



## ADAPTATION CHALLENGES OF NOVICE TEACHERS\*

### ADAY ÖĞRETMENLERİN UYUM SORUNLARI

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**ABSTRACT:** The purpose of this study was to investigate adaptation challenges of novice teachers during induction period. Through a questionnaire prepared in a cross-sectional descriptive design, the data were collected from 465 novice teachers teaching in randomly selected 8 provinces of Turkey. The results indicated that novice teachers had both job-related challenges and social challenges. The most frequent adaptation challenges were related to (1) workload, (2) social status and identity, (3) supervisors (school principals and inspectors), and (4) classroom management.

**Keywords:** Novice Teachers, Induction Period, Adaptation Challenges

**ÖZET:** Bu çalışmanın amacı aday öğretmenlerin mesleğe giriş sürecinde karşılaştıkları uyum güçlüklerini ortaya çıkarmaktır. Seçkisiz örnekleme yöntemiyle saptanan, Türkiye'nin 8 ilinde görev yapmakta olan 465 aday öğretmene uygulanan anket yoluyla, veriler toplanmıştır. Çalışmanın sonuçları, aday öğretmenlerin hem mesleki açıdan hem de sosyal açıdan uyum güçlükleri olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. En sık rastlanan uyum güçlükleri ise sırasıyla (1) iş yükü, (2) sosyal statü ve kimlik, (3) müdür ya da müfettişlerle ilişkiler ve (3) sınıf yönetimi ile ilgili uyum güçlükleri olmuştur.

**Anahtar sözcükler:** Aday Öğretmenler, Öğretmenlikte İlk Yıl, Uyum Sorunları

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Beginning teachers' transition from pre-service education to professional practice is often 'unsettling,' because there is no gradual induction into teaching profession. The novices most often teach like experienced teachers, thereby having a multiplicity of roles like being a student, a teacher and a researcher (Smith & Sela, 2005). There seems to be a common understanding that what is required from an experienced teacher is also required from a novice teacher. Despite the fact that novices do not possess the qualities of an experienced teacher, they are expected to meet similar requirements as soon as they enter the field, and sometimes, this unfairness goes further and beginning teachers commonly receive the most difficult teaching assignments (Yalçinkaya, 2002). This creates another challenge in novice teachers' struggling. As a consequence, "beginning teachers leave the field at higher rates than beginning workers in other careers" (Wonacott, 2002, p. 3).

Research on new teachers identified two critical challenges in relation to how novices view their induction status: a "practice shock" that results in an over emphasis on controlling students and a "cultural mismatch" that causes novices to see diversity as a problem (Achinstein & Barret, 2004). As Kellough (2005) clarified, the first year of teaching is "full of highs and lows, with few days in-between or neutral" (p. 1), and it is quite natural that there will be days when teaching seems wonderful and the days when teaching spreads fear. Thus, early experiences have significant influences on teachers' practices and attitudes throughout the remainder of their careers. Especially, the first year of teaching is critical, because any new teacher needs help to realize the importance of their work and to find the resources that will allow them to continue their work in a satisfying way (McCann & Johannessen, 2004).

Yalçinkaya (2002) identified the early problems of newly qualified teachers as: inexperience, conflicts between pre-service training and in-service applications; pressures on new teachers; effort to be able to finish more tasks, fear of inspection, and adaptation to school and environment. Resulting from inexperience, other difficulties were discussed as classroom management, planning and

\* This article is a part of the master thesis named "Induction into Teaching: Adaptation Challenges of Novice Teachers".

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implementation of the curriculum in line with the level of the classroom and the time allocated, using common and context-specific teaching methods, adjusting lessons according to individual and group differences, and learning the legislation regarding the profession and the employee rights.

Lundeen (2004) investigated what the perceived problems of new teachers in their first year were, how they changed over time, and what changes in their development were evident. The results of this study showed that there was a distinct struggle between the processes of caring for self as a developing adult in society and caring for the needs of students in their classrooms. The analyses provided two emerging categories for individual and group problems: classroom management and discipline problems and adult relationship and interaction problems. Additional analyses indicated six sub-problems: single student problems, small group problems, whole classroom management problems and issues, colleague and administrator problems, parents and classroom assistant problems, and mentor problems.

The study by Achinstein and Barret (2004) on novice teachers' challenges produced three frames: the managerial frame (like routines and procedures for managing students during activities in the classrooms, behaviour problems and consequences for discipline, timing and pacing of lessons), which was addressed in 93% of the cases; the human relations frame (such as knowing individual students' needs and learning styles, student-teacher relationships and communications, classroom culture, sense of community, collaboration, and connections with students and parents, student expression, choice, and motivation), which was addressed in 100 % of the cases; the political frame (like diverse students' needs in order to foster equity and access to learning, differentiation of instruction, students' prior knowledge and cultural understandings, teachers' expectations about learners, an analysis of race, culture, language and access; and inequities of student participation in classroom discourse), which was addressed in 87% of the cases.

The study conducted by McCann, Johannessen, and Ricca (2005) presented the major categories of challenges identified in interview transcripts of beginning teachers as: relationships with students, parents, colleagues and supervisors; workload, time management, and fatigue; knowledge of subject and curriculum; evaluation and grading; authority and control; and appearance and identity.

All these challenges identified in the literature are summarized in Jarvis and Algozzine (2006) as: workload, time management, and fatigue; content and curriculum knowledge; relationship with students, parents, colleagues, and supervisors; evaluation and grading; and autonomy and control. Beside all these common challenges, there are also specific problems encountered in different settings by different groups or individuals. Wang, Strong, and Odell (2004), in a study with novices from US and China, defined the most pressing challenges emerging from the interactions and conversations between novice and mentor teachers as: (1) teaching, (2) subject matter, and (3) students or a combination of the three. The cases in the U.S. had a dominant focus on teaching and students, particularly individual students and their behaviours. In Chinese cases, there was a strong focus on teaching and subject matter.

