Investigating Graduate and Non-graduate Teachers' Views about Educational Research

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to explore views of teachers who have graduate degrees vs. those who do not, regarding educational research with respect to concepts, conductors, and the value of educational research, in addition to sources that teachers follow and how those sources contribute to their professional life, if at all. In this study, survey research design is utilized. Participants of the study were chosen by random sampling technique and include 61 teachers with graduate degrees and 67 teachers without graduate degrees. The study findings revealed that teachers' views about educational research are generally positive. Graduate degree holders state that educational research is valuable for society, university faculty, teachers, school principals and Ministry of National Education, while teachers with non-graduate degrees point out its value for society and teachers. Graduate degree teachers mostly follow educational research from websites, academic journals, books and graduate courses while half of the teachers who do not have graduate degrees follow forums, such as websites. Teachers with graduate degrees assert that educational research contributes to their professional life in terms of classroom practices, as well as in individual and professional development. More than half of teachers who do not have a graduate education indicate that educational research studies contribute to professional knowledge and practice; one-forth of them think that educational research studies comprise studies that stay in theory without becoming actualized in practice.

Keywords: Educational research, Graduate degree teachers, Non-graduate degree teachers

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most important constitutive elements of education system is undoubtedly acknowledged as "teachers" through their indispensible roles on implementing the instruction program. It is therefore obvious that teachers need to know how to handle the problems aroused in the classroom while implementing the instruction program (Davies, 2005). In that sense, teachers are also expected to follow recent developments related to teaching with being aware of educational changes in order to be considered qualified teachers (Lewis & Munn, 1997). In this context, teachers should realize the latest developments in their field by means of paying attention to recent educational research. It is clear that following and implementing findings of educational research would lead to an increase in teaching quality and improve professional practices (Everton, Galton & Pell, 2000; Brown & Sharp, 2003).

Even though educational research is defined by Bill Radford as "an activity carried out by the researchers located either in universities, research institutes or the research branches of large state education bureaucracies" (Lingard & Gale, 2010, 31) and as "structures, processes, products and persons that are part of the systematic development of knowledge of education" (Broekkamp & Van Hout-Wolters, 2007, 205), there are controversies concerning the understanding and aims of educational research. Some researchers point out that educational research emphasizes developing educational practices while some authors believe that educational research frames development of educational policies (Bassey, 1999; Lingard & Gale, 2010). More specifically, it is believed that educational research focuses on providing pedagogical practice and enhances school improvement (Hemsley-Brown & Sharp, 2003; Clark, 2005; Nisbet, 2005). Therefore, the understanding of educational research requires us to put the stress *on* education and *for* education (Biesta, 2007). Disagreements about the aims of educational research by the researchers come forward as well. Some authors assert that the main goal of research conducted in the field of education is to elaborate teaching practices by improving educational processes and outcomes (Elliot, 1991; Zeichner, 1995) while others state that these research focus on producing theoretical knowledge (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1992). On the one hand, some researchers also support both of the goals of educational research; improvement in educational practices and production of knowledge (Mortimore, 2000; Bauer & Fisher, 2007).

Contributions of educational research are undeniable when returns of educational research are considered. In fact, aside from relating practitioner and the policy maker practices, educational research develops understanding and enlightenment. In addition, it is claimed that educational research contributes to democratic discourse of government, society and humanity with enhancing policy making of progressive education (Lingard & Gale, 2010).

In order to have activities and projects conducted in the field of education and to develop professionalism in education, teachers need to participate in graduate education programs. Even though the purposes of graduate programs differ across different regions, these programs often emphasize increasing professionalism and pedagogical skills of teachers. Specifically, graduate programs provide students to comprehend research methods and pedagogical knowledge. Graduate programs offer teachers the ability to learn knowledge, as well as improve understanding of quality research for being creative producers of research (Moulding & Hadley, 2010). Actually, it is asserted that teachers performing both informal mini-research study with collecting data and formal study with traditional methods enable teachers gaining classroom practice (Reis-Jorge, 2007). More

specifically, teaching should be based on research, and teachers are expected to utilize research findings in their daily practices and conduct research (Hangreaves, 2000). However, there are limited studies empirically conducted to determine perspectives of teachers and their attitudes toward educational research (Isakson & Ellsworth, 1978, 1979; West & Rhoton, 1994; Sckedi, 1998; Everton, Galton & Pell, 2000; Gore & Gitlin, 2004; Ekiz, 2006; Sarı, 2006; Ozturk, 2010, 2011) and graduate students' views on educational research (Demircioglu, 2008; Moulding & Hadley, 2010). Given the lack of empirical data, the aim of this study is to explore the views of teachers on educational research. In the study, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What are the views of teachers (with or without a graduate degree) about educational research concept?
2. What are the views of teachers (with or without a graduate degree) regarding the people conducting educational research?
3. What are the views of teachers (with or without a graduate degree) on the value of educational research?
4. What are the views of teachers (with or without a graduate degree) about the sources for following educational research results?
5. What are the views of teachers (with or without a graduate degree) about the contribution of educational research to their professional life?
6. What are the views of teachers without a graduate degree with respect to conducting educational research and learning research methodology?

METHOD

In this study, survey research design is utilized in order to determine the views of teachers with or without graduate degrees about educational research. In fact, survey research design comprises procedures in quantitative research in which the survey is administered to a sample or entire population of people in order to provide characteristics, opinions, attitudes and behaviors of the population (Creswell, 2005).

Participants

Participants of the study include 61 teachers with graduate degrees and 67 teachers without graduate degrees. The participant teachers are chosen by random sampling technique; teachers who have graduate degrees received their graduate education in the Department of Educational Sciences at Eskişehir Osmangazi University, Ege University and Dokuz Eylül University. Other non-graduate teacher participants are composed of teachers working at primary schools in İzmir, Bornova (See Table 1).

