AN EXPLORATION OF TEACHER COMMITMENT THROUGH THE
PERSPECTIVES OF NOVICE TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

AN EXPLORATION OF TEACHER COMMITMENT THROUGH THE PERSPECTIVES OF NOVICE TEACHERS

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The purpose of this study was to explore perceptions of novice teachers regarding teacher commitment, their experiences of teacher commitment, and the factors causing changes in it. Also, it was aimed to be informed of the suggestions of novice teachers for the sustainability and increase of teacher commitment. In this study, phenomenology as a qualitative research design was used. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews from 30 novice teachers working their first three years of the teaching profession at public lower secondary schools. For the analysis of the interview data, content analysis was used. The findings of the study indicated that novice teachers perceived teacher commitment from emotional and practical aspects, which refers to their love of profession and students, and the enactment of these emotional aspects in the professional settings which are fulfilling job requirements, preparing for lessons, and devoting extra time and effort for students. Also, based on teachers' experiences regarding teacher commitment, the findings revealed four dimensions of it related to the teaching profession itself, teaching work, students and their learning, and professional development. Moreover, it was found that there are weakening and strengthening factors affecting teacher commitment. Regarding the

weakening factors, the most striking one was the reality shock that all teachers experienced during their initial years of the profession. As for the strengthening factors, the most prominent ones were student engagement and getting the reward for the efforts. For the sustainability and increase of teacher commitment, suggestions of teachers were also taken in the study. In light of findings, it was concluded that teacher commitment is of great importance for continuance in the profession in a qualified and effective way. In line with this, implications for practice and further research were provided at the end of the study.

Keywords: teacher commitment, the teaching profession, novice teachers

ÖZ

ÖĞRETMEN ADANMIŞLIĞININ MESLEĞE YENİ BAŞLAYAN
ÖĞRETMENLERİN BAKIŞ AÇISIYLA İNCELENMESİ

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Bu çalışmanın amacı, mesleğe yeni başlayan öğretmenlerin öğretmen adanmışlığına ilişkin algılarını, öğretmen adanmışlığı olgusuna ilişkin deneyimlerini ve adanmışlıklarında değişikliğe neden olan faktörleri araştırmaktır. Ayrıca öğretmenlerin öğretmen adanmışlığının sürdürülebilirliği ve artırılmasına yönelik önerileri hakkında bilgi sahibi olunması amaçlanmıştır. Bu çalışmada nitel araştırma deseni olarak fenomenoloji (olgubilim) kullanılmıştır. Araştırmaya devlet ortaokullarında ilk üç yılını çalışmakta olan 30 öğretmen katılmıştır. Veriler yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yoluyla toplanmıştır. Görüşme verilerinin analizi için içerik analizi kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın bulguları, öğretmen adanmışlığının duygusal ve pratik açılardan algılandığını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Duygusal açıdan algılar öğretmenlerin mesleklerine ve öğrencilerine olan sevgilerini kapsarken pratik açıdan algılar ise duygusal boyutların pratikteki yansımalarını gösteren eylemler olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Ayrıca, katılımcıların öğretmen adanmışlığına ilişkin deneyimlerine dayalı olarak öğretmenlik mesleğine, öğretime, öğrencilere ve onların öğrenmelerine ve mesleki gelişime adanmışlık şeklinde dört farklı adanmışlık boyutu ortaya çıkmıştır. Bunun yanı sıra, öğretmen adanmışlığını zayıflatan ve güçlendiren faktörlerin olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Zayıflatan faktörlerle ilgili olarak en çarpıcı olanı, tüm öğretmenlerin mesleğe başladıkları ilk yıllarda yaşadıkları gerçeklik şoku olarak

ortaya çıkmaktadır. Güçlendirici faktörlerde öne çıkanlar ise öğrencilerin dersteki katılımı ve öğretmenlerin çabalarının karşılığını aldığını hissetmesi olarak bahsedilmiştir. Ayrıca çalışmada öğretmen adanmışlığının sürdürülebilirliği ve arttırılması için öğretmenlerin önerileri alınmıştır. Elde edilen bulgular ışığında, meslekte nitelikli ve etkili bir şekilde devam edebilmek için öğretmen adanmışlığının büyük önem taşıdığı sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Bu doğrultuda, çalışmanın sonunda uygulamaya ve gelecek araştırmalara yönelik önerilere yer verilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Öğretmenlik mesleği, öğretmen adanmışlığı, mesleğe yeni başlayan öğretmenler

To My Beloved Family

&

All Committed Teachers

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

In the global world, new advancements emerge to a great extent causing changes in societies that in turn create an increase and complexity in the needs of individuals. In the new era, one of the essential means for serving people's various needs is education. Education is a complicated procedure that involves lots of factors having a close relationship with one another. In this complex network, teachers are the prominent agents of the educational process. Since teachers have direct contact with students, all other building blocks in the education system directly contact teachers Koyuncu & Düşkün, 2020). In that respect, teachers hold a crucial responsibility in the educational process as the most potent agents.

Moreover, for various developments, improvements, and advancements in society, it is required to raise qualified individuals through quality education that serves people with an opportunity to discover their potentials, interests, and abilities (Shukla, 2014). This, in turn, requires to have qualified teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Caena, 2011; Kozikoğlu, 2016; Çelik & Atik, 2020). As Mayer (2003) also stated, society wants teachers to be knowledge workers with experience, develop, distribute, and apply new knowledge. In addition, teachers' professional knowledge needs to include new technologies and required skills. Since the change is accelerated in the new era, teachers cannot be prepared in the absolute sense, but they are expected to learn and improve themselves. These expectations make the teaching profession more stressful and demanding for new teachers. Thus, the nation needs committed teachers who make

an effort for the profession's quality and act as the most critical asset of an educational institution since they are responsible for society's future. Similarly, in the report of TEDMEM (2014) it is emphasized that the quality of no education system can exceed the quality of its teachers.

Teachers are prepared for the profession through teacher education programs. First, they have pre-service teacher education, including courses regarding content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and general cultural knowledge courses (YÖK, 2018). Its main goal is to help teacher candidates acquire the necessary knowledge and teaching skills. After graduation, teacher training continues with induction program for novice teachers and in-service teacher training to provide teachers with continuous personal and professional development activities (MEB, 2017a; Çelik & Atik, 2020). In-service training includes various compulsory and optional seminars to support in-service teachers so that they can meet their needs related to specific issues they face in the profession. Similarly, while describing the main goals and functions of teacher education, Doyle (1990) identifies the qualities of ideal teachers as those who can efficiently cope with the real world of schooling, which is the core issue for novice teachers experiencing the incongruence between ideal and actual classrooms. It needs to be emphasized that teacher education should not only help pre-service and in-service teachers develop excellent and useful teaching competencies; but also it should consider especially novice teachers who need to be assisted in getting familiar with the actual conditions of the teaching profession. If the importance of commitment is taken into consideration in teacher education programs, pre-service teachers can be full-grown teachers since they will not only know how to teach but also have a firm commitment to teach well (Steen, 1988). Thus, it should be aimed to raise committed teachers through teacher education programs and to retain committed teachers with maintained support and necessary in-service training despite the discouraging experiences due to unfamiliar conditions (Veenman, 1984) or by enhancing encouraging experiences that motivate teachers.

The teaching profession requires responsibilities, such as meeting students' needs with individual differences, planning the lesson accordingly, managing the classroom to

create a suitable environment for healthy teaching and learning procedure, and considering the institution's goals of education and objectives. Other than these responsibilities, due to the new era's changing trend, students, parents, and administrators have expectations that make the already complex profession more and more demanding (Öztürk, 2008). Based on the changes, the adjustments in curriculum and teaching and learning processes, in turn, brought out new conditions for teachers to be adapted. Therefore, to help teachers acquire specific competencies and features following the changes, it is necessary to define the teachers' role carefully and maintain necessary support and training because they are the change agents in the education system whose willingness, enthusiasm, and commitment are needed. So, the success of any reform and improvement effort in practice largely depends on the professional competence, perceptions, and commitment of teachers (MEB, 2018). Thus, it can be claimed that quality education cannot be reached without the works of committed teachers (Razak et al., 2010). Similarly, Fox (1964) claims that the effectiveness of a profession is dependent on the commitment levels of the agents of it, and it is the same for teaching profession, too. Therefore, teaching commitment can be considered as an influential factor on teachers' performance. In this regard, a teacher's effort and time spent for the profession are directly related with their professional commitment (Kozikoğlu, 2016).

Achieving a good teaching and contributing to student learning are not something that can be only related to accumulation of experiences of teachers. Rather, teacher commitment is considered as an essential element for the success and future of the education (Skilbeck & Connell, 2004; Huberman, 1993). As claimed by Day (2004), there are some items that can be optional for education, but a commitment is not one of those for the process of education. Passion creates motivation, hence encourages teachers to act (Vallerand, 2008). Similarly, according to Day and Gu (2010), commitment is perceived as a part of teachers' professional identity. Since commitment is considered as a key to teachers' effectiveness, it is claimed to be not an option, but a necessity for them to have the sense of commitment. Therefore, novice teachers need to have teacher commitment, which is one of the factors that encourages

them to make an effort to do their best to perform effectively and continue in the profession (Shukla, 2014).

According to Coladarci (1992), teacher commitment is about teachers' psychological attachment to the teaching profession. It is complex in its nature since it includes cultural, social, and cognitive dimensions. Therefore, a teacher's commitment can be influenced by various factors, such as workload, colleagues, students, and parents (Chesnut, 2017). Shukla (2014) also states that teacher commitment is the feeling of individuals' engagement and dedication to their profession. Beliefs of commitment to the teaching profession are not innate; they are built over time in appropriate contexts, such as teacher preparation programs, working with colleagues and mentors, and the actual teaching experiences. Therefore, providing pre-service and in-service teachers with fruitful context, helping them be aware of what kind of situations they may face, and supporting them to develop their teacher commitment is vital for the teachers' effectiveness and retention in the profession because teacher commitment can be a source of motivation for teachers to make an effort to sustain positive experiences or cope with negative situations. Thus, it can be claimed that the roots of teacher commitment can be found in the quality of the teaching experiences during the initial years. In other words, experiences in the first years of the profession act as the factors influencing teacher commitment. So, it can be concluded that the teaching profession's initial years are crucial for the commitment of teachers.

The initial years of novice teachers have critical importance as they are expected to handle the tasks and perform their duties in the same way as veteran teachers, even though they are less experienced. As Brock and Grady (2007) argued that most novice teachers state that they feel overwhelmed with excessive non-teaching workload, harsh realities of the classroom environment and teaching workload. They have limited time to spare for themselves. In addition, since new teachers come with high and unrealistic expectations about the profession in the first place, they have reality shock when they get into the profession and face the reality of it. This reality shock can be a serious problem in teacher retention. Therefore, in the teaching profession, a successful start

is critical to both the teacher's continuance of the career with commitment and the students' education (Brock & Grady, 2007).

Most novice teachers start their profession with a great desire, high expectations, and willingness to help students, but most of them might feel the sense of failure in the first years of teaching since they experience unfamiliar situations to deal with and cannot know what to do because of limited pre-service teaching experience. In other words, no novice teacher has faced precisely the same conditions as they expected or they do not know precisely how to deal with the situations they confront (Wyatt & White, 2007) during the first years of the teaching profession. For this reason, as Kellough (2005) states that during the initial years of teaching, novice teachers have experiences that are full of ups and downs with only a few days in-between or neutral. While teaching gives pleasure some days, it might be painful another day. That is why the initial years of the teaching profession are regarded as a transition from ideal expectations to the real conditions (Corcoran, 1981). The overall effect of all the challenges teachers faced in their initial years is that they leave the teaching profession at a rate of one third in the first three years of their profession (Feiman- Nemser, 2001). Öztürk (2008) emphasized the seriousness of the situation by stating that nearly 10% of beginning teachers leave in their first year and 25% to 50% leave the profession during their first three years of teaching. Similarly, it was also found that 50% of novice teachers leave the profession by the end of first five years of teaching (Ingersoll, 2001).

In the literature of novice teachers' experiences during their first years of teaching, there are mostly studies about challenges and difficulties (Veenman, 1984; Huntly, 2008; Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). In these studies, the common themes for the experience that novice teachers confront are related to students, parents, administrators, colleagues, classroom practices, and personal issues (self-efficacy beliefs, prior experiences, etc.), content and curriculum knowledge, evaluation and grading, incongruence between pre-service and in-service training, and adaptation to school. Even though these experiences have mostly been studied as problems, concerns, and challenges in the literature, they may also be encouraging and positive

factors affecting teacher commitment (Veenman, 1984; Ganser, 1999). As Talbert (1994) found out, the initial years' experiences are not always negative to novice teachers because they may occasionally get positive feedback from their students or colleagues that might encourage them, and this is an example of an encouraging experience. That is to say, while unfamiliar conditions might cause a decrease in teachers' commitment, there may also be some motivating experiences that would make teachers feel committed to the profession, which will, in turn, help them give more effort to deal with the possible challenges. Therefore, the initial years of teaching have a considerable influence on novice teachers' rest of the career since they either seek ways to continue their work satisfactorily or be prone to leave the profession (Hudson, 2017; Okas et al., 2014; Helms-Lorenz et al., 2016; Andrews et al., 2012). Thus, teachers need to be supported and encouraged for the sustaining their commitment (Louis, 1998; Day, 2000). Accordingly, it is essential not to leave teachers, especially novice teachers who have just completed the pre-service teacher education program, alone throughout this process (Ertürk, 2013) because they feel in-between as fresh starters of the teaching profession.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

As Huberman (1993) claims, the success and the future of education are mostly dependent on career-long teacher commitment. Therefore, exploring the phenomenon of teacher commitment of novice teachers, and learning about their related experiences strengthening or weakening their commitment are crucial for assisting novice teachers in adapting to the very demanding expectations and keeping them in the profession by enhancing their commitment.

Based on the rationale provided above, the present study aims to explore the teacher commitment of novice teachers in terms of their perceptions of teacher commitment, their experiences regarding the teacher commitment phenomenon, factors affecting it, and being informed about novice teachers' suggestions for sustaining and increasing the teacher commitment throughout their initial years of the teaching profession.

Regarding these purposes, the following research questions have been formulated for the present study:

1. How do novice teachers perceive teacher commitment?
2. What are the experiences of novice teachers in terms of teacher commitment?
3. What are the factors affecting the sense of teacher commitment?
4. What do novice teachers suggest for the sustainability and increase of the sense of teacher commitment?

1.3. Significance of the Study

This study aims to explore teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding teacher commitment, the factors affecting it, and their suggestions to sustain their commitment in the initial years of the profession. In this regard, the study has significance in terms of its intended contributions to theory, research, and practice.

First of all, this study is expected to provide an in-depth exploration of perceptions and experiences of novice teachers in terms of teacher commitment along with the factors affecting it. Since the sense of teacher commitment is an urge for teachers' being willing for performing better in the profession and dealing with issues during the educational process, examining it thoroughly with influential factors might contribute to the field in terms of revealing shared experiences of novice teachers as well as the diversity among their experiences. Moreover, teacher commitment is significant for ensuring quality and successful educational process (Nias, 1981), and it contributes to teachers' work performance, burnout and turnover, as well as having an important influence on students' achievement and their attitudes toward school (Firestone, 1996; Louis, 1998; Tsui & Cheng, 1999). Furthermore, teacher commitment is not an isolated concept, but is closely related with quality of teaching, teacher motivation, student engagement, and health and effectiveness of the school (Firestone, 1996; Tsui & Cheng, 1999; Yong, 1999), so the failure of a teacher's continuing the profession affects curriculum, students, administrators, and all the other stakeholders in the educational process. In other words, the attrition of novice

teachers cost a lot for the schools and all stakeholders of the education. For all these above-mentioned reasons, providing in-depth understanding of the nature of teacher commitment might lead to more emphasis on it to sustain and increase because a strong sense of commitment is necessary for the future of quality education by retaining teachers in the profession.

In the literature, although there are many studies about novice teacher experiences and problems in the initial years of the teaching profession, there are relatively fewer studies related to teacher commitment of them and the factors affecting it. As Brock and Grady (2007) claim, besides the adaptation and problems of novice teachers, their commitment to the profession is also an important issue that needs to be emphasized because teacher commitment significantly affects the teacher's ability to cope with challenging and discouraging situations, the amount of effort and willingness to maintain favorable situations and make a change in education (Crosswell & Elliott, 2004). Thus, committed teachers who can make the necessary effort to continue their profession under all circumstances are needed for the success of the education system, so the phenomenon of teacher commitment is worth exploration as well as novice teachers' problems in their first years. Especially in Turkey, there are only a few studies that explore the phenomenon of teacher commitment. Also, the existing studies mostly provide quantitative data rather than in-depth qualitative data. However, as Michel (2013) also states, using interviews to understand novice teachers better is of great importance for gaining insight into how their teacher commitment get affected by negative experiences or if they ever had encouraging experiences that help maintain their sense of teacher commitment high, which will influence their retention in the profession. In that respect, the current study is to contribute to the literature by exploring the teacher commitment and factors affecting commitment via interviews to get in-depth information.

Even though the literature provides some studies about the factors affecting teacher commitment, they are mostly related to novice teachers' discouraging experiences, concerns, and challenges. However, exploring both weakening and strengthening factors would contribute better to develop or maintain the teacher commitment necessary for quality education and well-being of the teacher during the educational

process. Being aware of and maintaining positive factors is as important as knowing negative ones and taking action for them. Therefore, the present study intends to explore strengthening factors as well as the weakening ones on teacher commitment in order to develop support for helping teachers deal with discouraging factors or sustain the positive ones.

Last but not least, it is important to know about the needs of novice teachers to sustain and increase their commitment in the initial years of the profession. Therefore, the suggestions of novice teachers are aimed to be taken in this study, which is believed to contribute to practice in terms of being a guide in determining their needs and the measures to be taken for maintaining and increasing their teacher commitment.

1.4. Definition of the Terms

*Novice teachers***:** Teachers who were appointed to public lower secondary schools of the Ministry of National Education in July 2018, March 2019, and September 2019. They have at least one year and at most three years of experience in the teaching profession as it is claimed in the literature that novice teachers are the ones having three or less than three years of experience (Barrett et al., 2002). Also, the first three years are defined as representing a different period that can affect the professional development and teachers' retaining in the profession (Day et al., 2007).

Teacher commitment: It refers to teachers' motivation, willingness to perform their job, and intrinsic urge to engage in the profession (Rosenholtz, 1991; Tsui & Cheng, 1999; Razak et al., 2009; Shukla, 2014). Also, it indicates the faith and value teachers attach to their profession along with their psychological and emotional attachment it (Shukla, 2014; Coladarci, 1992).

Lower secondary school: In Turkey, the levels of education are made up of pre-school, primary, lower secondary, upper secondary, and higher education**.** Lower secondary school is the second stage, which lasts for four years (5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grade).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the existing literature most relevant to the purpose of this study is presented. First of all, the teaching as a profession and the concept of teacher commitment are discussed. Teacher commitment is handled in terms of its various dimensions. Moreover, the experiences of teachers regarding teacher commitment during the initial years of the profession are touched upon. Lastly, the factors influencing teacher commitment of novice teachers are examined. As an integrated part of the literature review, relevant research studies from abroad and Turkey are presented, and the chapter is ended with a summary.

2.1. Teaching as a Profession

The National Education Basic Law No. 1739 article 43 of part three includes provisions related to the teaching profession. In this law, teaching profession is defined as a specialized profession that undertakes the education, training and related management duties of the state. Also, it is stated that teachers are responsible for performing these duties in accordance with the aims and basic principles of Turkish National Education. Preparation for the teaching profession is provided by general cultural knowledge, content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge courses through the pre-service teacher education programs or pedagogical formation programs. Thus, in the 43rd article of the law it has been emphasized that it is essential to ensure that teacher candidates receive undergraduate degree for the teaching profession.

Based on above-mentioned article of the Basic Law No. 1739, the teaching profession can be examined in three phases. It starts with pre-service teacher education in which teacher candidates complete courses related to content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and general cultural knowledge (YÖK, 2018). Second phase is identified as induction period that is the process covering the first year of novice teachers at a school where they work as a candidate contract teacher with a mentor, complete certain in-school and out-school activities, and attend in-service training seminars to fulfill the requirements for being assigned as a permanent contract teacher at the end of the first year of the teaching profession (MEB, 2017b). After novice teachers complete the seminars and other activities, they are evaluated by their mentors, school principals, and an inspector. After the evaluations are done, candidate teachers have a written examination. If they pass the exam, they are assigned as permanent contract teachers. As for the last phase of teacher training, it refers to ongoing in-service training which includes pieces of training that continue throughout the teacher's career in the teaching profession.

According to Hussen et al. (2016) teaching is described as a profession and a social work for the development of the nation, not just a simple profession aimed at earning a living. The development of a country is up to the quality of teachers, so teachers are called as nation builders whose profession is regarded as a social service.

When the society's perception of teaching profession is observed, it is seen that teachers are mostly heroized by attributing them metaphors, such as superhero, mother, or sculptor. However, while recognizing the transformative power of teachers in the education system, it is necessary to avoid seeing teachers as heroes who have the solution to every problem since there are such problems that cannot be solely solved by teachers. This needs to be considered in order not to make teachers feel powerless and stressful; instead, the importance of cooperation and collaboration for the teaching profession among the stakeholders of education should be emphasized to prevent teachers from feeling alone (Aktaş-Salman, 2020; ERG, 2021). Moreover, it is highlighted that as opposed to heroic representation of the teaching profession, most of the time it is discredited by referring it as a comfortable and an easy job. These stereotypes

cast a shadow over the view of teaching as a professional occupation. Even though there are conflicting views regarding the teaching profession, it cannot be denied that it has a key role in the education system as stated in the report of ERG (2015) and TEDMEM (2014) that good education can only be achieved with good teachers, and the quality of schools cannot go beyond the quality of their teachers.

