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Graduate Students' Perspectives on the Qualities of Innovative Teachers*

Lisansüstü Öğrencilerin Yenilikçi Öğretmen Özelliklerine İlişkin Görüşleri

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ABSTRACT: This qualitative study aims to explore to determine the views of graduate students on the features of 'innovative teachers'. The participants comprised of 36 graduate students (15 masters and 20 doctorates) who enrolled in a graduate program on education in a state university in Turkey. Depending on the findings obtained through an open-ended questionnaire and content analysis process, the following categories are formed: technology use, renewing oneself, openness to developments, motivation, collaboration with colleagues, student centered thinking and guidance. Additionally, most of the participants expressed that they regard themselves as innovative. It is hoped that the findings of the study provides an insight into a discussion about the issue
Keywords: innovation, innovative teacher, graduate students, qualitative research, professional development

ÖZ: Bu nitel araştırmanın temel amacı lisanüstü öğrencilerin 'yenilikçi öğretmen' özelliklerine ilişkin bakış açılarını belirlemektir. Araştırmada çalışma grubunu, 15 yüksek lisans ve 20 doktora öğrencisi olmak üzere toplam 25 lisansüstü öğrenci oluşturmaktadır. Açık uçlu sorular ile içerik analizi sonucunda elde edilen bulgulara bağlı olarak, aşağıdaki kategoriler oluşturulmuştur: (1) teknoloji kullanımı (2) kendini yenilemek (3) gelişmelere açık olmak (4) motivasyon (5) meslektaşlar ile işbirliği (6) öğrenci merkezli düşünmek (7) rehberlik. Ayrıca, katılımcıların çoğu kendilerini yenilikçi olarak vurgulamışlardır. Araştırma sonuçlarının, bu konudaki tartışmalara bir bakış açısı sağlayacağı umulmaktadır.
Anahtar sözcükler: yenilik, yenilikçi öğretmen, mezun öğrenciler, nitel araştırma, mesleki gelişim

1. INTRODUCTION

Social needs have been changing so rapidly in the context of modern qualifications and have had a multi-purposed quality. It is known that the rapidity of information and communication technologies also raise a whole new set of challenges (Samašonok & Leškienė-Hussey, 2015) in all areas as well as in education. It is necessary that educational institutions keep up with these developments and renew themselves rapidly in this sense. Their success is obviously related to their power to manage the change and the skills of teachers to produce new strategies and effective solutions in order to achieve the change. Bringing an innovation to this system is also closely related to the fact that human factor being the main component of this system adopt the innovations and be ready for that (Yılmaz & Kocasaraç, 2010). Every innovation brings a change with it as well; however, every change might not have a value of innovation. Being able to find effective solutions regarding current applications is a significant step having a value of innovation. According to Alter (2000), innovation at education is the task of offering solutions for many problems apart from the known ones when the current

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applications are inadequate, while casing some negativities for the applicator who expects a positive result. Innovation could be perceived as the ways of application and solutions likely to be effective by benefiting from science and technologies instead of old application or applications. Charitonidou and Ioannitou (2012) included the elements of innovation, efficacy, change, relevancy and process quality in the basic qualities of innovation. In this context, the innovator is the one realizing innovation.

In educational context, the concepts of innovative teaching and innovative teacher and research studies on these issues are remarkable. In related literature, on the other hand, there is a lack of a specific definition of innovative teaching (Zhu, Wang, Cai & Engels, 2013) even though there are some definitions of this concept. Jaskyte, Taylor and Smariga (2009) state that innovative teaching is not only introducing a new methodology or technique. According to them, innovative teaching "is a process that encompasses the interplay of a number of factors, including the instructors' personality, classroom culture, student-faculty communications, and means of knowledge transfer/teaching techniques as well as outcomes". MacIntyre (2015) notes that innovative teaching could be divided into four main categories based on related literature: (1) Class activities including active classroom assignments, activities, and interactions (2) Course projects referred to long-term projects that focused on developing student abilities over the course of a semester.(3) Instructor characteristics including instructor attributes that the literature considered to be most meaningful to students. (4) Environment consisted of technological aids that changed the physical nature of the classroom (MacIntyre, 2015). In sum, as Zhu et al. (2013) stated that innovative teaching is a necessity for all teachers in order to meet the educational needs of the new generations. This suggests that teachers have crucial roles in realizing innovative teaching and in a sense, teachers need to be innovative. As Thurlings, Evers & Vermeulen (2015) emphasise that innovative behavior should be central to the teaching profession.