Data Collection Tool

As a data gathering tool, the 'Educational Research Form' developed by the researchers is utilized for this study. The form administered to teachers with graduate degrees is composed of eight open-ended questions while the other form distributed to teachers without graduate degrees is comprised of nine open-ended questions. Used open-ended questions in the form are generated through examining the related literature (Demircioğlu, 2006; Sarı, 2006; Taylor, 2007; Moulding & Hadley, 2010). In order to ensure content validity of the generated questions in the form, three academicians in educational sciences were consulted. The form was also shown to two Turkish language teachers for meaning and language validity.

Table 1. *Demographic characteristics of the participants*

		Having Graduate Degree*		Not Having Graduate Degree**	
		n	%	*n*	%
Gender	Men	29	47.5	28	41.8
	Women	32	52.5	39	58.2
Age	20-25	11	18	2	3.0
	26-30	36	59	6	9.0
	31-35	11	18	10	14.9
	36+	3	5	49	73.1
Seniority	1-5	28	45.9	4	6.0
	6-10	26	42.6	10	14.9
	10+	7	11.5	53	79.1
Graduate Education	Master of Science (MS)	18	29.5	-	-
	Non-thesis Master of Science (NT MS)	32	52.5	-	-
	Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)	11	18.0	-	-
Graduate Program	Educational Administration, Supervision, Planning and Economics	46	75.4	-	-
	Curriculum and Instruction	15	24.6	-	-

*Teachers having graduate degree: *n*=61

**Teachers not having graduate degree: *n*=67

Procedure

The data gathered from open-ended questions in the study is analyzed through descriptive statistics (percentage and frequency) and categorical analysis of the content analysis techniques. In the process of categorical analysis, *i*) data coding, (*ii*) identifying themes [categories], (*iii*) organizing the themes, and (*iv*) interpretation of the findings steps are followed (Corbin & Strauss, 2007). Specifically, views of teachers are coded depending on the research questions. The following step is identifying themes [categories] in which common featured codes are brought together to construct main structure of the study findings. Analysis process is continued by placing the coded data into identified themes. In the last phase, interpretation of the findings is provided in order to give the data meaning, clarify the relationship between findings, and demonstrate the importance of obtained findings. For ensuring confidentiality, codes like G1 and G17 are used for teachers with a graduate degree while codes like T5 and T17 are used for teachers without a graduate degree.

Validity and Reliability

In order to assure content validity of the study, obtained findings are firstly presented in the findings section with clear specifications, and then the interpretation is done. In addition, the findings are examined by two academicians who specialize in the field of educational sciences. For guaranteeing external validity, obtained data is presented with detailed descriptions through direct quotations from participants. Likewise, external reliability of the study is aimed to be enhanced through providing detailed descriptions about procedures displayed in design, sampling, data gathering tool, and data analysis parts in the method section. For ensuring internal reliability of the study, two academicians specialized in qualitative research are invited to recode the identified themes. Percentage of agreement (number of code agreements / number of coding decisions + 100) suggested by Miles and Huberman (1984) is used and 84% of reliability is found. Since 70% and upper

percentage of agreement is considered as sufficient intercoder reliability, it is assumed that reliability of the data is ensured. Hence, only codes that are agreed upon by the intercoders are taken in order to get through the themes and codes that are not agreed upon, which are not given a place in the analysis part.

FINDINGS

The findings will present respectively: teachers' views about educational research concepts; who conducts educational research; what the value of educational research is; the reasons behind why educational research is seen as valuable; sources for following the results of educational research; contributions of educational research on teachers' professional life; conducting educational research and learning research methodology with the reasons.

Teachers' Views (Having Graduate Degree or not) about Educational Research Concepts

Views of graduate degree holding teachers about educational research concepts are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. *Views of teachers with graduate degrees about educational research concepts (n=61)*

Themes	*f*	*%*
Improving function and quality of education	23	37.7
Producing knowledge in education field	11	18.1

Most of the teachers with graduate degrees assert that educational research concepts refer to studies for improving function and quality of education (37.7%) as seen from Table 2. The other distinctive view of teachers (18.1%) is that education research is the study for producing knowledge in the education field.

> *G2: All initiatives on behalf of improving education quality.* **G16:** *Refers to endeavor for increasing the level of education quality.* **G23:** *Studies with the purpose of increasing quality in education and rising to contemporary civilizations.* **G42:** *Necessary research for optimizing new practices in education or the education itself.* **G5:** *Systematic research conducted through scientific methods in order to produce knowledge in educational concepts.* **G12:** *The process of producing knowledge in order to learn the reasons of any issue about education or any deficiency in education and to develop solutions for these.* **G61:** *Putting forward a snapshot in any field of educational sciences and producing knowledge.*

Views of teachers without graduate degrees about educational research concepts are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. *Views of teachers without graduate degrees about educational research concepts (n=67)*

Themes	*f*	*%*
Improving function and quality of education	42	62.6
Studies for the society	8	11.9
Professional development	2	2.9
Useless studies and staying in theory	2	2.9

Greater than half of the teachers without graduate degrees (62.6%) indicate that educational research studies are studies for improving the function and quality of education. The other themes about the concept of educational research acquired from teachers refer to studies for the society (11.9%), professional development (2.9%) and useless studies or those that stay in theory (2.9%).