As one of the few studies in Turkey, the study by Taneri (2004) focused on novice classroom teachers' problems with respect to teacher certification processes they were engaged in. General findings indicated that the participants experienced problems in: teaching at mixed-level classes; understanding and implementing current rules and regulations; teaching reading and writing to elementary school students; developing supporting teaching materials; and getting students to participate in the course. Further indication was that alternative certification teachers experienced more problems than regular education teachers.

Korkmaz (1999) attempted to discover novice teachers' problems in Turkey by surveying the induction process of the novice classroom teachers in Afyon province. The results revealed a significant mean difference in the perceptions of the novices with respect to the place where they worked and the number of the teachers in their schools. Results of the multiple comparisons showed that the novices working in villages had more problems than the ones working in towns or cities. The number of the teachers in the school had a significant effect on the adaptation levels. For instance, the ones encountering the most problems were from the schools, in which there were only 3 to 5 teachers.

The literature reviewed globally indicated various dimensions of novice teachers' adaptation challenges, but the studies in Turkey are few and limited in scope. Therefore, a more comprehensive research investigating those dimensions with teachers from different parts of the country appeared to be a need. Accordingly, the main purpose of the study was determined to examine the induction process of novice teachers who had just started teaching in different parts of Turkey by inquiring the research question '*what are the most frequent adaptation challenges the novice teachers encounter in the first year of their profession?*' With the help of this study, it was intended to provide information for all stakeholders who are responsible for teacher training. The most significant effect of the study marked its generalization to many novice teachers in different parts of the country, because the answers provided to the questionnaire have a potential to reflect the current situation of the novices in Turkey.

## 2. METHOD

This study is based on a cross-sectional survey design in which the data were collected from 465 novice teachers, who were in the first year of their teaching profession, through a questionnaire to identify their perceptions on adaptation problems experienced in different schools in Turkey. The target population was all the novice teachers that had been teaching for about one year in various school contexts in different parts of Turkey. Through a cluster sampling procedure, a total of eight provinces were selected randomly to administer the questionnaire. Rather than selecting a random sample among all individuals of the target population, it was intended to cluster the population and select eight provinces of Turkey randomly, and implement the study with all the novice teachers in those provinces.

Reaching novice teachers working in various areas of those eight provinces became possible with the help of the National Education Directorates in the provinces. Procedurally, all the novice teachers in Turkey have to, compulsorily, attend a program (named in Turkish as *Aday Öğretmenlerin Yetiştirilmesi*), which is prepared for novice teachers' development in their first year of teaching. The courses are done at the weekends, in the evenings, or during the semester break by the NEDs (National Education Directorates) in each province. During this period, all novice teachers working either in the city centre or in villages have to come together and attend the program. Visiting one of the sessions in the schedule of the program of the NEDs in a particular city made it easier to see and administer the questionnaire to the novice teachers in that city. The highest percentage of novice teachers was in Konya (26.9%,  $n=125$ ), followed by Batman (20.6%,  $n=96$ ), Ordu (15.7%,  $n=73$ ), Niğde (13.8%,  $n=64$ ), Erzurum and Muğla (8.4%,  $n=39$  in each), Kütahya (3.7%,  $n=17$ ), and lastly Ankara (2.6%,  $n=12$ ). The numbers of the participants changed according to cities as a result of teacher assignment procedures and quota of the Ministry of Education.

Although the samples representing different provinces were not close to each other in size, the sample represented different school locations. 29% of the participants were teaching in a school in city centres, while 25.6% in districts, 23.4% in small towns, and 21.9% in villages. On the other hand, the percentage of participants teaching at public schools was 86%, being larger than the ones in private schools (14%). Regarding the teaching fields of the participants, nearly half (47.1%) of them were either classroom teachers (18.7%,  $n=87$ ) or language teachers, 15.7% of whom were English language teachers ( $n=73$ ) and 12.7% of were Turkish language teachers ( $n=59$ ). The rest (52.9%) were from other teaching fields: Mathematics and Science (including Chemistry, Physics, and Biology; 14.8%), Social Studies and Ethics (including History, Geography, and Literature; 13.1%), Computer and Technology (8%), Kindergarten (6.5%), and other branches like Guidance and Counseling, Art, Physical Education, Music, Early Childhood Education, and Philosophy; 10.5%. Out of 465 participants, 58.9% were female ( $n=274$ ), and 41.1% were male novice teachers ( $n=191$ ). The age of the sample ranged from 21 to 37 and 80% were between 21 and 25. Teaching experience of the participants ranged from 7 to 12 months.

Through a detailed analysis of related literature, a survey questionnaire, *Questionnaire for Novice Teachers*, was developed to obtain data on most frequently occurring adaptation challenges. In

designing the questionnaire, previously conducted studies about the novice teachers' induction process were considered and other related resources of literature were reviewed. Accordingly, items related to issues like workload, classroom management, instructional challenges, identity conflicts, and relationships with school community were prepared. Later, daily speeches and interviews reflecting the concerns of the novices, as insiders in the field, were noted down. In accordance with this step, items clarifying issues like social status, overwhelming workload, and supervisor challenges were added. Apart from these, the opinions of the school principals and some mentor teachers around were taken into account, which brought different items in relation to the issues of classroom management, relationship with mentors and supervisors to the light. As a result of this three-step inquiry, an item pool, where numerous statements appeared, was constructed. In categorizing the items in the pool into groups and specifying the headings, again previously conducted studies were taken as a basis. After having advisor opinion and making necessary revisions on the items, the questionnaire was pilot tested. The results of the pilot testing also added to the scope and the content of the questionnaire. The next step was the proposal of the instrument to the Human Subjects Ethics Committee at METU. After doing necessary revisions based on Committee's opinion, the final draft was obtained upon the approval of the Committee.

