A content analysis concerning the studies on challenges faced by novice teachers

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to analyze the studies concerning challenges faced by novice teachers in terms of various aspects and compare challenges according to location of the studies conducted in Turkey and abroad. A total of 30 research studies were included in detailed analysis. This is a descriptive study based on qualitative research method. In the analysis of the studies, a matrix (content analysis form) was prepared and studies were analyzed accordingly. In addition, descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages and graphics were used. As a result of the study, it was found that 22 studies were articles, five of them were dissertations and three of them were master theses. Half of the studies were designed as case studies and almost half of them were designed as descriptive survey. In half of the studies, qualitative research method was preferred. The most frequently used data collection tools are survey and interview form; the most frequently used data analysis technique is descriptive statistics. Most of the studies were conducted on small samples. Furthermore, it was found that novice teachers faced various challenges which were grouped under four themes named as instructional, relational, adaptation challenges and physical infrastructure/facilities of the school.

Keywords: challenges, content analysis, novice teachers.

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1.   Introduction

Teaching profession is a complex endeavor. It requires reading, study and planning for instruction. Apart from this instruction and planning, a teacher should know the subject matter and characteristics of the students (Wyatt & White, 2007). In addition to the complexity and difficulty of the teaching profession, novice teachers generally face extra challenges such as reality shock, the state of being inexperienced, loneliness etc. Therefore, it is important to understand the experiences of novice teachers in their initial years in the profession.

Teaching is an ongoing and dynamic process as even the experienced teachers have to change their beliefs concerning teaching, approaches and techniques. For a novice teacher, teaching is an on-the-job training in initial years of teaching. Despite a qualified pre-service teacher education, a teacher cannot be fully prepared for teaching (Wyatt & White, 2007). Even if a novice teacher had a qualified pre-service teacher education, novice teachers require a comprehensive guidance in the first year because of the challenges such as differences in practice, the excitement of first experience in the profession, adaptation to the profession (Yalcinkaya, 2002).

A successful beginning is quite important both for teachers' careers and students' education. In case of a novice teacher's being unsuccessful; students, parents, policymakers and administrators will lose (Barbara & Grady, 2007). No matter how good pre-service teacher education is, there are things to be only learned within the profession. The experiences gained in pre-service education create a basis and provides practice in teaching. Confronting with the real instructional situations starts with novice teachers' entering the classroom (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). So, it can be said that novice teachers actually learn how to teach in the first year when they enter the classroom (Wideeen, Mayer-Smith & Moon, 1998).

All novice teachers will face radical changes in professional and personal lives in their challenging first year in the profession even if they undergo varied experiences. Entering into teaching profession is often demanding process with dramatical changes in personal lives, support groups, social environment (Barbara & Grady, 2007). Everything is new for a novice teacher such as things to do on the first day, students, interests, resources and so on. There is an unlimited number of questions waiting for the answer in the mind of novice teacher such as: "*What should I teach?*", "*How should I evaluate the students?*", "*What are the expectations of the principals?*" etc. These and similar questions cover many topics such as program, instruction, evaluation, management and school culture (Feiman-Nemser, 2003).

The factors that make the first year difficult are distinctive. One of these factors can be listed as career transition with new and demanding responsibilities. The novice teacher is under the pressure of full-time teaching which can be challenging without adequate support. The expectations of students, colleagues and administrators make the profession more challenging. Career transitions, high expectations together with changes in interpersonal relationships cause the feeling of loneliness which gets the novice teacher isolated in the first year (Barbara & Grady, 2007). Therefore, it can be said that novice teachers are special group in teaching profession who face various challenges apart from the challenges that an experienced teacher face.

Novice teachers have certain learning needs that cannot be gained in advance or be learned outside of the learning environment (Feiman-Nemser, 2003). As well as being new in the profession, the complexities of the teaching within itself leave novice teachers alone with many dilemmas and uncertainty. Most of novice teachers meet this situation with confusion and uncertainty as they have limited experience and practice in the profession. Above all, these teachers' feeling alone in their class gets demanding or getting help more difficult (Feiman-Nemser, Carver, Schwille & Yusko, 1999).

Each novice teacher can have different experiences in the early years, but they mostly live common problems and concerns regarding the profession (Michel, 2013). The problems experienced by novice teachers in the profession can be listed as being inexperienced, a mismatch between theory and practice, social pressure on new teachers, desire to do many things and fear of discipline (Yalcınkaya, 2002). Challenges faced by novice teachers vary as classroom management, planning the lesson and so on (Dickson, Riddlebarger, Stringer, Tennant & Kennetz, 2014).

In accordance with the literature, challenges faced by novice teachers can be categorized as planning and implementation of teaching, relations with colleagues, administrators, parents, and society, physical infrastructure and facilities of the school, professional development-legal rights and responsibilities. Thus, the first year in teaching can be seen as a struggle, learning, confronting with realities of teaching and adaptation process for novice teachers.