> *T15: Studies for determining how education can be more qualified and identifying the best methods for reaching the objectives. **T50:** Studies for improving education. **T67:** Educational researches are the studies for increasing education quality, ensuring greater achievement and identifying the mistakes done.*

> *T3: Envisioning the future. **T36:** Awareness in society and providing a comfortable and a peaceful life in the future. **T46:** Shaping the future of society and reaching for a better life. **T2:** Enables a better understanding for educational concepts and methods. **T64:** The results of educational research contribute to solving our professional problems. **T32:** I see educational research as studies not passing beyond the research phase. **T63:** Useless studies with unreliable results.*

Teachers' Views (Having Graduate Degree or not) Regarding the People Conducting Educational Research

Teachers' views regarding the people conducting educational research are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. *Teachers' views regarding the people conducting educational research*

	Having Graduate Degree				Not Having Graduate Degree			
	Yes		No		Yes		No	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
University faculty	58	**95.1**	3	4.9	50	**74.6**	17	25.4
School principals	29	47.5	32	**52.5**	18	26.9	49	**73.1**
Teachers	31	**50.8**	30	49.2	33	**49.3**	34	50.7
Ministry of National Education	39	**63.9**	22	36.1	29	43.3	38	**56.7**
Inspectors	24	39.3	37	**60.7**	16	23.9	51	**76.1**
Undergraduate students	23	37.7	38	**62.3**	28	41.8	39	**58.2**
Graduate students	56	**91.8**	5	8.2	43	**64.2**	24	35.8

A great majority of the teachers, whether they have graduate degrees or not, think that university faculty (95.1%; 74.6%) and graduate students (91.8%; 64.2%) are conductors of educational research. Participants with graduate degrees point out that the Ministry of National Education (63.9%) is the other implementer organ of educational research while greater than half of the non-graduate degree teachers think the opposite (56.7%). Besides, greater than half of the teachers exclude inspectors (60.7%; 76.1%), school principals (52.5%; 73.1%) and undergraduate students (62.3%; 58.2%) from this process while half of them perceive themselves as conductors of educational research (50.8%; 49.3%), as can be seen from Table 4.

Teachers' Views (Having Graduate Degree or not) on the Value of Educational Research

Teachers' views on the value of educational research are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. *Teachers' views on the value of educational research*

| | Having Graduate Degree | | | | Not Having Graduate Degree | | | |
| | Yes | | No | | Yes | | No | |
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
For society	51	**83.6**	10	16.4	59	**88.1**	8	11.9
For university faculty	46	**75.4**	15	24.6	29	43.3	38	46.7
For school principal	39	**63.9**	22	36.1	27	40.3	40	**59.7**
For teachers	42	**68.9**	19	31.1	47	**70.1**	20	29.9
For Central Ministry of National Education	39	**63.9**	22	36.1	22	32.8	45	**67.2**
For Provincial Ministry of National Education	35	57.4	26	42.6	14	20.9	53	**79.1**
Parliamentarian	26	42.6	35	57.4	9	13.4	58	**86.6**

Teachers with graduate degrees state that educational research is valuable for society (83.6%), university faculty (75.4%), teachers (68.9%), school principals (63.9%), and the Central Ministry of National Education (63.9%), respectively. Non-graduate degree teachers think that educational research is valuable for society (88.1%), and teachers (70.1%), as can be seen from Table 5.

Views of teachers having graduate education regarding why educational research is seen as valuable are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. *Views of teachers having graduate education regarding why educational research is seen as valuable (n=61)*

Themes	f	%
Having contributions to society	15	24.5
Helping the constitution of politics of education	11	18.1
Academic development and promotion	8	13.1

Teachers with graduate degrees assert that educational research is seen as valuable due to having contributions to society (24.5%), helping the constitution of politics of education (18.1%) and enhancing academic development and promotion (13.1%) (See Table 6).In the following, some of the expressions are given related to these contributions:

> *G11: In order to create a country with high standards of living and to nurture happy individuals. G60: It is important for a country with high standards of living. G38: Society will go forward as a result of implementation of obtained findings from educational research.*

> *G10: Due to helping people who make decisions about politics of education and the implementers of education. G23: It is important for directing all the concerning actors, determining the needs of society, planning, constructing new legislations and teacher training. G42: Conducted educational research should guide Ministry of National Education for constituting educational politics. Obtained findings from*

educational research and suggestions derived from the results can be considered in the implementation step.

G2: It is valuable for developing me academically. G32: I get benefit from these educational researches in my studies. G40: Titles of the academicians will be promoted with these researches.

Views of teachers without graduate education regarding why educational research is seen as valuable are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. *Views of teachers without graduate education regarding why educational research is seen as valuable (n=67)*

Themes	f	%
Improving quality of education and practices	16	23.8
Having contributions to society	8	11.9
Inspection of educational problems	7	10.4
Bringing innovations in education	6	8.9
Having scientific qualifications	2	2.9

Teachers without graduate degrees think that educational research is valuable due to improving quality of education and applications (23.8%), having contributions to society (11.9%), facilitating inspection of educational problems (10.4%), bringing innovations in education (8.9%), and finally because of possessing scientific qualifications (2.9%) as seen from Table 7. Some given expressions for these reasons are:

T18: Necessary for increasing quality of education. T55: If obtained findings from educational researches are used properly, they will help to increase quality of education. T56: In order to increase the level of education.

T9: To develop society, social justice and to nurture good individuals. T38: It is valuable for shaping the future of the country and forming a happier, more prosperous and healthier society. T62: It is valuable for raising awareness.

T10: Educational researches identify lacking and missing areas in education and help strengthen these points. T12: It may be useful for contributing to education and detecting educational problems. T51: By means of research, lacking parts and shortcomings of education are identified. T47: I found it valuable in terms of revealing real issues in education.

T22: Educational research is a process bringing innovations. T37: In order to step out of traditional practices and to implement innovations. T42: Due to emergence of new ideas and adapting these ideas into education.

T8: Because of withstanding scientific basis. T67: Due to presenting us the findings achieved through science as evidence.