The questionnaire consisted of three main parts: *Personal Information*; *Job-related Challenges*, and *Social Challenges*. Items in job-related challenges were grouped under the sections of (a) Workload Challenges, (b) Instructional Challenges including knowledge of subject matter, curriculum, planning, and evaluation, and (c) Classroom Management Challenges. Items in social challenges were grouped under the sections of (a) Social Status and Identity Challenges, (b) Challenges in Relationship with Students, (c) Conflicts with Colleagues, (d) Supervisor Challenges, and (e) Challenges in Relationship with Mentor Teachers.

A *Likert Scale* was adopted in the questionnaire to inquire the frequency of adaptation challenges in five-level from (1) *Never* to (5) *Always*. The questionnaire was pilot-tested with 77 novice teachers selected conveniently from cities like Istanbul, Ankara, Ağrı, Kahramanmaraş, Aksaray, Kütahya, Trabzon, Samsun, İçel, Hakkari, and Tekirdağ. The results of the pilot work indicated that the participants had problems more in classroom management (%47), instructional planning and evaluation (%38), overloaded duties of teaching (%37), and relationships with school principals and inspectors (%33).

Exploratory factor analysis was conducted to assess the underlying structure of the questionnaire. Correlation matrix, Scree Plot, Eigenvalue results and Pattern Matrix were checked to determine the number of factors and which items loaded to which factor. In relation to the sampling adequacy, KMO analysis was conducted. Sample size was assumed to be appropriate for the study as KMO value indicated .89. Additionally, Bartlett test of sphericity indicated a significant value, which is .000 ( $p < .05$ ). As the data was relatively normally distributed, maximum likelihood factor extraction method was used. The communalities were mostly above .70. As the *Total Variance Explained* table indicated, there existed eight factors which had Eigenvalues greater than 1.00. These eight factors accounted for 29.28%, 21.67%, 12.27%, 9.97%, 6.71%, 4.62%, 4.27%, and 3.54% of the total variance respectively. A cumulative of 92.33% of the variance was explained by this eight-factor model, which puts forward a good value for social sciences.

Reliability of the instrument was ensured through "reliability analysis" of Cronbach's alpha level. With the objective of looking at the internal consistency of the items in the data collection instrument, Cronbach's alpha level was calculated as .89 for the 74-item questionnaire. The items were grouped under eight dimensions based on factor loadings and inter-correlated groups. To assess whether the items formed a reliable scale for each dimension, Cronbach's alpha was computed. Accordingly, the alpha level was .96 for *challenges in relationship with mentor teachers*; .88 for *instructional challenges*; .89 for *conflicts with colleagues*, .82 for *workload challenges*; .81 for *challenges in relationship with students*; .79 for *supervisor challenges*; .78 for *social status and identity challenges*; and .71 for *classroom management challenges*. All these results confirmed that each item shared common variance with other items and each of the items was significantly correlated with the total score for each dimension.

Quantitative data collected through closed-ended items were analyzed through descriptive statistics. The responses were summarized in frequency distribution tables and the findings were organized according to percentages, means, standard deviations calculated for each item.

### 3. RESULTS

In relation to the overall research question, the general concerns of the novice teachers were investigated under two categories: job-related and social challenges. Results for each category were organized around the key questions reflected by the sections of the questionnaire and discussed under those dimensions

#### 3.1. Job-related Challenges

This part describes the first domain, job-related challenges of novices under sub-divisions as workload, instructional, and classroom management challenges. In brief, the mean scores, which were calculated as the average value of the items in each group, revealed that workload challenges had the highest mean ( $M=3.37$ ) among the job-related challenges that were frequently encountered during induction period of participant novice teachers.

**Table 1: Workload Challenges**

Workload Challenges	%					Mean	N
	A	U	S	R	N		
I have challenges in preparing administrative paperwork, official correspondence, and reports.	17.0	31.0	28.2	15.5	8.4	3.32	465
I have difficulty in getting everything all done because of overwhelming workload.	11.2	31.8	39.6	11.8	5.6	3.31	465
Non-instructional duties become tiring.	15.9	29.5	28.0	19.8	6.9	3.27	465
I spend my time at home assessing students' papers.	11.2	30.3	28.6	15.9	14.0	3.08	465
Extra-curricular tasks require too much time.	11.6	22.2	34.4	24.7	7.1	3.06	465
I have sleepless nights due to time-consuming burden.	7.3	18.1	32.5	28.4	13.8	2.76	465

A= Always, U=Usually, S=Sometimes, R=Rarely, and N=Never in this and all the following tables.

To start with Table 1, which presents the findings in relation to workload challenges, nearly half of the novice teachers reported that they always (17%) or usually (31%) had difficulties in preparing administrative paperwork, official correspondence, and reports. 45.4% found non-instructional duties tiring while 28% sometimes experienced these challenges. Similarly, 43% perceived difficulty in getting everything all done because of overwhelming workload, and 41.5% reported that they spent their time at home by assessing students' papers. On the other hand, having extra-curricular activities requiring too much time and having sleepless nights due to time consuming burden were reported as a challenge usually or always faced by a smaller number of teachers (33.8% and 25.4% respectively).