In the current age having a constant change, teachers could reach to a professional level in terms of profession by improving and enriching the applications in the classes with innovative approaches. In this sense, it is expected that innovative teachers should also be an observant and researcher. This case requires innovative teachers to have such qualities as being flexible, prone to collaboration with the environment, being able to carry out team work and share (Cordonier, 2011). Innovative teacher is the one who could design the things mentally and make the designed products real. Thus, having innovations requires experiencing a great many interlinked processes, working interdisciplinary, learning problem solving skills and consequently obtain a lifelong learning (Creativite et Innovation, 2013). From this point of view, it is crucial that the profile of the innovative teachers should be clear to some extent. The applications and fields that provide innovative teachers with being innovative could be given shortly as follows: thinking reflectively and empathetically, learning constantly, dominant in information and communication techniques, prone to collaboration and help, principled and having democratic values, curious and open to improve himself. On the other hand, according to Jaskyte, Taylor and Smariga (2009) a creative teacher is seen as the one whom is consistently curious and constantly seeks out new ways to improve her or his teaching abilities. This suggests that being innovative teacher also requires being creative in learning and teaching atmosphere. In other words, innovation and creativity are two interlinked concepts and they are indispensable for each other. It can be thought that the concept of innovation is a function of the creativity concept. Choon-Keong, Aris, Harun & Kean-Wah (2012) stated that "*creativity is often seen as a characteristic that a person possesses, a product or outcome that is regarded as original, and a process by which an unusual, novel or suitable outcome or solution is obtained*". This definition suggests that there is a close relationship between creativity and creative thinking. Creative thinking can lead to many possible outcomes or solutions based on imagination, therefore it can be said that creative thinking plays a decisive role in the realization of new and

different applications which suggest that innovative practices. Creativity could be taught and fostered according to many researchers (Choon-Keong, Aris, Harun & Kean-Wah, 2012). Creative pedagogy requires creative teaching, teaching for creativity, and creative learning (Lin, 2011). Hence, teachers also become innovative when they realize new practices in their classrooms in the light of their experiences since as Woods (1990, cited in Jeffrey, 2006) states that creative acts bring change. Therefore, a creative teacher can be desribed as' the one who is consistently curios and constantly seeks out new ways to improve her or his teaching abilities' (Hosseini, 2014).

In sum, as science and technology improves, innovation becomes an indispensable reality for educational institutions in order to meet the emerging expectations and adaptations (Blanquer, 2010). Schools that could have continuity in renewing and transforming themselves, in other words those which are open to learn, could only keep up with this change and transformation with the teachers having these qualities. In a sense, research has been conducted in order to investigate innovations in the school context. The literature review in this field shows that there haven't been so many studies over innovative teaching and teacher. One of the rare studies was carried out by Zhu et al. (2013). In their study, basic competencies regarding the innovative teaching performance of the teachers were focused and basic competencies for the innovative teaching of teachers depending on the literature and earlier studies were ordered as four basic competencies: teaching competencies, educational competencies, social competencies and technological competencies. In that study, a questionnaire was prepared to determine the basic competencies of teachers and the performance of innovative teaching, the data obtained showed that there is a positive relation between the educational, social and technological competencies of the teachers and their own innovative teaching performances. Another important result of the study was that supportive relations with the colleagues have a significant role in affecting the performance of innovative teachers in a positive way. On the other hand, in the study conducted by Gorozidis and Papaioannou (2014), it is stated that innovations are often introduced via centrally organized in-service teacher training programs and generally teachers' participation to these programs is optional. In a sense, teachers' willingnesss to learn and their motivation to learn are important factors for their professional development. Teachers' willingness to learn is a crucial factor for implementing educational innovations as suggested by Könnings, Brand-Gruvel and Merrienboer (2007). However, as Avidov-Ungar and Eshet-Alkakay (2011) indicated that teachers' attitudes towards change is also crucial point and in the case of innovative technology implementation in schools, teachers' resistance is important factor in the project's success. Additionally, they stated that teachers' resistance can be categorised under two fold: (1) cognitive resistance and (2) emotional resistance based on Del Val Fuentes' study (2003). On the other hand, Davis, Hartshorne and Ring, (2010) pointed out that even though teachers talked very positively about the technology interventions, they failed to implement changes upon returning to their classrooms based on the study conducted by Beyerbach et al. (2001). Davis et al.(2010) also stated that teachers reported that they need more incentives for integration, more access to technology and the presence of more technological support in reaction to the difficulties faced when implementing technology in terms of the results of study conducted by Norum, Grabinger and Duffield (1999).