Teachers' Views (Having Graduate Degree or not) about the Sources for Following Educational Research Results

Teachers' views about following the results of educational research are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. *Teachers' views about following the results of educational research*

	Yes		No		Total
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*	*n*
Having graduate degree	54	88.6	7	11.4	61
Not having graduate degree	39	58.2	28	41.7	67

A great majority of the teachers (88.6%) with graduate degrees state that they follow the results of educational research while this rate decreases to 58.2% for teachers without graduate degrees, as can be seen from Table 8.

Teachers' views about the sources for following educational research results are presented in Table 9.

Table 9. *Teachers' views about the sources for following educational research results*

	Having graduate education				Not having graduate education			
	Yes		No		Yes		No	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
Academic journals	44	72.1	17	27.9	13	19.4	54	80.6
Colleagues	29	47.5	32	52.5	23	34.3	44	65.7
Graduate friends	24	39.3	37	60.7	-	-	-	-
Books	44	72.1	17	27.9	25	37.3	42	62.7
Graduate courses	41	67.2	20	32.8	-	-	-	-
Websites	52	85.2	19	14.8	36	53.7	31	46.3
Professional journals	28	45.9	33	54.1	25	37.3	42	62.7

When the sources of educational research that the teachers follow are examined, teachers with graduate degrees mostly follow educational research results from websites (85.2%), academic journals (72.1%), books (72.1%), and graduate courses (67.2%). However, nearly half of the teachers without graduate degree (53.7%) specify that they reach the results of educational research from websites.

Teachers' Views (Having Graduate Degree or not) about the Contribution of Educational Research to Their Professional Life

Teachers' views about the contribution of educational research to their professional life are presented in Table 10.

Table 10. *Teachers' views about the contribution of educational research to their professional life*

	Yes		No		Total
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*	*n*
Having graduate degree	50	81.9	11	18.1	61
Not having graduate degree	51	76.1	16	23.9	67

As seen from Table 10, a great majority of the teachers with graduate degrees (81.9%) and without graduate degrees (76.1%) state the contribution of educational research to their professional life.

Views of teachers with graduate degrees regarding the way of contribution of educational research to their professional life are presented in Table 11.

Table 11. *Views of teachers with graduate degrees regarding the way of contribution of educational research to their professional life (n=61)*

Themes	f	%
Classroom practices	22	36.1
Individual and professional development	15	24.5
Attitudes toward education	7	11.4
Academic development	4	6.5

Teachers with graduate degrees assert that educational research contributes to their professional life in terms of classroom practices (36.1%), individual and professional development (24.5%), attitudes towards education (11.4%) and academic development (6.5%), as seen from Table 11. To exemplify these contributions, teachers point out the following statements:

> **G45:** *It helped me in being aware that direct teaching has serious shortcomings and visuality should always be in the foreground.* **G29:** *I do different preparations in my classroom activities.* **G53:** *In light of research findings, I get benefit in classroom practices.* **G22:** *I have started to practice new techniques in the classroom management area.*

> **G1:** *I am better equipped in a professional sense.* **G50:** *It helped me to develop myself.* **G31:** *A research about communication skills has developed my communication and communication power.* **G23:** *It helped me be more tolerant and qualified.* **G27:** *It was effective in terms of developing me and ameliorating deficiencies and mistakes in my practices.*

> **G7:** *It caused a change in my attitude and behaviors towards education.* **G40:** *Research emphasizing preschool children is successful and made me give importance to these studies.* **G11:** *I comprehend the importance of education in the world and my point of view has changed towards education.* **G37:** *I have become more questioning than before by means of research results.*

> **G48:** *It made me learn how to research. I have learned the research process and I have conducted research.* **G20:** *It will help me get promoted academically.*

Views of teachers without graduate degrees regarding the way of contribution of educational research to their professional life or not are presented in Table 12.

Table 12. *Views of teachers without graduate degrees regarding the way of contribution of educational research to their professional life or not (n=67)*

Contribution	Themes	f	%
Yes	Developing professional knowledge and practice	29	43.2
No	Staying in theory	11	16.4

Of the graduate teachers who think educational research is beneficial for their professional life (43.2%), they assert that educational research contributes in terms of developing professional knowledge and practices effectively. Another teacher group (16.4%) states that educational research stays in theory without actualizing in practice. Therefore, they believe that educational research does not contribute to their professional life. In the following, teachers' views related to this issue are given:

> **T37:** *Research results ensure knowledge accumulation as it regards to professional life.* **T29:** *It helps us to reach new information and allows us to use it.* **T12:** *It lets me learn new methods and techniques.* **T22:** *The results of educational research provide development of professional practices of the individual.* **T62:** *According to recent studies, we renew the information that we deliver to the students and we develop our practices in that direction.*

> **T30:** *I think that educational research just left in agendas does not add much to our society or us.* **T32:** *It mostly does not contribute because theory and practice do not match with each other.* **T59:** *Mostly it does not go into practice.* **T34:** *Because it does not have a meaning more than formalism.*

Views of Teachers without Graduate Degrees with respect to Conducting Educational Research and Learning Research Methodology

Views of teachers without graduate degrees with respect to conducting educational research and learning research methodology are presented in Table 13.

Table 13. *Views of teachers without graduate degrees with respect to conducting educational research and learning research methodology (n=67)*

	Yes		No	
	f	%	f	%
Conducting educational research	47	70.1	20	29.9
Learning research methodology	59	88.1	8	11.9

The results revealed that most of the teachers without graduate degrees are willing to conduct educational research (70.1%) and want to learn research methodology (88.1%) while one-third of the teachers step out from conducting educational research (29.9%).

Views of teachers without graduate degrees about the reasons of conducting/not conducting educational research are presented in Table 14.