**Table 2: Instructional Challenges**

Instructional Challenges	%					Mean	N
	A	U	S	R	N		
I experience a curriculum conundrum.	4.8	23.9	40.0	23.3	8.0	2.94	460
I feel I need an extra support in planning.	11.5	20.9	23.5	31.5	12.6	2.87	460
I have difficulty when implementing what I plan.	2.8	8.9	35.7	37.8	14.8	2.47	460
Determining course objectives is hard for me.	4.3	12.1	28.0	34.3	21.3	2.44	460
I have difficulty in choosing appropriate teaching methods.	2.0	10.9	28.0	40.0	19.1	2.36	460
I cannot decide what is really important to teach.	2.2	11.1	23.5	40.0	23.3	2.28	460

I have difficulty in drawing attention of the students into the activities in the lesson.	1.7	7.2	27.4	43.0	20.7	2.26	460
I feel insufficient in the issue of teaching strategies.	0.9	7.8	22.8	42.6	25.9	2.15	460
I feel insufficient in testing and evaluation.	1.3	5.4	20.2	39.1	33.1	2.01	460
I have difficulty when matching students' grades with my subjective impressions.	1.3	4.3	19.8	41.5	33.0	1.99	460
I feel hardship in using instructional tools.	1.1	3.7	20.7	38.5	36.1	1.95	460

As shown in Table 2, most of the instructional challenges were among the least experienced ones, as almost three-fourth of the participants never or rarely had difficulties in: using instructional tools (74.6%); matching quantitative numbers with their subjective impressions (74.5%); and testing and evaluation (72.2%). Apart from these, more than half of the novices never or rarely felt insufficient in the issues of: teaching strategies (68.5%); drawing attention of the students into activities (63.7%); deciding what is important to teach (63.3%); choosing appropriate methods and techniques (59.1%); determining course objectives (55.6%); and implementing what is planned (52.6%). In relation to instructional challenges occurring sometimes or more often, 68.7% of the participants experienced a curriculum conundrum and 55.9% needed extra support in planning.

**Table 3: Classroom Management Challenges**

Classroom Management Challenges	%					Mean	N
	A	U	S	R	N		
I think classroom management is the most challenging part of the profession.	15.6	31.2	26.5	19.1	7.6	3.28	461
I have difficulty in managing unruly classes with discipline problems.	4.6	19.6	39.6	27.8	8.5	2.83	461
I don't know the best way to approach students' problematic behaviours.	5.2	14.8	17.6	48.0	14.3	2.48	461
I can't use effective classroom management strategies.	1.1	8.9	33.0	49.1	7.8	2.46	461
I have problems in determining class rules.	1.3	7.2	23.0	40.7	27.8	2.13	461
I feel insufficient to undertake leadership or coaching roles in the class.	0.7	3.9	17.0	35.9	42.6	1.84	461

Table 3 regarding classroom management items, shows that nearly half (47%) of the novice teachers usually or always perceived classroom management as the most challenging part of the profession while 27% sometimes thought so. 40% of the teachers found it difficult to manage unruly classes with discipline problems only sometimes. On the other hand, almost half of the novices never felt insufficient to undertake leadership or coaching roles in the class (42.6%); about three-fourth never or rarely had problems in determining class rules (69%); 62.3% of them never or rarely experienced difficulty in choosing the best way to approach student behaviours and more than half of the teachers were never or rarely unable to use effective classroom management strategies (57%).

### 3.2. Social Challenges

This part presents the results regarding the second domain, social challenges of the novice teachers, according to their frequency under five themes: social status and identity, relationships with students, conflicts with colleagues, supervisor challenges, and relationships with mentor teachers.

**Table 4: Social Status and Identity Challenges**

Social Status & Identity Challenges	%					Mean	N
	A	U	S	R	N		
I am dissatisfied with my employee rights.	28.0	24.1	22.2	18.1	7.7	3.46	465
I am dissatisfied with my salary.	31.4	17.0	21.7	21.5	8.4	3.41	465
I think I need an emotional support.	17.6	22.2	26.5	24.3	9.5	3.14	465
I feel a great pressure of teaching profession on me.	11.0	26.0	27.7	23.7	11.6	3.01	465
I have difficulty when revealing my teaching persona in class and at school.	20.4	14.8	14.4	27.1	23.2	2.82	465
I am unable to see myself as a professional educator.	3.9	17.4	38.5	33.1	7.1	2.77	465
I experience times when I feel hopeless and callous about the profession.	4.1	14.2	39.6	33.1	9.0	2.71	465
I am losing my idealistic side for the profession.	4.9	19.6	31.8	27.5	16.1	2.69	465
I am unable to connect my undergraduate training with the current atmosphere of the school.	10.8	13.8	19.8	35.7	20.0	2.59	465
I am dissatisfied with my social status.	10.1	14.2	20.0	33.8	21.9	2.56	465
I have worries about whether I am a good teacher or not.	3.7	6.7	30.3	37.0	22.4	2.32	465
I don't think I am respected in the society as a teacher.	2.8	7.3	21.5	44.3	24.1	2.20	465
I am unable to adapt to the culture of the school.	2.6	4.9	15.3	45.4	31.8	2.01	465
I am worried about how the students judge me.	3.0	4.9	17.0	39.1	35.9	2.00	465
I find my profession unsuitable for my personality.	2.6	5.2	12.7	39.1	40.4	1.90	465

For social status and identity challenges (see Table 4), approximately half of the participants were always or usually dissatisfied with their employee rights (52%) and their salary (48.4%) while 22% were sometimes dissatisfied regarding these issues. About two-fifth of the participants usually or always needed emotional support for the profession (39.8%); felt a great pressure of teaching profession on them (36%); and had difficulty when revealing their teaching persona in the class (35.2%). A number of teachers experienced these challenges sometimes (26.5%, 27%, and 14.4% respectively). Additionally, almost two-fifth of the participants sometimes experienced moments when they felt hopeless and callous about the profession (39.6); couldn't see themselves as professional educators (38.5%); and felt losing their idealistic side for the profession (31.8%). On the other hand, being unable to adapt to school culture, finding teaching profession unsuitable for their personality, and being worried about how the students judged them were reported as challenges usually or always faced by a small number of teachers (less than 8% for each).