2.2. Teacher Commitment

Teacher commitment is a phenomenon defined by various scholars and explored through empirical studies with slight differences. As Firestone and Pennell (1993) stated that the common theme in the definitions is "psychological bond or identification of the individual with an object that takes on a special meaning and importance" (p.491). Similar to this, Mowday et al. (1982) described a committed person as the one who strongly believes in the object's goals and abides by the orders and expectations on voluntary basis, puts more effort than expected for the object's well-being, and wants to remain associated with the object. At this point, it needs to be clarified that the object that is mentioned while defining teacher commitment can change depending on the contexts. For instance, it might be a school, a student, or an activity that is done. While some researchers studied commitment to organization (Mowday, et al., 1982), others studied commitment to profession or commitment to teaching (Bredeson, et al., 1983) separately. In line with this, Firestone and Rosenblum (1988) suggested that teachers might be committed to teaching, their students, or their school.

Teacher commitment is defined as an internal motivation for teaching profession (Rosenholtsz, 1991). Similarly, Shukla (2014) defines it as the feeling of individuals' engagement in and dedication to their profession. Along the same lines, it is described as an internal force that encourages teachers to engage in the profession (Tsui & Cheng, 1999; Razak et al., 2009). Also, committed teachers are described as having passion for learning new things and desire that somebody shows towards an activity that s/he spends time (Carbonneau et al., 2008).

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For the teaching profession, subject matter knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and teaching skills are required elements. However, as Rikard (1999) claimed, the quality of teaching not only be governed by the knowledge and teaching competences of teachers, but also their enthusiasm for doing their job and commitment in it. Teachers' having excitement for teaching has great effect on students' motivation as well which is one of the key factors of successful educational process (Czubaj, 1996). Therefore, committed teachers are the critical elements in education system. Thus, their actions directly affect every component of educational process. Similarly, in the literature, it is stated that teachers' commitment and their performance in the profession go hand in hand, and teachers' sense of commitment positively affects their performance (Delima, 2015; Mart, 2013). In line with this, Hussen et al., (2016) claims that teachers' low level of teacher commitment influences the effectiveness of the schools and the performance of teachers negatively, even some teachers tend to leave the profession in extreme cases. Therefore, it is concluded that besides being competent in teaching, teachers need to be committed as well because the potency of a profession relies on the sense of teacher commitment that teachers have which is an intrinsic urge to maintain certain tasks and complete necessary activities. As Fox (1964) claims that the effectiveness of a profession is dependent on the commitment levels of the agents of it, and it is the same for the teaching profession, too. Therefore, teacher commitment can be considered as an influential factor on teachers' performance.

Most of the time teachers might feel under pressure to sustain high level of attitude and behavior in students because many studies claim that the teaching quality is the most important factor on students' achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2000). In the current educational setting of the new era, there are continuous changes every day, and teachers as the agents of this situation need to maintain keeping up with these changes. There are some teachers who could succeed to stay updated despite the challenges while others are overwhelmed by the current demands. The reason why some of the teaches feel overwhelmed is their perception of the requirements of the current educational context as a burden. Thus, they tend to keep their efforts limited. However, teachers' work they engage in is demanding, and it requires commitment. The changing demands of the new era also change the meaning of it. Therefore, the

importance of understanding the teacher commitment is emphasized (Crosswell, 2006). Moreover, since teacher commitment is not an isolated concept, rather it is closely related with teacher self-efficacy, quality of teaching, teacher motivation, student engagement, and health and effectiveness of the school (Firestone, 1996; Tsui & Cheng, 1999; Yong, 1999), teacher commitment is considered as an essential element for the success and future of the education (Skilbeck & Connell, 2004; Huberman, 1993). Correspondingly, research studies on the effectiveness of the school underlines the importance of teachers' commitment and their personal investment (Shann, 1998).

Fox (1964) put forward that although committed teachers vary from each other in a lot of ways, they have certain common characteristics. First of all, committed teachers want to be a good teacher in terms of teaching. Also, they like to work with children and youth and have a desire to help them develop their potential. Secondly, committed teachers value each student with their individual differences because there may be students having different backgrounds, intellectual development, or motivation. Also, teachers care about the whole development of their students, not only the intellectual development. Lastly, committed teachers fulfill their job responsibilities, and make an effort for a qualified teaching and improving the status of the profession.

Also, highly committed teachers invest extra time and effort for the quality of their profession and they make and effort and spend time for their students' success (Glickman et al., 2005; Brock & Grady, 2007). Similarly, Butucha (2013) states that teachers committed to teaching profession are prone to spend extra time with their students and collaborate with parents.). A teacher's effort made, energy used, and time spent for the profession are closely related with their sense of teacher commitment (Turhan, et al., 2012; Kozikoğlu, 2016). Therefore, a teacher's level of commitment can be measured based on the time and effort they spent for instructional processes. In contrast, less or not committed teachers are not interested in their profession, and they do not make an effort for professional development.

Moreover, Crosswell (2006) argued that commitment is described as a passion, or a love of particular aspects of teaching profession because it is claimed that there is a

close relationship between a passion for teaching and teacher commitment. Teacher commitment requires a positive attachment to the job. Love of the job is what motivates teachers and help them overcome the difficulties they face on daily basis. Therefore, passion seems to be a necessary element to maintain teachers' interest in their job.

2.2.1. Dimensions of Teacher Commitment

Regarding the above-mentioned definition of commitment by Firestone and Pennell (1993) who state that commitment is a psychological bond with an object which can vary according to the context or situations. In the current context, this variation refers to the dimensions of teacher commitment while some studies focus on commitment to organization (Mowday et al., 1982), others focused on commitment to students or commitment to teaching (Kushman, 1992; Danetta, 2002). Therefore, even though there is not a consensus yet in terms of terminology, it can be stated that the term teacher commitment is used as an umbrella term that can include various dimensions regarding the educational context.

In the literature, it is emphasized that teacher commitment is not one dimensional, it has several dimensions (Day, 2004; Tyree, 1996). Similarly, Crosswell and Elliott (2001) also argued that teacher commitment has a multidimensional feature, and there are certain dimensions of it as commitment towards the school, students, teaching profession, career continuance, and professional knowledge base. Shukla (2014) described teacher commitment as having certain areas, such as commitment to the learners, commitment to the profession, commitment to the society, commitment to attaining excellence for professional actions, and commitment to basic values. As for another study conducted by Jong (2015), it was found that teacher commitment has three dimensions which are commitment to the organization, commitment to teaching, and commitment to student learning, while Dannetta (2002) focused on only commitment to student learning. Based on these, it can be concluded that various studies focused on various dimensions of the teacher commitment. However, most recurring and most related ones will be dwelt on in the following sections.

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2.2.1.1. Commitment to the Teaching Profession Itself

In the literature, the most commonly referred dimension of teacher commitment is commitment to the teaching profession itself because teachers' commitment to the teaching profession has been given importance by researchers and teacher educators since it is the motive that drives teachers enter into profession because it is defined as loving the profession, valuing, and respecting it (Kozikoğlu, 2016) that are among the intrinsic motives that individuals want to get into the teaching profession (Chan, 2006). According to (Fried, 2001), one of the features making a teacher a great teacher is teacher's love of the profession because in rapidly changing world, as Mart (2013) suggests, teachers' improvement is mostly dependent on their love of the profession because the enthusiasm of them for their field feeds their desire to keep track of the changes and updating themselves to serve the needs of students better. Along the same lines, commitment to the teaching profession is teachers' desire to behave in accordance with the goals and values required by his/her profession and the expectation to fulfill professional roles effectively. Therefore, teachers' commitment is of great importance in terms of effort given for the task. In the study of Turhan et al. (2012), it was found out that novice teachers value and love their profession, so they put effort for being successful in their profession. In another related studies, it was discovered that novice teachers love their professions, and they have high sense of teacher commitment (Michel, 2013; Ewing & Smith, 2003). Moreover, according to Kanste (2011), commitment to teaching profession is a motivational and positive expression of work-related well-being. It is characterized by the concepts of effort and devotion. Effort means giving a high level of energy and mental self in work, willingness to strive for work, and persistence even in the face of difficulties. Also, it refers to being fully concentrated and focused on the job. Accordingly, teachers who are so committed are thought to view teaching to be not "just a job" (Day, 2000, p. 125).

According to the studies and arguments presented above, it can be concluded that commitment to teaching profession itself is centered around the terms which are emotional and intrinsic ones, such as love, respect, value, effort, and devotion. Since all of these are integral concepts for the procedures to be followed in the educational

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process, commitment to teaching profession can be regarded as a more comprehensive dimension whose traces can be seen in other dimensions, as well. To clarify, commitment to students dimension or commitment to professional development also includes love and effort in it which are identifying concepts of commitment to teaching profession itself.

2.2.1.2. Commitment to Teaching Work

As an another widely discussed dimension, commitment to teaching work described as having a passion for teaching and learning, and teachers who are committed to teaching are regarded as satisfied with teaching since they enjoy it, and they always desire to reach a good instruction. Since they care about their teaching performance, they are willing for reflecting upon their teaching performance, and they strive to perform teaching according to high standards (Somech & Bogler, 2002; Hargreaves, 1997). Also, a teacher who is committed to teaching work considers an effective teaching as not only being competent, using good strategies, or having the necessary knowledge, but it also involves emotional dimension in terms of having pleasure, passion, and joy while teaching something (Hargreaves, 1995). Accordingly, Fried (2001) states that teachers having a sense of commitment towards the teaching work is essential because teachers' being passionate for teaching affects students' engagement and willingness as well. According to Shukla (2014) commitment to teaching refers to the willingness of teachers for shaping the future of society, so they need to adopt effective teaching methods to best serve the needs of the students. Since teachers are seen as change agents in the society, they are to shoulder the responsibilities of molding the future by means of teaching and learning process. Therefore, teachers who are committed to teaching work are expected to integrate innovative methods and materials into their teaching for finding the best way to teach their students effectively (Hussen, et al., 2016). Committed teacher with the aim of teaching effectively search for a variety of instructional strategies that will help students learn better because their sense of commitment leads them to enhance their teaching performances (Altun, 2017).

Based on the theoretical framework of commitment to teaching work dimension, it can be concluded that it involves love, effort, and willingness which are present in commitment to teaching profession as well, but here with a focus on the teaching work. Also, it can be stated that this dimension is related with commitment to students and their learning because teachers' willingness originally stems from their love of the students and their aim to contribute to students' learning through teaching effectively.

2.2.1.3. Commitment to Students and Their Learning

Committed teachers engage in the teaching work, show interest in their teaching skills, and achievement of the students (Brown & Leigh, 1996; Firestone &Rosenblum, 1988). Student dimension of the teacher commitment is highlighted in the literature a lot because students have direct contact with all dimensions of commitment since students are indispensable part of teaching and learning process. Thus, in the literature it was stated that committed teachers are differentiated by their commitment to students and their learning, and feeling responsible for them (Elliott & Crosswell, 2002; Park, 2007; Mart, 2013).

Teachers' commitment to students and their learning primarily involve love of students. As Choi and Tang (2009) states that love for students is a significant factor that prevents discouraging factors from weakening the sense of teacher commitment. Thus, it drives teachers to make extra effort and spend time for students, and profession-related issues because teachers strive for doing thing right since they love their students and value them. Based on these, it can be concluded that student is a potent object of commitment. In relation to these, it was argued that since teachers value their students and care about them; they believe that responding to students' needs is at the core of teaching work, so they seek for ways to make student learning better (Crosswell, 2006; Altun, 2017). At this point, it is notable as Kushman (1992) stated that commitment to student learning is more meaningful when teachers help students learn without discriminating them in terms of their individual differences, such as level of achievement, learning styles, social background, etc. This responsiveness of teacher enhances student engagement and achievement, which in

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turn strengthen teacher commitment to students. Based on this, it can be argued that teacher commitment and student achievement are closely related with each other (Firestone & Rosenblum, 1988; Rosenholtz, 1989; Mkumbo, 2012). While teachers' high level of commitment to students contributes to student achievement, low commitment decreases it (Kushman, 1992; Firestone & Pennell, 1993). As a striking argument as Huberman (1993) stated that student achievement was not result of the effective teaching or having experience in the field, but the effect of strong sense of commitment. Consistent with the previous argument, Fried (2001) claimed that there is a significant relationship between teachers' commitment with students' learning because when students are aware that their teachers focused on their work and devote themselves to students and their learning, students take their studies more seriously too.

Based on the literature provided above, it can be inferred that teachers' having high sense of commitment towards their students and their learning is significant for reaching out good results in terms of development of students because children need teachers who are sensitive and responsive in terms of understanding students' learning needs, tendencies, capacities, and abilities (Louis, 1998).

2.2.1.4. Commitment to Professional Development

Professional development refers to enhancing and improving professional knowledge of teachers and their teaching skills in order to add to the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process (Sonia, 2003; Crosswell, 2006). According to some features stated by Fried (2001) in terms of making a teacher a great teacher, one of the features is teachers' willingness for changes which means that **co**mmitted teachers are interested in searching for opportunities to improve their efficacy of teaching profession and also they tend to collaborate with their colleagues to improve themselves, learn new things, and apply them for the effectiveness of the educational process.

Similarly, Shukla (2014) claimed that teacher commitment involves two essential components which are namely, pride in one's being in the teaching profession; and a

strong desire for professional development. She also claimed that commitment for the professional development is about teachers who continue searching for becoming better in their profession because committed teachers give importance to professional development as well as they work hard for the development of students. In line with these, Hussen et al., (2016) claimed that professional development has significance in affecting teachers` beliefs, attitudes, practices, and student learning. Similarly, Crosswell (2006) also pointed out that commitment affects teachers' potential to meet the changing demands of the current educational context.

Fox (1964) considered the desire to fulfill their work in a qualified way as the most important feature among the characteristics of a committed teacher. Affective commitment or desire for the profession alone is not enough, but it is only a driving force for teachers to improve themselves, make up for their inadequacies, and perform the job effectively.

2.2.2. Teacher Commitment During the Initial Years of the Profession

In the literature, teachers who are in their initial years are defined as novice teachers. Although it is certain that novice teacher refers to the one who is new in the profession, there is no consensus in the number of years it refers to. In the literature, while some researchers use it only for the first year of the profession (Öztürk, 2008), some others can use it for the first three (Veenman, 1984; Barrett et al., 2002) or five years of the job (Ingersol & Smith, 2003). Thus, definitions of novice teacher change in terms of years of experience. Despite these differences, there is one thing in common, which is that the initial years are of great importance for teachers since these years are regarded as a key to a successful teaching career (Loughran et al., 2001). However, most of the time initial years are described as problematic (Veenman, 1984), insecure and disappointing (Olson & Osborne, 1991), and paralyzing (Corcoran, 1981) times. The reason of it can be explained by the fact that although the teacher education programs seem sufficient enough for preparing prospective teachers for the teaching profession, the actual classroom environment might be different from the internship experiences of the novice teachers. This gap between theory and practice cause novice teachers to

find the transition period challenging and demanding due to their prior unrealistic ideals and shattered dreams (Jarvis & Algozzine, 2006) caused by confronting unfamiliar conditions when they start the profession (Veenman, 1984; Loughran et al., 2001; Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). Based on these, there appeared terms called transition shock (Corcoran, 1981) and reality shock (Gaede, 1978) which are described as experiencing a state of shock when novice teachers noticed that ideal classroom in their mind does not match with the real classroom complexity (Veenman, 1984; Senom et al., 2013). There are various metaphors used for the reality shock of novice teachers, such as sink or swim (Grant & Zeichner, 1981), a painful beginning (Huberman, 1989), culture shock (Wideen, et al., 1998), practice shock (Jordell, 1986) or it is described as immigrants in new country by Sabar (2004).

Due to these demanding and challenging initial years, teachers might lose their enthusiasm and willingness, which directly causes decrease in their sense of teacher commitment. In this period, teachers can either cope with the challenges by getting motivated with the positive experiences which are relatively less, or continue their career unwillingly, or quit their job as the worst possibility (Gergin, 2010). As Veenman (1984) also stated that the disillusionment during the initial years can be so great that novice teachers tend to leave profession early. From an opposite perspective, in the literature career continuance is regarded as one of the aspects of commitment (Nias, 1981; Tyree, 1996) which are interrelated because career continuance included the sense of willingness as it is also core element in commitment. Similarly, in a study by Brockner and Higgins (2001), it was seen that the links between teacher commitment and retention in the profession can be confirmed in the teaching profession. To exemplify, in the study of Yıldız (2020), it was stated that adapting to the school environment can be very difficult or unbearable for new teachers. Some even leave the profession. However, through willingness to stay in the profession which is the result of having teacher commitment, new teachers are able to overcome the barriers of the profession.

According to the above-mentioned retention and attrition issue, it was seen that teacher commitment is a necessary variable in teachers' retention in the job and performing

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the profession effectively (Tait, 2008) without fluctuations. Therefore, teacher commitment is extensively studied across the literature due to its crucial effect on a variety of elements of education as well as its getting influenced by many factors, such as working conditions, experiences in the profession, personal characteristics, or relational factors throughout educational process (Rots, et al., 2010; Fresko, et al. 1997). While the reason for weakening of teachers' sense of teacher commitment is the reality shock and demanding nature of the profession, the strengthening factors can be any support provided during this challenging period, and this support might be a way for retaining novice teachers in the profession (Ingersoll, 2003). However, in terms of reaching a conclusion of factors affecting novice teachers' sense of teacher commitment, the studies related to teacher commitment of novice teachers throughout their initial years are worth to examine.

2.2.3. Factors Affecting Teacher Commitment of Novice Teachers

Teacher commitment is a phenomenon that can be understood better through the factors affecting it from the perspectives and experiences of different novice teachers in various contexts. According to Elliott and Crosswell (2001), teacher commitment has a multidimensional feature, and there are certain external and personal factors that influence the level of commitment. In the literature these factors centered around adaptation to a new environment, school conditions, teaching, students, administrators, colleagues, and parents. Also, the influential factors are mostly founded in the studies where the aim of the study is exploring the problems of novice teachers. Since these problems affect the teacher commitment directly, the literature is reviewed in an integrative way that includes the problems of novice teachers which are actually the factors affecting teacher commitment.

In the literature, novice teachers' experiences in their first years of teaching are grouped under specific categories. As Jarvis & Algozzine (2006) also stated that major categories of novice teachers' experiences, especially the challenging ones are as follows: workload, time management, content and curriculum knowledge, relationship with students, parents, colleagues, mentors, administrators, evaluation and grading;

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and autonomy and control. Other than these issues, some other categories of the generally mentioned problems of novice teachers are inexperience, the incongruence between pre-service and in-service training, pressures on teachers, fear of inspection, and adaptation to school (Yalçınkaya 2002).

Similarly, Day and Gu (2010) grouped the critical incidents affecting the teacher commitment into four categories as personal (i.e., related to teachers' lives outside school, personal relations, health-related issue), pupil (i.e., related to students' attitudes, motivations, behaviors and teacher-student relationships), practice settings (i.e., workplace, support from administration, duties of teachers, workload, and the quality of professional development opportunities), and policy issues related to educational policies, government initiatives and changes.

According to Doğan (2015), it has been observed that novice teachers are faced with important problems related to adaptation to the new school environment that they were appointed to. Similarly, Akbaşlı and Meydan (2009) found in their studies that teachers have problems regarding cultural differences and having language problems. These problem makes them get into a negative mood which lowers their enthusiasm.

Moreover, Kozikoğlu (2016) came up with novice teacher problems as related to student, colleague, administrator, parent and relationship with the society. Also, it was found that there were problems regarding planning and implementing the instruction. They all have influence on teacher commitment adversely.

According to Saha & Dworkin (2009) which includes that novice teachers have some serious problems that cause them to leave the profession. They are as follows: challenging working conditions, lack of support from administrators, lack of teacher involvement in decision-making process, and insufficient resources for instruction.

In another study, Öztürk and Yıldırım (2013) found the most common problems as workload, relations with administrators, classroom management. As for the relatively less confronted problems are relations with mentors, colleagues, parents, and students.

As for another related study, Pfister (2006) grouped influential factors into six categories. These are as follows: personal problems, bureaucracy, colleagues, teaching problems generally include (a) motivating students, (b) being open and honest with parents and students, (c) having unmet expectations in the classroom, (d) student behavior and classroom management, (e) responsiveness to individual student needs, and (f) have been found to contain problems of dealing with students' parents.

Day et al. (2005) has revealed that there are four factors sustaining or diminishing factor for teacher commitment. The most striking ones were found to be personal and school context factors for sustaining the level of teacher commitment to teaching, and system context factors for diminishing the sense of teacher commitment.

Kandemir (2019) conducted a study related to teacher commitment, in her study, it was emphasized that teachers take pleasure in the growth and learning of their students. Although many teachers start their work with this desire, they lose this desire later on because some teachers have problems with managing their classrooms, some with enforcing national education standards, and some with school administrations that hinder their ability to create desired classroom environments. Even though the committed teacher is defined as the one trying to eliminate the reasons that hinder their enthusiasm, they might have loss in their teacher commitment due to the problems they have during their initial years.

Another issue regarding the initial years is that novice teachers have challenges due to the expectations of administrators, students, colleagues, and parents with the identity of the teacher, and at the same time they deal with the responsibilities and challenges of their personal adult life. This makes novice teachers feel overwhelmed. In addition to this, in the teaching profession, there are no differences in the tasks given to novice teachers and experienced teachers. Also, even though the novice teachers lack the experience that veteran teachers have, the expectation from a novice teacher is the same as the expectations from the experienced teachers (Brock & Grady, 2007).

Fransson and Frelin (2016) in their study, came up with five factors which can be useful for sustaining teacher commitment which are personal, teaching, school context,

system context, and professional development. In a similar vein, Crosswell (2006) emphasized in her study that teacher commitment can be influenced by external factors, such as students, colleagues, school culture, and school administration. However, she stated that personal factors are emphasized relatively less than external ones.

To touch upon a personal factor rather than the external ones, teacher self-efficacy belief is an influential factor on teacher commitment, which can be categorized as a personal factor. In the literature, teacher commitment has been found to be correlated with teacher self-efficacy beliefs (Coladarci,1992; Evans & Tribble, 1986; Chesnut, 2017; Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Teacher commitment and teacher-self efficacy are found to be associated because teacher's commitment changes when they feel unable to carry out tasks or influence the students' learning (Coladarci, 1992; Joffres & Haugey, 2001). Bandura (1997) stated that commitment of one's to the profession and self-efficacy beliefs are intertwined because they get highly affected by each other. An individual's belief about his capacity to perform a task has powerful effect on the individual's motive to persist and achieve the target tasks. Teachers with higher qualifications tend to be more satisfied, and high level of sense of self-efficacy results in high sense of teacher commitment.