Table 14. *Views of teachers without graduate degrees about the reasons of conducting/not conducting educational research (n=67)*

Choice	Themes	f	%
Yes	Individual and professional development	23	34.3
	Ameliorating the system	11	16.4
No	Non-implementation of educational research findings in practice	4	5.9
	Methodological knowledge deprivation	3	4.4
	Non-speciality in conducting educational research	2	2.9
	Lack of resources	2	2.9

As can be seen from Table 14, teachers without graduate degrees explain the reasons why they want to conduct educational research by specifying individual and professional development (34.3%) and ameliorating the education system (16.4%). In the following, teachers' expressions are given:

> **T10:** *I think that it contributes to me. I follow innovations; therefore, I force my boundaries.* **T11:** *I want to be better at my profession and to be more useful for my students.* **T49:** *In order to develop myself.* **T50:** *To be more effective.* **T37:** *In order to investigate deficiencies, problems and methods related to my field and learn these comprehensively.*

> **T8:** *To lighten distortions in education.* **T65:** *Willing to develop failing aspects of the system due to being in the system for many years.* **T12:** *In order to contribute to problems in education a little bit.* **T9:** *To correct the errors in the system.*

On the other side, teachers without graduate degrees explain the reasons why they do not want to conduct educational research by addressing non-implementation of educational research findings in practice (5.9%), methodological knowledge deprivation (4.4%), non-speciality in conducting educational research (2.9%), and lack of resources (2.9%). In the following, statements of the teachers are presented:

> **T32:** *I know that they will remain in the research stage; for that reason I found them unnecessary.* **T43:** *Beyond the need, unnecessary investigations are not applicable.* **T44:** *I think that I will not succeed as regards to methodology.* **T30:** *I don't believe that I am competent enough.* **T16:** *Researchers should conduct educational research.* **T18:** *Specialists in this field should do this work.* **T45:** *Due to not enough resources.* **T53:** *There are not enough documents and they are not up-to-date.*

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTIONS

In this study, teachers' (with or without a graduate degree) views regarding educational research are determined. More specifically, teachers with graduate degrees perceive educational research as studies for improving function and quality of education, and studies for producing knowledge in the education field. Likewise, teachers without graduate degrees express that educational research studies are the studies for improving function and quality of education. The other meanings that teachers who do not have graduate degrees attach to educational research concepts, involve studies for society and research for professional development. The negative meaning attached to the concept

perceives educational research as unnecessary and theory-based. When the related literature about concepts of educational research is examined, educational research is characterized as studies producing knowledge, enhancing the development of educational practices, solving problems in education, and determining educational policies with the aim of preparation (Bartlett, 1989; Mortimore, 2000; FEC, 2007; Lingard & Gale, 2010). However, some of the authors and councils address negative thoughts and they are pessimistic against educational research by acknowledging educational research as far from implementing mentioned purposes with being useless studies (Bracey, 1989; Shkedi, 1998; DETYA, 2000; NERF, 2000; Broekkamp & Vanltout-Wolters, 2007).

When teachers are asked about the conductors of educational research, both teachers with graduate degrees or not see university faculty and graduate students as conductors of educational research. Teachers who do not have graduate degrees exclude the Ministry of National Education compared to other group, while majority of teachers in both groups expel school principals and teachers from conducting educational research. Similarly, Çepni and Küçük (2002) indicate in a study that teachers in Turkey are far from doing educational research. Likewise, in a study conducted by Moulding and Hadley (2010), teachers state that university faculty, district staff, state agency staff and department of education perform educational research. Therefore, conductors of educational research are seen as educational institutions in USA rather than individuals. However, it is thought-provoking that the Ministry of National Education that determines educational politics, provincial and district national education, and implements these politics in practice in addition to school principals are not seen as mechanisms performing this process.

Contribution of educational research to schools and to the constitution of educational politics depends on taking the results of educational research, following educational studies, and taking value into account (Hillage, Pearson, Anderson & Tamkin, 1998; Brown & Sharp, 2003). According to results of this study, teachers with graduate degrees believe that educational research would be valuable to society, university faculty, teachers, Ministry of National Education and themselves, due to having contributions to society, helping the constitution of politics of education and enhancing academic development. In addition to these, the graduate teacher group in this study use academic journals, books, graduate courses and websites while following educational research as in Moulding and Hadley's (2010) study. Using various sources can be considered as the given value to educational research. In another study, Gore and Giflin (2004) explain that teachers mostly value research emphasizing classroom practices. Similarly, Everton, Galton and Pell (2000) state that if educational research is related to classroom practices, teacher-student interaction and assessment of the teachers, teachers give greater importance to educational research and they assert that teachers follow educational research from courses, official print media, newspapers, journals and colleagues.

Regarding the value of educational research, teachers who do not have graduate degrees claim that educational research is valuable due to improving quality of education, having contributions to society, facilitating inspection of educational problems, bringing innovations in education, and possessing scientific qualifications. Even though the teachers in this group assert that they find educational research valuable, this value does not reflect itself in following publications; it stays in the idea stage and does not turn into action. If followed sources are examined, nearly half of the teachers not having graduate degrees follow educational research results from websites like forums rather than following real sources like books, academic and professional journals. A study conducted in Turkey shows

that teachers do not value educational research and they follow newspapers, TV, radio, Internet, Ministry of National Education publications and announcements for getting the results of educational research (Sarı, 2006). Likewise, Vanderlinde and Broak (2010) assert that teachers look at the value of educational research with suspicion and they do not follow these studies. At this point, it can be supported that the other group of teachers who have graduate degrees are sensitive in following educational research with utilizing original sources.