Taking into account teachers' own attitudes and perceptions in situations where they are expected to implement new practices is important for the success of the innovation process as also Lau and Shiu (2008) have noted. From this point, the main purpose of the current study was to define postgraduate students' views over innovative teaching qualities and determine the innovative teacher profile from the perspectives of them. It was thought that it would be meaningful and important to determine the opinions of post graduate students who are also teachers in the schools, on innovative teacher qualifications who are taking post-graduate education.

2. METHOD

2.1. Participants

The study is conducted in a state university in Turkey. This qualitative research particularly proposes to post-graduate students on the characteristics of innovative teachers. Table 1 provides information on the characteristics of the participants.

Table 1: Participants' characteristics

Variables		n
Gender	Female	21
	Male	15
	Total	36
Graduated Field	Mathematics Teaching	9
	Computer Education	8
	Science and Technology Teaching	5
	Classroom Teaching	4
	English Language Teaching	3
	Geography Teaching	3
	Turkish Language Teaching	1
	Biology Teaching	1
	History	1
	Vocational Educational	1
	Total	36

The participants consisted of 36 graduate students (21 female and 15 male) enrolled in the graduate program on education in the university. In this research, two main factors were important to decide the participants of the study: Firstly, participants are teachers and have at least three years of teaching experience in the profession. Secondly, the participants have completed their undergraduate education in the faculty of education and doing post graduate education in different fields of education. Because of these two features, it was thought that participants had a vision for the teaching profession and its characteristics. Thus, the criteria sampling, which is a purposeful sampling technique, was used in determining the study group. This technique particularly refers to selecting certain units based on a specific purpose as Tashakkori & Teddlie (2003, cited in Teddlie & Yu, 2007, p. 80) indicated.

2.2. Data Collection Tool

In this descriptive study, a data collection form which was made up of open-ended questions was used as a data collection tool in order to determine graduate students' perceptions regarding with innovative teacher characteristics. The form which includes the questions about personal information (e.g.teaching experience) and innovative teacher qualities, developed by the researcher of this study. In this data collection form, the reason to use open-ended questions was to be able to define the views of the participants in detail (Arseven, 2001). The open-ended questions used in the data collection form were: (1) What do you think the features that would be able to make teachers innovative are? (2) Do you regard yourself as an innovative teacher? If "yes" or "no", give the reasons why. (3) To what extent, do you think the education you took at the undergraduate education effective in attaining innovative teacher features is. For the validity and reliability of the prepared data collection tool, firstly, the opinions of the three experts who were working on the field were taken. In this phase, two questions have been corrected for expression and two new questions have been added according to experts' suggestions, thus the form has been finalized. Secondly, the form was implemented with three undergraduate students, and the functionality of the questions was tested. Lastly, to ensure ethical aspect of the research, researchers gave the data collection form with voluntary post graduate students after providing informnation and the purpose of this research.

2.3. Data Analysis

For the answers given by the participants, a data base for each question was formed first and then they were analyzed with the content analysis technique that is frequently used in the qualitative researches (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2006). Firstly, the three researchers carried out their own codes and categories on the data set for each questions and secondly, the three researchers came together to have a consensus which was very useful for trustworthiness in the research. The average reliability between coders was found to be high (95 %). After taking expert views, the categorizations are finalized. In presenting data tables are used and representative quotations were also given for readers (Anderson, 2010).

3. FINDINGS

In this part, findings were given in the order of questions asked to the participants in the research. The first question was "What do you think the qualities that would make teachers innovative are?" The analysis results of the responses given to this question were given in Table 2. It should be noted here that the frequency is not given for the analysis of this question in the table since the participants' expressions found merit to discuss regarding the issue.

