I totally agree	Average Price	Standard Deviation
1. AI can contribute to improving the quality of teaching.	3.6	3.6	11.1	49.8	32.0	4.03	.042
2. AI can enhance reflection in teaching practice.	4.0	4.0	15.4	49.0	27.7	3.92	.043
3. The school can act as a learning community around AI.	3.2	7.5	22.1	43.9	23.3	3.77	.044
4. AI can support innovation in the school unit.	3.2	3.2	15.0	46.2	32.4	4.02	.042
5. The future of education requires a combination of human and digital skills.	2.0	2.0	9.9	35.2	51.0	4.31	.039
6. The use of AI can enhance the pedagogical role of the teacher.	5.1	5.5	18.2	46.6	24.5	3.80	.046
7. I expect institutional support for my professional development in AI.	3.2	3.2	13.0	41.5	39.1	4.10	.043
8. Continuous training in AI should be a priority.	5.1	8.7	22.5	33.6	30.0	3.75	.050
9. Professional development is linked to the ability to use digital tools.	2.8	2.4	15.8	37.5	41.5	4.13	.042
10. AI creates new perspectives for professional identity.	2.8	3.2	19.8	38.7	35.6	4.01	.043
Teachers' Expectations and Professional Development in the Age of AI						**3.98**	**.034**

Table 2 *Professional autonomy and pedagogical decision-making in the age of AI.* Regarding Pedagogical responsibility and decision-making limits (Table 1), teachers clearly reject the substitution of pedagogical judgment by AI (AP=4.54 SD=.042), while even stronger is the position that the ultimate responsibility for decisions should remain with the teacher (AP=4.72 SD=.032, 81.4% "I strongly agree"). There is broad agreement that clear boundaries are required between human judgment and automated suggestions (AP=4.63 SD=.033) and that AI must operates supportively and not directionally (AP=4.67, SD=.032). In contrast, the view that AI influences decision-making appears more moderate (AP=3.81 SD=.045), showing caution but not rejection. The answers show a strong professional identity and a need to maintain control. AI is only accepted as a tool for reinforcement, not as a decision-maker.

In terms of Professional autonomy, consent and control, AI is considered to be able to enhance professional autonomy, but with a much lower intensity (AP=3.75 SD=.045). On the contrary, the view that it should not restrict pedagogical freedom gathers almost universal acceptance (AP=4.67 SD=.033, 78.3% "I strongly agree"). Autonomy is recognized as a critical factor in the acceptance of AI (AP=4.32, SD=.042), while its use without consent is estimated to negatively affect the role of teachers (AP=4.21, SD=.043). Finally, there is a strong need for a clear framework of pedagogical decisions (AP=4.42, SD=.041). The acceptance of AI is clearly 'conditional'. Consensus and the institutional framework function as preconditions, not as secondary issues.

Overall, professional autonomy and pedagogical decision-making in the age of AI are evaluated very positively (AP=4.37, SD=.027). Teachers appear open to the use of AI, but with clear boundaries, an emphasis on human judgment and a demand for control and consent.

Table 2: Percentage distribution, M.T., T.A., Professional autonomy and pedagogical decision-making in the age of AI

	I strongly disagree	I disagree a bit	I neither disagree nor agree	I agree a little	I totally agree	A.P.	S.D.
11. AI should not be a substitute for teacher's pedagogical judgment.	4.0	.8	6.3	15.4	73.5	4.54	.042
12. The ultimate responsibility for pedagogical decisions must remain with the teacher, even with the use of AI.	1.6	.8	3.6	12.6	81.4	4.72	.032
13. The potential use of AI may influence pedagogical decision-making.	2.8	8.3	21.7	39.5	27.7	3.81	.045
14. It is important to have clear boundaries between human judgment and automated suggestions.	1.2	1.6	4.0	19.4	73.9	4.63	.033
15. AI should act as a support and not as a guide to the teaching practice.	.8	2.4	3.6	15.8	77.5	4.67	.032
16. The use of AI could enhance the teacher's professional autonomy.	4.7	5.5	22.9	43.9	22.9	3.75	.045
17. The potential use of AI should not restrict the teacher's pedagogical freedom.	1.2	2.0	3.6	15.0	78.3	4.67	.033
18. Professional autonomy is a crucial factor in teachers' acceptance of AI.	2.0	2.4	13.8	25.7	56.1	4.32	.042
19. The use of AI without the consent of teachers can negatively affect their professional role.	2.8	3.2	11.9	34.8	47.4	4.21	.043
20. The integration of AI in schools requires a clear pedagogical decision-making framework.	2.4	2.0	9.5	24.1	62.1	4.42	.041
Professional autonomy and pedagogical decision-making in the age of AI						**4.37**	**.027**