The most discussed topic related to educational research is the contribution of these studies to educational practices; unfortunately many authors have negative thoughts on this matter (Castle, 1988; Bracey, 1989; White, 1992; Englert & Tarran, 1993; Kaestle, 1993; Kennedy, 1997; Shkedi, 1998; Bates, 2002; Berliner, 2002; Stevens, 2004; Sarı, 2006; Broekkamp & Vantout-Wolters, 2007; Vanderlinde & Broak, 2010). The reasons of these negative thoughts are behind the ideas that educational research stay in theory and do not turn into practice, fail to discuss the problems of education, handle boring subjects, have unconvincing results and the used jargon and statistical procedures are not qualified enough for the comprehension of teachers. Moreover, the communication gap between teachers and researchers, non-interest of teachers on research literature, conducting educational research for self and academic promotion, and teachers' lacking ability to use the results of educational research are the other reasons why authors have pessimistic outlooks. In contrast to this pessimistic view, other authors support educational research as studies encouraging educational development, solving aroused problems in education, shaping politics of education and educational practices with an optimistic view (Everton, Galton, & Pell, 2000; Mortimore, 2000; Brown & Sharp, 2003; Levin, 2004). In this study, teachers with graduate degrees approach the related question with an optimistic standpoint and they state the contribution of educational research to educational practices. The study results also reveal that teachers with graduate degrees find that educational research contributes to classroom practices like the use of new methods and techniques, providing effective classroom management and preparation of various activities in class. On the other side, in addition to referring individual and professional development and positive change in the attitudes towards education, teachers also emphasize their academic development by means of educational research. In a similar way, teachers without graduate degrees claim that educational research influences educational practices and these studies enhance the professional knowledge of teachers. However, a substantial majority of participants have similar thoughts with the authors who have a pessimistic outlook; they assert that educational research are the studies staying in theory without actualizing in practice, far from solving problems in education with being useless.

The last issue handled in the study is the willingness of teachers who do not have graduate degrees to conduct educational research. Teachers are also found as enthusiastic in conducting educational research and in learning research methodology; the reason for these requests deal with their willingness to ensure individual and professional development and to ameliorate the education system. Similar to this finding, teacher candidates are also willing to perform educational research and to learn research methods in Demircioğlu's study (2008). However, a minority of the teachers does not see this process as their own profession and believe that the results of educational research do not turn into practice and they have lack of resources with methodological knowledge deprivation.

To conclude, a great majority of the participant teachers, especially teachers having graduate degrees, states that they get benefit from the results of educational research and get

them into practice with a belief that educational research enhances individual and professional development of teachers, improves quality of education and has contributions to society. However, it is essential to put an emphasis on insensitiveness of teachers without graduate degrees while following educational research, thoughts of their non-speciality in conducting educational research with a belief that academicians and graduate students should perform educational research, and their thoughts about the research staying in theory. At this point, school culture following educational research and spending time for sharing study results should be created at schools. Teachers may be encouraged to take courses offering research methodology, while processes giving opportunities to conduct educational research may be created and teachers may be encouraged to enroll in graduate education programs. Lastly, educational researchers should take care of educational research topics by considering actualization of the findings in practice and they should conduct their studies with this direction. Educational researchers may even design their studies with teachers from the step of determining educational problems to the application process and all can get benefit from the findings.

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Lisansüstü Öğretim Alan ve Almayan Öğretmenlerin Eğitim Araştırmalarına İlişkin Görüşlerinin İncelenmesi

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Giriş

Öğretmenlerin nitelikli öğretmen olarak kabul edilebilmesi için eğitimsel değişimlerin farkında olarak eğitim-öğretim ile ilgili son gelişmeleri takip etmeleri beklenmektedir. Eğitim araştırmalarının takip edilmesi ve araştırma bulgularının uygulanması eğitim-öğretim kalitesinin artmasına ve mesleki uygulamaların gelişmesine yol açacağı açıktır. Aslında, geleneksel yöntemlerle veri toplayarak küçük bir araştırma yapan öğretmenlerin sınıf deneyimi kazandıkları iddia edilmektedir. Özellikle belirtmek gerekirse, öğretim araştırmaya dayalı olmalı ve öğretmenlerin günlük uygulamalarında araştırma bulgularını kullanmaları ve araştırma yapmaları beklenmektedir. Ancak öğretmenlerin eğitim araştırmalarına ilişkin bakış açılarını ve tutumlarını belirleyen sınırlı sayıda çalışma bulunmaktadır. Veri eksikliği göz önüne alındığında, bu çalışmanın odağı öğretmenlerin eğitim araştırmalarına yönelik görüşlerini ortaya koymaktır. Bu araştırmanın amacı lisansüstü öğretim alan ve almayan öğretmenlerin eğitim araştırmaları kavramına, gerçekleştiricilerine, değerliliğine, takip ettikleri kaynaklara ve mesleklerini gerçekleştirmeleri üzerindeki katkılarına ilişkin görüşlerini incelemektir.

Yöntem

Bu araştırmada lisansüstü öğretim gören ve görmeyen öğretmenlerin eğitim araştırmalarına ilişkin görüşlerinin belirlenmesi için tarama modeli kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu lisansüstü öğretim gören 61 ve lisansüstü öğretim görmeyen 67 öğretmen oluşturmaktadır. Çalışma grubundaki öğretmenler *seçkisiz örnekleme* tekniğiyle belirlenmiş olup; lisansüstü öğretim gören öğretmenler, Eskişehir Osmangazi Üniversitesi, Ege Üniversitesi ve Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi'nde Eğitim Bilimleri anabilim dalında lisansüstü öğrenim almaktadırlar. Diğer öğretmen grubu ise İzmir Bornova'da ilköğretim okullarında görev yapan öğretmenlerden oluşmaktadır. Araştırmada veri toplama aracı olarak araştırmacılar tarafından geliştirilen 'Eğitim Araştırmaları Formu' kullanılmıştır. Lisansüstü öğretim gören öğretmenlere uygulanan form 8, lisansüstü öğretim almayan öğretmenlere uygulanan form ise 9 açık uçlu sorudan oluşmaktadır. Formda kullanılan açık uçlu sorular, konu ile ilgili literatür (Demircioğlu, 2006; Sarı, 2006; Taylor, 2007; Moulding & Hadley, 2010) incelenerek oluşturulan soru maddeleri arasından seçilmiştir. Seçilen sorulardan oluşturulan formun kapsam geçerliğini sağlamak üzere eğitim bilimlerinde uzman üç akademisyenin görüşüne başvurulmuştur. Formun anlaşılırlığı ve dil geçerliği için ise form iki Türkçe öğretmenine inceletilmiştir.