Table 2: Graduates' views over the qualities of innovative teachers

Categories	Sub-categories	Exemplary quotes from data
1. Using technology	-	• Keeping up with technology and applying it in the field • Integrating technology to the courses • Being open to technological innovations
2. Renewing oneself	In-service seminars, courses etc. Reading habit	Active participation in the conferences, seminars, certificate programs with regard to the field The easiest and most effective activity that would provide a person with having changes and development regardless of his position and profession.
3. Being open to developments	Openness to new teaching approaches Openness to new technologies Openness to new ideas Openness to research Updating oneself	An innovative teacher follow new methods and techniques and integrate them to the courses Giving priority to being openness to technological innovations, being willing and using technological opportunities ▪ Being open to change and developments ▪ Keeping the doors open to different opportunities, trying new applications and learning what is unknown in this way. Innovative teacher is willing to learning and searching. A teacher should update through guiding their students.
4. Motivation	-	Innovative teachers should always motive their students
5. Collaboration with colleagues	-	Innovative teachers apply suitable methods and technology and share these practices with their colleagues.
6. Student centered thinking	-	Getting to know the results of the student centered educational approach that would replace traditional learning approaches, arranging the courses in line with this approach and activities.
7. Guidance	-	• Being an innovative teacher is not only teaching what is learned to students, but also transferring the life experience to students. • An innovative teacher should be a good guide

As given in the table, the answers of the graduate students were given in seven categories: (1) using technology, (2) renewing oneself, (3) being open to developments, (4) motivation, (5) collaboration with the colleagues, (6) student centered thinking, and (7) guidance. In a similar study, Zhu et al. (2013) regarded innovative teacher competencies in four basic dimensions: teaching competencies, technological competencies, social competencies and educational competencies. At this point, the findings obtained in the current study have a compliance with the categories formed by Zhu et al. (2013), for example, the category of using technology could be regarded within the technological competency dimension by Zhu et al. (2013). Similarly, collaboration with the colleagues could be considered within social competence, the categories of motivation and guidance could be considered within teaching competence and renewing oneself and openness to developments could also be regarded within learning competence.

Depending on the categories in the current study as given in the table, it is clear that these qualities correspond to modern teacher qualities (Budak 2011; Bramwell, Reilly, Lilly, Kronish & Chennabathni, 2011; Heather, Hartshorne & Gail, 2010) at first sight. On the other hand, the second category of "Renewing oneself" is made up of sub-themes. Depending on the responses given by the participants in this category, the items of in-service courses and seminars, necessity of reading habit, being open to innovations and changes come to the forefront. This finding is of great importance in the studies targeting training innovative teachers in all educational systems (Creativite et Innovation, 2013).

There were also some interesting expressions by graduate students in this question. These expressions did not make up a category but had some interesting points to make teachers innovative. Some of them were given below:

> *"It is inevitable that teachers would become innovative unless they lost their identity as a student" (p3)*

> *"...teachers would be renewing themselves not by 'teaching', but by 'learning" (p21)*

In the second question, the participants (n=36) were asked "Do you regard yourself as an innovative teacher? If "yes" or "no", give the reasons why". The detail with regard to the direction of the answers given to this question was given in Figure 1.

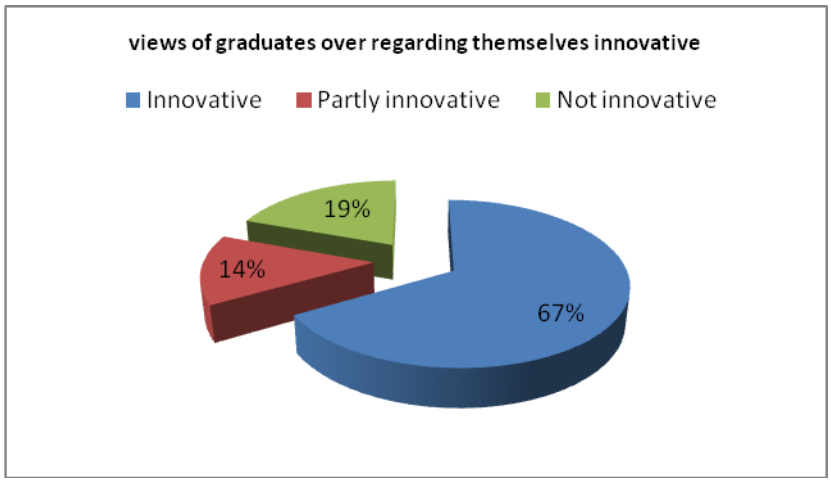

Figure 1: The views of graduates over regarding themselves innovative

As given in the table, most of the graduate students (67%) participating in the study expressed that they regard themselves as innovative. On the other hand, seven of them (19%) pointed out that they do not consider themselves innovative; five of them (14%) reported it as

partly innovative. Here are the quotations from the views of graduate students in these three categories:

Those regarding themselves as innovative:

"Yes, thanks to developing technology, access to information has become easier and the knowledge accumulation of the students increased. It is necessary for teachers to have adequate knowledge in his field in order to have an access to the students and this makes him compulsory to renew himself constantly" (p2)

"Yes, because I like searching, I am keen on improving myself and trying to keep up with technology and innovation as much as I can. I also pay attention to using effective teaching methods" (p12)

"Yes, certainly. I have never seen myself fully improved in my professional career... I have been following the publications, books and read more and I have started post-graduate education... I try to follow up courses, seminars, and conferences." (p13)

"… I am following informatics technology and using it (p16)

"Yes, I am following new ideas regarding my field. I am trying to learn new teaching methods and techniques". (p18)

As seen in the responses of the participants, behind the definitions of graduates regarding themselves innovative lies such features as using technology, creativity and tendency of being extraordinary, focusing on researches, having a positive perspective for innovations, contribution of post graduate education, openness to learning, personal features. On the other hand, with regard to the second question, graduate students had different ideas over being innovative. Some of them found themselves partly innovative. Some of the quotations are given below:

The ones regarding themselves partly innovative:

"I regard myself partly innovative…Teaching is a profession that requires being a student every time". (p25).

"I would say either yes or no, since I follow up the innovations both in my field and in education but it is sometimes difficult to put them into practice. While I am using many of the methods in my small groups, I prefer straight teaching method in large classes..." (p29).

Depending on the views of graduate students in the category of partly, two points are remarkable. On the one hand, the participants show a tendency of not being able to regard themselves innovative, but focusing on "learning constantly" need, on the other hand it is observed that they regard themselves innovative as the conditions force them to do so.

Those not regarding themselves as innovative:

"My answer is no. The reason of it is that we do not have any time to improve ourselves due to various reasons as our work load is too heavy." (p6)

The participants not regarding themselves innovative pointed out heavy work load, working conditions and time factor. Graduate students who not regarding themselves as innovative in this present study indicated quite remarkable points behind this which suggests that graduates' resistance for the innovations. In a similar study, Başaran and Keleş (2015) conducted a research study with 370 teachers in order to examine teachers' innovativenesss and they found that teachers have an average innovativeness level.

It should be noted here that, in the related literature, four main reasons can be listed for teachers' resistance to innovations as follows: (1) willingness to learn, (2) lack of consciousness of teaching behaviour, (3) incomplete reflection and (4) dominant conception of teaching and learning (Könings et al., 2007). Being innovative for teachers also requires for teacher to adapt and implement a new curriculum process. However, Stevens (2004, p.391) stated that there are three kinds of teachers when it comes to trying new programs: (1) the innovators, those who like trying new instructional approaches, (2) the immovable, those who refuse to change and (3) the large middle group that essentially takes a "wait and see" attitude. On the other hand, in the study conducted by Vanatta, Beyerbach and Walsh (2001), it is found that preservice teachers changed their views of technology infusion and they stated that they would teach and learn about technology to support student learning. However, it should be noted here that innovative teacher is not only a teacher using informatics technologies or developing projects regarding these technologies (Heather, Hartshorne & Gail, 2010).

The participants were asked as the last question "To what extent, do you think the education you took at the undergraduate education effective in attaining innovative teacher features?" With this question, it is hypothesized that undergraduate education might be effective for students in attaining innovative teacher features, with different courses provided. The responses given to this question were examined in three basic categories: those giving positive views, those giving negative views and indecisive ones. Some example quotes from responses are follows:

Those giving positive views:

"Its effect is great. I can relate almost all of it to these courses, since I was introduced to innovative teacher qualities thanks to the courses in undergraduate education". (p4)

"Undergraduate education has a great contribution to us in becoming an innovative teacher. A lot of things like the recent developments with regard to education are affected by the undergraduate education we took". (p22)

Those giving negative views:

"Undergraduate education was an education focusing less on the practice but more on the theoretical information..." (p2)

"...The courses in the name of innovative education were given in old system, the application dimension was lacking". (p25).