The purpose of this research is to analyze the studies concerning the challenges experienced by novice teachers in terms of various aspects such as publication language, publication type, year, method, design, sample size, data collection tools, data analysis techniques and challenges experienced by novice teachers and compare the challenges according to studies conducted in Turkey and abroad. It is expected that the results of this research will guide the researchers about tendencies in the studies conducted with novice teachers in terms of methodology and scope. Furthermore, as types of challenges faced frequently by novice teachers are determined in this research; this research is expected to guide educators and policy makers in reorganizing or developing pre-service teacher education and induction programs.

In the literature, it is seen that there are many theoretical studies based on literature review on novice teachers. However, there is a limited number of empirical studies on challenges faced by novice teachers. There is one study conducted by Karatas & Karaman (2013) which reviewed 10 studies published between 2002 and 2012 related to novice language teachers and their challenges. There are no studies that focus on content analysis of the studies on challenges faced by novice teachers. Therefore, this study has importance in terms of forming a thematic framework concerning challenges of novice teachers.

2. Method

This is a descriptive survey study using qualitative research method. This study uses content analysis method in analyzing the studies concerning challenges faced by novice teachers. Content analysis is a technique in qualitative research that provides analysis of written communication patterns (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2012) and written texts such as diaries, documents or interview transcripts (Patton, 2002). Since content analysis combines similar data together considering certain codes and aims under a related theme and then interpret them in a clear and detailed way (Cresswell, 2014), it is considered in accordance with the purpose of this study.

2.1. Data Source

The studies analyzed in this research include the ones conducted with novice teachers and deal with challenges faced by novice teachers. The studies consist of the ones conducted in Turkey and abroad, so the publication language is limited to English and Turkish. The first study within the scope of this research was conducted in 1997 and the last one in 2016. So, the studies included in this research involve the publications between 1997 and 2016. The studies within the scope of this research were obtained from various databases such as ERIC, EBSCO, ProQuest, Google Scholar, ULAKBİM, database of the Council of Higher Education (COHE) in Turkey, peer-reviewed journals etc. For data collection, a comprehensive review was made via Internet using the keywords "novice teachers", "induction", "challenges/difficulties/problems faced by novice teachers", "first years in teaching". After this review, many studies were gathered, but only empirical studies were included in this research in accordance with the purpose of this research, so the studies based on literature review, theory or compilation were not included in the analysis. As a result, 30 studies (15 in Turkey, 15 abroad) were included in the analysis. The list of the studies included in this study is presented in Appendix 1.

2.2. Data Collection Tool

In this study, for data collection purposes, document analysis technique was used. Documents are an important source of information and document analysis technique is frequently preferred in qualitative researches (Cresswell, 2005). In order to analyze the studies included in this research, a matrix (content analysis form) was prepared by the researcher in accordance with research questions. The matrix consisted of categories such as publication language, publication type, year, method, design, sample size, data collection tools, data analysis techniques and challenges faced by novice teachers. The matrix sample used in this research is presented in Table 1:

Table 1. Matrix Sample Used in This Research

Pub. lang.	Pub. type	Year	Method	Design	Sample size	Data collection tools	Data analysis techniques	Challenges
English	Article	2004	Qualitative	Case study	1-50	Interview form	Content analysis	Classroom management, teaching planning and relations with administrators

2.3. Data Analysis

In the analysis of the studies, content analysis was used. The studies included in this research were examined in detail. Then, the data were coded according to the matrix (content analysis form) and the findings were organized accordingly. In order to determine challenges faced by novice teachers, all studies' full-text were examined in detail, codes and themes were extracted from the data. First, codes were determined, and then these codes were combined under a theme by taking the related literature into consideration. However, it was found that in some studies (mostly articles) there were not clear explanations or information about the method, design or data analysis techniques. In this case, these studies' method, design or data analysis techniques were named properly to the study by analyzing the study in detail and based on the two coders' agreements. A sample of coding is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. A Sample of Coding in This Research

Theme	Coding
Method	Quantitative- Qualitative - Mixed
Design	Descriptive survey - Case study - Phenomenology
Challenges	Classroom management - Teaching planning - Relations with administrators

In the presentation of the data, descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages and graphics were used by using SPSS 18 program. In order to enable internal reliability in the research, all studies were coded according to the matrix by two researchers separately. Then, the correspondence between two raters (intercoder reliability) was calculated by using the formula (reliability= number of agreements / total number of agreements + disagreements) suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994). As a result, intercoder agreement between two raters was found as 91%. This calculation shows that correspondence of coding is quite high, because based on the size

and range of the coding form; intercoder correspondence is expected to be in 90% range (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