İşlem

Araştırmada açık uçlu sorulardan elde edilen veriler, betimsel istatikler (yüzde ve frekans) ve içerik analiz türlerinden kategorisel analiz tekniği kullanılarak çözümlenmiştir. Kategorisel analiz sürecinde; (*i*) verilerin kodlanması, (*ii*) temaların [kategorilerin]

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oluşturulması, (*iii*) temaların düzenlenmesi (*iv*) bulguların yorumlanması aşamaları izlenmiştir (Corbin & Strauss, 2007). Araştırmada öncelikle lisansüstü öğretim alan ve almayan öğretmenlerin verdikleri yanıtlar, araştırmanın alt problemleri ve soru başlıkları dikkate alınarak göre kodlanmıştır. Veri kodlamasını tamamlanmasını izleyen süreç temaların [*kategorilerin*] oluşturulmasıdır. Bu aşamada kodlama işleminden sonra elde edilen kodlar bir araya getirilerek ortak yönleri belirlenmiştir. Böylece çalışma bulgularının ana hatlarını oluşturan temalar elde edilmiştir. Bu aşamanın devamında kodlanan verilerin, düzenlenen temalara [*kategorilere*] yerleştirilmesi ile sürece devam edilmiştir. Verilerin çözümlenmesinin son aşaması ise bulguların yorumlanmasıdır. Bu aşamada toplanan verilere anlam kazandırmak ve bulgular arasındaki ilişkileri açıklamak ve elde edilen sonuçların önemine ilişkin açıklamalar yapılmıştır. Katılımcı gizliliğini sağlamak amacıyla lisansüstü öğretim alan öğretmenler için L1, L15 vb. kodlar, lisansüstü eğitim almayan öğretmenler için ise Ö5, Ö17 vb. kodlar kullanılmıştır.

Geçerlik ve Güvenirlik

Araştırmanın iç geçerliğini sağlamak için, elde edilen veriler, bulgular bölümünde sunulurken söz konusu duruma ilişkin bilgiler ortaya konulduktan sonra yorumlama yoluna gidilmiştir. Ayrıca sonuçlar eğitim bilimleri alanında uzman iki öğretim üyesine inceletilmiştir. Araştırmanın dış geçerliğini sağlamak için ise katılımcılardan elde edilen veriler sunulurken doğrudan alıntılarla ayrıntılı betimlenme yapılmasının yanı sıra yöntem bölümünde, desen, örneklem, veri toplama aracı, verilerin çözümlenmesi süreçlerindeki işlemlere ayrıntılı olarak yer verilerek araştırmanın dış güvenirliğini arttırmak hedeflenmiştir. Araştırmanın iç güvenirliğini sağlamak için ise nitel araştırma konusunda uzman iki öğretim üyesine temalar yeniden kodlamaları amacıyla verilmiştir. Araştırmacılar ve öğretim üyelerinin yaptıkları kodlamalar üzerinde Güvenirlik= Görüş birliği/ Görüş ayrılığı+100 formülü uygulanmış ve kodlayıcılar arasındaki uyuşum yüzdesi % 84 olarak hesaplanmıştır (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Uyuşum yüzdesinin % 70 veya daha üstü yeterli görüldüğünden veri analizinin güvenirliğinin sağlandığı varsayılmış ve sadece uyuşum gösteren kodlara temalara ulaşmada ele alınmış, uyuşum göstermeyen kodlara araştırmanın analizinde yer verilmemiştir.

Bulgular

Araştırma bulguları lisansüstü öğretim alan ve almayan öğretmenlerin eğitim araştırmaları kavramını daha çok eğitim kalitesini geliştirmek amacıyla ve eğitim alanında bilgi üretmek için yapılan çalışmalar olarak ifade ettiklerini ortaya koymaktadır.

Öğretmenlerin büyük çoğunluğu eğitim araştırmalarının gerçekleştiricisi olarak öğretim üyelerini (% 95.1; % 74.6) ve lisansüstü öğrencileri (% 91.8; % 64.2) görmektedirler. Lisansüstü öğretim alan öğretmenler eğitim araştırmalarının diğer bir gerçekleştiricisi olarak Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'nı [MEB] (% 63.9) işaret ederken; lisansüstü öğretim almayan öğretmenlerin yarısından fazlası (% 56.7) MEB'in eğitim araştırmalarını yapmadığını düşünmektedir. Ayrıca, öğretmenlerin yarısından fazlası müfettişleri (% 39.3; % 23.9), okul yönetimini (% 47.5; % 26.9) ve lisans öğrencilerini (% 37.7; % 41.8) bu sürecin dışında tutarken; yarısı (% 50.8; % 49.3) ise kendilerini eğitim araştırmalarının gerçekleştiricisi olarak ifade etmektedirler.