According to these results, it is likely to say that there were graduates who have positive views while there were also some who has negative viewpoints regarding this question. The responses of those regarding the undergraduate education sufficient thought that undergraduate courses made students attain a multi-directional perspective and so making a support to critical thinking, in addition, they focused on the importance of experience obtained in the interactional settings. On the other hand, the answers of those regarding the undergraduate education insufficient in making teachers attain thought that the courses were theoretical and far from practice; the things made in the name of innovation was carried out were not effective in making teachers attain innovative qualities, there was some missing points in practice.

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Innovative teacher qualities are not unchangeable, since being unchangeable is the opposite of innovativeness. In this sense, it is of great importance that teachers should develop behaviors aiming at realizing the visions of the schools where they work with an innovative understanding and they make their applications in that way. Drucker (2007, cited in Beegan,

2014) states that innovation is the only way to convert change into opportunity and in order to keep up with changes it is important to adapt and innovate to better develop. In other words, innovation brings change with it for a teacher, however every change might not have a value of innovation. Technology here comprises a significant part of innovation when it is thought to be a concept with a lot of dimensions. Developing effective ways of solution with regard to current applications is a significant step having a value of innovation. In order that education and educational institutions are innovative, it is necessary that some initiatives should be taken to meet the expectations and facilitate the realization of the processes in an effective way with regard to the fields of occupations in the light of science and technology.

With this research, it is aimed to explore how the concept of innovative teacher is perceived by post-graduate students. The study indicated some remarkable findings as follows:

- Post-graduate students think that the main characteristics for being innovative teacher are related to using technology, renewing oneself, being open to developments, motivation, collabration with colleaques, student centered thinking and guidance, in general.
- Most of the graduate students in the study regard themselves as innovative whereas a small group of participants do not consider themselves as innovative.
- Graduate students have different viewpoints (positive and negative) about the effect of undergraduate education on their views regarding innovative teacher characterisctics.

This study shows that determining the innovative teacher qualities by the postgraduates' perspective would facilitate the reflection of innovative perspectives to teaching and would make a positive contribution to attaining functionality in the teacher training programs. It should be noted here that change brings about development and development brings change. It is worth noting that everyone has the potential to be creative and innovative.

Literature review made for this research indicated that there are not enough studies into innovative teacher qualities and innovative teaching. Therefore, it is recommended that some detailed studies should be made in this issue and benefitted from these studies in developing teacher training programs, so developing the innovative capacities of innovative teachers. In a sense, more research is needed about innovations in teaching and education context. It would be useful to conduct similar studies in different contexts so that different viewpoints of stakeholders could be obtained. It is hoped that this study provides some crucial points by the perspectives of graduates and these perspectives can also be considered in future studies in the context of innovation studies.

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Uzun Özet

Eğitim kurumlarının da gelişmelere hızla ayak uydurması ve bu anlamda kendilerini hızla yenilemeleri gerekir. Bunu başarabilmeleri kuşkusuz onların değişimi yönetme güçleriyle ve öğretmenlerin değişimi yönetme adına yeni stratejiler ve etkili çözümler geliştirme becerileriyle ilgilidir. Bir sisteme yenilik getirmek o sistemin yürütücüsü olan insan faktörünün yenilikleri benimsemesi ve ona hazır olması ile yakından ilişkilidir (Yılmaz ve Kocasaraç, 2010). Alter (2000)'e göre eğitimde yenilik, mevcut uygulamaların çözümünde yetersiz kaldığı birçok soruna, bilinenler dışında çözümler getirme işi olmakla birlikte uygulayıcı açısından beklenen sonucu verme konusunda olumsuzluklar da içerebilir. Yenilik, eski uygulama veya uygulamaların yerine bilim ve teknolojiden yararlanılarak daha etkili olabilecek uygulama ve çözüm yolları geliştirilmesi olarak algılanabilir. Charitonidou ve Ioannitou (2012) yenilikte olması gereken temel nitelikler arasında: yenilik, verimlilik, değişiklik, amaca uygunluk ve süreçsellik unsurlarını sıralamaktadır.