Comparisons with demographic-Occupational characteristics

a) Table 3 *Comparisons of Expectations and Professional Development of Teachers with Demographic-Professional Characteristics*. Regarding the comparison of the Expectations and professional development of teachers in the era of Artificial Intelligence based on their demographic and professional characteristics, Gender, Years of Service, Level of Education (Primary-Secondary), Degree (Basic Degree, Master's, Doctorate) and School Area (Urban, Semi-urban, Rural) do not show a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of the participants (p>.05). Statistically significant differences are: a) The *role in the school* [t(504)=-2.164, p=.031<.05]. Principals have a higher average (AP=4.09, SD=.749) compared to classroom teachers (AP=3.93, SD=.782). The difference is small but stable (APT=0.16). The magnitude of the effect is small (Cohen's d=0.20), which shows a mild variation. Principals appear more optimistic and positive about the potential of AI for professional development. growth. Classroom teachers also maintain positive expectations, but to a more restrained degree. b) ICT *knowledge* F(2)=8.096, p<.001]. Post hoc comparisons (Tukey) show that teachers with Level B (B1/B2) have higher expectations and a more positive attitude compared to those with Level A (DAP=0.23, p=.009). At the same time, they show significantly higher values compared to those who do not have ICT certification (DAP=0.35, p=.002). c) AI Training [t(504)=4.699, p<.001]. Trained teachers have a higher average (AP=4.14, SD=.728) compared to non-trained teachers (AP=3.83, SD=.786). The magnitude of the effect is moderate (Cohen's d=0.42), which shows a substantial effect of training on expectations and professional attitude. AI training enhances positive expectations and a sense of professional development. The absence of training is associated with more restrained expectations.

Table 3. *Comparisons of Teachers' Expectations and Professional Development with Demographic-Professional Characteristics*

Teachers' Expectations and Professional Development in the Age of Artificial Intelligence	Gender	t(504)=.179, p=.858>.05
	Years of service	F(3)=1.999, p=.113>.05
	Education Level	t(504)=1.436, p=.151>.05
	Role in the school	t(504)=-2.164, p=.031< .05
	Degree	F(2)=2.619, p=.074>.05
	ICT Knowledge	F(2)=8.096, p<.001
	School Area	F(2)=.0291, p=.747>.05
	AI training	t(504)=4.699, p<.001

b) Table 4 *Comparisons of Professional Autonomy and Pedagogical Decision-Making with Demographic-Professional Characteristics.* Regarding the investigation of differentiation of Professional autonomy and

pedagogical decision-making in the age of AI based on their demographic and professional characteristics, Gender, Years of service, Level of Education (Primary-Secondary), Role in the school (Headmaster-Class Teacher), Degree (Basic Degree, Master's, Doctorate) and School Area (Urban, Semi-Urban, Rural) do not show a statistically significant difference in the participants' perceptions (p>.05) (Table 3). Statistically significant differences are: a) ICT *knowledge* [F(2)=3,193, p=.042<.05]. Post hoc comparisons have shown that those with B-level ICT show a higher average than those who do not have any ICT certification (BM=0.225, p=.034). On the contrary, there were no statistically significant differences between Level A and B, nor between Level A and without certification. It appears that advanced and pedagogically oriented knowledge of ICT is associated with a stronger sense of autonomy and control in the use of AI. b) *AI* Training [t(504)=-2,084, p=.038<.05. Teachers without AI training had a slightly higher average (AP=4.43, SD=.421) than those who have undergone training (AP=4.32, SD=.749). The magnitude of the effect is small (Cohen's d=-.186), indicating limited practical significance. The finding suggests that AI training is not necessarily associated with a higher sense of autonomy. those who have been trained seem to adopt a more critical and realistic attitude towards the use of AI and its limits. Greater awareness of pedagogical, ethical and institutional issues may reduce the sense of total control, but without weakening the professional role of teachers.