**Table 5: Challenges in Relationship with Students**

Relationship with Students	%					Mean	N
	A	U	S	R	N		
I have problems in helping students with behavioural problems.	4.1	14.4	40.0	32.0	9.5	2.71	465
I have difficulty in guiding students and giving advice.	2.6	9.9	35.9	37.8	13.8	2.49	465
It is difficult for me to recognize individual differences of students.	0.9	7.7	33.8	45.2	12.5	2.39	465
I feel insufficient in dealing with students' physical, cognitive, and social development.	1.9	6.0	20.6	57.0	14.4	2.24	465
I am unable to provide emotional support to the students.	1.9	2.8	17.8	55.1	22.4	2.06	465
I experience hardship in establishing a positive relationship with students.	0.4	2.4	12.7	44.1	40.4	1.78	465
I feel the students do not see me as a good teacher.	0.2	1.5	9.9	46.5	41.9	1.71	465
I am afraid of that the students do not respect me as a teacher.	0.4	1.5	8.6	41.3	48.2	1.64	465
I think the students do not like me as a person.	0.2	0.6	6.7	40.0	52.5	1.56	465
I am unable to learn the students' names.	1.1	1.9	7.1	23.0	66.9	1.47	465

As Table 5 displays, the challenges occurring in relationships with students indicated that one-fifth of the participants usually or always experienced problems in helping the students with behavioural problems and 40% experienced the same challenge sometimes. Similarly, they sometimes encountered difficulty in: guiding students and giving advice (36%); perceiving individual differences (33.8%), and dealing with students' physical, cognitive, and social development (20.6%). All the other challenges were rather rare. To exemplify, 66.9% never had problems in learning the students' names and calling them by name; 52.5% never felt that students did not like them as a person; 48.2% were never afraid that students would not respect them as a teacher; 41.9% never worried that students would not accept them as a good teacher; and lastly establishing a positive relationship with students was never hard for 40.4% of the participants.

**Table 6: Conflicts with Colleagues**

Conflicts with Colleagues	%					Mean	N
	A	U	S	R	N		
Unfriendly approaches of my colleagues make me upset	16.8	17.5	25.4	22.4	17.9	2.92	464
I think experienced colleagues do not spend time with novice teachers.	12.1	18.5	26.5	27.4	15.5	2.84	464
I think my colleagues don't assist and support me as a novice teacher.	5.8	11.4	19.6	34.1	29.1	2.30	464
I am not glad with my colleagues' behaviour and manner.	3.0	8.6	20.3	41.6	26.5	2.20	464
I don't have collaboratively approaching colleagues.	1.9	8.0	19.6	42.5	28.0	2.13	464
My colleagues aren't willing to be in a professional sharing with me.	2.2	8.0	17.5	40.5	31.9	2.07	464
My colleagues do not respect my personal efforts.	1.9	6.0	15.1	46.1	30.8	2.02	464
I am unable to develop positive relationships with the colleagues.	0.9	1.7	7.1	43.5	46.8	1.66	464

As regards the conflicts with colleagues (see Table 6), unfriendly approach of colleagues usually or always upset 35% of the participants; and 31% thought experienced colleagues did not usually or always spent time with novice teachers. However, the other occasions were experienced never or rarely, because 90.3% did not feel unable to develop a positive relationship with their colleagues; colleagues respected personal efforts of 76.9% of the participants; colleagues were engaged in a professional sharing with 72.4% of the participants; 70.5% had collaboratively-approaching colleagues; 68.1% were glad with the colleagues' behaviour and manner; and colleagues supported 63.2% of them.

**Table 7: Supervisor Challenges**

Supervisor Challenges	%					Mean	N
	A	U	S	R	N		
I have worries like satisfying the expectations of my principal/supervisors.	12.9	26.5	34.7	17.5	8.4	3.18	464
My principal/supervisors are not proactive in providing feedback.	14.4	24.4	24.6	26.9	9.7	3.06	464
I think my principal/supervisors are not sympathetic listeners trying to understand me.	10.6	20.3	32.3	26.9	9.9	2.94	464
My principal does not nurture an environment that encourages me as a new teacher.	12.7	16.6	25.0	27.2	18.5	2.77	464
My principal requires too much work from me.	7.3	17.2	29.1	28.9	17.5	2.68	464
My principal is not willing to deal with my problems.	9.3	20.3	19.8	26.9	23.7	2.64	464



I have difficulty in communicating with my principal/supervisors on professional development issue.	3.9	11.4	26.5	31.9	26.3	2.34	464
I don't feel I will satisfy the expectations of my supervisors.	1.3	5.6	24.1	52.6	16.4	2.22	464
I hesitate to ask questions to my principal.	3.4	10.6	18.8	18.3	48.9	2.01	464
My principal/supervisors have a highly critical assessment of my lessons or me.	3.2	5.6	15.3	34.3	41.6	1.94	464

To continue with Table 7, two-fifth of the participants usually or always had worries about satisfying the expectations of the principals or supervisors (39.4%) and thought that principals or supervisors were not proactive in providing feedback (38.8%). About 30% usually or always had principals or supervisors who were not sympathetic listeners trying to understand them and claimed that principals did not nurture an environment encouraging new teachers. For challenges occurring never or rarely, it was revealed that three-fourth (75.9%) of the novice teachers did not have principals or supervisors with a highly critical assessment of them or their lessons; 69% did not feel unable to satisfy the expectations of principals/supervisors; 67.2% did not hesitate to ask questions to principals; and 58.2% did not have problems in communicating with supervisors on professional development issues.