Eğitimsel bağlamda, yenilikçi öğretmen ve yenilikçi öğretim ve bu konularda yapılan araştırma çalışmaları oldukça dikkat çekicidir. Diğer taraftan, ilgili alanyazında yenilikçi öğretim ve öğretmene ilişkin net bir tanım eksikliği bulunmaktadır (Zhu ve diğ., 2013). Jaskyte, Taylor ve Smariga (2009) yenilikçi öğretimi şu şekilde tanımlamaktadır: "Yenilikçi öğretim, sadece yeni bir metodoloji yada teknik tanıtma konusu değildir. Yenilikçi öğretim, içinde öğreticinin kişiliği, sınıf kültürü, öğrenci-öğretici iletişimleri ve öğrenme ürünleri kadar bilgiyi transfer ya da öğretme tekniklerini de kapsayan bir süreçtir. Bu noktada, yenilikçi öğretimi gerçekleştirmede öğretmenlerin çok önemli rolleri olduğunu belirtmek gereklidir. Aynı zamanda, yenilikçi öğretimin, yeni kuşakların eğitimsel ihtiyaçlarını karşılamada, tüm öğretmenler için bir gereklilik olduğunu da burada belirtmek gerekir (Zhu ve diğ., 2013).

Yenilik yapma süreci iç içe geçmiş birçok sürecin yaşanmasını, disiplinler arası çalışmayı, sorun çözme becerilerini ve nihayetinde yaşam boyu öğrenmeyi gerektirir (Creativite et Innovation, 2013). Yenilikçi öğretmenlerin yenilikçi olmalarını sağlayıcı uygulamalar ve alanlar temel olarak şöyle sıralanabilir (Bramwell ve diğerleri 2011; Holmes 2009). Yansıtıcı ve empatik düşünme; sürekli öğrenme, yaratıcılık, bilgi ve iletişim teknolojilerine hâkim olma, işbirliği ve yardımlaşmaya yatkınlık, ilkeli ve demokratik değerlere sahip olmak; merak ve kendini geliştirmeye açık olmak. Zhu ve diğerleri (2013)nin araştırmalarında, öğretmenlerin yenilikçi öğretim performanslarıyla ilgili temel yeterliliklerine odaklanılmış, alanyazına ve önceki çalışmalara dayalı olarak öğretmenlerin yenilikçi öğretimleri için temel yeterlikleri dört temel yeterlilik olarak sıralanmıştır: öğrenme yeterliliği, eğitimsel yeterlilik, sosyal yeterlilik ve teknolojik yeterlilik. Çalışmada öğretmenlerin temel yeterlilikleri ve yenilikçi öğretim performansları konusunda bir anket geliştirilmiş, bulgular, öğretmenlerin eğitimsel yeterlilikler, sosyal yeterlilikleri ve teknolojik yeterliliklerinin, kendi yenilikçi öğretim performanslarıyla olumlu bir ilişkisi olduğunu göstermiştir. Çalışmanın diğer bir önemli sonucu, meslektaşlarıyla destekleyici ilişkilerin, yenilikçi öğretmenlerin performansını olumlu bir şekilde etkilemede önemli rol oynamasıdır. Diğer taraftan, Gorozidis ve Papaioannou (2014) yapılan çalışmada, yeniliklerin sıklıkla merkezi düzenlenen hizmet-içi öğretmen eğitimi programlar aracılığıyla tanıtıldığını ve genellikle öğretmenlerin bu programlara katılımlarının opsiyonlu olduğunu belirtmişlerdir. Bu anlamda, öğretmenlerin öğrenmek için isteklilikleri ve motivasyonları mesleki gelişimleri için önemli unsurladır. Könnings, Brand-Gruvel ve Merrienboer (2007) tarafından da belirtildiği üzere, öğretmenlerin öğrenme isteklilikleri eğitimsel yenilikleri uygulamalarında son derece önemli bir faktördür. Diğer taraftan, yenilikçi öğretmen, sadece bilişim teknolojilerini kullanan ya da bu teknolojilere ilişkin proje geliştiren öğretmen değil, aynı zamanda ilgili taraflarla işbirliği içinde sistemin içindeki dolaylı ve dolaysız tüm tarafları ve öğeleri için yeni sayılabilecek uygulamalar gerçekleştiren öğretmendir (Heather, Hartshorne ve Gail, 2010) denilebilir.