3. Results

Publication Language

In terms of publication language of the studies included in this research, there are two languages presented in Figure 1:
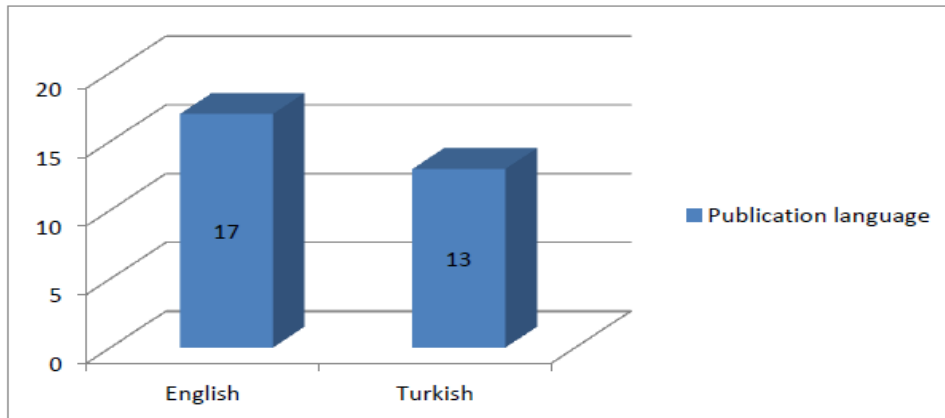

Figure 1: Distribution of Studies in Terms of Publication Language

Figure 1 indicates that more than half of the studies (56%) were written in English, the other studies (44%) were written in Turkish language.

Publication Type

In terms of publication types of the studies included in this research, it was found that there are articles, dissertations and master theses that are presented in Figure 2:
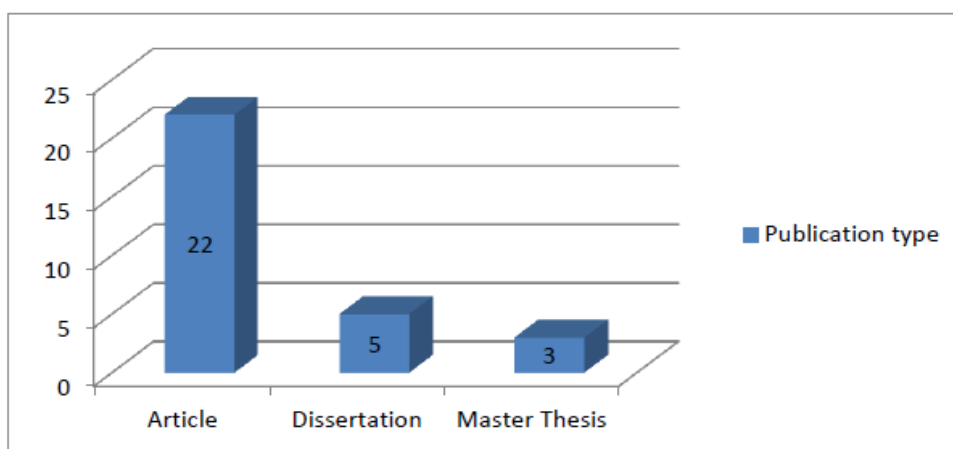

Figure 2. Distribution of Studies in Terms of Publication Type

Figure 2 indicates that most of the studies (73%) were published as article, five of them are dissertations (PhD thesis) and three of them are master thesis.

Publication Year

In terms of publication year of the studies included in this research, the distribution of the studies is presented in Figure 3:
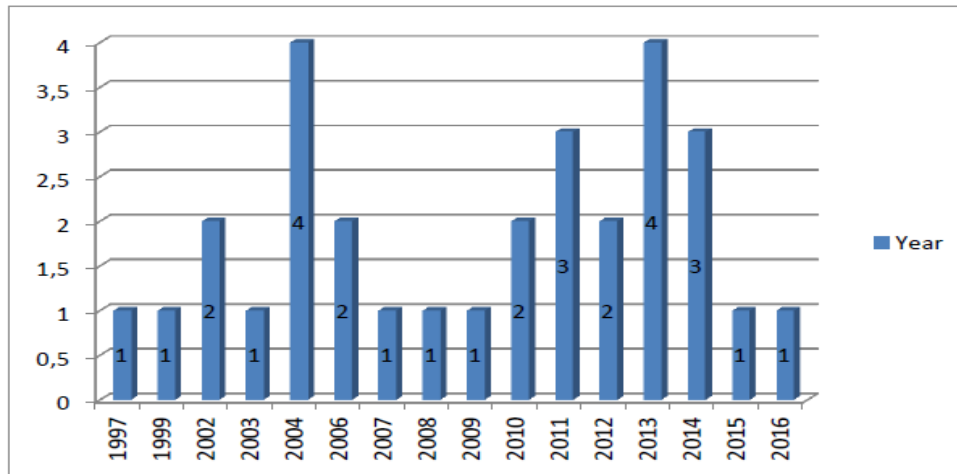

Figure 3. Distribution of Studies in Terms of Publication Year

Figure 3 indicates that publication year of the studies range between the years 1997 and 2016.