As can be concluded from above-mentioned factors found be influential on novice teachers' sense of teacher commitment, it can be stated that the most commonly mentioned and thought to be more influential factors were related to classroom management and school-related relational factors. Also, the underlying reason for these factors is generally thought to be pre-service teacher education. Therefore, in the following paragraphs, these commonly mentioned factors are presented to emphasize their importance.

As a matter of fact, in the literature, Gergin (2010) and Goodwin (2012) stated that the most important difficulty experienced by new teachers is classroom management. Similarly, Wyatt & White (2007) described classroom management as a nightmare for novice teachers. Yaman (2009) also found that teachers have problems related to large class size, misbehaviors, and students with special needs. The reasons for this was

explained by the fact that the inadequacy of pre-service teacher training (Kozikoğlu & Senemoğlu, 2018).

As the factor affecting teacher commitment, relational factors have been mentioned in the literature regarding colleagues, administrators, and parents. For colleagues, the importance of collaboration is emphasized (Jong, 2015) because it was claimed that when teachers collaborate, the shared experiences increase, and this causes the development of shared goals. Also, if teachers become a part of a collaborative environment and have many ties with colleagues, they are expected to be more committed since they have access to colleague support.

As for administrator-teacher relations, the influence of school administration on teacher commitment is widely addressed in the literature (Kushman, 1992; Firestone and Pennell, 1993; Singh and Billingsley, 1998). As Crosswell (2006) also states that school principals are one of the most influential factors on teacher commitment through their leadership styles and behaviors towards teachers. The data gathered for this case study indicates that sharing ideas, values, and beliefs with school principals leads to encourage teachers in terms of commitment. However, the feelings of discontent and lack of communication with school administration causes decrease in the level of teacher commitment.

As for another issue affecting novice teachers' commitment, parents are believed to play an integral role in education, so their support is highly important for teachers in order to increase teacher commitment (Friedman, 2004). In contrast to this, Taneri and Ok (2014) touched upon the problem of indifference of parents and their lack of involvement in the process.

As an underlying reason for all these factors, the quality of pre-service teacher education is of great importance for novice teachers confront less problems or have ability to cope with them. Kozikoğlu (2016) found that pre-service teacher education program does not prepare teachers in terms of relational issues in the school context and with parents. Therefore, novice teachers face problems related to these. Also Liston et al. (2006) highlighted the importance of teacher education by stating that pre-service teacher education programs need to be better to prepare candidates for

challenging initial years. Moreover, the roots of teaching commitment can be found in the quality of the first teaching experiences. Thus, for teachers' being committed, teaching practice is of great importance during teacher education program.

2.3. Related Studies with Teacher Commitment

The current study aims to explore the phenomenon of teacher commitment in terms of perceptions of novice teachers regarding teacher commitment, their experiences of teacher commitment, and the factors affecting the sense of teacher commitment via gathering data through semi-structured interviews.

2.3.1. Related Studies Abroad

In the literature, there are studies related to teacher commitment which were conducted abroad focusing on different aspects. They are chronologically presented in the following paragraphs.

A study on the perception of commitment was carried out by Nias (1981). In the study, it was aimed to elicit how teachers perceive commitment. The participants consisted of 39 teachers. The results showed that there are four different senses of the word commitment. These include caring, personal identification as teacher, a concern for occupational competence, and career continuance. While the perceptions of commitment as caring and a concern for occupational competence include readiness for devoting personal sources to work, such as time and money, the perceptions as personal identification as teacher and career continuance involve an intention for making a career in the teaching profession. It was concluded that all four perceptions contribute to entering and remaining in the teaching profession.

Another study was conducted by Coladarci (1992) with the purpose of determining the self-efficacy perceptions of teachers and investigating the effect of self-efficacy perceptions on their teacher commitment. The study was conducted with the participation of 364 teachers. To collect the data of the study, scales for self-efficacy, school climate, and teacher commitment were administered to the participant teachers.

The results showed that the level of teacher commitment was at a high level for the teachers who had high level of self-efficacy, who work at schools where the number of students for each teacher is low, and who work with administrators that establish a positive school climate in the contexts of decision-making, relationships with students and colleagues, and so on. It was concluded that there is a positive effect of the support of administrators and colleagues on the commitment of teachers.

Another study concerned with commitment to teaching was carried out by Fresko and others (1997). The aim of the study was to examine the variables regarding the personal and job-related factors in terms of predicting teachers' tendency to leave teaching, and to investigate the interrelationships among these predictor variables. The study was conducted with the participation of 175 teachers who graduated from a teacher training college. The data of the study were collected by administering a questionnaire including questions about demographic information and scales about commitment, job satisfaction, and professional self-image. The results revealed that teachers' commitment to the profession was at moderate level. Also, it was found that intrinsic job satisfaction of teachers was higher than extrinsic satisfaction. Moreover, teachers reported positive professional self-images. Lastly, intrinsic satisfaction was found to be related with professional self-image. That is, they are found to be more committed to the profession when they enjoy engaging in their profession, when they feel that they are offered enough chance to express their knowledge and skills, and when they are satisfied with the income and social status of their profession.

Crosswell and Elliot (2004) pointed out that although teacher commitment is considered from the traditional view to refer to external factors, a strong connection is believed to exist between teacher commitment and intimate factor of passion for teaching. Considering this, the researchers carried out a study to identify teachers' conception of commitment, as well as the factors affecting their commitment levels. The data were collected via semi-structured interviews conducted with 30 teachers individually. The findings revealed six distinct but related conceptions of teacher commitment. That is, teacher commitment is perceived by teachers as a passion, as an investment of extra time with students, as a focus on students' individual needs, as a responsibility in imparting knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and values, as maintaining

professional knowledge, and as the engagement with school community. Disagreeing with the literature that focuses on external factors in relation to teacher commitment, it was concluded that there are also personal passions of teachers that contribute to their commitment, which emphasized that the connection between commitment of teachers and passion should not be ignored. Lastly, it was suggested that school leaders should establish and maintain the connection between new educational ideas and the existing passions and ideologies of teachers.

Crosswell (2006) carried out a multi-method study regarding the commitment of teachers. the aim of the study was to explore the perceptions of teachers on teacher commitment. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews. Based on the results of the study, four categories regarding the perceptions of teacher commitment emerged. The teacher commitment was perceived as a passion, as an investment of extra time, as a focus on students, and as a responsibility for maintaining professional knowledge. According to the first category, teacher commitment was described as an emotional involvement or loving particular aspects of the teaching profession. The second category implies that teacher commitment is perceived as spending time for students even out of the general contact time during the daytime. It is also implied in this category that teaching is perceived to extend beyond the day and time allocated for school for committed teachers. The third category describes teacher commitment as valuing the students and striving for meeting their needs. The last category implies that teacher commitment is perceived to require the maintenance of teachers' professional knowledge. In this regard, it was concluded that keeping updated in terms of professional knowledge is considered as crucial for committed teachers.

Another study was conducted by Rots and others (2007) with the aim of examining the relationship between teacher education and graduating teachers not starting teaching, with a focus on predictor variables including teacher education, integration into teaching, and teaching commitment. The participants consisted of 209 graduates of teacher education. The data were collected through a scale about perception of teacher education, a scale for perceived faculty support, a scale for mentor support, a scale for professional orientation, and another scale for teaching commitment. The

results showed that teacher commitment is a powerful predictor of entering into teaching. Among all predictors, the perceived teacher education preparation for the responsibility of teachers towards community is found to be the most important one. Moreover, mentors' role as evaluators is also found to have an impact on entering into teaching. Another predictor is revealed to be the type of teacher training. On the other hand, the other variables are not found to have any significant effect. As for the relationships, teaching commitment was found to be positively and directly related to teacher efficacy and professional orientation. That means, the graduates concerned with the professional collaboration and locating their classroom teaching in a broader educational context, and having higher teacher efficacy are likely to have teaching commitment more. Also, there found to be an indirect influence of the support variable on the perception of teacher education preparation. The type of teacher education was also found to have an important indirect effect on teaching commitment.

Choi and Tang (2009) conducted a study on teacher commitment trends with the purpose of examining the commitment of teachers. The researchers employed the life history method to examine teachers' commitment levels, as well as the factors that contribute to those trends. The study was conducted with the participation of 23 teachers in full life history interviews, followed by a thematic life history interview. The results about the trends of teacher commitment showed that the participant teachers commonly perceive a committed teacher as the one who spends extra time and effort for students, teaching, and school, who willingly seeks further improvement to achieve excellence, who fulfils responsibilities whole-heartedly, and who aims to do something for students. Moreover, it was found that the commitment of the most teachers in the early-career group decreased in a decade. As for the results about the factors contributing to the teachers' decreased commitment, it was found to involve personal factors, workplace factors, and education systemic factors. Regarding education systemic factors, the main ones to contribute to the decreased commitment of teachers include unstable employment, school downsizing and closure policies, and professional standards for the teachers in the early-career group. The workplace factors include work intensification, insufficient time for students, student problems, and leadership problems. Lastly, the personal factors involve other life commitments, health condition, and protecting private time. As for the factors that contribute to the

increased commitment of early-career teachers, it was found that the workplace factors consist of less intensification, psychic reward, collegial support, and recognized achievement. Also, the personal factors comprise love for students, trying out what was learnt, and personal aspiration, as well. The researchers highlighted that the student-related factors are strong objects of teachers' commitment in either decreasing or increasing manner. In this regard, it was emphasized that the factor of love for students is an essential personal factor that counteracts undesired external conditions to sustain the commitment of teachers. The researchers concluded that since early-career teachers are unaware of their identities and their probable achievements as teachers, they need support to explore and overcome the challenges they face regarding pedagogy and student discipline.

Mohammadtaheri (2011) conducted a study on professional commitment with the aim of examining it in terms of the influential factors on it. There were 340 participants, and the data were analyzed by using Spearman's correlation in order to examine the relationship between economic factors, human relationship, teacher's knowledge, in-school factors, values system, teacher's personality traits, and teachers' work commitment. The results showed that there was significant and positive correlation between these mentioned factors.

Michel (2013) conducted a study to explore novice teacher commitment by examining four novice teacher domains, including teacher beliefs, pre and early teaching experiences, feelings of effectiveness, and community context. The data of the study were collected through conducting semi-structured interviews with 10 novice teachers separately. Based on the findings, the researcher argued that if novice teachers are provided with probationary or permanent status and the appropriate school structural supports, they are more likely to remain in the profession past their first five years. In addition, the protected collaboration time, administrative support, and support staff are argued to be among the most critical structural supports. It was recommended in the study that novice teachers should be supported in terms of increasing their feelings of effectiveness in the classroom and subsequent commitment to the teaching profession.

Shukla (2014) carried out a piece of research on the commitment of teachers. The study aimed to investigate the relationship among teaching competency, job satisfaction, and

professional commitment of teachers. The participants consisted of 100 primary school teachers. The data were collected by administering scales for the teaching competency, professional commitment, and job satisfaction of teachers. The professional commitment scale consisted of five dimensions, including commitment to learner, to the society, to the profession, to attaining excellence for professional actions, and to the basic values. The results about the relationship between professional commitment and job satisfaction showed that there is a significant relationship between the two variables. Regarding the dimensions of professional commitment, there found to be significant relationship between job satisfaction and the dimensions of commitment to attaining excellence for professional actions, and to the basic values. However, no significant relationship was found between the other dimensions of professional commitment and job satisfaction of teachers.

Another recent study on teacher commitment was conducted by Hussen et al. (2016). The aim of their study was to determine the commitment of the teaching program graduates to students' learning, their profession, and the community. A mixed research design was employed in the study. The participants consisted of 170 teachers. The results of the study showed that teachers had low level of commitment to students' learning, their profession, and the community. The reasons were found to be related to low salary, lack of respect, weak attitude towards the profession, and lack of motivation and incentives. Considering these, the researchers suggested that it may be beneficial for education policy makers to design incentive mechanisms such as providing financed affordable housing, supporting transportation and reducing taxes in collaboration with the community. Such mechanisms can increase teachers' income and motivation. In addition, it was concluded that the government needs to work on strategies for raising awareness to improve stakeholders' attitudes towards the teaching profession.

A recent study was conducted by Fransson and Frelin (2016) with the aim of exploring the nature of teacher commitment and investigating the factors which contribute to the sustained commitment of teachers. The data were collected from eight teachers via semi-structured interviews. The results showed that the positive aspects in the teachers' daily lives help them sustain their commitment. Also, the teachers were

found to be primarily committed to students and their learning and well-being. As for the factors contributing to sustaining teachers' commitment, the results revealed five main factors that consist of personal, teaching, school context, system context, and professional development. The most influential one among all to contribute to sustaining teacher commitment was found to be the teaching factor, which involves planning and conducting lessons, and especially the relationships developed with students. The researchers concluded that the reason of teaching factor's contribution to teacher commitment may be the rapport built in time as teachers get to know their students closely while teaching time for a certain amount of time.

2.3.2. Related Studies in Turkey

Regarding teacher commitment, there are only a few studies conducted in Turkey because researchers mostly focused on organizational commitment (Celep et al., 2000; Ertürk, 2011; Narman, 2012; Doğan, 2015; Gökaslan, 2018; Yıldırım, 2019; Mert; 2019). Therefore, three studies are presented below which have been chosen as the most related ones for the focus of the current study.

Turhan and others (2012) conducted a study to examine the factors affecting the classroom teachers' commitment to the profession. The data were collected from 198 classroom teachers by administering a survey. According to the results of the study, the factors affecting the level of teachers' commitment to the profession are found to include love of job, giving effort in the job, job appreciation, social status of the job, and job strain. According to participants' level of job commitment results, teachers love their job, give effort for being successful and value their profession, but they find its social status low. According to the age variable, it was found that teachers who are 51 and above, making up the oldest group in the study, love their job and give more effort than the other younger groups. According to the education level of teachers, there is significant difference only in the job strain dimension, in that, teachers with undergraduate degree had less job strain than the ones with graduate and associate degrees.

A study was conducted by Kozikoğlu (2016) about teacher commitment with the participation of 942 novice teachers. The data of the study regarding the professional commitment of teachers were collected through administering a scale for professional commitment and conducting interviews with the 33 of the participant novice teachers. The collective results based on the scale and interviews showed that novice teachers' professional commitment was at an adequate level. The interview findings also revealed that novice teachers do their job with love, make effort for being helpful for students, and do various activities for doing their jobs effectively or for their professional/personal development. It was concluded that although in the initial year of the profession novice teachers encounter difficulties, they are still committed to profession.

Kandemir (2019) conducted a thesis study concerned with teacher commitment. The aim of the study is to examine the relationship among the technological pedagogical content knowledge of teachers, their commitment, and the level of using technology in education. The participants consisted of 678 teachers. The data were collected by administering a scale for technological pedagogical content knowledge, a scale for teacher commitment, and another scale for the technology usage level of teachers. The results about the commitment of teachers showed that teachers had a high level of teacher commitment. Also, among all dimensions, teachers had a higher level of commitment in the dimension of commitment to students than those of commitment to teaching profession and dedicated work. Moreover, the results showed that teachers had higher levels of commitment in the initial years of the profession, up to five years. The results based on the subject area variable revealed that teachers of different subject areas had similar levels of commitment to profession. Similarly, it was also found based on the school level that teachers have similar levels of commitment to profession regardless of the school level at which they teach.

2.4. Summary of Literature Review

This chapter reviewed the related literature and studies conducted on teacher commitment. In light of the literature review, it can be concluded that teacher

commitment is an integral concept for the teaching profession which is intertwined with concepts like teacher self-efficacy belief and job satisfaction, which also have significant roles in educational process for the performance of teachers and achievement of students, and for the society as a whole. Some studies aimed to examine the perceptions of teachers on teacher commitment to come up with a definition of it. There are various definitions of teacher commitment with certain common points but with slight differences. Therefore, in the current study it is aimed to explore how novice teachers perceive teacher commitment in their contexts. Also, there are studies both in Turkey and abroad regarding teachers' experiences of teacher commitment that is examined as the different dimensions of teacher commitment; however, there is not a strict consensus on the dimensions since it might change based on the context it is experienced. Thus, the present study aims to explore it in Turkish context at lower secondary schools. Also, the factors affecting teacher commitment investigated in most of the studies from both negative and positive perspectives. However, in Turkey there are few studies regarding the factors affecting teacher commitment. Rather, most Turkish researchers focused on novice teacher problems that might have weakening effect on teacher commitment; however, they have not focused on encouraging factors for teacher commitment while studies abroad provide contribution to the literature in that sense. In the current study, it is aimed to gather in-depth data regarding factors influencing teacher commitment of novice teachers. Another point to be highlighted is that in Turkey most scholars focused on organizational commitment rather than teacher commitment. Therefore, this study aims to explore teacher commitment with a comprehensive perspective. Lastly, both in Turkey and abroad, studies were either conducted with quantitative or qualitative designs which provides more understanding regarding the teacher commitment, but as it is pointed out before, there is need for more studies focusing on teacher commitment in Turkish context.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

This study aims to explore novice teachers' perceptions of teacher commitment, their experiences of teacher commitment along with the factors affecting it. Also, it is aimed to be informed about the suggestions of novice teachers to sustain and increase the sense of teacher commitment. This chapter presents the overall design of the study to provide the rational of it. It is followed by research questions, participants, data collection instrument and procedures, and data analysis. At the end of the chapter, trustworthiness of the study, and the limitations of it are presented.

3.1. Overall Design of the Study

In the study, qualitative research methodology was employed to gain insight into teacher commitment of novice teachers which is regarded as the central phenomenon requiring exploration and understanding because in the qualitative inquiry, the purpose is to develop an in-depth exploration of the central phenomenon (Creswell,2013). Qualitative research allows researchers to investigate various life experiences, thoughts, beliefs, and views to explore the complexities of the situations from a comprehensive framework.

While designing research studies, the preference for a particular research design is mostly based on the purpose of the study (Patton, 2002). The purpose of the current study was to explore novice teachers' perceptions of teacher commitment, their experiences regarding teacher commitment, factors affecting the sense of teacher commitment, and to be informed of teachers' suggestions for sustaining and increasing the sense of teacher commitment. Following these purposes, the phenomenological

research design was employed since the purpose of phenomenological studies is to better understand the world of several individuals comprehensively, exploring their perceptions of the phenomenon, and revealing the realities they have built around their own experiences (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2015).

Additionally, phenomenologists claim that there can be various interpretations of a single experience (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Merriam, 2014), so they dwell on the lived experiences of different people (Patton, 2002). Therefore, the current study is based on the perceptions and experiences of 30 novice teachers regarding the phenomenon of teacher commitment. Also, the phenomenological studies are based on the assumption that there is an essence in the lived experiences of individuals, so phenomenologists focus on describing what all participants have in common, what is fundamental in their perceptions and reactions to the phenomenon as they experience it (Creswell, 2013). Along the same lines, Patton (2002) also put forward that a phenomenological inquiry is mostly focused on the question of the essence of the phenomenon based on the perceptions of individuals who experienced it. In that respect, in the exploration of novice teachers' perceptions of teacher commitment and their experiences regarding this phenomenon along with the factors affecting it, the present study aimed to figure out the common essence in the experiences of the novice teachers participated in the study.

3.2. Research Questions

Phenomenological studies focus on what people experience and how they experience it (Patton, 2002). Similarly, Moustakas (1994) also stated that in phenomenological studies, participants are asked two broad and general questions to explore what they experienced and how they experienced it. These two questions are articulated as follows: What have you experienced in terms of the phenomenon? and What contexts or situations have typically influenced or affected your experiences of the phenomenon? Based on these, Creswell (2013) argued that even though some other open-ended questions are asked, especially these two questions lead to an

understanding of the shared experiences of the participants. In light of these, present study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. How do novice teachers perceive teacher commitment?
2. What are the experiences of novice teachers in terms of teacher commitment?
3. What are the factors affecting the sense of teacher commitment?
4. What do novice teachers suggest for the sustainability and increase of the sense of teacher commitment?

3.3. Participants of the Study

In qualitative research studies, participants or sites are selected to best help researchers understand the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). In line with this, Merriam (2014) also argued that participants need to be selected in accordance with the research questions of the study, so in the current study, participants are consisted of the individuals who experienced the phenomenon of the interest so that they can share their experiences and perceptions related to the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). As Patton (2002) also argued that in phenomenological approach, it is required to describe how people perceive the phenomenon, describe it, feel about it, and make sense of it. Therefore, to collect data, in-depth interviews were done with people who have directly experienced the phenomenon, namely, with the ones who have lived experiences regarding the phenomenon of interest (Patton, 2002).

For that reason, in this study, the sample includes novice teachers with at most three years of experience in the teaching profession and working at public lower secondary schools since it is believed that this group has the highest potential to contribute to the present study with the richest information thanks to their experiences of initial years of the profession (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Creswell, 2013).

After determining the setting and individuals, a sampling strategy is chosen in a way that is going to provide the best data for the research questions of the study. Therefore, the sample needs to be selected purposefully to elicit relevant information for the key actors (Patton, 1990). The term used for qualitative sampling is purposeful sampling

in which researchers intentionally select participants to understand the phenomenon of interest (Creswell, 2013).

In this study, a purposive sampling is used to choose information-rich participants, which is a standard in selecting individuals (Patton, 1990). There are different purposive sampling strategies. For the current study, criterion sampling and maximum variation sampling strategies were utilized. In criterion sampling, the basic idea is selecting individuals who meet the pre-determined set of criteria to get a better insight and identify commonalities by ensuring that all participants experienced the phenomenon of interest in similar institutions (Patton, 2002; Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011; Creswell, 2013). Accordingly, the teachers who participated in the study were selected only from the public lower secondary schools in Turkey, assuring the criteria for having been appointed in July 2018, March 2019, and September 2019. The reason for the appointment year criteria is that this study aims to explore the perspectives of novice teachers with at least one and at most three years of experience. In the literature, even though there is no clear-cut definition of a novice teacher, a novice teacher can be the one who has begun teaching for the first time, or has started to work in a new context (Farrell, 2012). Besides, some scholars defined novice teachers as the one having less than five years of experience (Kim & Roth, 2011), and it was also defined as teachers working in their first three years of the profession (Veenman, 1984; Barrett et al., 2002; Day et al., 2007).