Table 4: Comparisons of Professional Autonomy and Pedagogical Decision-Making with Demographic-Professional Characteristics

Professional autonomy and pedagogical decision-making in the age of AI	Gender	t(504)=.646, p=.518>.05
	Years of service	F(3)=1.904, p=.128>.05
	Education Level	t(504)=1.255, p=.210>.05
	Role in the school	t(504)=2.006, p=.075>.05
	Degree	F(2)=2.823, p>.05
	ICT Knowledge	F(2)=3.193, p=.042<.05
	School Area	F(2)=1.234, p=.292>.05
	AI training	t(504)=-2.084, p=.038<.05

Checking the correlation between expectations-professional development and teachers' professional autonomy-decision-making

A correlation test was carried out between the expectations and professional development of teachers in the age of Artificial Intelligence and their professional autonomy in combination with pedagogical decision-making.

Table 5 *Correlation check.* The analysis was based on a sample of 506 teachers and the correlation coefficient Pearson was used. The results show a positive and statistically significant correlation of moderate intensity (r=0.349, p<0.001). This means that teachers who have higher expectations and feel that they are developing professionally in the context of AI tend to feel more autonomy and more comfortable in making pedagogical decisions. but not strong, which shows that professional autonomy does not depend solely on professional development. The finding makes sense, as training and familiarity with AI can boost teachers' confidence. At the same time, it should be noted that correlation does not indicate causality. In other words, it cannot be argued that professional development leads directly to autonomy or vice versa. In addition, factors such as school culture, administrative support or digital skills may influence this relationship and are not reflected in this screening.

Table 5: Correlation check

		(1)	(2)
Teachers' Expectations and Professional Development in the Age of Artificial Intelligence (1)	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	506	
Professional autonomy and pedagogical decision-making in the age of AI (2)	Pearson Correlation	.349**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	506	506

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)*

IV. Discussion

The purpose of this research was to explore the role of the teacher in the era of Artificial Intelligence, focusing on their expectations for their professional development, their professional autonomy and their pedagogical decision-making. In particular, the study examines how teachers perceive the transformation of their teaching practice and professional identity through the use of Artificial Intelligence, as well as the boundaries between human pedagogical judgment and automated suggestions, in the context of a human-centered and pedagogically responsible integration of technology in the school.

In terms of *Teachers' Expectations and Professional Development in the Age of Artificial Intelligence,* the findings show that teachers generally maintain positive expectations about the role of Artificial Intelligence (AP≈4.0) in their professional development. They believe that it can improve teaching through personalization and the utilization of innovative practices[6]. At the same time, consider it to contribute to enhancing student engagement and the development of higher-level skills[20, 26]. Reflection through data and learning analytics is evaluated positively, but with greater caution. This shows that educators recognize the potential, but need further support to make meaningful use of these tools[7]. AI is not seen as a substitute for the teacher, but as a supporting tool[15]. Particularly strong is the view that the future of education requires a combination of human and digital skills, while maintaining the pedagogical core.

Also, regarding *professional autonomy and pedagogical decisions in the age of AI*, there is a strong commitment to human control of pedagogical decisions. Teachers clearly reject the idea that pedagogical judgment can be replaced by AI (AP=4.54). They almost universally consider that the ultimate responsibility should remain with the teacher (AP=4.72). They also emphasize the need for clear boundaries between human judgment and algorithmic suggestions (AP=4.63), as well as for a supporting rather than directional role of AI (AP=4.67). The view that AI influences decision-making gathers more moderate acceptance (AP=3.81). This element shows caution, but without complete rejection. The findings are in line with the international literature, according to which AI can only act as a reinforcement when the teacher has the final say[4, 41, 37, 38].

As for the influence of *demographic-professional characteristics*, on the *Expectations and professional development of teachers in the era of Artificial Intelligence,* the perceptions of the teachers in the sample do not differ in terms of gender, years of service, level of education, degree and school area ($p>.05$). On the contrary, clear differences are recorded based on the role in the school, ICT knowledge and AI training. Principals have higher expectations than classroom teachers, which is associated with a more organizational and strategic perspective. Advanced knowledge of ICT (Level B) is associated with significantly more positive expectations compared to Level A or the absence of certification. AI training emerges as the strongest differentiator, as trained teachers have clearly higher expectations for professional development[1, 19]. The finding shows that positive attitudes are not spontaneous, but are cultivated through knowledge and systematic support.