**Table 8: Challenges in Relationship with Mentor Teacher**

Relationship with Mentor Teacher (MT)	%					Mean	N
	A	U	S	R	N		
My MT does not satisfy my expectations about professional support.	13.0	9.6	22.1	31.8	23.4	2.57	384
My MT is not proactive in providing feedback.	12.2	11.5	20.6	29.7	26.0	2.54	384
My MT does not deal with my problems sufficiently.	12.2	10.4	18.5	34.6	24.2	2.51	384
I don't find my MT as sympathetic listener.	11.7	7.3	18.2	31.3	31.5	2.36	384
I don't feel I will satisfy my MT's expectations.	9.6	5.2	17.4	41.9	25.8	2.30	384
I am unable to ask anything to my MT.	10.2	8.3	12.0	29.9	39.6	2.19	384
My MT has an attitude of critical assessment about me.	9.4	4.9	11.7	34.9	39.1	2.10	384
I do not have a positive relationship with my MT.	8.8	6.0	11.4	34.0	39.7	2.10	384

Last of all sub-group adaptation challenges, there were not frequent challenges in relationships with mentor teachers; on the contrary almost all occurred rarely or never. It was seen that nearly one-fourth of the participants had a positive relationship with their mentors (73.7%); were able to ask anything to their mentors (70%); and felt they would satisfy the expectations of their mentors (68%). 74% did not have a mentor teacher with an attitude of critical assessment (see Table 8).

To end with more general results, the three most frequent sub-group challenges were listed in order of: workload challenges having the highest mean ( $M=3.37$ ) with 79.4%; social status and identity challenges having the second highest mean ( $M=2.81$ ) with 67.3%; and supervisor challenges ( $M=2.77$ ) with 62.8% of the novices experiencing these sometimes or more often.

Under job-related challenges, workload challenges were more experienced than instructional or classroom management challenges, because 55.2% never or rarely experienced instructional challenges ( $M=2.51$ ), and 47.4% never or rarely experienced classroom management challenges ( $M=2.62$ ). Under social challenges, social status and identity challenges, and supervisor challenges were more experienced than the other ones. They were followed by challenges in relationships with mentor teacher ( $M=2.47$ ), colleagues ( $M=2.41$ ), and students ( $M=2.11$ ). In line with these results, it was indicated that challenges or conflicts were never or rarely experienced in relationships with students by 78.5%; with mentor teachers by 59.9%; and with colleagues by 57.7% of the novice teachers.

Finally, the mean scores calculated as the average value of the items in each group revealed that the novice teachers had job-related challenges ( $M=2.78$ ) a little more often than the social challenges ( $M=2.54$ ). For instance, 67.6% of the participants had job-related challenges sometimes or more frequently; whereas this percentage was 53.3% for social challenges

#### 4. DISCUSSION

The major results about the adaptation challenges of the novices indicated that they experienced job-related challenges a little more often than the social challenges, which was consistent with some of the related literature pointing out the problems such as workplace stress (Holmes, 2003), workload, time management, content and curriculum knowledge (Jarvis & Algozzine, 2006), teaching, subject matter, students (Wang, Strong, & Odell, 2004), and instructional errors (Kellough, 2005).

Workload challenges received the top rating among the sub-group categories, which was supported by the related literature, as overwhelming workload was emphasized in many papers or books (Britt, 1997; Gilbert, 2005; Holmes, 2006; McCann, Johannessen, & Ricca, 2005; Smith & Sela, 2005; Thompson, 2007; Walsdorf & Lynn, 2002). The second most frequent sub-group was social status and identity challenges. This finding seemed to be in line with a small amount of literature, which is rather focusing on creating an identity, defining the teacher persona or developing a “self” as a teacher (Achinstejn & Barret, 2004; Agee, 2004; McCann & Johannessen, 2004). Thirdly, the novices had concerns about supervisor challenges more than many other issues. Being consistent with this finding, supervisor challenges were asserted in an average amount of the related literature (Athaneses & Achinstejn, 2003; Gilbert, 2005; Howard, 2006; McCann, Johannessen, & Ricca, 2005; Stanulis, Fallon, & Pearson, 2002; Thompson, 2007; Watkins, 2005; Williams & Prestage, 2002).

On the other hand, the findings about classroom management, appearing as the fourth most frequent group, were less similar with some literature attaching a highlighting importance to the management issue, for instance Howard (2006) naming management as the “single most difficult challenge” or Wyatt III and White (2007) calling it as “teachers’ nightmares”. Still the findings were consistent with the arguments in some other literature drawing a moderate picture about classroom management (Achinstejn & Barret, 2004; Stanulis, Fallon, & Pearson, 2002). Like the results in this study, McCann and Johannessen (2004) had expressed classroom management as a predictable concern of beginning teachers, and Athaneses and Achinstejn, (2003) had mentioned about it as one of the most identified particular persistent problem. It was also similar to the findings of Lundeen (2004), who had designated that classroom management problems outnumbered adult relationship problems; and Watzke (2003), who had stated that classroom management problems initially overshadowed novices’ attention to instructing and nurturing children.

Instructional challenges followed classroom management challenges, but they were not as serious as some literature depict (Athaneses & Achinstejn, 2003; Jarvis & Algozzine, 2006; Wyatt III & White, 2007), because the novices had very limited challenges about using instructional tools, testing and evaluation, teaching strategies, choosing appropriate methods and techniques, determining course objectives, and implementation. On the other hand, it was obtained that most of the participants experienced a curriculum conundrum as in the literature and needed extra support in planning (Achinstejn & Barret, 2004; Grinberg, 2002; Lundeen 2004; Wyatt III & White, 2007).