Lisansüstü öğretim gören öğretmenler eğitim araştırmalarının sırasıyla toplum (% 83.6), öğretim üyesi (% 75.4), öğretmen (% 68.9), okul yönetimi (% 63.9) ve MEB merkez teşkilatı (% 63.9) için değer taşıdığını ifade etmektedirler. Lisansüstü öğretim almayan

öğretmenler ise eğitim araştırmalarının toplum (% 88.1) ve öğretmenler (% 70.1) açısından değer taşıdığını belirtmişlerdir. Lisansüstü öğretim gören öğretmenlerin eğitim araştırmalarını topluma fayda sağlaması (% 24.5), eğitim politikalarını yönlendirmesi (% 18.1) ve akademik gelişim ve yükselmeyi (% 13.1) sağlaması nedeniyle değerli buldukları görülmektedir. Lisansüstü öğretim almayan öğretmenlerin yarısından fazlası eğitimin kalitesini ve uygulamaları geliştirmesi, topluma katkı sağlama, eğitimsel problemlerin çözümü, eğitime yenilikler getirme ve bilimsel nitelik taşıma nedeniyle eğitim araştırmalarını değerli bulmaktadır.

Lisansüstü öğretim gören öğretmenlerin tamamına yakını (% 88.6) eğitim araştırmalarını takip ettiklerini belirtirken, lisansüstü öğretim almayan öğretmenlerde bu oran % 58.2'ye düşmektedir. Öğretmenlerin eğitim araştırmalarını takip ettikleri kaynaklar incelendiğinde, lisansüstü öğretim alan öğretmenler daha çok web sayfası (% 85.2), akademik dergi (% 72.1), kitap (% 72.1) ve lisansüstü ders (% 67.2) gibi kaynaklardan eğitim araştırmalarını takip ederken; lisansüstü öğretim almayan öğretmenlerin sadece yarısı (% 53.7) web sayfalarından eğitim araştırmalarına ulaştıklarını belirtmiştir.

Lisansüstü öğretim alan ve almayan öğretmenlerin büyük çoğunluğu (% 81.9; % 76.1) mesleklerini icra etme sürecinde eğitim araştırmalarının katkı sağladığını ifade ederken lisansüstü öğretim almayan öğretmenler % 23.9'u eğitim araştırmalarının teoride kaldığını, uygulamada hayat bulamadığını düşünmektedir. Lisansüstü öğretim alan öğretmenler sınıf-içi uygulamalar (% 36.1), kişisel ve mesleki gelişim (% 24.5), eğitime karşı tutum (% 11.4) ve akademik açıdan (% 6.5) eğitim araştırmalarının mesleği gerçekleştirme sürecine katkı sağladığını belirtmektedirler. Lisansüstü öğretim almayan öğretmen grubunda eğitim araştırmalarının meslekleri için faydalı olduğuna inananlar ise (% 43.2) eğitim araştırmalarının mesleki bilgi ve uygulamalara katkıda bulunduğunu ifade etmektedirler. Ancak lisansüstü öğretim almayan öğretmenlerden bazıları (% 16.4) ise, eğitim araştırmalarının mesleği icra etme sürecine faydası olmadığını düşünmekte ve eğitim araştırmalarını teoride kalan araştırmalar olarak görmektedirler.

Lisansüstü öğretim almayan öğretmenlerin büyük çoğunluğu araştırma yöntemleri dersi alma (% 88.1) ve eğitim araştırması yapma (% 70.1) konularında istekliliğini ifade ederken; öğretmenlerin üçte biri (% 29.9) eğitim araştırması yapmaktan kaçınmaktadır. Lisansüstü öğretim almayan öğretmenler eğitim araştırması yapma isteklerinin nedenlerini kişisel ve mesleki gelişim (% 34.3) ve eğitim sistemini düzeltme (% 16.4) olarak belirtmişlerdir. Eğitim araştırması yapma konusunda isteksiz olan öğretmen grubu ise bu durumun nedenini araştırma sonuçlarının uygulamaya geçmemesine (% 5.9), metodolojik bilgi yoksunluğuna (% 4.4), uzmanlık alanlarının araştırma yapmak olmadığına (% 2.9) ve kaynak eksikliğine (% 2.9) bağlamaktadırlar.

Sonuç, Tartışma ve Öneriler

Lisansüstü öğretim gören öğretmenler, eğitim araştırmalarına ilişkin görüşlerinde eğitim araştırmalarını faydalı araştırmalar olarak görmekte ve bu araştırmaları mesleklerini icra ederken kullandıklarını ifade etmektedir. Bu öğretmen grubunun aksine lisansüstü öğretim almayan öğretmenler her ne kadar eğitim araştırmalarını faydalı araştırmalar olarak gördüklerini ve mesleklerini gerçekleştirme de bu araştırmalardan faydalandıklarını ifade etseler de; bu öğretmenlerin sadece yarısının eğitim araştırmalarını forum niteliği taşıyan web sayfalarından takip etmeleri, araştırmaların gerçekleştiricisi olarak sadece akademisyen ve lisansüstü öğrencileri görmeleri, bazılarının araştırmaların teoride kaldığını düşünmeleri ve buna rağmen eğitim araştırması gerçekleştirme isteklerinin olması üzerinde durulması

gereken hususlardır. Bu noktada okullarda eğitim araştırmalarının takip edildiği, sonuçlarının paylaşıldığı ve bu araştırmaların sonuçlarına zaman ayrıldığı bir kültür oluşturulabilir. Öğretmenlere araştırma yöntemlerinin öğretileceği kurslar ve onlara eğitim araştırması yapma fırsatı sağlayacak süreçler yaratılabileceği gibi öğretmenlerin lisansüstü öğretim almalarında teşvikler yapılabilir. Son olarak da eğitim araştırmacıları ele alacakları konularda uygulamada hayat bulabilecek konuların seçimine özen göstermeli ve bu doğrultuda çalışmalarını yürütmelidir. Ayrıca eğitim araştırmacıları olası araştırmaları öğretmenlerle problem belirlenmesinden uygulama sürecine kadar birlikte tasarlayabilir ve sonuçlarından faydalanabilirler.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Eğitim araştırmaları, Lisansüstü öğrenim gören öğretmenler, Lisansüstü öğrenim görmeyen öğretmenler