As for the differences in *demographic-occupational characteristics* with occupational *autonomy and pedagogical decision-making,* there are no statistically significant differences in terms of gender, years of service, level of education, role in the school, qualification and school area ($p>.05$). On the contrary, there are two essential differences. First, ICT knowledge is associated with a stronger sense of autonomy, as teachers with B-Level ICT show a higher average than those who do not have certification. Second, AI training is associated with a slightly lower sense of autonomy, a finding interpreted as a sign of increased awareness of the pedagogical and ethical constraints of AI. The result is consistent with studies showing that training does not lead to uncritical acceptance, but to a more realistic and critical attitude[2, 11, 21].

Regarding the relationship between teachers' expectations for their professional development in the era of Artificial Intelligence and their professional autonomy and pedagogical decision-making, the results of this study showed a positive and statistically significant correlation of moderate intensity ($r=0.349$, $p<0.001$). This finding suggests that the more positive teachers' expectations for their professional development through the use of AI, the more they state that they feel professional autonomy and comfort in making pedagogical decisions. This finding is consistent with the theoretical framework that supports that training, digital proficiency and familiarity with AI tools can enhance the teacher's sense of effectiveness and upgraded role[15, 21]. At the same time, research shows that systematic training and institutional support cultivate more positive attitudes and increased expectations of professional development[1, 19], an element that is interpretively associated with a higher sense of professional empowerment. However, the moderate intensity of the correlation indicates that professional autonomy does not depend solely on professional development in AI. The literature highlights that autonomy is a complex phenomenon, which is influenced by institutional, organizational and cultural characteristics of the school[16, 28]. In addition, the acceptance of AI is linked to the existence of clear boundaries, consensus, and institutional framework[37, 38], as well as issues of ethical governance and algorithmic transparency[2]. Factors such as school culture, administrative support, and digital skill level have been identified as critical in shaping teachers' professional identity and degree of autonomy[29, 42]. It is important to emphasize that association does not indicate a causal relationship. The statistically significant relevance does not allow to conclude that professional development in AI leads directly to increased autonomy or vice versa. The international literature points out that the relationships between professional learning, autonomy and pedagogical control are multifactorial and dynamic[15, 38], which necessitates further research investigation with multivariate models.

V. Conclusion

This research clearly highlighted that teachers in Greece approach Artificial Intelligence with a positive but mature attitude. They do not treat it as a threat, but neither as a panacea. They see it as a tool with potential, under certain conditions and limits. Expectations for professional growth are high. Most teachers believe that AI

can improve teaching, foster innovation and open up new perspectives for their professional identity. At the same time, they recognise that the future of education requires a combination of human and digital skills. Technology does not replace the pedagogical role, but redefines it. Of particular importance is the fact that a positive attitude is linked to knowledge and training. Teachers with a higher level of digital training and training in AI have stronger expectations for professional development. This finding highlights the crucial role of systematic training. The integration of AI cannot be based on individual initiative. It requires an organized institutional framework, solid support and a clear strategy. At the same time, the results show that professional autonomy is a non-negotiable value for teachers. The ultimate responsibility for pedagogical decisions is considered purely human. AI is only accepted as a supporting tool and not as a guiding or control body. The need for clear boundaries between human judgment and automated suggestions is almost universal. Consent and pedagogical freedom are emerging as basic conditions for the acceptance of technology in school. The positive, but moderate, correlation between professional development and autonomy is also interesting. The more positive teachers' expectations for the use of AI, the more autonomy they say they feel. However, this relationship is not absolute. Autonomy is also influenced by other factors, such as school culture, administrative support and institutional framework. AI alone does not empower or weaken the role of the teacher. The way it is integrated is what determines the result

Overall, the study shows that teachers are not resisting technological change. On the contrary, they ask to be actively involved in its formation. They want training, clear rules and an essential role in decision-making. The successful integration of AI requires a human-centric approach. Democratic governance, pedagogical sensitivity and ensuring professional autonomy are needed.

The research contributes to the scientific dialogue, as it empirically captures a transitional moment for the Greek school. It highlights that the challenge is not whether to integrate AI into education, but how to integrate it. The future is emerging as a coexistence of human judgment and technological support. The focus, however, remains on the teacher. Further research could focus on qualitative approaches, case studies of school units and multifactorial models that will explore more deeply the factors that influence autonomy and professional identity in the age of Artificial Intelligence. Artificial Intelligence does not replace the teacher. Challenges him/her to redefine his/her role. And this challenge, as its data shows, can be turned into an opportunity, if it is accompanied by knowledge, support and respect for pedagogical autonomy.

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