As for maximum variation sampling strategy, the aim is not to make generalizations, on the contrary, to try to find out whether there are any common points or shared themes between the experiences of participants out of this variety as well as to reveal the different dimensions of the phenomena (Patton, 2002; Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011). Accordingly, utilizing maximum variation, the teachers selected for the sample of this study differed in their subject areas (i.e., Math, English, Turkish, Physical Education, Science and Technology, and Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge). Also, teachers were chosen from different service regions of the country that are specified for teacher appointments. Service regions refer to the three categories of the cities formed by grouping the cities that are similar to each other in terms of geographical situation, economic and social development level, and transportation conditions. Based on these,

cities of Turkey are grouped into three categories as first-level, second-level, and third-level of development (MEB, 2015) as it is presented in Table 3.1. In the table, the cities written in bold are the ones in which the participant teachers of the current study work. From the first level, there were 12 teachers in total from Gaziantep, Konya, and Aksaray. From the second level, 11 teachers working at Şanlıurfa, Kahramanmaraş, and Sivas participated. Lastly, from the third level, seven teachers working at Batman, Iğdır, Kars, and Şırnak participated in the study.

The sampling procedure was completed when the saturation of the data was ensured (Frankel, 1999) which refers to coming to a point at which the data are saturated and the researcher no longer obtains no new information that adds to the enrichment of the data (Creswell, 2013).

Table 3.1

Service Regions for Teaching Profession in Turkey

Development Levels	Cities
1st Level	Adana, Afyonkarahisar, **Aksaray**, Amasya, Ankara, Antalya, Aydın, Balıkesir, Bartın, Bilecik, Bolu, Burdur, Bursa, Çanakkale, Çorum, Denizli, Düzce, Edirne, Eskişehir, **Gaziantep**, Hatay, Isparta, Mersin, İzmir, Karabük, Karaman, Kayseri, Kırıkkale, Kırklareli, Kocaeli, **Konya**, Kütahya, Manisa, Muğla, Osmaniye, Sakarya, Samsun, Sinop, Tekirdağ, Trabzon, Uşak, Yalova, Zonguldak
2nd Level	Adıyaman, Artvin, Bayburt, Çankırı, Elazığ, Erzincan, Giresun, Gümüşhane, İstanbul, **Kahramanmaraş**, Kastamonu, Kırşehir, Kilis, Malatya, Nevşehir, Niğde, Ordu, Rize, **Sivas**, **Şanlıurfa**, Tokat, Yozgat
3rd Level	Ağrı, Ardahan, **Batman,** Bingöl, Bitlis, Diyarbakır, Erzurum, Hakkâri, **Iğdır**, **Kars**, Mardin, Muş, Siirt, **Şırnak**, Tunceli, Van

At the end of sampling procedure, the study included 30 novice teachers in total. The detailed descriptive information of the participant teachers is presented in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

Descriptive Information of Participants

ID	Age	Gender	City	Location	Subject Area	Appointment Year
T1	25	Female	Gaziantep	City center	English	2019
T2	25	Female	Konya	Village	English	2019
T3	25	Female	Konya	Village	English	2019
T4	25	Female	Şanlıurfa	Village	English	2018
T5	25	Female	Gaziantep	City center	Maths	2019
T6	24	Female	Konya	Village	Rel.Cult. & Moral Edu.	2019
T7	25	Female	Gaziantep	City center	Turkish	2018
T8	29	Male	K.Maraş	Village	P.E.	2019
T9	26	Female	Konya	Village	Science	2019
T10	25	Female	Iğdır	Town	Turkish	2018
T11	25	Female	Iğdır	Town	English	2019
T12	25	Female	Kars	City center	English	2018
T13	25	Female	Gaziantep	City center	Turkish	2019
T14	25	Female	Batman	Village	Maths	2019
T15	25	Female	Aksaray	Village	English	2019
T16	25	Female	Şırnak	Village	Maths	2018
T17	26	Female	Şanlıurfa	Town	Science	2019
T18	25	Female	Gaziantep	City center	Turkish	2018
T19	31	Male	Şanlıurfa	Village	P.E.	2018
T20	26	Female	Şanlıurfa	Village	Science	2018
T21	26	Female	Şanlıurfa	Village	Maths	2019
T22	25	Female	Sivas	Town	English	2018
T23	26	Female	Konya	Village	Rel.Cult. & Moral Edu.	2019
T24	25	Female	Şanlıurfa	Village	Maths	2018
T25	25	Female	Şanlıurfa	Village	Rel.Cult. & Moral Edu.	2018
T26	25	Female	Batman	Village	Maths	2018
T27	25	Male	Şanlıurfa	Village	Turkish	2018
T28	26	Female	Batman	Village	Turkish	2018
T29	26	Female	Şanlıurfa	Village	Maths	2018

As presented in Table 3.2 above, all of the participants were novice teachers, 16 of whom were appointed in 2018 and 14 of them in 2019. Regarding the gender of the participants, they were predominantly female because there were 27 females and three male teachers. They were between the ages of 25 and 31 with an average of 26 years old. As for the information regarding the cities that teachers work, nine of teachers were working in Şanlıurfa, six of them in Gaziantep, five of them in Konya, three of them in Batman, and two of them in Iğdır. Also, there was one teacher each from Aksaray, Kahramanmaraş, Sivas, Şırnak, and Kars. As for the locations of the schools, teachers were working at different parts of the cities. While seven teachers were working at city centers and four of them in towns, remaining 19 teachers were all working at village schools. When it comes to their subject areas, there were nine English, seven Math, six Turkish, three Science, three Religious Education and Moral Education, and two Physical Education teachers.

3.4. Data Collection Instrument

In phenomenological studies, the data collection is mostly based on in-depth interviews with participants to reveal their point of view about the phenomenon by entering into an individuals' inner world to understand the phenomenon and their experiences (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2013). Interviews provide researchers with rich information about participants' experiences, perceptions, and opinions (Fraenkel, et al., 2015). Therefore, in the current study, interviewing was used as the data collection method, given that it is the primary data collection method for phenomenological studies (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011).

Patton (2002) talks about three types of interviewing approaches: conversational interviewing, general interview guide approach, and standardized open-ended interview. In the present study, the general interview guide approach (i.e., semi-structured interview) prepared by the researcher based on the literature and the research questions of the current study was used. Semi-structured interviews include pre-determined questions and probes about particular topics related to the study's research questions to elicit information on the same issue from all interviewees.

However, there is still flexibility for both interviewer and interviewees. The interviewer can ask any probe questions for clarifying some points to discover the experiences of individuals regarding the phenomenon, or the interviewee can shape the interview's content because probes provide flexibility (Yıldırım & Şimsek, 2011).

In the current study, certain steps were followed for creating data collection instrument which are summarized in Figure 3.1 below. After reviewing the literature, the first version of the semi-structured interview guide was created including two parts involving 22 main questions and several probes. The first part included demographical questions and teaching-related questions. The second part included two sections for questions regarding teachers' experiences in the profession and teacher commitment. For the validation of the data collection instrument, the first version of the semi-structured interview guide was shared with five experts holding PhD degree with different titles and working in state universities in the field of educational sciences. One of the experts works as a professor, two as an associate professor, one as an assistant professor in state universities. The remaining one expert works in a state university's center for advancing learning and teaching as a lecturer. After getting feedback from experts, necessary revisions were made. The revised version of the semi-structured interview guide is comprised of three parts with 19 main questions including probes as sub-questions. The first part includes two personal information questions that helped to learn about the participants. This demographical part is vital in preparing interviewees for the interview and relaxing with these basic and straightforward questions (Patton, 2002). The second part includes seven questions to learn about participants' professional context and getting information related to the teaching profession. The third part contains 10 open-ended questions related to teacher commitment along with their experiences in the profession since the purpose is to get in-depth answers from the participants by letting them give their responses in their way related to the phenomenon of interest. Additionally, the interview guide was developed in Turkish since the communication with participants was in Turkish.

Figure 3.1

Procedure for Formation of Data Collection Instrument
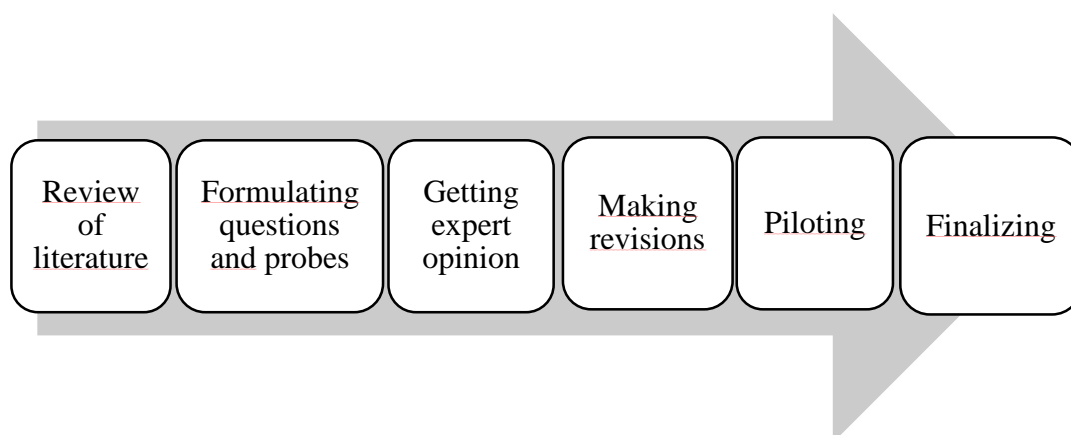
After the semi-structured interview guide was revised in accordance with expert opinions, a pilot study was conducted with three novice English, Turkish, and Math teachers who are in their first three years of the profession in order to see if the questions serve the study's purpose, if the timing is appropriate, and any gap to be filled with necessary revisions (Maxwell, 2013; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Tiny revisions regarding wording were made after piloting it. After expert opinion revisions and piloting, the interview guide (Appendix A) was finalized for the data collection procedure.

3.5. Data Collection Procedure

As the first step of the data collection procedure, an application was made to the Human Subjects Ethics Committee of METU in October 2020 (Appendix B) in order to get approval for the study. After the approval of the ethics committee at METU, legal permission was taken from the Ministry of National Education, Directorate of Strategy Development (Appendix C).

After all approval procedure was completed, interviews for piloting were done with three novice teachers, and only minor wording revisions were made after these interviews. Then, an invitation call (Appendix D) including brief information of the study was shared for inviting volunteer teachers to participate in the study. Among the

volunteers, eligible teachers who met the sampling criteria were contacted via e-mail, and they were informed of the details of the study.

Also, an interview timetable was prepared by researcher and shared with participants on Google Drive, and they were asked to fill it out according to their availability. The reason for sharing it via Google Drive is that both researcher and other participants can keep the track of available and reserved hours on the calendar simultaneously to avoid any conflict in meeting hours or days.

The interviews were conducted online because of the COVID-19 pandemic during 2019-2020 Fall Term. They were held through Zoom, which is a web-based communication tool. At the beginning of each interview, participants signed a consent form (Appendix E), and sent it to the researcher via e-mail. After the participants were conveyed an information about the study, their permission for recording the meeting was asked. All participants approved it, so meetings were recorded in order to transcript the data without losing any important points. Also, participants were informed that they have right to leave the interview at any time they want, and that the recordings made till the point they left would be deleted. Each one of the interviews took between 50 minutes and more than one and a half hour, with an average of 70 minutes.

3.6. Data Analysis

For the data analysis in qualitative studies, Strauss & Corbin (1990) suggested two types of analysis: descriptive analysis and content analysis. Descriptive analysis is more superficial than the content analysis. As for the content analysis, its primary purpose is to reaching out the concepts and relationships that can explain the collected data (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). Similarly, Patton (2002) stated that content analysis is the process of making sense of any qualitative data and determining the core meanings with consistency by searching the data for coming up with recurring words or themes.

For content analysis, certain steps can be followed. Yıldırım & Şimşek (2011) proposed four steps which are as follows: coding data, identifying themes, organizing

codes and themes, and describing and interpreting findings. In a similar vein, Creswell (2009) came up with six steps: organizing and preparing the data for analysis, reading through all data to get a general idea about it, coding the data, use codes to come up with themes and a general description, representing the themes and descriptions, and as a last step interpreting the meaning of the data analyzed. Although these steps are specified for the analysis procedure, it was highlighted that the steps can be intertwined and all of them might not be followed in the same order (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011; Creswell, 2009).

In the current study, content analysis was carried out in light of above-mentioned steps in order to reach in-depth analysis of the data. First of all, the recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim in order to organize and prepare them for the coding process. Before the coding process was started, a code list had been created based on the purposes of the study along with the literature and transcripts by reading through them to get a general sense of the participants' ideas. The initial code list was aimed to be enriched by adding emerging codes during the coding process. Then, the coding work was completed by organizing the data into chunks and assigning descriptive names for them. There were emerging codes, and they were added to the existing list. This coding process required researcher to read the data set more than once for ensuring the congruence of the meaning of the chunks and the assigned terms for them. In the next step, emerged codes were grouped according to their similarities and differences, and the related codes were brought together to identify themes. Since the number of themes were very large, related themes were grouped together for coming up with more general themes, so remaining themes were organized under the general ones as sub-themes. Then, the emerging themes, sub-themes, codes, and sub-codes were organized in a logical order by considering the relations between themes. A brief example for the process of data analysis is presented in Figure 3.2 and in Table 3.3.

Figure 3.2

An Example of Coding Data for Analysis
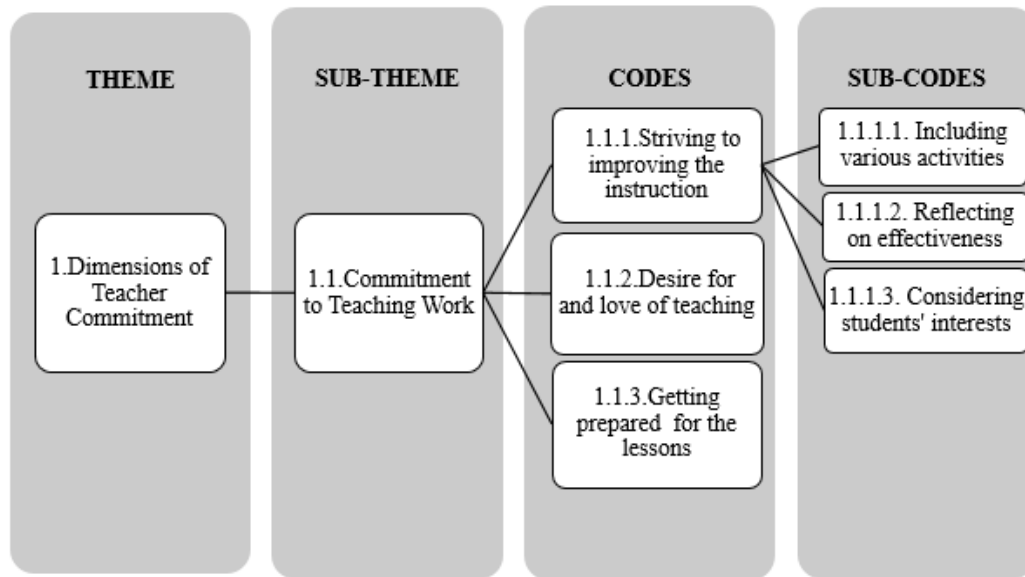
Table 3.3

Example of Coding and Analysis on Verbatim Quotations

Verbatim Quotations	Theme/ Sub-theme/ Code/ Sub-code
"… I consider how I could enrich this more with or what I would do to attract their attention so that the week could be fruitful and the curiosity of students would be increased." T(18)	1. Dimensions of Teacher Commitment 1.1. Commitment to Teaching Work 1.1.1. Striving to improve instruction 1.1.1.3. Considering students' interests
"I always think about how it could be taught better, which topics I should cover, whether I should integrate visuals into the lessons, etc… If I find appropriate materials or games, I try to use them in my class." (T17)	1. Dimensions of Teacher Commitment 1.1. Commitment to Teaching Work 1.1.1. Striving to improve instruction 1.1.1.1. Including various activities
"… I truly become pleased when someone learns something. I think in the teaching profession, I expect every teacher to lecture by making all efforts and feel happy when they teach something … I do not know if I should describe this as a passion for teaching, but I mean that I always want to see someone learn something thanks to me." (T1).	1. Dimensions of Teacher Commitment 1.1. Commitment to Teaching Work 1.1.2. Desire for and love of teaching

The content analysis described above was done through MAXQDA 2020 which is a computer software program helping the researcher carry out the analysis systematically, and it makes the process go faster and more efficient.

After completing the analysis process, the researcher presented the findings based on the data set by providing direct verbatim quotations and descriptions without discussing them in the findings section. When it comes to the last step, the analyzed data were discussed by the researcher by explaining the relations among themes, coming up with conclusions, and touching upon the significance of the findings in the discussion and implications section.

3.7. Trustworthiness of the Study

In qualitative studies, trustworthiness refers to the criteria of validity and reliability in quantitative studies. However, due to the difference in the nature of inquiry, Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed the terms credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability that would contribute to the quality of the qualitative studies. These criteria can be achieved through certain strategies that can be applied in different stages of the studies to persuade readers that the study was conducted thoroughly (Saldaña, 2011).

In the current study, to ensure the criteria of credibility in terms of data collection, while developing the semi-structured interview guide, five experts were consulted and necessary changes were made. Then, before starting the actual data collection procedure, the interview guide was piloted with three novice teachers in order to make sure that it is appropriate. Also, interviews were recorded based on permission, and this was a great opportunity for the researcher to be able to analyze the whole data without missing any important points. As for data analysis, analyst triangulation is benefitted. Analyst triangulation is one of the triangulation strategies to strengthen the credibility of conclusions to be drawn based on the analysis (Patton, 2002). It is achieved by the review of the findings by multiple analysts. Thus, in this study, the data were reviewed by a fellow researcher for eliminating the doubts about the potential bias that might stem from the single researcher bias. Another strategy for

ensuring the credibility was peer debriefing. It was done through sharing data with a peer with experience in qualitative study in the field of education. The researcher asked for feedback regarding the data analysis, and necessary revisions were made based on the peer's suggestions. As Merriam (1998) also argued that peer examination provides a different perspective for the researcher. In addition to this, while presenting the findings, direct verbatim quotations were provided related to almost each theme of research questions of the study. These serve the purpose of reaching the credibility criteria as Saldaña, (2011) claimed that supporting findings with relevant quotes from participants present more credible evidence.

To ensure transferability, all the procedures taken while conducting the study was explained in detail which will serve for the transferability of the study. Also, participants of the study were selected based on purposive sampling strategies because the aim is to emphasize the phenomenon along with revealing the distinctive features of it. In other words, instead of revealing general information in qualitative research, there is a tendency to reach both general and specific information, so it is important to select the data sources included in the research in a way that reflects this difference (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011), and this was attempted to achieved with using purposive sampling in the current study.

As for dependability and confirmability, audit trail was adopted. Here, the main issue is to check if the process of the study is consistent and reasonable (Miles, et al., 2014). Regarding this, in the present study, the supervisor of the researcher contributed to the dependability and confirmability of the study by providing feedback at all stages of the process to confirm that systematic and logical research process was carried out.

3.8. Limitations of the Study

As every study has limitations, this study might have certain limitations stemming from variety of reasons. First of all, the participants might not have felt confident enough since they were part of a study. It might have created anxiety, which in turn could have affected their answers during the interviews. Also, even though they were

assured about the confidentiality, they might have felt uncomfortable due to being recorded.

The data were collected through an online communication tool. Though it is an easiness in terms of practicality, it might have created several shortcomings influencing the process. The internet connection of some participants were unstable, sometimes the voice was not clear enough, and they had uncharged battery problems. All these caused interruptions during the interview which might have affected the mood of both the interviewer and interviewee.

Since the data were collected during the COVID-19 pandemic period, all teachers were going through unfamiliar circumstances. This might have hindered them from focusing on diverse aspects of the issues they discussed.

Lastly, there might have been a threat of researcher bias during the interviews due to the researcher's communication skills, motivation, reactions, and comments.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study is to explore novice teachers' perceptions of teacher commitment, their experiences regarding the teacher commitment phenomenon, the factors causing changes in their sense of teacher commitment, and the suggestions from novice teachers regarding the sustainability and increase of teacher commitment. This chapter presents the findings of the study based on the content analysis of the qualitative data obtained from interviews held with 30 novice teachers. As a result of the content analysis, the themes, sub-themes, and codes that emerged from the data are organized under four research questions respectively and summarized in tables. Also, they are reported by providing direct verbatim quotations from the data set. Finally, at the end of the chapter, a summary of the findings is presented.

4.1. Novice Teachers' Perceptions of Teacher Commitment

The first research question is posed as "How do novice teachers perceive teacher commitment?" to explore teachers' conceptions of the phenomenon of teacher commitment. According to the content analysis results, there came up two themes with certain sub-themes. The first theme appeared as an emotional aspect since almost all participant teachers perceived teacher commitment as the love of the profession. The second theme emerged as practical aspect, including three sub-themes: fulfilling job requirements, devoting extra time and effort for students, and endeavoring for professional development. Teachers mentioned the practical aspects as referring to the enactment of emotional aspect in the school context. That is, love of profession is

mentioned as an integral part of practical aspects because teachers pointed out that when teachers love the profession, they tend to reflect it on their actions. The themes and sub-themes are summarized in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

The Themes and Sub-themes for Novice Teachers' Perceptions of Teacher Commitment

Themes	Sub-themes
1. Emotional Aspects	1.1.Love of the profession
	1.2.Love of the students
2. Practical Aspects	2.1.Fulfilling the job requirements
	2.2.Devoting extra time and effort to students
	2.3.Endeavoring for professional development

4.1.1. Emotional Aspects

As the first theme of the teachers' perceptions of teacher commitment, the theme of emotional aspect came out based on the perceptions of teachers since they mostly defined teacher commitment in terms of teachers' feelings towards the profession. That is, they highlighted the emotional attachment to the profession by defining a committed teacher as someone who loves the profession. Another emotional aspect emphasized by teachers is their love of the students. These two emotional aspects were the most recurring points during the interviews.