Bu çalışmanın temel amacı, Türkiye'de lisansüstü eğitim öğrencilerinin yenilikçi öğretmen niteliklerine yönelik görüşlerini betimlemek ve bu perspektifinden yenilikçi öğretmen profilini ortaya çıkarmaktır. Bu betimsel çalışmada veri toplama aracı olarak açık uçlu soruları da kapsayan bir bilgi

formu kullanılmıştır. Araştırmacılar tarafından hazırlanan bilgi toplama formu kişisel bilgiler ve yenilikçi öğretmen özelliklerini içeren açık uçlu üç sorudan oluşmuştur. Bilgi toplama formunda açık uçlu soruların kullanılma nedeni, katılımcıların konu ile ilgili detaylı görüşlerini betimleyebilmektir (Arseven, 2001). Bilgi toplama formunda kullanılan açık uçlu sorular şunlardır: (1) Öğretmenleri yenilikçi kılabilecek özellikler sizce neler olabilir? (2) Siz kendinizi yenilikçi bir öğretmen olarak görüyor musunuz? Cevabınızın ”evet” ya da “hayır” olması durumunda bunun nedenlerini belirtiniz. (3) Lisans düzeyinde aldığınız eğitimin size yenilikçi öğretmen özellikleri kazandırmada ne derece etkili olduğunu düşünüyorsunuz? Katılımcıların bu sorulara verdikleri cevaplar için öncelikle her bir soruya yönelik veri tabanı oluşturulmuş, daha sonra her bir soru için nitel araştırmalarda sıklıkla kullanılan içerik analizi tekniği ile çözümleme yapılmıştır (Bilgin, 2006; Yıldırım, 2006). Her bir soru için üç araştırmacı veri seti üzerinde kendi kod ve kategorilendirme işlemlerini gerçekleştirmiş, daha sonra üç araştırmacı bir araya gelerek görüş birliğini sağlamıştır.

Katılımcılara ilk olarak “öğretmenleri yenilikçi kılabilecek özellikler sizce neler olabilir?” sorusu yöneltilmiştir. Katılımcıların bu soruya yönelik cevapları yedi kategori altında toplanmıştır: (1) teknoloji kullanımı (2) kendini yenileme (3) gelişmelere açıklık (4) motivasyon (5) meslektaşlarla işbirliği (6) öğrenci merkezli düşünme ve (7) rehberlik. Araştırmada katılımcılara, çalışmaya katılan lisansüstü öğrencilerin aynı zamanda öğretmen olmasından dolayı, siz kendinizi yenilikçi bir öğretmen olarak görüyor musunuz? sorusu yöneltilmiştir. Cevabınızın ”evet” ya da “hayır” olması durumunda bunun nedenlerini belirtiniz” sorusu yöneltilmiştir. Katılımcıların büyük çoğunluğu (n=24) kendini yenilikçi öğretmen olarak gördüğünü belirtmiştir. Araştırmada katılımcılara son olarak "Lisans düzeyinde aldığınız eğitimin size yenilikçi öğretmen özellikleri kazandırmada ne derece etkili olduğunu düşünüyorsunuz?" sorusu yöneltilmiştir. Katılımcıların bu soruya yönelik cevapları üç temel kategoride incelenmiştir: olumlu görüş verenler, olumsuz görüş verenler ve kararsız olanlar. Lisans eğitimini yeterli görenler cevaplarında, lisans derslerinin çok yönlü bakış açısı kazandırması ve böylece eleştirel düşünmeye katkı sağladığı, ayrıca etkileşime dayalı ortamlarda yaşanan deneyimlerin önemine odaklanmışlardır. Lisans eğitimini bu anlamda yetersiz bulanların cevaplarında ise derslerin teorik temelli olması; yenilik adına yapılanların yenilikçilik özelliklerini kazandırmada etkili olmadığı, uygulama eksikliği, derslerin içeriğinin yenilikçilik açısından uygun olmadı gibi boyutlar dikkat çekmiştir.

Yenilikçi öğretmen niteliklerinin lisansüstü öğrenciler perspektifinden tanımlanması ve açıklanmasını amaçlayan bu çalışmanın sonuçlarının, öğretmenlerin yenilikçi bakış açısını öğretimlerine yansıtmaları konusunda önemli ipuçları sağlayacağı söylenebilir. Diğer taraftan, yenilikçi öğretim ve öğretmen nitelikleri konusunda ilgili alanyazında çok sayıda çalışma olmadığı gözlenmektedir, bu anlamda konuyla ilgili daha kapsamlı çalışmalar yapılarak öğretmen yetiştirme programlarının geliştirilmesinde bu çalışmalardan yararlanılması mevcut öğretmenlerin, öğretmen adaylarının ve lisansüstü öğrencilerin yenilikçi kapasitelerinin geliştirilmesine önemli katkılar sağlanabilir.