Research Methods

In terms of research method of the studies included in this research, it was found that different kinds of research methods were preferred which are presented in Figure 4:
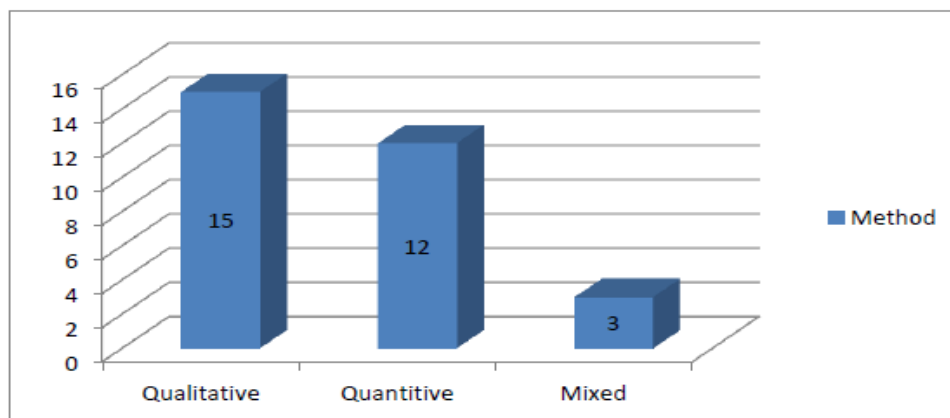

Figure 4. Distribution of Studies in Terms of Research Methods

Figure 4 indicates that the most used research method in the studies is qualitative method (50%) followed by quantitative (40%) and mixed method (10%), respectively.

Research Designs

In terms of research designs of the studies included in this research, it was found that different kinds of research designs were preferred which are presented in Figure 5:
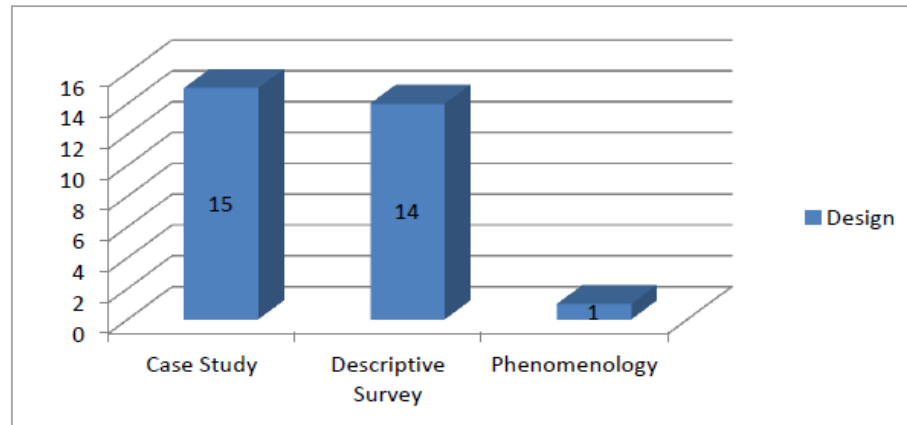

Figure 5. Distribution of Studies in Terms of Research Designs

Figure 5 indicates that half of the studies were designed as case study, almost half of the studies (14 studies) were designed as descriptive survey design and one of the studies was conducted in phenomenology design.

Sample Size

In terms of sample size of the studies included in this research, distribution of the studies is presented in Figure 6:
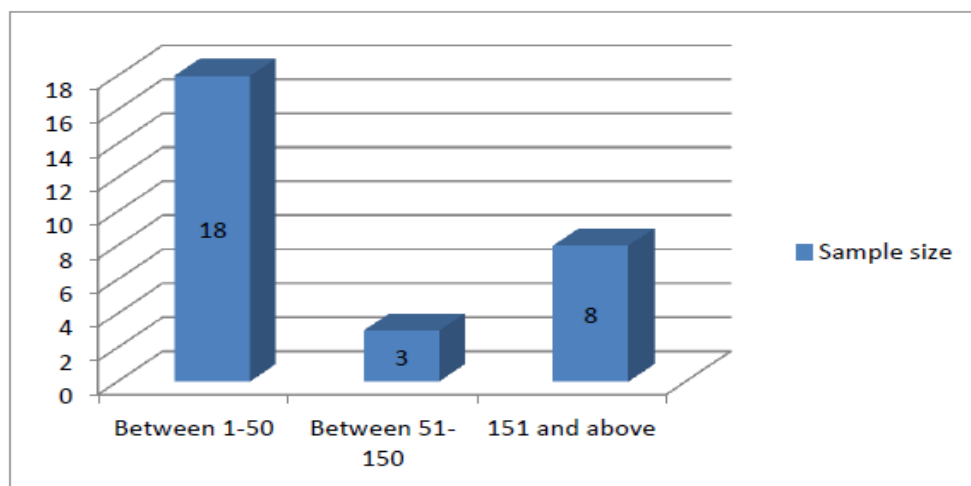

Figure 6. Distribution of Studies in Terms of Sample Size

Figure 6 indicates that most of the studies (60%) were conducted with small number of teachers (between 1 and 50), eight of the studies were conducted with high number of teachers (between 151 and above) and three of the studies were conducted with between 51 to 150 teachers.