4.1.1.1. Love of the Profession

The sub-theme of love of the profession emerged as the conception of teacher commitment from the perspectives of novice teachers. Teachers expressed the significance of a committed teacher's love of the job and performing it willingly by

devoting himself/herself. Accordingly, teachers made emphasis on this issue by stating the followings:

> When you say teacher commitment, I immediately think of loving the job and performing it willingly. There are too many teachers who do not like their profession, and we can see the difference (T11).

> I think commitment means not seeing teaching as a profession and doing it entirely from your heart. If you do not teach something just for the sake of teaching, and if you do not see what you do as a job; then, I think you are highly committed to your profession (T30).

While loving the profession is described as core value for teacher commitment, loving students is also as important as loving the profession. In the following section, importance of it explained in detail.

4.1.1.2. Love of the Students

As the second sub-theme of emotional aspects theme, love of the students was commonly mentioned while teachers were defining how they perceive teacher commitment. They emphasized its importance since students are viewed as in the center of the educational process from the perspectives of teachers in general. They stated that a teacher cannot be labeled as a committed teacher if s/he does not love children since they view this as a basic need for making effort for the profession. They expressed the importance as it is seen below:

> For a teacher, teacher commitment is carrying students in his/her heart even after leaving the school when the classes are over (T7).

> ... if a teacher can love every child, that teacher is truly committed to the profession (T20).

> ... Some teachers spend time playing games with students during the 10-minute break. Indeed, the person who can keep that bond of love alive is a better teacher in the students' eyes. I think this teacher is a committed teacher (T10).

During the interviews, as novice teachers pointed out that love of the profession and students are key emotional urges for performing the job willingly, which refers to the

practical aspect of their perception of teacher commitment, which is explained with details in the following section.

4.1.2. Practical Aspects

Based on the teachers' perception about teacher commitment, another theme after emotional aspect emerged as practical aspects. Teachers expressed that love of the profession and students which are the emotional aspects of teacher commitment, make teachers tend to be willing for fulfilling job requirements, devoting more effort and time for students, and endeavoring for professional development.

4.1.2.1. Fulfilling Job Requirements

Based on the findings of the content analysis of the interviews, the first sub-theme of practical aspect theme of perceptions about teacher commitment is fulfilling the job requirements. This sub-theme consists of various aspects, such as performing the job conscientiously, preparing for the lessons, and teaching under all circumstances. Regarding these, verbatim quotations from the interviews are presented in the following paragraphs.

Novice teachers mainly emphasized that fulfilling job requirements is an essential issue for teacher commitment because it is already regarded as a responsibility that all teachers have to do. For example, one of the teachers articulated the following:

> ... when an administrative document is requested, some teachers bring it three weeks or five weeks later with all kinds of excuses, like having a child, being sick, etc. Okay, these are the things that can happen to a person, but some teachers constantly do the same thing. Thus, I question these teachers' commitment because they are not fulfilling their responsibilities (T18).

Some teachers emphasized the importance of performing the requirements conscientiously. Accordingly, teachers have statements as follows:

> When we imagine a committed teacher, first of all, I think of a conscientious teacher who knows her responsibilities and does her part properly (T17).

As I said before, the teaching profession is a matter of conscientiousness, so at the end of the day, if I can relieve my conscience by saying that I did my best for my students, this is commitment (T16).

Furthermore, most of the teachers touched upon the willingness for the teaching aspect of the requirements of the teaching profession. They emphasized being on time and preparing for the lessons to teach effectively. To illustrate, the following is a sample quote expressed by one of the teachers:

... For example, if the break time duration is 10 minutes, you will spend 10 minutes for it; you will not do it for 15 minutes. Apart from that, if a lesson duration is 40 minutes, you need to use that 40 minutes effectively. Therefore, it would be best to prepare and plan before coming to the class to know what to teach in class. Even if you do not make plans beforehand, you should at least have an idea in your mind regarding how to teach. To make it short, teacher commitment means knowing and fulfilling such responsibilities well (T27)

Lastly, about the teaching-oriented definitions of teacher commitment, teachers stated that teaching under all circumstances is an essential component of teacher commitment. Regarding this, the followings are mentioned:

Teacher commitment is definitely being willing to do the profession anywhere and under any condition. If a teacher can do his/her job for children from any religion or race, and in places with challenging conditions by pushing the limits, s/he meets a necessary criterion of teacher commitment (T24).

Even if there are no materials around him/her except a board, s/he still does her/his job in the best way and reaches the children. Therefore, s/he can provide the child with the necessary things if they need (T17).

Overall, novice teachers perceive teacher commitment as fulfilling job requirements willingly, so they touched upon the things to be done regarding teaching and non-teaching duties by committed teachers.

4.1.2.2. Devoting Time and Effort for Students

Regarding the second sub-theme of the practical aspect of teacher commitment perceptions, the analysis results revealed that novice teachers define teacher commitment as devoting extra time and effort for students even after working hours. This situation is mainly described as being an altruistic teacher since teachers do something extra due to love of the profession, love of the students, and they care about students. As an example for committed teachers' being perceived as altruistic, the followings are articulated by teachers:

> For me, teacher commitment means helping students as much as possible and making sacrifices because being a teacher is not only about teaching. Thus, I think commitment refers to being altruistic (T15).

> In my opinion, the teacher's effort refers to the commitment because I think not every teacher makes the same effort for their profession. Some just lecture and leave the class, while some try hard and spend extra time. So when you say teacher commitment, the effort made for the job comes to my mind. I mean, some teachers are so dedicated to teaching something that they work for extra hours. There are even teachers who voluntarily tutor after school without being paid (T1).

As for teachers' willingness to care about students in relation to making extra time and effort for them, it covers various components, which are explained in the following paragraphs.

First of all, touching students' lives by guiding them, acting as a role model, and making an effort for students' development is emphasized by most teachers while defining teacher commitment. They expressed that teachers need to be aware of the importance of contributing to students' lives in various ways to make a difference in them positively. To illustrate, some of the teachers articulated as follows:

> ... when the students come back to you, they say, "Dear teacher, I am glad you entered my life," so I think the teacher commitment is to touch a student's life in a good way (T13).

> I think a committed teacher raises people's awareness, motivates them, sees people's potential, and anticipates what they can do, and guides them accordingly. I think that is the most prominent feature of a committed teacher (T19).

... Being a committed teacher is to focus on changing a student's life; it is not only going to work in the morning, finishing all the lessons, and coming back home (T25).

According to the teachers, teacher commitment also includes establishing a good relationship and communication with students since they are of great importance in terms of creating an effective learning environment, during the interviews teachers mentioned it as in the followings:

A committed teacher's interest and love for children are very important. I mean, of course, knowledge of the field is also something that should be, but I think it is necessary to establish good communication with children first (T9).

I think of a teacher who has a good relationship with his students when you say a committed teacher because I think the atmosphere in the classroom is essential. In my opinion, fifty percent of teaching is getting along well with students, and fifty percent is your professional knowledge (T3).

Other emerged points regarding caring about students are attending to students' struggles and providing emotional support by showing affection. Accordingly, teachers expressed the followings:

The teacher commitment is to deal with the students' problems and find a solution even after leaving the classroom. You know, there is a cliché saying 'I will teach you what is expected, and I will leave the class", this is not dedication or commitment to your profession (T7).

… there are students in need of love because they did not receive any affection from their parents or are not cared for. That is why they like us so much that we smile at them and talk to them—even showing them a smiling face is support for them to feel good (T25).

As the last constituent of caring about students, acknowledging the presence of students by calling them with their names, or knowing the details about students' outside lives is mentioned as an identifying characteristic of teacher commitment. Regarding this, one of the teachers stated the following:

To be interested in things outside of the classroom is important, I think. For example, if we have heard that a brother of one of our students will be born a month or two later, we can ask the student, 'Was your brother born? What did you name him?'. Such small touches can be very effective in children because they are very attentive. For example, I think it is possible to ask a student who seems a little upset at school, saying, 'How are you today, is there a problem?' (T7).

Novice teachers mostly talked about their perceptions of teacher commitment in terms of extra time and effort devoted to students since they expect a committed teacher who loves his/her profession and students to be willing for caring about and investing extra time and effort for them when it is needed.

4.1.2.3. Endeavoring for Professional Development

Concerning the results of the analysis of the interviews, the last sub-theme of practical aspects of the teachers' perceptions of teacher commitment is endeavoring for professional development. During the interviews, teachers highlighted that committed teachers desire to develop themselves professionally to be effective in teaching by remaining up-to-date and being aware of the dynamic nature of the educational process. Concerning these, teachers stated the followings:

> Teacher commitment is being able to say that "I tried all the things and made an effort to make things better" or consulting colleagues without any shame or hesitation to get their opinions for new ideas to develop themselves professionally (T16).

> ... I expect committed teachers to be more active and knowledgeable about the different learning styles of the students and the content of the course. In addition, I expect them to get prepared for the lessons by including alternative ways (T4).

4.2. Novice Teachers' Experiences of Teacher Commitment

The second research question aims to examine novice teachers' experiences regarding teacher commitment, so it is asked as "What are the experiences of novice teachers in terms of teacher commitment?". During the interview, teachers expressed their opinions and experiences based on their own sense of teacher commitment. With respect to the answers, three themes emerged. These themes are presented as follows: (1) perceived level of teacher commitment, (2) dimensions of teacher commitment, and (3) teacher retention. The themes with various sub-themes are summarized in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2

The Themes and Sub-themes for Novice Teachers' Experiences of Teacher Commitment

Themes	Sub-themes
1. Perceived level of teacher commitment	1.1.Committed teachers 1.2.Partially committed teachers
2. Dimensions of teacher commitment	2.1. Commitment to the teaching profession 2.2. Commitment to teaching work 2.3. Commitment to students & their learning 2.4. Commitment to professional development
3. Teacher Retention	3.1. Remaining in the profession 3.2. Tendency to leave the profession

4.2.1. Perceived Level of Teacher Commitment

Considering the analysis of the interviews, teachers mentioned their sense of teacher commitment and expressed it by identifying the perceived level of it. Therefore, two sub-themes emerged as committed and partially committed under the theme of perceived level of teacher commitment.

4.2.1.1. Committed Teachers

During the interviews, some teachers clearly stated that they have a high sense of teacher commitment by emphasizing the reasons as the love of the profession and doing the best for their students. To illustrate, quotes from some of the teachers are provided below:

> I am committed to my profession because I tried to do whatever I could, even more, since I started teaching (T13).

I am away from my family, so looking for miles since I miss them. If I did not have a commitment to the profession, if there were no desire to perform this profession or such a love, I probably would not have put up with this difficulty. (T20).

4.2.1.2. Partially Committed Teachers

As for other teachers, except for those who feel committed, they stated that they are not feeling fully committed yet due to inadequate experience and unable to adapt to school since the online teaching period has started due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They emphasized a need for more experiences and time to spend at schools for a high level of commitment. There are quotes regarding teachers' views in the followings:

I cannot see myself as a committed teacher. I think commitment requires a process to go through in order for a person to mature enough and adapt to the teaching profession. Online teaching, unfortunately, is a factor that has been weakening the sense of commitment. (T21).

Honestly, I cannot say that I am fully committed because we could not adapt to the school. We worked for a semester, and as you know, there came up COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, we did not have a chance to adapt to the school atmosphere (T9).

…we could not experience the job enough to be able to feel committed. Last year we started and worked for almost six months, and then pandemic issues erupted, and schools were closed (T8).

Lastly, some teachers stated that they are partially committed by mentioning reasons as feeling the lack of self-efficacy beliefs in teaching, and feeling the need for professional development.

As I said, I do my best, I fulfill my responsibilities, but I cannot describe myself as a fully committed teacher because there are subjects that I do not feel competent enough. For example, we cannot know which problem will arise in the classroom, and even though I think that I can solve most of the problems, I am sure there will be ones that I cannot handle (T12).

In terms of teacher commitment, I cannot say that I am a fully committed teacher. I am still improving myself, and I think every teacher is already striving to develop themselves. Nobody starts the profession as fully prepared (T8).

4.2.2. Dimensions of Teacher Commitment

Regarding the second theme of the second research question, the analysis demonstrated that there are four dimensions of teacher commitment as sub-themes. These sub-themes are as follows: (1) commitment to the teaching profession, (2) commitment to the teaching work, (3) commitment to students and their learning, (4) commitment to professional development.

4.2.2.1. Commitment to the Teaching Profession

Concerning the first dimension of teacher commitment which is commitment to the teaching profession, teachers expressed their satisfaction with the choice of profession, love of the job and appreciating it, spending extra time and making an effort for the job, and carrying out responsibilities details of these components are provided in the following paragraphs.

First of all, most of the teachers expressed that they are satisfied with the choice of the teaching profession, and they would choose it again if they were given a second chance even though they are aware of the difficulties of the teaching profession. In the following quotes, teachers stated their satisfaction:

> I think I would still choose the teaching profession if given even the 10th chance (T21).

> While I was studying at the university and after I graduated, although I think that I will work or I am working under challenging conditions, there is nothing that I regretted. It is not easy to deal with both the parents and the children. Also, you have work-related tasks to do at home, and you always think about students when you go to bed or even when you are at dinner. In between your conversations with other teachers, you still talk about students, school, and conditions ... despite all the challenges, I always think that this is the best job I can do (T16).

Moreover, teachers mentioned the sources of satisfaction as being with children and the appropriateness of the job to their personality traits. Regarding this, an example quote is as follows:

For me, it is good to learn and teach and to be with the students. That is why I chose this profession, and I am glad I did. Sometimes, I imagine a different job, but I cannot see myself in any profession except teaching. In terms of my personality traits, the most suitable profession for me is the teaching profession (T13).

Except for the teachers who expressed their satisfaction with the choice of teaching profession without any hesitations, some of them expressed that even though they are absolutely satisfied with the teaching profession, they would change their subject matter areas if given a chance because they think that there are other subject fields which are more appropriate for them. To illustrate, teachers stated the followings:

I would definitely choose the teaching profession again, but I could have chosen physical education as my field. Children ask this a lot, "What would you be if you were not a teacher?" I say that I would be a teacher again, but I could be a physical education teacher so that I could have been in a more motion-based branch (T2).

While teachers express their opinions regarding their satisfaction with the choice of profession, most of them also mentioned their love of the profession as an indicator of commitment to the teaching profession. The utterances of teachers regarding their love of the profession are as follows:

You do not perform this job as an obligation; you do it because you want it with all your heart. I cannot call the teaching profession a job because teaching is not a job for me. It is not a profession; you know; it is an entirely different feeling (T20).

Frankly, it is a perfect job for me. I enjoy doing it. I always think that I could never have done it if I did not love it. I think it is a matter of patience and a matter of love. You know, there are so many different things that can challenge teachers and sometimes things that may overwhelm them. However, once you love, you can bear it all (T22).

In addition to teachers' love of the profession, they appreciate it, as well. Teachers feel proud of it and value their job since they find it a divine and significant profession, as can be seen in the following quote from a teacher:

I think the most sacred profession is the teaching profession, and teachers should appreciate it and act accordingly. Working hours are not a problem, but it can be a mentally tiring job. However, I think it is a wonderful journey for us (T6).

Teachers do not only love their profession solely; they also emphasized the significance of carrying out job responsibilities on time for getting things done in the best way. Regarding this, teachers articulated the followings:

I have strived to accomplish both tasks and duties assigned to me, which could be about my subject matter. Or, it could be administrative work, again I have fulfilled my duties on time… Concerning the documents, foremost I have always tried to prepare them. For now, I consider myself as having done my best (T13).

I truly believe that I have fulfilled my responsibilities. I have never been a teacher who comes to lessons late and delivers her documents late (T18).

Lastly, teachers stated that since they love their job, they are willing to invest extra time and effort for their job beyond the primary responsibilities, and they do all of these extra things willingly. Thus, they view this willingness for extra effort and time as a component of commitment to the teaching profession. Regarding this, they articulated the followings:

One of my colleagues wanted to renew desks before the term begins. There were 220 desks in total, and we finished renewing them in two days by working all day and night. Of course, we had difficulties, but we completed them. I think this is related to our commitment to the profession (T11).

In my opinion, helping everyone unconditionally, struggling unconditionally for everything, making an effort for students, parents, and the school are really enjoyable things. I am always in the mode of doing things for anyone (T29).

4.2.2.2. Commitment to the Teaching Work

Regarding the second dimension of teacher commitment which is the commitment to the teaching work, teachers mentioned their love of subject matter, desire and love for teaching, making an effort for preparing for the lessons, and striving to improve instruction by reflecting on the effectiveness of it in terms of responding to cognitive

needs and interests of students, and including various activities to improve it. An elaborate presentation of details is provided below.

In the first place, some teachers expressed their love of subject matter as a necessity for enjoying the teaching work in the class. They expressed their ideas as follows:

> I adore English, for that reason I love teaching it. If I did not adore English, teaching could not be favorable to me. (T30)

> I like my major as it is an enjoyable field. For instance, we do not solely teach our students parts of speech. We make plays, dramas, or recite poems, songs; we could do all. I mean, it is a unique field. As we already speak this language, students comprehend very swiftly. Therefore, more time is reserved for doing more activities, which would be better for both students and me (T10).

Secondly, most of the teachers indicated that they desire and love teaching. They mentioned the enjoyment and satisfaction they get from teaching something as the reasons why they love teaching and desire it. Regarding these, a sample quotation is provided below:

> As I said, I truly become pleased when someone learns something. I think in the teaching profession, it is expected that everyone should lecture by making all efforts and feel happy when they teach something. A teacher who does not do this; instead, if s/he does not care about students' learning, that teacher cannot continue in the profession. I do not know if I should describe this as a passion for teaching, but I mean that I always want to see someone learn something thanks to me (T1).

In addition to teachers' love of the subject matter and willingness for the teaching phase, teachers noted that their willingness is also present during the preparation phase before the lessons. First, most of them highlighted that they never go to classes without planning the instruction and deciding how to convey the content effectively. Thus, they stated that while teachers are planning the instruction, they give importance to arranging materials and activities according to their learners' needs and interests. Regarding these, some quotes from teachers are presented below:

> I prepare materials. Even if I do not prepare myself, I make a preparation by getting inspired by other teachers and arranging the difficulty for the level of my students or making the easy parts more challenging. Actually, I become more enthusiastic during that preparation. For instance, I get prepared

enthusiastically as feeling "ah look, let's show that; ah look, this could be taught better that way" (T2).

… I plan what I teach before going to school. I never go to my classes without preparation. For example, I look for activities to decide on what to teach and how to teach it effectively so that students can comprehend better. Also, I look at different websites or watch other teachers' videos from YouTube to see how they taught. I certainly go to classes as prepared (T24).

I definitely make a preparation one day before going to classes because the textbook could be insufficient for English and extra materials and activities are needed. For instance, students show interest in listening activities slightly. Instead of these, I try to find a song or a part in a movie. I use online games more. If I cover vocabulary, especially in the beginning of units, I prepare vocabulary games (T1).

Furthermore, after the preparation period for the lessons, teachers mentioned the phase of teaching. They emphasized that their focus is on improving instruction based on their own reflections on the effectiveness of the instruction in terms of responding to students' cognitive needs and interests. Therefore, they take necessary actions, such as including various activities or materials and being more careful about meeting students' cognitive needs and interests. According to the analysis of results regarding the strive to improve the instruction, most of the teachers, in a general sense, mentioned their effort for being more effective in teaching as follows:

After I arrange the materials for the next class, I consider how I could enrich this more or what I would do to attract their attention so that the week could be fruitful and the curiosity of students would be increased. I strive so that the lesson could be productive and effective. (T18).

In order to achieve the effectiveness in teaching, they start with reflecting on the effectiveness of the instruction by making self-evaluation during or after the class based on the observations. Concerning this situation, teachers articulated the followings:

When I feel that the students do not comprehend something, I assume that I could not teach something accurately there. Or there could be moments when I feel like I could not respond to the level of students (T20).

There have been moments when I question what I have done wrong or what has been missing, what I could do differently, or why it is so. I ask these questions a lot. I also discuss with my colleagues about the reasons (T22).

While teachers are reflecting on the effectiveness of the teaching process, they consider the significance of responding to students' cognitive needs and interests. Therefore, based on the reflection, teachers make an effort to include various teaching methods and activities in their lessons for responding to students' needs. Also, they stated that in order to improve the instruction, they get help from different sources, such as online sites, course books, and colleagues. Regarding these, teachers stated the followings:

> Structuring a lesson by diversifying the methods is highly important. Some students comprehend by writing, some by reading, some by seeing on the smartboard, or some by doing exercises on digital platforms (T7).

> For example, if an activity had not caught the students' attention, I do not use the same activity in another topic. Let's say, it was a matching activity, I would not use it any longer. I try to find another activity or modify the same activity to make it more attractive (T2).

> I always consider how it could be taught better, which topics I should cover, whether I should integrate visuals into the lessons, etc. When I think about what can be done more, I look upon some websites to see what they have done for similar situations, or learn about the methods of other teachers on online platforms, such as Instagram and Facebook groups. If I find appropriate materials or games, I try to use them in my class (T17).

4.2.2.3. Commitment to Students and Their Learning

Based on the analysis, the third dimension of teacher commitment has emerged as commitment to students and their learning. The findings are presented under two groups as caring about students and making an effort for students' learning.

To begin with, the term caring about students is a general one which has various ways to show, such as providing help for students' problems and needs, making an effort for touching students' lives, and establishing a good relationship with them. Almost all teachers indicated the importance of caring about students in terms of various issues mentioned above. In the followings, there are some quotes from teachers regarding the importance of caring about students:

The most essential need of students here is care. I mean I try to give care as they were not much cared by their parents because they have many siblings and their parents are indifferent. Children like it when they are cared for (T20).

... when it is needed, a teacher really makes a sacrifice of their own personal time. For example, the teacher care about his/her students. We as teachers are not required to care about them, but we do since it makes us and the child happy(T22).

To get into details of caring about students, the first issue emphasized by teachers that indicates a teacher's commitment to students is establishing a good relationship with them. This issue comprises several points, such as loving students, making an effort to know about them, having a good interaction and keeping in touch, and creating a positive atmosphere by valuing each student and acknowledging their presence in the classroom.