The least frequent sub-categories were all about the relationships. Some of the challenges occurring in relationship with students were the difficulties in helping the ones with behavioural problems, guiding students and giving advice, and perceiving individual differences, like in some literature (Achinstejn & Barret, 2004; Athaneses & Acinstejn, 2003; Lundeen, 2004; Walsdorf & Lynn, 2002; Wang, Strong, & Odell, 2004). There were not frequent challenges in relationships with mentor teachers; on the contrary almost all of them occurred rarely or never. For the conflicts with colleagues, it was seen that unfriendly approach of colleagues upset most of the novices and more than half of them thought that experienced colleagues did not spend sufficient time with new teachers.

All adaptation challenges discussed here might result from various variables such as school context in which the novice teachers started to teach and their prior experiences from pre-service

years. These factors might have some direct or indirect effects on novice teachers' adaptation processes, which is a question to be studied and elaborated in a further research.

Under the light of the results the study revealed, some practical implications could be provided for different stakeholders, as newly beginning teachers are not the only responsible body for current situation and further professional development. Teacher organizations, teacher educators, state and local officials, inspectors, school principals, students, their parents, researchers and educational specialists all are to be included in the team for their welfare. It is certain that different perspectives from different units are needed for improvement. Since the implications cannot be from one way, it is aimed to offer partnership between university trainers and the school community in ensuring the professional development of new teachers.

An effective teacher induction program is supposed to solve problems of new teachers. Therefore, a deep assessment of current induction applications together with the existing challenges could ease focusing on more accurate induction. First of all, an induction should aim an encouragement of novices' work through supportive communicating and a response to novices' questions. Besides being informative, this program is expected to release the anxiety of the novices with the help of emotional supports and guiding activities. Including novice teachers in decision-making process will surely make a difference.

At this point, local officials like directorates, inspectors, supervisors, school principals, and mentors all are expected to contribute to this process by assisting and advising new teachers. The most crucial role belongs to school administrators, as they are the officials to organize meetings to introduce the new teacher to school culture and to present practical matters; supply social events where beginning teachers can get to know their colleagues; establish a support program for the new teachers' professional development; organize peer teachings; and schedule regular meetings to discuss any concerns and problems the beginning teachers might have and offer suggestions. For a novice teacher having adaptation difficulties, lesson observations of other colleagues, video recording of their own teaching, conducting action research, keeping learning logs, reflective writing could be beneficial to decrease particular challenges and ensure professional development. Besides learning from self-study, new teachers will benefit from a broader network of contacts with their peers.

In this study, an important step was taken to see the induction processes of the novice teachers by clarifying their adaptation challenges. However, these findings could be multiplied through a deeper research carried out with multiple participants and multiple instruments. In addition to the questionnaire administered in this study, another study in the forms of interviews with mentor teachers, school principals, and the inspectors could be carried out, which would help to see the "induction" picture from a broader and diverse perspective. What is more, a larger sample selection could add more to the significance of this study. Including all seven regions and selecting equal or close sample sizes from each region will surely make it more objective to compare regional differences. When selecting sample provinces, physical and economical growth of the cities should be taken into consideration in order to promote more objective comparisons.

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## GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Öğretmenlik mesleği, derin teorik bilgi gerektirdiği için bir meslek dalı, zaman içerisinde oluşumu tamamlanıp edinildiği için de bir sanat dalı olarak görülebilir. Bu edinim sürecinin ilk aşaması şüphesiz aday öğretmenliktir. Yeni bir okul topluma veya okul çevresine girmek, bütün bireyler için olduğu gibi, yeni öğretmenler için de önemli bir süreçtir; çünkü bu hem bir heyecan kaynağı hem de yeni çevreye uyum için duyulan bir kaygı nedenidir. Göreve yeni başlayan öğretmenler yeni öğretim çevrelerine, geçmiş deneyimleri ve bir takım alışkanlıkları ile girerler. Bu deneyim ve alışkanlıklar, öğretmenliğe geçiş sürecinde bazı uyum güçlüklerine neden olan veya olası uyum güçlüklerini kolaylaştıran bir etkiye sahip olabilir. Ancak çoğu eğitim sisteminin ortaya koyduğu uygulamalarda, göreve yeni başlamış bir öğretmenden, birçok konuda daha az bilgi ve tecrübeye sahip olmasına karşın, deneyimli bir öğretmenden beklenen performansı ve uzmanlığı göstermesi beklenebilir. Bazen bu uygulamalar daha da abartılarak, aday öğretmenlere en zor görevler verilebilir (Yalçınkaya, 2002). Yapılan alanyazın taramasında, aday öğretmenlerin mesleğe giriş sürecinde taşıdıkları kaygıların, sıkça karşılaştıkları uyum sorunlarının ve aşmak durumunda oldukları güçlüklerin, farklı zamanlarda ve farklı ortamlarda olsa da çoğunlukla benzer temalar altında toplandığı görülmüştür. Örneğin, yapılan bir çalışmada en temel kaygı başlıkları öğrencilerle, velilerle, meslektaşlarla ve amirlerle ilişkiler; iş yükü, zaman yönetimi ve yorgunluk; alan ve müfredat bilgisi; ölçme ve değerlendirme; otorite ve sınıf yönetimi; görünüş ve kimlik olarak belirtilmiştir (McCann, Johannessen, & Ricca, 2005).