Data Collection Tools

In terms of data collection tools of the studies included in this research, it was found that different kinds of tools for data collection were preferred which are presented in Figure 7:
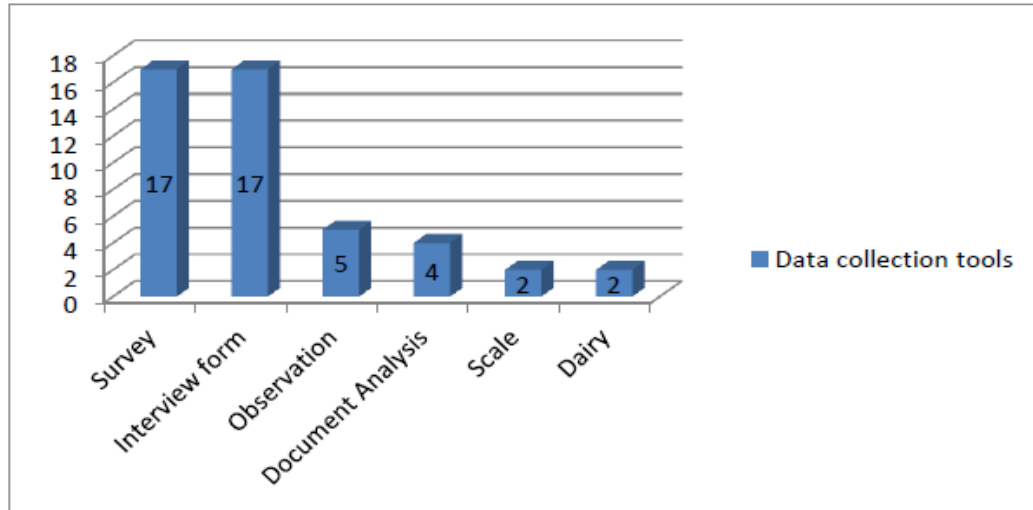

Figure 7. Distribution of Studies in Terms of Data Collection Tools

Figure 7 indicates that the most used tools in the studies are survey and interview form (17 studies for each). Furthermore, it was found that five studies used observation, four studies used document analysis, two studies used scale and two studies used diary for data collection.

Data Analysis Techniques

In terms of data analysis techniques of the studies included in this research, it was found that different kinds of techniques for data analysis were preferred which are presented in Figure 8:
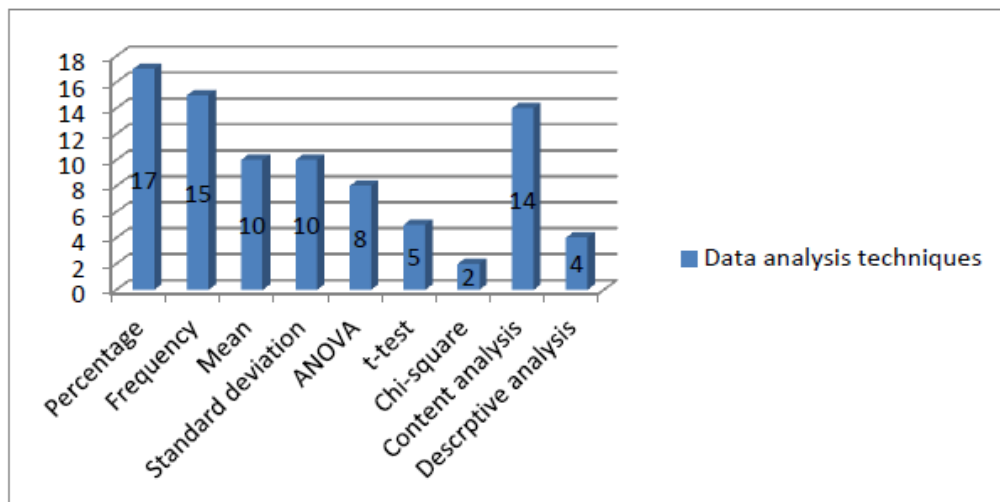

Figure 8. Distribution of Studies in Terms of Data Analysis Techniques

Figure 8 indicates that mostly preferred techniques are descriptive statistics such as percentage and frequency; mean and standard deviation were also used in ten studies. Content analysis as one

of the techniques in qualitative analysis was used almost half of the studies (47%). Furthermore, it was found that correlational analyses such as ANOVA, t-test and chi-square were used in some of the studies.