Most of the teachers emphasized that they love their students, and some of them described their love as having an affectionate bond with them and touched upon its significance for establishing a good relationship. Regarding these, teachers stated the followings:

... I try to establish a relationship based more on love. When they see that I am committed to them, they become more committed to school and lessons (T5).

First of all, I see myself as a very affectionate teacher, and I love my students. A nice little behavior of them can touch my heart (T7).

As they say about being a teacher, it is completely a bond of love. We are responsible for this bond of love established… For instance, you care about the child and teach something to him/her, and you are aware that it is valuable for him/her (T11).

More than half of the teachers highlighted that besides their love for the students, they also show students that they are valuable by acknowledging their presence by celebrating their birthdays, calling them by their names, and caring about their physical and psychological well-being. Regarding these, teachers mentioned the followings:

I interact with every student one by one, ask for their well-being, and care about their academic progression. For instance, a student does not come to school, and the next day, he or she would like to be asked for his/her absence and thinks

that the teacher realizes his/her absence. I believe that I could make every single student in my classes feel that (T24).

Being respected and being loved make students feel more worthy. Mainly, I tried to learn their names quickly as I dislike calling students by saying you. I like to call them by their names, and I also used to like to be called by my name by my teachers (T13).

Almost all teachers touched upon their interactions with students and underlined that interacting with students makes the teacher-student relationship better since students feel closer to teachers. Thus, good student-teacher interaction creates a chance for students to share their ideas, problems, or the issues they need to get help. Furthermore, teachers let students know that they can interact with their teachers whenever they want. Teachers mainly mentioned that they have good interaction with their students since they like children and spending time with them. In the followings, some quotes are presented regarding having a good interaction with students:

I like to talk and chat with students out of class time. Most of my colleagues go to the teachers' room during break time, but I spend time in the classroom with my students (T7).

I try to talk with my students and encourage them to ask any questions and speak up. I try to make a connection so that they can share their troubles, struggles if any (T13).

Sometimes, we chat during the lesson, and I behave as if I were their friend. Sometimes, I try to make my speech similar to students' way of speaking. They become happy when they see a teacher having the same speaking style with them (T21).

Other than focusing on having good interaction with students in the classrooms, some teachers mainly talked about the online teaching period in terms of keeping in touch with students to provide help when needed.

For instance, I am the responsible teacher of class 5A, and we keep in touch. I always call their parents to learn whether they attend the online classes or not. I also reach out to those who could not attend or have opportunities to do so (T8).

We always keep in touch with students. They can always reach us and call us whenever they want. Therefore, being able to help students living in bad conditions that way affects me positively (T1).

Every week I talk on the phone with parents. I ask them if they have a television at their house and those who do not were supported. Even in this online period, if I do not leave students alone and call them, I believe that I am a committed teacher (T10).

Another issue for establishing a good relationship is knowing about students. Teachers express this issue in two different aspects. While some teachers mentioned the importance of knowing about students' lives outside of the classroom, some emphasized the significance of knowing about students' developmental characteristics of the age level. The common point for both aspects is the vitality of knowing about students in order to understand their behaviors, needs, problems, and interests better. Regarding these, the followings are presented as example quotes:

I have visited the parents, have been to their houses to see how they live and what they do, and have met with their mothers. These are helpful as you meet the family and see the conditions in which students live. Some problems occur due to families, and you can understand the reasons since you already know about their families. Also, problems could stem from the style of upbringing, and I got the chance to observe it (T13).

I think that age is an important matter. In lower secondary school years, students start to experience puberty, and what matters for them becomes friendship. During elementary school, the teacher mattered the most for them, yet they care about friends more in the lower secondary school years. In this regard, the teacher should make more effort to understand students' concerns in their minds.

Teachers pointed out that the classroom should be a place for students to feel good and welcomed, so they pay attention to have a positive mood. Furthermore, teachers are aware that there are different students from various backgrounds in a classroom. Thus, they all deal with various struggles both in the classrooms and in their outside lives. Concerning these, the followings are quotes from teachers:

All of my students are really important to me as they are all different and live distinct experiences. They have different families, different problems. When they come to school, away from these problems, I want them to be welcomed

with a smile and warmth. Because of that, I approach them more positively and genially (T3).

I smile with a bit of geniality, and they feel closer to me. I think smiling with geniality is crucial (T23).

Another essential component of caring about students is providing help for students' problems. Teachers indicated that they help students whenever they want for any kind of problems, and they let students know that they can reach teachers when they want to get help for the struggles they have. Almost all teachers emphasized that they are always ready to help students, and they take this as their responsibility towards students even though they need extra effort and time for that. Regarding this, teachers stated the followings:

I try to learn their feelings, emotions. I listen to them when they have something to share, and I really like doing it. We do not have a school counselor in our school; therefore, students seek help concerning that. Even though I do not know much about counseling, I do my best to help them anyway (T3).

When a student of mine has a problem primarily based on financial issues, I would not like to be indifferent about it; I would like to interfere with these needs (T6).

I do my best for children. If there is a problem, need, or anything that I could do, I would like to offer my help. This is not limited to the working hours and the basic requirements of the profession; instead, I would like to make an extra effort to help them (T11).

Besides providing help for students' needs and problems, teachers referred to the effort they made to touch students' lives as one of the components of caring about students. More than half of the teachers pointed it out by stating their future goals for students, efforts for broadening their horizons, and encouraging students to develop themselves. Before going into details, in the followings, some quotes are presenting the importance teachers give for touching students' lives:

For me, commitment refers to touching students' lives, I mean making an impact on their lives on an action basis. This is highly crucial (T6).

.... A teacher comes across thousands of students, but a student has only one unforgettable teacher… For example, a student comes to the teacher by saying "I have succeeded thanks to you, my teacher." Thus, I wish I could touch a few students' lives and see them reaching their goals (T6).

Since teachers are willing to make a difference in students' lives, more than half of the teachers indicated that they have certain goals for their students' future lives. While the goals of a few teachers are related to academic achievement, most of the teachers aim to raise students as good citizens with moral values and necessary social skills. Regarding these, teachers articulated the followings:

My wish for them is to enroll at a good high school and develop themselves academically. I would say saving themselves from the disadvantaged life conditions (T27).

The most significant to me is really for them to be good people… As time passes, they will forget about English and me, but at least I want them not to forget to be good people, well-behaved individuals, and at least they do behave nicely to each other. I mean, these human-related aspects are more prominent than academic subjects for me (T3).

… I would like my students to be good, sophisticated, and polite people. It does not matter which occupation they perform or which high school, qualified or non-qualified, they go to. I would say that being a good person and representing themselves well in a milieu are enough (T5).

To make the term touching students' lives more specific, teachers expressed their aims for broadening students' horizons since their students have narrow visions due to living in disadvantaged regions of the country. Regarding their aims, the following quotes are presented:

They live in small villages. I am striving so that they could at least develop themselves and see that the world is a big place. For example, when a text comes up about Pamukkale, I show the beautiful places in Turkey such as travertines or Nevşehir-Ürgüp-Göreme so that they become aware of these places and know it is not limited to the place where they live. I would like them to discover the world (T10).

Their visions are restrained as they live in isolated neighborhoods. They do not even travel inside Kars… I make them dream, even their dreams are so restricted that it does not flow outside these neighborhoods. Or they do not

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dream about university… I would very much like them to see other cities and lives in the future (T12).

I always want to demonstrate different sports to children. They only learn about basketball or football, but I at least would like them to learn badminton, bocce… I want to do more for them to let them experience further (T8).

Since teachers have goals for their students, they naturally tend to encourage them. During the interviews, some teachers talked about motivating students to go further in their academic studies. Also, some of the teachers especially emphasized the disadvantages of female children because of their culture. Thus, they indicated that sometimes they make more effort for preventing drop out of female students due to families' pressure for early marriage. Moreover, to encourage students, teachers mostly give examples from their own lives since they are the role models for students, and they think that mentioning students about their lived experiences is more effective. Also, teachers sometimes encourage students with motivational speeches and guiding them through their future paths. In the followings, there are various example quotes regarding the issues mentioned above:

I demonstrated everything to them crystal clear with the thought that showing them how we earn our money and our opportunities would touch their lives. I tried to express the life I have been living. I tried to show what would happen if I had not studied and what happened after I had studied (T29).

What I aim for them is that I would like to encourage them, especially female children as the families look at girls as if they were already going to marry… I know that all could not get into university or get into a good high school, but I would like them to at least have a job… I try to encourage them to earn their money and stand on their own feet (T15).

As for the students' learning component of commitment to students dimension of teacher commitment, the findings regarding this are compiled under the term of making an effort for students' learning. Regarding this term, teachers addressed various issues about the teaching and learning period. The critical issues are as follows: making an effort for student engagement, being aware of individual differences, contributing to academic development, and making an extra effort for student learning, and providing material support for students.

First, teachers stated that they endeavor for student engagement during the classes. The term student engagement includes the participation of students, their interests and attention, and students' effort made for learning. During the interviews, teachers mentioned the importance of student engagement in the teaching and learning process, and they mostly talked about their effort made for engaging students in the learning process to make it worthwhile for both students and themselves to continue teaching with motivation. Also, teachers regarded their effort for student engagement to indicate their sense of commitment towards students' learning.

First of all, in order to achieve student engagement, teachers try to encourage student participation in various ways, such as integrating different activities, videos and games, or they use verbal ways to encourage their participation. Some teachers also use rewards, such as pencils, stickers, etc. In the followings some examples are presented:

> When we use different instructional materials, the student attends the lesson due to his/her eagerness to use that material even if he/she makes mistakes. We can win the student with these sorts (T16).

> I sometimes use stickers with hearts, flowers in color. Every lesson, I write well done on one of them and hang it over the board. For instance, I say that I would stick it to the notebook of an example student. That motivates students so much that even the most misbehaving student does his writing and sits down gently in order to win the sticker. I think that little reinforcing items are very crucial (T21).

Secondly, teachers also highlighted that encouraging student participation is closely related to attracting students' attention during the lesson and considering their interests while preparing activities. To illustrate, teachers mention the followings:

> Shapes or such things are important in our lesson. Thus, I like to use shapes and colorful pens to attract students' attention (T9).

> When they get bored in the lesson, there could be a transition to another activity. It might be a video, song or anything attracting their attention (T22).

Lastly, regarding student engagement, teachers indicated that praising students' efforts by saying well done or by giving them tiny presents make a big difference in their motivation for participating and making more effort even though these reinforcements seem like simple things. To illustrate, some teachers stated the followings:

> For students, even saying a well done is very valuable. For instance, I flatter a student by commenting that you have changed a lot, you are so good at and so interested in the lesson (T6).

> For instance, I buy small gifts such as pencils, post-it or something colorful that they can fancy. I give presents to the ones who come to the course or become successful and they rejoice (T25).

> For example, the topic with fifth graders was power. I sent the photos of the materials to make a dynamometer. They make and we share the pictures on the school website. This reinforces as their products are shared. They see their own creation on the school website; therefore, students' engagement increases (T9).

Regarding the sense of teacher commitment for students' learning, teachers underlined that teachers need to be aware of students' differences in the classroom and decide on the details of instruction accordingly. Teachers referred to the individual differences as learning speed, learning style, level of readiness, and students' achievement levels. Some teachers expressed the followings regarding different learning speeds and learning styles of students:

> During the lesson, I try to keep each of them under control. What I mean is that I pay attention and observe whether they all can do the activity. I monitor if they can reach the same level with my help even if they cannot progress at the same pace (T2).

> Students are so different from each other. For instance, some students do not want to play games in the lesson as they need raw information instead of learning during the games… But there is also a group preferring lessons covered with games. As a teacher, you need to establish the balance (T18).

As for individual differences of students regarding their readiness and achievement levels, teachers pointed out that most of the students lack prerequisite knowledge for achieving the course objectives of the current grade level they have been studying.

Hence, there also occur differences in the academic achievement levels of students. Therefore, teachers highlighted their awareness of this issue, and they try to adjust the instruction in accordance with the students' readiness levels by considering the differences among students. According to most teachers, this awareness and the effort they made shows their commitment to their students' learning. The followings are example quotes presenting teachers' awareness of the issue:

> The student profile that we encounter is also crucial. I cannot start with the most difficult ones as firstly I need to teach the basic level. I also need to organize basic activities and attract their attention in the first place. Thus, I always strive for this (T14).

> Normally I like to know students more and make plans accordingly. Because everybody's level is not the same and you cannot progress from the same point… I try to make plans in accordance with the students' readiness levels (T28).

Concerning the sense of teacher commitment regarding students' learning, as teachers emphasized, besides being aware of the students' needs, differences and finding ways to engaging them, the main thing is teachers' aims for contributing to students' academic development. During the interviews, they mentioned that they try their best for students' learning by helping them during the classroom activities. Also, some teachers stated that they organize the physical environment for students even though they think that this is not the responsibility of teachers. Regarding these, the following quotes are stated by teachers:

> For example, our school was dirty, so when we came to the school, we cleaned it ourselves. There were no curtains, we bought curtains or the windows were in a bad shape, we had them fixed etc. I think organizing the physical setting shows the importance we give to their learning (T17).

> For example, while doing an exercise in a class or if they have a problem, I try to listen to them one by one. I come near them one by one and try to offer my help (T2).

As almost all teachers work in disadvantaged regions of the country, they mentioned students' material needs as an integral component for students' academic development. Teachers provide students with resource books since most of the

students cannot reach them on their own. Some teachers highlighted that their effort to provide students with necessary materials indicates their sense of commitment to their students' learning. In the followings, there is a quote related to the providing material support.

> If they need a resource, I try to provide them with various resources. We also sometimes provide resources by contacting stationeries. We do our best to accommodate all their needs. I think this represents commitment to students (T22).

Throughout the interviews, teachers generally talked about the extra effort they made for their student's learning, which requires them to spend extra time. They regarded this situation as one of the essential points showing their sense of teacher commitment to students' and their learning. They stressed considering students' needs and helping them continuously even out of the working hours without expecting anything in return. To illustrate, teachers stated the followings regarding spending extra time and making an extra effort for students' learning:

> I provide every kind of support that I could. Even at midnight, I answer their questions. I would not answer after working hours if I want, but I do that (T3).

> Without any financial return, we are running a coach teacher system for students. We arrange extra study hours for students. We find question banks ourselves and lead students, but of course not every teacher does that (T17).

> When I go to school, I call a student and teach him/her just because they do not have chance to join online lessons. In return for this, I have no financial gain. I do not have a moral gain as well since the other teachers or the administration do not appreciate it. Still I would like to do that (T24).

4.2.2.4. Commitment to Professional Development

Based on the analysis of the results, the fourth and last dimension of teacher commitment emerged as the commitment to professional development. Teachers stated that they made an effort to perform the job in a qualified way, so the findings are compiled under the professional development dimension of teacher commitment by grouping them into two as staying up-to-date and collaborating with colleagues.

During the interviews, most of the teachers mentioned the significance of staying up-to-date in terms of professional issues, such as knowing about new instructional methods, technological tools, and developments in education. Teachers underlined that in the 21st century, everything is changing rapidly, so they feel the need to adapt to change. The ways for staying up-to-date are mentioned as attending seminars and courses, following various resources, such as online platforms (i.e., teacher forums, social media, useful websites) and related publications (i.e., books, articles, and journals), discovering new teaching methods and tools. Lastly, some teachers stated that graduate studies, such as a master's degree, are beneficial for going deeper in the field with the help of academic studies.

First of all, teachers emphasize the need to keep up with the developments in the field and make an effort to adapt to the changes that the current era requires. Regarding this, a sample quote is as follows:

> A teacher must follow profession or field-related current events, current achievements or make professional updates when it is needed. For instance, one must not pass without reading an interesting article in their free time. Or, one must have a look at people's projects. I think we can develop ourselves that way (T21).

Regarding attending seminars and courses, teachers stated the followings as an indication of their commitment to professional development:

> Just as the updates come to our phones, we also need to renew ourselves as teachers. I mean MoNE organizes professional training courses and seminars on various topics and I try to attend them (T3).

> I like to stay updated. I think people should develop themselves all the time and this is a requirement for teachers. I assume an unprogressive teacher to be a dead investor and it is a real loss, for the student a great loss… I try to attend seminars… Afterwards I think about what I could do for myself by keeping up to date with developments or how I could implement them in class (T28).

As for following various resources, teachers referred to online platforms and social media, and publications related to education and their subject areas. In the followings, there are quotes regarding teachers' expressions about resources they benefit.

For example, there are some groups I have attended on Facebook or pages I have followed on Instagram. Teachers always share worksheets and activities, I follow them. They arouse a great interest in me, I say I would do them in my classes (T4).

There is Sport and Life Journal, which was published by physical education teachers. I follow it as there are mentioned sports, current events, developments concerning our department (T8).

In a more specific aspect, teachers also highlighted that discovering new instructional methods or tools and integrating new methods or tools are important in order not to be repetitive in the classes as teachers having a sense of commitment for professional development.

What I do for professional development are to discover new instructional strategies and methods, introduce a new application to students, utilize several instructional activities, and not be monotonous; these are what I do for professional development (T1).

Furthermore, some teachers emphasize the importance of graduate studies that can provide more profound theoretical knowledge, which will feed the teaching phase. Concerning this, the followings are stated by teachers:

I think if you do not pursue a graduate degree, you cannot develop yourself. I believe my master's degree contributed to me a great deal because during the graduate studies, with the help of basic information, we brainstormed with ten accomplished teachers for one year. My horizon was actually widened there (T19).

In contrast to most teachers' willingness to make an effort regarding professional development, some teachers indicated their lack of sense of commitment to professional development. They stated that they do not have that much willingness for making an effort for developing professionally. Regarding this issue, some statements of the teachers are as follows:

I try to attend seminars. I have attended some talks even on digital platforms. I believe this requires a dedication. However, frankly, I am not that motivated for this issue (T21).

I sometimes follow some websites such as BBC, but I do not actually do much (T4).

As you know, the pandemic greatly affected face-to-face seminars. And also, under the conditions of the eastern parts, this could not happen. If I can, I try to attend online professional development activities. However, the professional development part is missing, I think due to the busy life of mine (T20).

Moreover, some teachers mentioned the reasons of the lack of commitment to professional development. They stated that they have lack of opportunities for professional development studies due to the conditions of the schools or the region they work. Regarding this, a sample statement is as follows:

I work at a village school, so I live in the village, but professional development events are done in the city center. So, it is very difficult for me to go to there because it takes more than half an hour, and we encounter a ton of troubles such as road closures and not being able to find a vehicle in winter. (P16)

Conditions of school are not very good here. Since my primary goal is to provide basic things, I don't have time to do anything extra, so I cannot actually get to that level. Maybe if I were in a school with everything is okay, then I could spare more time for such things. (P14)

Also, teachers expressed that they do not feel the need for developing themselves since they do not have an opportunity for implementing the things they have learned depending on the lack of facilities and poor conditions. Also, they believe that they are already qualified to meet their current students' needs. Therefore, they do not have the feeling of lack of self-efficacy for now in the current situations even though they think that they are not fully qualified teachers. Some of them stated that if they work at a different school with good conditions, sufficient facilities, and highly achieving students, they would intend to develop themselves. Regarding these issues, their statements are as follows:

So for now, I don't make an effort for professional development because I am able to meet students' needs for now. Even if I develop myself by learning new things, I cannot apply it because the class size is large and the conditions of the school are very bad. No matter how much I improve myself, I cannot apply it. If I go to a qualified school, I can try to improve myself there because the school's conditions and facilities will be good and student success level will be high. Maybe I will feel inadequate and lack of self-efficacy, and these

situations will motivate and encourage me to develop professionally, but for now I do not need to improve myself here because I find myself sufficient to respond to cognitive needs of students (T25).

I want to develop myself, but I don't have an opportunity to use it. For example, I've been willing to study robotic coding for a long time, but then I say, 'you are working in a village school now, what will you do with coding?'. In other words, I think that I cannot use it even if I develop myself, so this lowers my motivation. But for example, if I were in the western part of Turkey, I would definitely devote myself to further development since there are high achiever students and schools in good conditions. However, the situation we are in right now affects me negatively and so I guess I am not doing anything for professional development (T24).

With respect to professional development, besides staying up-to-date with various professional development activities, teachers underscored the importance of collaborating with colleagues by sharing experiences, ideas, and materials or conducting projects for developing themselves professionally and improving the educational process they take part in as its agents. In respect of these, the followings are stated by teachers:

For instance, my subject matter is Turkish. When I hear from my colleagues or another Turkish teachers something new or something I have known in a wrong way, I feel happy to have learned that. Learning something new makes me happy in terms of developing myself (T27).

We conduct e-twinning projects, which have contributed to us a great deal. For instance, we won a prize last year. Thanks to it, we developed ourselves in technology. We have also learned a lot from it. I think a teacher must develop herself/himself, and never be the one who makes no progress (T23).

For example, there has been a TÜBİTAK project where I was the project manager last year. We wrote down a project. Actually, the acceptance and conditions were pretty hard. I have strived a lot. I appreciate our principal who supported us. We worked very hard and our project was chosen. This has been very beneficial in terms of professional development (T29).

4.2.3. Teacher Retention

Regarding the third theme of the second research question, teacher retention, the analysis of the results showed two sub-themes as (1) remaining in the profession and (2) tendency to leave the profession. While some teachers indicate that they want to stay in the profession until they get retired, some have certain hesitations. The details of the sub-themes are provided in the following paragraphs.

4.2.3.1. Remaining in the Profession

As the first sub-theme of teacher retention, teachers' staying in the profession refers to their willingness to continue teaching for the rest of their lives. With respect to these, teachers stated the followings:

> I would like to continue in this profession and I would choose this profession if I had any other chance. I never think of quitting; thus, I consider myself to be committed to my profession (T1).

> I do not want to quit my job as I am fond of brisk life, and love children as well (T26).

While some of the teachers directly expressed their desire for continuing in the profession, some teachers pointed out their concerns regarding the level of the institution. Even though they still want to continue teaching, they expressed their intentions to transition from MoNE to HEC because they think that MoNE limits teachers' autonomy a lot. Another reason is regression in the field knowledge due to teaching the same topics repeatedly in the lower grade levels.