Bu çalışmada, Türkiye'nin farklı bölgelerinde görev yapan aday öğretmenlerin mesleğe giriş sürecinde sıkça rastladıkları uyum güçlüklerini araştırmak hedeflenmiştir. Aday öğretmen tanımı, Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı tarafından yapılan öğretmen atamalarıyla veya Özel Öğretim Kurumlarının sözleşmeye dayalı olarak yaptığı atamalar ile göreve başlamış, henüz stajyerlikleri kalkmamış, mesleğinin ilk yılını icra etmekte olan öğretmenleri kapsamaktadır. Seçkisiz örnekleme yöntemiyle saptanan, Türkiye'nin 8 ilinde görev yapmakta olan 465 aday öğretmene uygulanan anket yoluyla, veriler toplanmıştır. Aday öğretmenlerde görülen uyum güçlüklerini uygulanan anketteki gibi iki başlıkta topladığımızda, araştırmanın genel sonuçları iş kaynaklı kaygıların sosyal kaygılardan daha sık görüldüğünü ortaya koymuştur. Alt grupların değerlendirilmesi için aritmetik ortalamalar ve yüzdeler dilimlere dikkate alındığında, en sık görülen sorun başlıkları sırasıyla iş yükü zorlukları, sosyal statü ve kimlik karmaşası, müdür ya da müfettişlerle ilişkilerde yaşanan zorluklar ve sınıf yönetimi zorluklarıdır. Öğretim zorlukları, rehber (danışman) öğretmenle ilişkilerde yaşanan sorunlar, meslektaşlarla uyuşmazlık, velilerle ilişkilerde yaşanan sorunlar ve öğrencilerle ilişkilerde yaşanan sorunlar ise daha az rastlanan sorun başlıkları arasında yer almıştır.

İş yükü zorlukları en sık belirtilen alt başlık olarak saptanmış olup, resmi dokümanları, raporları, yazışmaları hazırlamakta zorlanmak; iş yoğunluğu nedeniyle işleri yetiştirmekte güçlük çekmek; öğretim işi dışındaki (sınıf dışı) sorumlulukları yorucu bulmak; akşamlarını ve hafta sonlarını sınav okuyarak ya da öğrenci ödevlerine bakarak harcamak zorunda kalmak sıkça rastlanan sorunlardır. İş yükü zorluklarının ardından sosyal statü ve kimlik karmaşası ile ilgili sorunlar gelmektedir. Yeni başlayan öğretmenlerin pek çoğunun mesleğiyle ilgili moral ve desteğe ihtiyacı olduğu; öğretmenlik mesleğinin baskısını üzerinde hissettiği; kendini profesyonel bir eğitimci olarak göremediği; mesleği konusunda karamsar anlar yaşadığı; mesleğe dair idealist düşüncelerini kaybettiği; okulda ve sınıfta öğretmenlik kişiliğini ortaya koymakta güçlük çektiği ve çalışan haklarından memnun olmadığı görülmüştür. Müdür ya da müfettişler ile ilişkiler konusundaki sonuçlar, müdür ya da müfettişlerin yeni öğretmenleri teşvik edecek ortamlar yaratmadıklarını; geri bildirim sağlamadıklarını; yeni öğretmenleri anlamaya çalışmadıklarını ve yeni öğretmenlerden daha fazla görev talep ettiklerini ortaya koymuştur. Sınıf yönetimiyle ilgili olarak, aday öğretmenlerin sınıf yönetimini, öğretmenlik mesleğinin en zor yönlerinden biri olarak gördüğü ve disiplin problemleri olan sınıfları yönetmede zorlandıkları ortaya çıkmıştır. En az rastlanan uyum güçlükleri ise aday öğretmenlerin çevresindekiler ile ilişkilerinde yaşanabilecek sorunlardır. Örneğin rehber (danışman) öğretmenle ilişkilerde neredeyse hiç soruna rastlanmamıştır. Yine meslektaşlarla ve öğrencilerle ilişkilerde çok az sayıda sorun belirtilmiştir.

Çalışmanın sonuçları dikkate alındığında, etkili bir öğretmen yetiştirme programının gerekliliğinden bahsedilebilir. Hizmet-içi eğitimler veya aday öğretmenlerin yetiştirilmesi için yapılan uygulamaların tekrar gözden geçirilip, değerlendirilmesi ve hali hazırdaki sorunlara yönelik daha uygun bir hizmet-içi eğitimin planlaması sağlanmalıdır. Bu eğitim öncelikle aday öğretmenlerin sorularına yanıt veren, onları teşvik edici ve bilgilendirici olmanın yanı sıra, kaygılarını da azaltacak, moral ve destek sağlayacak, öğretmenlik yaşantılarını yönlendirecek, kendilerinin de karar verme ve planlama süreçlerinde aktif rol alacağı bir eğitim olmalıdır. Bu noktada, Milli Eğitim müdürlükleri, müfettişler, okul müdürleri, müdür yardımcıları ve rehber (danışman) öğretmenler de, aday öğretmenlere gerekli destek ve tavsiyelerle katkıda bulunmalıdırlar. En önemli rol şüphesiz okul yöneticilerine düşmektedir. Aday öğretmenleri yeni okul ortamına alıştıracak, meslektaşlarıyla yakın ilişkiler kurmalarını ve ihtiyaçları olan desteği almalarını sağlayacak, sorunlarını ve kaygılarını paylaşacak sosyal organizasyonlar ve düzenli toplantılar planlamak olabilir. Bu süreçte, aday öğretmenlerin ise okul dışında hem ulusal hem de uluslararası bağlamda ‘aday öğretmenler ağı’ kurma veya var olan benzer bir ağa dâhil olma, mesleği ile ilgili konferans, sempozyum, çalıştay vb. etkinliklere katılma ve üniversitelerde öğretmen yetiştiren kurumlardaki akademisyenlerle işbirliği oluşturma gibi faaliyetlerde bulunmaları mesleğe uyum sürecinde yaşadıkları güçlükleri aşmakta kendilerine yardımcı olabilir.

#### **Citation Information**

Öztürk, M., & Yıldırım, A. (2013). Adaptation challenges of novice teachers. *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi [Hacettepe University Journal of Education]*, 28(1), 294-307.