Challenges faced by novice teachers

In terms of challenges faced by novice teachers, it was found that novice teachers faced various challenges which are presented in Figure 9:
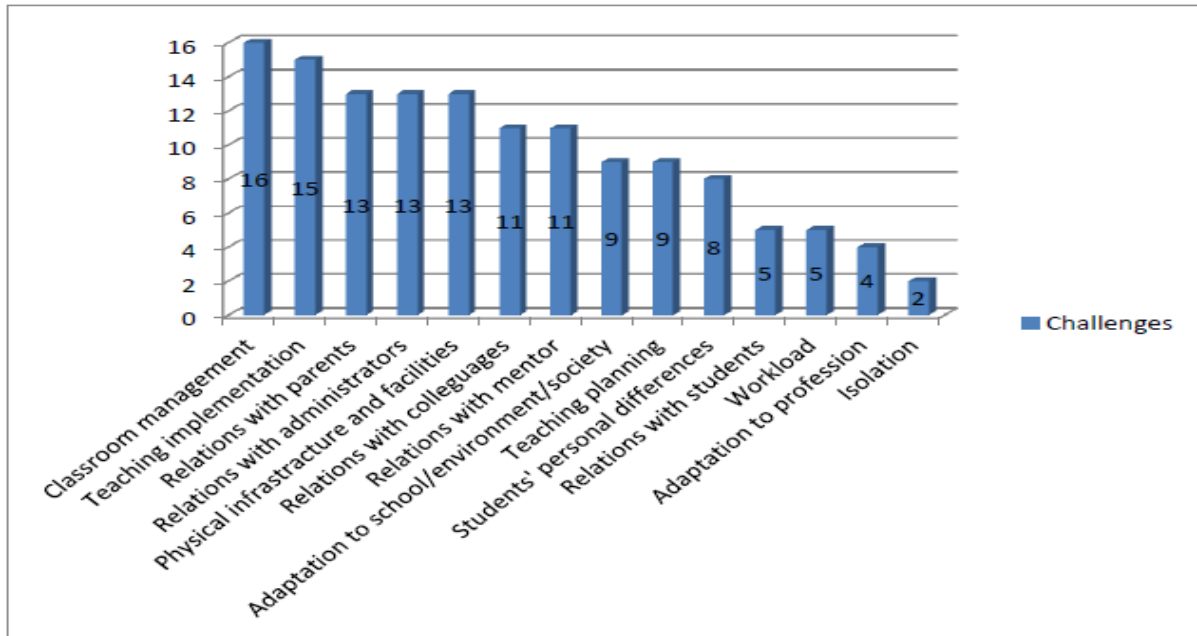

Figure 9. Challenges Faced By Novice Teachers in the Studies

Figure 9 indicates that the challenges most frequently faced by novice teachers are classroom management, teaching implementation, physical infrastructure and facilities of the school, relations with parents, administrators, colleagues and mentor teachers. Furthermore, it was found that novice teachers face challenges in adaptation to the school-environment-profession and society, teaching planning, dealing with students' different needs, teaching planning, relations with students, workload and isolation. The challenges faced by novice teachers were also compared according to studies conducted in Turkey and abroad which are presented in Figure 10 and Figure 11:
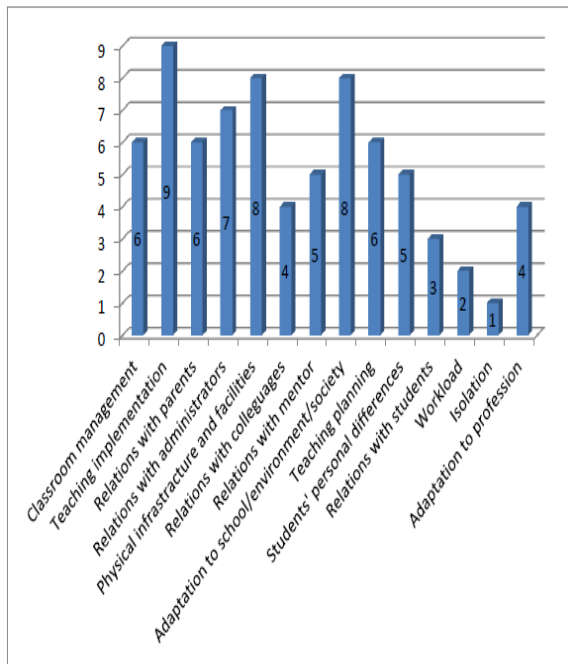
Figure 10. Challenges Faced By Novice
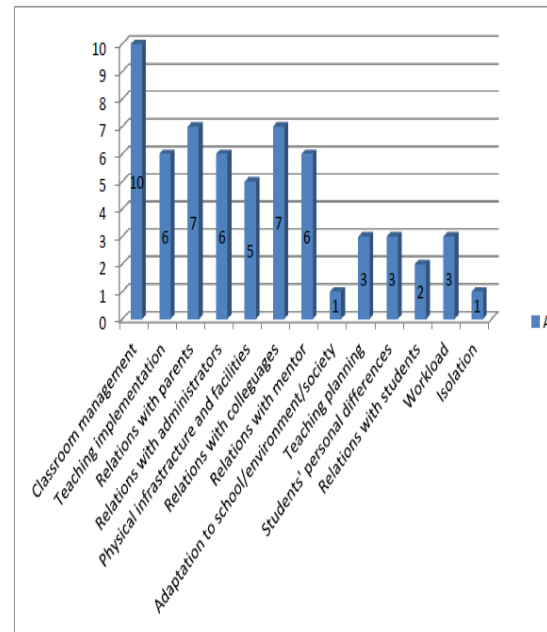
Teachers in Turkey

Figure 11. Challenges Faced By Novice

Teachers Abroad

Figure 10 and 11 indicates that there are some differences in terms of challenges faced by novice teachers in Turkey and abroad. It was found that novice teachers in Turkey face more challenges in teaching planning and implementation, physical infrastructure and facilities of the school, adaptation to school environment, profession and society compared to teachers abroad. On the other hand, it was found that novice teachers abroad face more challenges in classroom management and relations with colleagues compared to novice teachers in Turkey.

4. Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

This study examines the studies concerning the challenges faced by novice teachers in Turkey and abroad in terms of various aspects. Findings for each aspect are discussed separately and suggestions are presented accordingly.

Concerning publication language, it was found that more than half of the studies (56%) were written in English; the other studies (44%) were written in Turkish language. As half of the studies were conducted in Turkey, it can be said that most of the researchers in Turkey prefer to write studies in Turkish language. As English is a universal language, researchers can publish in English in order to reach a greater audience. However, scientific quality of a study should be questioned rather than publication language. And, in order to develop Turkish in academic language and get Turkish recognized internationally, this result can be seen as acceptable.

Concerning publication type, it was found that most of the studies concerning challenges faced by novice teachers involve articles, the number of master and PhD theses are quite low. The reason is believed to be that this issue has not been sufficiently investigated both in Turkey and internationally considering importance of this issue in development of both pre-service teacher education and induction programs. As the challenges faced by novice teachers are very diverse in broad sense, it can be said that these challenges should be examined more in master and PhD theses for a deeper investigation and understanding of the challenges.

Concerning publication year of the studies, it is seen that publication year of the studies range between the years 1997 and 2016 and there has been an increase in the number of studies on challenges faced by novice teachers during last six years. This finding can be considered as a positive result for understanding the importance of the issue, determining the challenges faced by novice teachers and developing suggestions for practices, novice teachers and induction programs.

Concerning research methods, it was found that the most used research method in the studies is qualitative method (50%), followed by quantitative (40%) and mixed method (10%), respectively. It is stated that the use of qualitative methods in the studies of educational sciences is not at a sufficient level (Saban, 2009; Saban, Kocbeker-Eid, Saban, Alan, Dogru, Ege, Arslantas, Cınar & Tunc 2010; Tavsancil, Cokluk, Citak, Kezer, Yıldırım, Bilican, Buyukturan, Sekercioglu, Yalcın, Erdem & Ozlem 2010). In this research, qualitative methodology found to be mostly preferred in the studies, the reason is believed to be related to the nature of the issue. In qualitative methodology, a broad and deep interpretation of behaviors is made (Cresswell, 2014) and the parts of observations, interviews or documents are combined inductively (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). So, high number of studies using qualitative method is favorable for more comprehensive researches especially for deeper understanding of challenges faced by novice teachers. However, it is seen that the number of studies using mixed method is quite low. In mixed method, both quantitative and qualitative methods are integrated and this provides research problems and questions to be better understood compared to single method researches (Creswell, 2014). So, it is suggested to use mixed methods in the studies in order to understand the challenges better and verify the data in multiple ways.

Concerning research design, it was found that half of the studies (15 studies) were designed as case studies; almost the other half of the studies (14 studies) was conducted as descriptive survey design. This finding is a result of research methods preferred in the studies. Researchers in educational sciences using qualitative research methods usually prefer case studies (Saban et al, 2010). The research results support this finding. It can be said that researchers using qualitative method mostly preferred case study design. In case studies, one or a few situations (events, individuals or groups) are investigated in depth and focused on the factors affecting or affected by the situation (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2005; Glesne, 2013; Yildirim & Simsek, 2011). So, it is possible to say that the researchers who study the challenges faced by novice teachers have the tendency to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by novice teachers and the factors/reasons affecting this situation. Furthermore, it can be said that researchers using quantitative methodology mostly preferred descriptive survey design. As it is aimed to describe a situation in the past or still exists in descriptive survey model (Karasar, 2013), it is possible to say that researchers preferred descriptive survey design in order to determine faced by novice teachers in a broad sense and describe the challenges quantitatively. And, one of the reasons is believed to be that in descriptive designs the researcher can reach more people in a shorter time and can put out a generalizable framework on the subject.

Concerning sample size, it was found that most of the studies (60%) were conducted with small number of teachers (between 1 and 50), and eight of the studies were conducted with high number of teachers (between 151 and above). It is thought that this result arises from the nature of research designs. It can be said that the studies using descriptive survey design were conducted greater number of participants, whereas the studies using case study or phenomenology were conducted with small number of teachers in depth.

Concerning data collection tools, it was found that the most used tools in the studies are survey and interview form (17 studies for each). And, some of the studies used various qualitative data collection tools such as observation, document analysis, diary etc. The survey is frequently used to collect information on behaviors and particularly useful for non-experimental descriptive designs in order to describe reality (Mathers, Fox & Hunn, 1998). Interviews and surveys are two ways for data collection about behaviors and beliefs. While surveys are significantly useful to gather information from a larger selection of people in order to find a general trend in people's experiences, opinions or behaviors; interviews are particularly used in order to learn detailed information in a specific situation (Driscoll, 2011). In this sense, the usage of data collection tools in the studies is thought to be related to research methods and designs preferred. It can be said that the studies in qualitative method or case study design used qualitative data collection tools such as interview form, observation, document analysis, diary etc., whereas the studies in quantitative method or descriptive survey design mostly preferred to use survey. In accordance with data collection tools used in the

studies, it was found that mostly preferred data analysis techniques are descriptive statistics such as percentage and frequency. Mean and standard deviation were also used in ten studies. Content analysis as one of the techniques in qualitative analysis was used almost half of the studies (47%). These data analysis techniques can be considered as the result of data collection tools used in the studies.