> I do not feel burnout. I also do not consider quitting. However, the MoNE restrains teachers and narrows down the space of teachers under certain circumstances. Or, I could have some administrators and colleagues that I would not like to work with. When this occurs, I happen to think about working at a university as universities are at least open to ideas and the places conducive to development (T28).

> I have had a goal concerning my academic career. I wanted to pursue it more as training teachers have attracted my attention further. If I had the chance, or could accomplish it, I would like to do that since I feel regression at MoNE and it might be tedious (T5).

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4.2.3.2. Tendency to Leave the Profession

As opposed to remaining in the profession, according to the analysis of the interview data, some teachers mentioned their tendency to leave the profession due to various reasons, such as negative effects of online teaching period, interest for different areas, and workload of the teaching profession. In the following paragraphs the quotes indicating teachers' tendency to leave the profession is expressed:

> I have questioned myself, my life, my choice of profession very much during this online teaching process. I did a lot of research on different occupations. Actually, If I feel satisfied in my profession, I would like to pursue it. For example, it happens when the schools are open and I make an effort and get the reward of my efforts. However, this online teaching process actually does not satisfy me at all. In this process, I have had several question marks concerning retention in the profession (T7).

> For instance, if I were a civil servant, I would turn off my computer at 5 p.m. and go home and would not think about anything else. However, teaching is a non-stop profession as I think about my students, prepare exams at night or evaluate the exam papers. If I had the chance, I would consider choosing another profession (T12).

4.3. Factors Affecting Teacher Commitment of Novice Teachers

The third research question aims to explore the factors affecting the level of teacher commitment of novice teachers. Therefore, the research question is asked as "What are the factors affecting the sense of teacher commitment?". During the interviews, novice teachers mentioned various factors which weaken and strengthen their teacher commitment. Thus, concerning the answers, two themes emerged as (1) weakening factors and (2) strengthening factors. The themes and related sub-themes are summarized in Table 4.3.

As shown in Table 4.3, weakening factors have the following sub-themes: Reality shock, professional factors which includes teaching, online teaching, school-related, and job-related factors; relational factors referring to the relations with colleagues, administrators, and parents; and lastly, personal factors which are related to teacher himself/herself.

Table 4.3

The Themes and Sub-themes for the Factors Affecting Teacher Commitment

Themes	Sub-themes
1. Weakening factors	1.1. Reality Shock
	1.2. Professional Factors
	1.2.1. Teaching-related
	1.2.2. Online teaching
	1.2.3. School-related
	1.2.4. Job-related
	1.3. Relational Factors
	1.3.1. Relations with colleagues
	1.3.2. Relations with administrators
	1.3.3. Relations with parents
	1.4. Personal Factors
2. Strengthening factors	2.1. Professional Factors
	2.1.1. Teaching-related
	2.1.2. Job-related
	2.2. Relational Factors
	2.2.1. Relations with students
	2.2.2. Relations with colleagues
	2.2.3. Relations with administrators
	2.2.4. Relations with mentors
	2.2.5. Relations with parents
	2.3. Personal Factors

As for the strengthening factors, which is the second theme, there came up the following sub-themes: Professional factors including teaching-related, students-related, and job-related factors; relational factors regarding the relations with

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colleagues, administrators, mentors, and parents; and personal factors that refer to teachers' self-centered factors.

4.3.1. Weakening Factors

Based on the analysis of the interview data, the novice teachers' sense of commitment is observed to be affected negatively due to the reality shock faced during the initial years of the profession. Besides reality shock, other weakening factors regarding professional issues refer to teaching, online teaching, school, and the job itself. Moreover, the problematic issues in relations with colleagues, administrators, and parents negatively influence teacher commitment. Lastly, novice teachers themselves have certain personal factors that cause a decrease in their teacher commitment. Each of these weakening factors will be presented in the following paragraphs with direct verbatim evidences.

4.3.1.1. Reality Shock

The first sub-theme of the weakening factors of teacher commitment is the reality shock that almost all teachers mention. Teachers expressed that they confront various unexpected situations when they start teaching even though they prepare for the teaching profession through pre-service teacher education programs. The aspects that they mentioned under the sub-theme of reality shock are environmental and cultural issues, the gap between theory and practice, student profile, non-teaching works, and physical conditions and facilities of the schools.

To begin with, during the interviews, teachers touched upon the environmental and cultural issues that made them shocked. Participant teachers have been appointed to the schools in different regions of Turkey. Most of them work in small towns or villages in disadvantaged regions. Therefore, they stated that when they went to the regions they were appointed, they got shocked because of the unfamiliar life conditions. Especially the teachers who have grown up in big cities of Turkey had

difficulties adapting to the new environment. Some teachers mentioned the issue as it is seen in the followings:

> I have never lived in a small town. I studied in İstanbul. After spending a long time there, I got stunned in every way when I arrived here. I do not still feel like I belong here, I have never felt that (T20).

> I always would like to be a teacher working in villages, but I started to say that I would not want to be a teacher working in villages after seeing the roads of the village. Physical conditions affect a person greatly (T26).

As for cultural issues, some teachers mentioned the challenges of being part of a different culture in a different region. Regarding this, the following quote is stated by a teacher:

> We feel like a fish out of water as we do not know the culture of this place. The climate is different and you do not know how to communicate with parents due to the cultural differences (T28).

Concerning the cultural differences, a common issue for teachers is the language barrier because, as teachers stated, there are students from different cultures who do not know Turkish even though they live in Turkey for a long time, as it is stated below:

> In my class, there are students who do not know Turkish. This stems from the city where there are many refugee children from Syria. I have also a student who has become a sixth grader without knowing any Turkish. It was shocking for me. I cannot even communicate with this student and we have made another student who knows Turkish and Arabic translate what it is said. This was the most shocking situation I have experienced (T5).

Except for cultural and environmental issues, some teachers emphasized the gap between theory and practice that causes a big reality shock for novice teachers resulting in disappointment. On the other hand, teachers mentioned unmet high expectations because of the gap between theory and the harsh reality of the actual classroom settings. To illustrate, the followings are expressed by teachers:

> In my opinion, the training that we have taken from the university was exactly utopic. And we arrived here and faced disappointment, so the situation became dreams versus reality (T17).

> At university, we have always been trained about learning by doing. When we came here, in my opinion, what we learnt seemed to be idealistic because the classes are highly crowded. Our training was targeting maximum 20 people (T25).

> We are unfortunately like Pollyanna, not so realistic… I had expectations, knowledge, and you think to yourself that you have learned this and that and you would put them into action this way and that way as I have been trained. However, you confront the conditions and these conditions push you towards the traditional education (T20).

Concerning the harsh reality of the classrooms, most teachers expressed their reality shock and disappointments regarding the achievement levels of students since their levels were entirely below the teachers' expectations. Teachers mentioned their disappointments as follows:

> When I first came here, sixth and seventh grade students' incapability in English made me shocked, they even could not say their names in English., that was really shocking for me because I have never expected academic achievement to be that low. I gave lessons and after two weeks, I felt burn-out very much and discouraged. I could not do my anticipated plan like I would make them play these games, etc. because students even could not say "my name is" when I asked their names to get to know each other in the first hour. That moment was really shocking for me (T1).

> When I asked "How are you?" in English to the seventh graders, they stared at me blankly. I was shocked and told myself that I left the utopia. It was overwhelming. I felt disappointed. Some facts that they do not understand when you speak English and they do not learn when you teach were slapped in the face as harsh realities. At that moment, I felt really sad and disappointed (T3).

Other than the classroom realities and the teaching work, teachers face non-teaching paperwork for the first time when they start the teaching profession. Therefore, they mentioned they felt overwhelmed due to much paperwork since they have not been informed about them before starting the profession. To illustrate, teachers' statements are presented below:

> During teacher training at university, nothing mentioned about additional courses, wages or how to fill the documents at schools. I did not know what the additional course is, what wage is and how the documents are filled out. When encountering and learning these, I was shocked (T2).

When it comes to the physical conditions and facilities of the schools, some teachers mentioned the bad conditions and lack of facilities of their schools as a shocking factor.

> … the physical conditions of the school made me deeply shocked and affected me adversely. It made me think about what I was doing there, whether I chose a wrong profession, or that I should not be there. That time, it diminished my commitment. I also questioned my choice and why I was there (T24).

Lastly, as a common point of teachers regarding reality shock, they feel disappointment due to facing unexpected issues. Also, these disappointments cause them to lose their teacher commitment gradually as time passes because they tend to be less willing for an extra effort since they have disappointments beforehand. The following quote is an example for this issue:

> At some moments, I have had some opinions or efforts vanishing after thinking about "what would I do?", "what would change if I do?". That certainly does not change anything in my teaching, I need to behave professionally… But, while I am eager to make more effort, I have become in the mood of only doing my job and fulfilling the expected responsibilities. In my third year, I do not feel eager or make an extra effort anymore (T29).

4.3.1.2. Professional Factors

As the second sub-theme of the weakening factors, professional factors affecting teacher commitment are grouped as teaching-related, online teaching, school-related, and job-related factors. Each one of them will be explained and supported with direct quotations from the data set.

4.3.1.2.1. Teaching-related

During the interviews, all of the teachers talked about some teaching-related factors as affecting their teacher commitment negatively. They referred to problematic issues stemming from students. Student-centered factors are as follows: Individual

differences among students, low level of readiness, low achievement, lack of engagement, and students' attitudes towards education. Other than student-centered factors, teachers mentioned issues related to classroom management and unable to get the reward of their efforts.

To begin with, the first issue regarding student-centered factors is individual differences among students, most teachers referred to achievement gaps among students. Also, they emphasized the challenges regarding diverse types of students that includes the ones from different backgrounds, speaking different languages, and students with special needs. Teachers pointed out that these individual differences cause challenges in classroom instruction that discourage the willingness of them. Regarding these issues, some teachers stated the followings:

> Every student has different characters, coming from different backgrounds. Their learning styles, problems and points of view are very different from us, for that reason you find yourself feeling lost and struggling with how to handle this diversity (T7)

> On academic-wise, there are very considerable differences among students in our class. For instance, there are a student who is very bright and a student who does not have a clue about mathematics or we have students who need individualized instruction. Responding to all of these could become really hard. You feel like giving up after some time (T5).

> Most of the Syrian children do not know how to write. They can understand you in speaking, their Turkish is great, but it does not work when it comes to writing. They do not know Turkish in writing. That really discourages me. As always said, you teach English, yet she/he does not know Turkish yet. You cannot skip over the language barrier because of their lack of knowledge in Turkish (T1).

Another student-centered factor is students' low level of readiness. Teachers mentioned low level of readiness as a weakening factor in terms of commitment because even though teachers are willing to teach something, students' low level of readiness is a hindrance for carrying out the instruction. With respect to this, a sample quotation is as follows:

> Students could have some shortcomings from previous knowledge. As content is consecutively progressing, they are supposed to be ready as having learned the previous subjects. Students' unreadiness causes a great problem. If they are not ready, you are forced to go back and revise, which extends the planned

process during that class hour. This might be demotivating and you could feel burnt-out after some time (T14).

Also, as a critical issue regarding students' level of readiness, teachers stated that there are even illiterate students in their classes. Most teachers underlined this problem as a more serious one than not having prerequisite knowledge. To illustrate, a sample statement from teachers is as follows:

> In my first year, there was a class from fifth grade. In this fifth grade class, students did not know how to read and write. I really could not resolve it as my conscience does not rest if I do not teach English because the students would have a hard time next year. However, they even did not know how to read and write and their writing skill is very much lacking. I was very unwilling and did not want to go to that class (T4).

In line with students' low level of readiness, all teachers mentioned low achievement levels of students as another student-centered factor. They mainly talked about students' failure in classroom activities and exams since students have problems in understanding the subjects. Regarding these, some quotes are provided below:

> The first factor affecting my commitment is students' very low academic success. Low grades from the quizzes done at the end of the units lower my enthusiasm. They still do not know something I have emphasized or they have seen since their primary school years. We spend such a long time and teach these students, so feel like wasting my breath (T1).

> The student profile is very low; I mean there is a low rate of success. Not only in my class, but in every class, they are unsuccessful. In a class with 50 students, there are at most 2-3 successful students. Their capacities are very limited, so they are really unsuccessful. You explain very simply all through the lessons. That diminishes your enthusiasm after a while (T25).

Concerning the student-centered factors, lack of student engagement is another influential issue in terms of affecting teachers' commitment. Almost all teachers emphasized the negative effects of students' lack of engagement which especially refers to the indifference of students to participate in the lesson, indifference to learn, and lack of effort for carrying out the learning tasks and their responsibilities.

First of all, in relation to lack of participation, teachers articulated the followings:

> In general, you teach the lesson. Sometimes students do not respond, they even do not say okay as a reaction. They do not participate in the lesson. You ask questions or teach, but no response is taken. When there is no response or they do not participate, these are the times that I feel exhausted and I feel very bad (T25).

When it comes to students' indifference towards lessons, the following quote is a sample statement for it:

> In terms of instruction, there could be some problems in class. For example, students might not demand as in supply-demand balance. They do not want to learn, be in the class. You cannot reinforce, motivate, or draw their attention. As a matter of course, it also affects your enthusiasm as a teacher (T21).

Lastly, students' lack of effort and irresponsibility are also referred by most teachers, and they stated that students' lack of effort and being irresponsible towards the tasks teachers assign are also influential factors affecting teachers' commitment negatively. They are as follows:

> There are of course times we feel not committed to our profession. It goes like this, for example, when they do not do something we want them to do, or when they do not put any effort into an activity or a homework; of course, we feel discouraged because to fulfill a responsibility, they do not show even the slightest of the effort we made for them (T13).

As the last component of student-centered factors, students' negative attitudes towards lessons and getting education causes students' to be uninterested in the lessons which make teachers feel down and unwilling to perform the job.

> The most problematic area for me is the attitudes of students towards lessons. I mean they love school, but they are not responsible enough for the matter of lessons. Because their parents have contacts abroad and students have got such ideas in their minds: I do not need to study, one day I can quit and leave. This lowers my motivation a lot as the student does not have any plan concerning progression in education. This affects me adversely (T22).

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The next weakening factor under the teaching-related factors is teachers' feeling of paying futile effort stemming from getting no reward of the efforts they made for students. Almost all teachers stated that sometimes they cannot receive the reward for their efforts, so they feel as if they were paying futile effort. Their statements regarding this issue are presented below:

> Sometimes we feel very down and lose our professional enthusiasm. Not getting feedback, reward of the efforts from students, not seeing any change in character, observing the repetition of unwanted behaviors are very much discouraging (T7).

> In spite of all the efforts, when I do not get any reward of efforts from students, I really think "this job is impossible to be done" (T18).

> No matter how I make an effort, I do not see any response. Neither of administration, nor of parents, nor of students, I see any response. I would say then that I make an effort for nothing. There is no reward to what I have done. The feeling of struggling in vain surfaces every time. Therefore, I experience a decrease in my teacher commitment (T25).

Regarding the teaching related sub-theme of the weakening factors, classroom management emerged as a critical issue causing decrease in the sense of teacher commitment because most teachers mentioned the challenges they had because of students' misbehaviors in the classroom. Teachers stated that they spend a lot of time for dealing with students' misbehaviors that stem from students' disrespectfulness and large class size. This problem causes them lose time and sometimes they feel that they cannot make a difference in students' behaviors in terms of solving their behavioral problems. This in turn causes them to feel decrease in their sense of teacher commitment. In the followings, teachers mentioned the regarding the influence of misbehaviors:

> Some classrooms are large size, so it made me afraid at first, and controlling the class is very challenging. Most of the time, students tend to make noise and misbehave. So, sometimes when nothing works in class, I feel burn-out and gets into an ungrateful vicious circle. That inevitably could lead to the loss of my enthusiasm (T27).

> In some moments, you feel eager and want to conduct the lesson, but you cannot as you need to solve a non-teaching problem immediately. That also

discourages me a bit because I go to class with nice materials, but instead of teaching, you try to stop a fight among students, or you hear swear words. What I mean is that you lose time with students' misbehaviors rather than carrying out instruction. This is absolutely discouraging thing (T14).

When I perceive a student's misbehavior as disrespect to me, naturally, my commitment ends at that moment. There are already too many students with conduct disorder at school. It is very frustrating for me not to be able to fix them. I think about it even at home, I worried about it that this child will graduate in 2 years, but we could not make any difference in their misbehaviors. This increases my worries and my commitment is harmed because of it (T12)

4.3.1.2.2. Online Teaching

Based on the analysis of interview data, almost all teachers underscored online teaching period as a weakening factor in terms of teacher commitment. Thus, online teaching aspect is examined under the sub-theme of professional factors as a weakening factor for teacher commitment. Teachers mentioned online teaching as a highly discouraging factor in terms of willingness in the profession that is about sense of teacher commitment. Concerning online teaching, there appeared issues related with the lack of facilities for attending classes that causes low students attendance; problems with teaching process which related to the lack of teacher-student interaction, lack of control over students, ineffective lessons, and heavy workload and responsibilities of teachers.

First of all, online teaching period requires students and teachers to have additional equipment, such as internet connection, computer, tablet, or smart phone for attending the lessons. However, as participant teachers mentioned, most of the students especially in disadvantaged regions struggle with the lack of facilities for joining the classes, so there is low attendance rate. Teachers touched upon this issue as a demotivating and discouraging factor for both themselves and students. Therefore, teachers mentioned it as a weakening factor for their sense of teacher commitment because there is low student attendance, and teachers cannot provide a solution for students' lack of facilities. To illustrate, teachers stated the followings:

I have been longing for student presence since no students attend my online classes. I wish they could attend lessons… I do not feel myself as a teacher and I feel like we sit idly as we do not go to schools. Let aside feeling committed, I do not even feel like I am a teacher right now (T25).

When online teaching started, my enthusiasm gradually started to decrease. I would say my commitment has been diminishing because children could not connect to the internet, they do not have opportunities, computers, tablets, telephones. Only one or two students could attend my lessons. Actually I am the person who can reach them easily, but I cannot help them. This makes me feel really bad (T26).

Secondly, online teaching period brings problems related with teaching process as teachers mentioned during the interviews. Concerning the teaching process, teachers pointed out the lack of teacher-student interaction that causes lack of control over students during the lesson. They mainly talked about that they cannot see students' faces and cannot even hear their voices during online sessions which causes demotivation due to lack of reaction and feedback from students. Also, teachers underlined that due to lack of interaction with students in online teaching, teachers feel the lack of control over students because they cannot interact with them effectively, so they cannot monitor their learning during the activities. Regarding these, teachers stated the followings:

I would say it affected the bond between me and the profession as the most motivating aspect was student feedback for me. However, I could not feel it during the online instruction. You could not see them, hear their voices, these are problems. There is no joy; thus, I cannot be eager for it after a while (T12).

Right now students could not concentrate on distance education. They can be occupied with other things. I can draw their attention in face-to-face class, but right now their cameras are turned off, I cannot even see whether their books or notebooks are open in front of them. I cannot interfere with it (T3).

Moreover, teachers emphasized that lack of interaction and control over students in turn influence the effectiveness of the lessons. The following quotes are stated by teachers.

There are no possibilities for any extra interaction, visuals or appeal to many senses. We sometimes used to do hands-on learning, but here we cannot. Lessons are not very effective. Such reasons make you feel inadequate and that is a feeling making me question my teacher commitment (T17).

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Last issue regarding the weakening influence of online teaching on teacher commitment is heavy workload and burden of responsibilities. Teachers express their tiring workload as follows:

> During this pandemic, it has been very hard, really very hard. Teaching online brings two times more workload. Apart from that, without exception, I attend a meeting, get busy with paperwork every day. I do not even have time to get prepared for lessons. I feel worn-out, even burnt-out (T18).

4.3.1.2.3. School-related

On the basis of the analysis, school-related issues emerged as a weakening factor of teacher commitment. Regarding the school-related factor, most teachers underlined the physical conditions and facilities of the schools as highly weakening factors. They stated that physical facilities and conditions of the schools are among the core issues for carrying out the education process effectively in a healthy environment. Also, they emphasized that even though they are willing to teach students by doing their best, the physical condition and lack of facilities hinder them. Then, they feel discouraged because this problem is not the one that they can solve individually. To illustrate, some sample quotes are provided below:

> The physical conditions of the school really affect me very much. For instance, we do not have a teacher's room. When I first came, we were having break time in the basement. When you do not have a cupboard, items in a regular place, you cannot feel like you belong there, which greatly influences teacher commitment (T12).

> The importance of physical variables is great, really great. I believe that they need to be provided. I am aware that there are expectations from me. When I could not accomplish them due to the physical conditions, which are beyond my control, there appear feelings of disappointment and inadequacy. In such a situation, I think maintaining commitment would be a bit utopic (T14).

> This deprivation constrains me a lot. For instance, I am a science teacher, but I do not have a lab. I try to do something with my own facilities by carrying stuff from home on the very basic level. But of course when I cannot exactly do what I would like to perform, my motivation diminishes. I question why it is so, commitment goes down sharply (T20).

4.3.1.2.4. Job-related

Regarding the weakening factors for teacher commitment theme, under professional factors, job-related issues came out as having negative influence in teachers' level of commitment. Job-related factors refer to the status of teaching profession and non-teaching paperwork.

Teachers talked about the low status of the profession in the society as a discouraging factor. They mentioned the problems stem from perception of teaching profession as having a low status, such as disrespectfulness of parents or other people in the society. Teachers emphasized that when parents do not respect them, there occur various problems that cause teachers to lose their commitment. Teachers stated the followings:

> People's views of the teaching profession are not as what it used to be. I see it as a factor in the decrease of teacher commitment over time. The reason why today's teachers, most of us, sometimes say enough is enough and feel exhausted, is the low status of the teacher in the society. It used to be a respected profession as everyone respected teachers. Now it is not so (T1).

> Unfortunately, the status of the profession is low in the eyes of parents. We might encounter disrespect. When this is the case, a person feels discouraged after a while (T7).

During the interviews, teachers also highlighted that another job-related issue affecting teachers' commitment is non-teaching paperwork that teachers have to complete only for the sake of procedural necessities of the school. Teachers emphasized the excessive amount of paperwork that impedes their preparation time for the lessons. Then, teachers stated that they feel nervous about their performance in the class, which they refer to as the most important part of their job.