After examining the selected studies' results concerning the challenges faced by novice teachers, four major themes were determined and the results were discussed in accordance with these themes below:

Instructional challenges

Concerning the results of selected studies, it was found that novice teachers faced various challenges in teaching process such as classroom management, teaching planning and implementation, dealing with students' different needs, relations with students and workload. In the literature, it is stated that novice teachers experience reality shock in initial years of the profession which is described as the state of shock that a novice teacher experience in a real classroom environment when s/he starts the profession (Veenman, 1984). Teaching is an on-the-job training in initial years of teaching for a novice teacher as they feel unprepared for teaching (Wyatt & White, 2007). The reason is believed to be that as novice teachers do not have enough experience in the profession, they have the difficulty in dealing with instructional challenges, meeting the needs and expectations of the students. As Feiman-Nemser (2001) states, confronting with the real instructional situations starts when the novice teachers enter the classroom.

Relational challenges

Concerning the results of selected studies, it was found that novice teachers faced challenges in relations with parents, administrators, colleagues, mentor teachers and felt isolated. Novice teachers are generally isolated in the early years in the profession rather than supported by colleagues (Cohen, 2005). Therefore, there should be solidarity towards novice teachers rather than isolation (Wong, 2004) because overcoming the challenges faced by novice teachers requires all stakeholders' support in educational settings (Karatas & Karaman, 2013).

The expectations of students, colleagues and administrators make the profession more challenging for novice teachers who feel isolated in the first year (Barbara & Grady, 2007). Therefore, novice teachers must know how to ensure cooperation with the other stakeholders. Teachers should know how to collaborate with other teachers and administrators, how to work with parents to shape students' lives at home and school (Darling-Hammond, 1998). All these are difficult even for experienced teachers, so it seems inevitable to face these challenges for novice teachers who are new and inexperienced in educational settings. This issue highlights the importance of support for novice teachers. So, it can be said that novice teachers need the support of colleagues, mentor teachers and administrators within the school culture in order to cope with a variety of challenges.

Adaptation challenges

Concerning the results of selected studies, it was found that novice teachers faced challenges in adaptation to the school, environment, profession and society. For novice teachers, the initial years of teaching are particularly stressful because they face emotional challenges in adapting to new workplace, social environment, society and to the profession itself (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000). And, novice teachers usually start working in the communities they are unfamiliar and this brings certain difficulties with it (Roehrig, Pressley & Talotta, 2002) and they face adaptation challenges for the profession, as well (Yalcınkaya, 2002). Novice teachers working away from their family and friends in an unfamiliar society are faced with stress and loneliness (Barbara & Grady, 2007). So, these realities can be considered important reasons of adaptation challenges of novice teachers.

Physical infrastructure and facilities of the school

Concerning the results of selected studies, it was found that novice teachers faced challenges due to physical infrastructure and facilities of the schools they worked. Most of the novice teachers begin the profession in schools with poor working conditions where there are insufficient social facilities and the absence of the necessary teaching materials (Barbara & Grady, 2007). The absence of the necessary teaching materials and facilities may affect novice teacher negatively and may even cause him/her to quit the profession (Buckley, Schneider, & Shang, 2004). In this case, it can be said that novice teachers have to struggle with poor conditions and facilities of the schools apart from the challenges they face in the profession.

And, the challenges faced by novice teachers were also compared according to studies conducted in Turkey and abroad, and it was found that novice teachers in Turkey face more challenges in teaching planning and implementation, physical infrastructure and facilities of the school, and especially in "*adaptation to school, environment, profession and society*" compared to teachers on abroad. This difference can be attributed to Turkey's physical, social and cultural conditions, socio-economic development features of the districts that novice teachers begin the profession. In Turkey, novice teachers usually begin the profession in the east and south-east regions of the Turkey which have different cultural traditions and low socio-economic development level. Hence, novice teachers that usually begin the profession at rural or low socio-economic status areas have difficulty in adapting to geographic features, physical conditions and society's social/cultural features. And, beginning the profession in small schools and deprived areas makes it more difficult for novice teachers to adapt to both the school and environment (Yalcınkaya, 2002). So, these factors can be considered important reasons of adaptation challenges of novice teachers in Turkey.

According to the results of this research, it is suggested that effective induction programs should be prepared for novice teachers and they should be provided professional support. Novice teachers' challenges should be determined comprehensively, their needs and expectations should be taken into consideration while preparing induction programs in order to help the novice teachers make a good transition from pre-service teacher education to in-service development. Lastly, it can be suggested that the number of dissertations or master theses that mixed method is used should be increased for more comprehensive researches on challenges of novice teachers, and to enhance strength and validity of the results by triangulating different kinds of data collection tools.

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