> Paperwork especially has been the part diminishing my willingness. These could be the meetings of branch teachers' committee in the beginning of the year, ŞÖK meetings. Every month, you are supposed to deliver a paper such as yearly plans. These all decrease my commitment, lessen my enthusiasm. For papers, I spend the time reserved for lessons. It consumes my energy and this time I underperform in classes and this affects me really negatively (T12).

4.3.1.3. Relational Factors

With respect to the findings, the third sub-theme of the weakening factor emerged as relational factors that includes relations with colleagues, administrators, and parents. Each one of them will be explained and enriched with direct verbatim data from the interviews.

4.3.1.3.1. Relations with Colleagues

According to the analysis of the data, teachers indicated that problems regarding relations with colleagues have a great effect on the sense of teacher commitment in a negative way. Therefore, they referred to two aspects which are colleagues' discouraging attitudes and the lack of cooperation and collaboration among them. The details of these two aspects are presented below with quotations.

Most of the teachers stated that in the school environment, colleagues have an important place in educational process in which they share common things and have similar routines in the school. Teachers expressed that in every school day, they spend time with their colleagues, or share ideas or experiences. Therefore, the attitude of colleagues and the collaboration among them is of great importance in terms of performing the job willingly. However, most of the teachers mentioned the discouraging attitudes of colleagues and lack of cooperation among them as a decreasing issue in their level of teacher commitment.

Regarding the discouraging attitudes of colleagues, teachers stated the followings:

> In the initial years of the profession, comments of other teachers such as "what have you seen" or "we have experienced a lot, what else you will see" cause a teacher to concern about what would happen. Or that demoralizes us (T13).

> When it comes to the same-branch committee, when I do a different activity, they would say why you create such a burden for us, just teach it as usual. It takes the wind out of my sails, it influences my willingness from time to time (T24).

As for lack of cooperation among colleagues which is emphasized for weakening the teacher commitment. Regarding this, teachers stated that some colleagues are unwilling to cooperate and they tend to do all the things individually. The statements of some teachers are as follows:

> For instance, I cover the topic of speed, but students do not know how to make division; thus they cannot understand that topic. If we cooperate with the mathematics teacher, we can handle it more easily. We could have less difficulties and that way we may not lose our willingness in the profession (T9).

> If we acted collectively and did something for children, it would be more effective than being on your own. However, I have to act individually as they are not so willing. That really diminishes my motivation. I think that it would be more beneficial if we act together. I would be more eager and we could be more capable (T24).

4.3.1.3.2. Relations with Administrators

On the basis of the analysis of the data, another relational factor is relations with school administrators. Teachers stated that school administrator is the person to whom each teacher turns when they have any issues to ask or get help. Therefore, relations with school administrators is an important factor for them in terms of their professional lives. Most of the teachers underlined that administrator-related issues have a negative impact on their level of teacher commitment. These weakening issues are stated as follows: disregard of teachers' efforts, unfair attitude, and lack of support and guidance, and administrative pressure.

First of all, most teachers indicated that school administrators are not sensitive about the efforts of teachers make for the profession. As teachers stated, administrators tend to focus on lacking points other than appreciating teachers' effort. This issue leads teachers to pay less effort, or they just fulfill the basic responsibilities other than making an extra effort. This situation refers to the decrease in their level of teacher commitment as most of the teachers stated as in the followings:

> I have struggled a lot for students to increase their test scores. However, the administrator has seen my lesson unworthy. And I said to myself "I struggle a lot, but am not praised anyway." I have a principal who does not value my

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lesson and my effort. This situation lowers my motivation. I do not make extra effort anymore (T25).

As much as a teacher's failure is criticized, their success should be praised. If not, the willingness of the teacher decreases. She thinks that I have accomplished, but no one has noticed. The administration has a great influence on a teacher (T30)

As for another influential issue in teachers' level of commitment, unfair attitude of school administrators is mentioned by some teachers. They stated that while school administrators favor some teachers more and take their ideas and needs into account, they do not give importance to other teachers' problems or efforts. Regarding this, there is a sample quote below:

I have problems with my administrator. How should administration be? It is to manage the school with teachers and students, but our administrator does not do so. He is a person who judges people by appearance and lowers the mood of a teacher. He discriminates against people whom he perceives to be contrasting his ideas. Seeing that, a person gets frustrated, has a bad mood and does not make any effort (T23).

Another issue regarding the relations with school administrators is the lack of support and guidance from them. Most of the teachers mention this point as hindering their willingness for making more effort since they are not encouraged. A sample quote related to this issue is as follows:

If we did not have any support from administration or from a potent person and failed in what we aim for, the responsibility of that failure would be upon us and we would face the consequences. Therefore, we are afraid to make an attempt. Realizing that we cannot be supported by the administration inhibits any attempt of mine to do more for my profession (T17).

Moreover, teachers emphasized that school administrators generally have an oppressive tone while telling them what to do. This lowers teachers' desire for carrying out the task. Also, as teachers stated, they are not provided with any options to select, rather they are just addressed certain things to do. With respect to this, the following is stated by a teacher.

When something is imposed on us such as "this certainly should be in this way and you cannot change it", you inevitably get demotivated (T13).

Related with administrators' oppressive tone, teachers also stated that administrators do not welcome new ideas. Some teachers stated the followings:

> They are not very open to innovation. For example, we arranged the first floor of our school as a Turkish street. A teacher who was appointed with me put forth the effort. However, the principal had it removed as advocating that it harmed the walls… Concerning that teacher's effort and time, I find it shameful. He started to feel offended in the profession after this incident (T7).

> For instance, once I was kicked out of the principal's room since I expressed my opinion. These sorts of situations broke my willingness. I cannot communicate freely with my principal or share my ideas as they are not open-minded (T11).

4.3.1.3.3. Relations with Parents

According to the findings, teachers talked about their relations with parents as lessening their teacher commitment because they have communication problems with parents even though they try hard for it. Also, they mentioned the negative influence of lack of parent involvement and lack of their support. As teachers stated, the reason of it is that when parents are not involved in the process, teachers feel more burden on their shoulders because when there is a problem about students, parent support is needed. Also, teachers think that the effort they made for students is futile since students' development is neglected at home. Regarding the issues mentioned above, related quotes from teachers are presented below:

> We have a disadvantage regarding parents as we do not have parent-teacher cooperation. The ones who cooperate is very few. They are very indifferent. For example, we organize parent conferences. My class is composed of 25 students, but only 5 parents attend these conferences. There are still parents who I have not known (T11).

> We educate the child and have an intimate relationship with him/her. We do everything for his/her sake, but the issue of parents makes me alienated from teaching. I have very bad memories in this matter. There have been even parents who call at 11 o'clock at night. I think the issue of parents could make a teacher fed up and lead to resignation (T1).

> There are many problems concerning attendance and parents are the only ones who can resolve it. As we cannot contact parents, we cannot overcome this struggle. Students also lack some notebooks, books, and stationery equipment.

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The ones who are supposed to provide these are parents, but they do not. This time you feel very exhausted as you have that much responsibility (T21).

4.3.1.4. Personal Factors

Considering the analysis of the data, personal factors are emerged as the sub-theme of the weakening factors for teacher commitment. Personal factors refer to the ones that are related to teachers' beliefs or feelings, such as self-efficacy belief in teaching, feeling of regression in the field knowledge and lack of job satisfaction.

First of all, most of the teachers talked about the lack of self-efficacy belief in teaching as resulting from the failure of students in class activities or exams. Teachers stated that when they cannot get the reward of what they have taught students, they reflect on their efficacy in teaching and they feel lack of it which in turn affects their teacher commitment levels negatively. In the following example, related issues are expressed by a teacher.

> I question my abilities a lot under certain circumstances. I ask myself where I have done wrong, why they cannot comprehend. I think like that I cannot teach, they cannot learn. I wear myself down as if I am not competent enough in teaching. Sure, my willingness goes down (T15)

As for the feeling of regression in the field knowledge, teachers expressed that at university they learn an intense content regarding their subject matter areas; however, after graduation they teach lower levels. Thus, they feel regression which discourages them since they do not enjoy in the lessons. They stated that this situation in turn causes a decrease in their level of commitment. Regarding this, a sample quotation is provided below:

> You are supposed to adapt the lesson content for the basic level and simplify the language. You need to check the appropriateness of the materials for the target level all the time. After a while, you think to yourself that these children do not contribute to you anyway and you experience the regression. Therefore, you cannot conduct the lesson with joy. This of course affects my commitment (T4).

Lastly, teacher emphasized the importance of job satisfaction for willingness to continue performing the job. Thus, according to teachers' statements, job satisfaction is closely related with teacher commitment. However, some teachers stated that they cannot get job satisfaction because of lack of facilities, and sometimes they cannot get the reward of their efforts from students. Therefore, teachers mentioned the lack of job satisfaction as an influential factor for the sense of teacher commitment. A sample for this as follows:

> I am in a village school and the opportunities are very limited. For instance, I cannot have lessons right now as students are not given opportunities. After some time, there is nothing left I could do for them. At that moment, I feel inefficient and lack of job satisfaction. I cannot see my students, so I do not feel their presence. It influences my teaching and commitment negatively (T14).

4.3.2. Strengthening Factors

Based on the analysis of the interview data, sense of teacher commitment is observed to be affected positively by various factors these are: (1) professional factors, (2) relational factors, and (3) personal factors. They are summarized in Table 4.3. The details of each sub-theme will be presented in the following paragraphs.

4.3.2.1. Professional Factors

As the first sub-theme of the strengthening factors, professional factors includes the teaching-related and job-related factors. The detail of these factors are explained in the following paragraphs.

4.3.2.1.1. Teaching-related

Based on the teachers' statements during the interviews, it was observed that under the sub-theme of professional factors, teaching related factors came to forefront. Most of

the teachers mentioned various factors influential in teaching phase, so they are examined under four sub-factors of teaching-related factors, such as student engagement, contributing to students' learning, getting the reward of efforts, and getting positive feedbacks from students.

The first sub-factor of teacher-related factors is student engagement. Almost all teachers touched upon the strengthening effect of it on the sense of teacher commitment. Teachers stated that students' participation in the lessons is of great importance for teachers' willingness for making more effort for teaching something to students, and teachers enjoy teaching when students participate in the lessons, answer questions, and ask for learning more. With respect to these, related verbatim evidence is as follows:

> Active participation in lessons is very crucial. As the class gets energetic and students get ambitious among themselves, at the moment when students are very eager to answer your question, you become more enthusiastic and want to teach more. In the classes where participation is high, I become more willing. Teaching becomes more pleasant (T20).

Besides students' participation, students' interests for the lessons is another component of student engagement. Teachers stated that when students are interested in the lesson, topics, or the activities, this helps them to feel more willing which in turn affects their teacher commitment positively. Concerning this issue, the followings are stated by some teachers:

> Due to the hardship in the nature of mathematics, students have a really hard time. However, seeing that even only one student could do, or get interested impresses me to a great deal (T5).

> When students ask for playing games or listening to music, I rejoice. I truly understand that they are interested (T15)

Besides, under the heading of student engagement, teachers emphasized that willingness of students for learning and the amount of the effort they made are among

the most strengthening factors for teachers in terms of sense of the teacher commitment. Regarding these, teachers stated the followings:

> The thing motivating me is the desire of a student to continue when s/he feels s/he has learned something. S/he expresses her/his desire in any way. For instance, s/he approaches you and asks some questions about the lesson even if you are on duty during the recess. The motivating part that contributes to your commitment is mostly concerned with the student's willingness (T8)

> Seeing students' making effort always increases my motivation. For instance, I would give them homework and see that they have really worked hard. I could say that this increases my enthusiasm. Endeavour of a student is the factor enhancing my willingness and teacher commitment the most (T5)

The second sub-factor of teacher-related factors is contributing to students' learning. During the interviews, teachers pointed out that when they contributing to students' learning, they feel encouraged and motivated for performing the job, and feel more committed to make more effort for their students. In the following, a sample quote from a teacher is presented:

> There could be moments when you embrace your profession. For example, it could be when a topic that I have taught is comprehended well or you see by asking simple questions that students remember the topic. To realize that the topic is in their minds is another instance (T7).

The third sub-factor is getting the reward of the efforts that teachers made for their students. This sub-factor is emphasized by most teachers. Teachers expressed that they get the rewards of effort either by ensuring students' learning, or as being appreciated by students, colleagues, or parents. Teachers defined this issue as an encouragement for the sense of teacher commitment. They stated that when they receive the reward of what they made, they feel satisfied and eager for continuing to make effort, and even more. They highlighted it as follows:

> The first factor that increases my commitment to profession is to receive the reward of our efforts from students in terms of morality, knowledge and skills, personality development and knowledge development (T7).

...It is about the feedback received from families, students or colleagues. For instance, my colleagues congratulate me by saying that students can contribute to the lesson more or comprehend better thanks to me. Such positive feedback motivates more (T10).

When realizing that the taught subject is comprehended fully by the other party, I truly become happy. I become delighted when I get such reward from students (T27).

4.3.2.1.2. Job-related

With regard to the strengthening factors theme, professional factors sub-theme includes job-related factors as the ones strengthening teacher commitment sense of teachers. Job-related factors refer to the prestige of it.

First of all, teachers stated that they feel more committed when they get positive feedback from people regarding the prestige of the job. Even though some teachers stated low status of the job as a weakening factor, some of them expressed that it is strengthening the sense of teacher commitment. A sample quote is presented in the following:

Parents make us feel respected more than enough. This feeling could most probably be the cause of my love for my profession. If I did not feel how much my profession is respected, I would not think the same way. However, under these conditions, I admire my profession more as I have noticed how it is respected. The parents are the people who have got a perception as we are here for their children. Therefore, I like this aspect of the profession (T16).

4.3.2.2. Relational Factors

Based on the analysis of the data, the second sub-theme of the strengthening factors theme emerged as relational factors. It includes relations with students, colleagues, administrators, mentors, and parents. Each one of them will be explained and enriched with direct verbatim quotations from the interview data.

4.3.2.2.1. Relations with Students

With respect to the findings, relations with students emerged under the relational factors sub-theme. Student-related factors include students' love for the teacher, having good relationship, and feeling responsible for limited opportunities of students. The first sub-factor is students' love for the teacher. Teachers emphasized that when they show students their love and care, students can easily understand it and love their teachers in turn. Therefore, there appears an affectionate bond between students and teacher. A sample quote is provided below:

> They sometimes write something expressing that they love me. These sorts of expressions especially impress me a lot. My love towards them really grows. Even if I get mad at them, when they write a letter of apology, this makes me very pleased because I know that they love me (T22).

Secondly, some teachers stated that having a good relationship with students is a strengthening factor for teacher commitment since they love students and enjoy spending time with them. They believe that being with their students in a good relationship helps them sustain and even increase their sense of teacher commitment. Therefore, they stated its importance as follows:

> We have a better vibe when me and my students make decisions collectively and I share my thoughts and they share theirs. That is one thing influencing my teacher commitment positively (T4).

As for the another issue, it is the limited opportunities of students and teachers feeling responsible for students since they value their students. Since most teachers work at schools in poor conditions in the eastern part of Turkey, they pointed out the inequality of opportunities. They highlighted that most students have limited opportunities for education, so teachers stated that their teacher commitment sense strengthens as teachers feel more responsible to provide better education to their students. With respect to this, a quote is presented below:

> Students have limited opportunities. I could exemplify it as a reason to increase my teacher commitment as students in other regions study in better schools and are academically successful. Due to the limited opportunities, I feel like I must take a lot of actions, make a lot of effort. I feel like I have responsibility towards

students because there is no private tutoring, courses or training centers or they do not have anyone at home who can offer help for their studies (T1)

4.3.2.2.2. Relations with Colleagues

Regarding the relations with colleagues, teachers underlined that it has an effect on the level of teacher commitment in a positive way when they share ideas and experiences, support each other when it is needed, and collaborate to work on certain issues.

Some teachers noted that their colleagues helped them during the adaptation period, and they still support each other when they have any problems or anything to learn how to do. Most of the teachers expressed that positive relationship with colleagues and their support and guidance have increasing effect on their sense of teacher commitment. A sample quote is as follows:

> The support of my colleagues influences my commitment. We have an environment surrounded by respect and love. Especially in my first years, they benefitted me greatly. They guided me by sharing their experiences. If I needed something or had problems, they always tried to help me (T22).

Moreover, some teachers touched upon the positive effect of sharing experiences and ideas with colleagues regarding the instructional process in terms of student behaviors and teaching methods or materials. Also, teachers pointed out that they mostly have common problems in the school context. The awareness of sharing the same problems with their colleagues prevents them from feeling alone and desperate; instead, they stated that they go on performing their job without giving up. Therefore, they emphasized the importance of having a chance for sharing experiences and ideas with their colleagues. Concerning these, statements of some teachers are as follows:

> We are always sharing among our colleagues. That motivates us and makes us eager. There could be conversations among us like "I have done that, you could also do" or "you have done it, so will I" (T16).

> We always have conversation among our colleagues from the same branch. These conversations are like "what have you been covering in the fifth grade?" or "the book of this class is pretty fine, isn't it?" or "have you watched that video?" With my friends from other disciplines, we also talk about the progress of students in our free time or during break times (T5).

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When I chat with my same-branch colleagues and share my experiences with them, I see that my experiences are not unusual. Everybody lives through similar problems. When you realize that there could be people in worse situations, you get a little bit motivated and move on. Making conversation on lessons or sharing personal issues; having common ground and sharing are great (T4).

As for collaboration, most of the teachers mentioned its effect on the willingness for striving to improve the current situations or problems regarding students, teaching, or school-related issues. Teachers highlighted that this willingness of teachers is a part of the sense of teacher commitment. They think about professional or school-related issues together with their colleagues and work collaboratively for coming up with solutions or improvements. Moreover, they conduct projects or various activities at school collaboratively. In that respect, teachers stated the followings:

For instance, with collaboration, we try to solve a problem caused by a student exhibiting negative behaviors. I give information to the class teacher. She offers her help, speaks with the students, and calls the parents. Apart from that, we collaborate for our students' progress and problems through our guidance and counselling service. This is definitely very positive both for students and for us. I could say that it is a motivating and positive situation (T7).

For example, one teacher among us puts forward an idea and says "I have thought of something like that, how can we develop it?" In every branch, we try to develop that idea. There is generally a collaboration among teachers (T10).

We have good relationships and have done different activities at school. For instance, we have carried out TÜBİTAK projects, sports competitions. We organized such events. In general, I think our relationships are pretty fine and this is one of the most motivating aspects for me in the profession (T22).

4.3.2.2.3. Relations with School Administrators

Based on the findings of the content analysis, relations with school administrators is emerged as another relational factor affecting teachers' sense of commitment. Teachers stated that relations with school administrators is highly effective in terms of strengthening the sense of teacher commitment. Regarding teachers' expressions about the school administrator factor, there came out two important aspects of relations with

school administrators which are having positive relationship with school administrators and support and guidance from them.

During the interviews some teachers stressed that having positive relationship with school administrators directly affects the willingness of teachers for carrying out job responsibilities and keeping motivated. Regarding this, a sample quote is presented below:

> Besides that, the conditions are bad, I really believe that I am lucky about the administration and my colleagues. This relationship is a detail influencing teacher commitment. I come to class in a happy mood after returning from break time or I do not have any additional problems. In the classroom, yes, I face some difficulties, but in the break time, actually I get relieved. I think that I am lucky for that matter with my colleagues and the administration (T14).

According to teachers' views regarding the administrator support and guidance, they pointed out that the support of administrators helps teachers have more courage to make an attempt to do something new or be less worried about the mistakes that they might make. Also, they highlighted that administrators stand behind teachers when they have any problems at school. Administrators' support and guidance make them feel more motivated. The following are stated by teachers regarding support and guidance by administrators:

> In our first year, we arrive at a new setting, move to a new city, and jump into a different culture. On these matters, my administrator helped me a great deal. On the other hand, teachers become more eager in their first years. Our administrator notices our eagerness. Seeing our motivation, he supports us or appreciates us for our actions. This administrator is also at the forefront to mediate when there is a problem at school or between parents and teachers. I have not had any negative experiences. I have an administrator always trying to help (T2).

> When supported by the administration, you take action more confidently. You might put yourself at risk as your principal makes you feel that s/he stands behind you. In that sense, my willingness for making more effort increases as you are motivated. Not to put it as being appreciated, but being supported gives courage and motivates a person (T21).

4.3.2.2.4. Relations with Parents

On the basis of findings of the current study, some teachers stated that relations with parents can be a strengthening factor for teachers' sense of teacher commitment if they get positive feedback from parents regarding the teaching performance. Teachers stated that positive feedbacks from parents make teachers more willing for developing themselves and contributing to students' learning. Other than that, they also stated that when they have eager parents who are willing to involve in the process, they feel better since all the burden of responsibilities are not on teachers' shoulders. Some teachers stated the followings regarding the parent feedback and involvement:

> Parents' comments regarding their students such as "she pays a lot of attention, loves you very much, is very interested in the lesson" make me more eager and are reinforcing me. I strive to develop myself or become more effective. For instance, some parents say personally that they are grateful. Or a parent comes and says that "our child loves you very much". Getting such nice feedback encourages me (T6).

> There are positive outcomes concerning parents. In general, my relationships with the parents at school are pretty good. When I explain something, they listen to me. When they want advice and I advise them, they also take them into consideration. There does not have to be a parent conference, they already come to school in order to learn their students' progress. Their visits and interest especially makes us very glad (T22).

4.3.2.2.5. Relations with Mentors

According to the interview data, the last relational factor strengthening teachers' sense of teacher commitment is their relations with mentors. Even though none of the participant teachers have a mentor currently, they tend to mention them since they think that mentors were effective in terms of positive influence on the sense of teacher commitment. They mainly talked about the support and guidance that mentor provided for them during their first years. They stated that having a person to whom they can always turn when they wonder something was beneficial. They especially get help in terms of adaptation to the school and developing themselves in terms of the instructional issues. The support and guidance that help increase teachers' sense of commitment are presented below as samples with direct quotations:

She is herself a very energetic, willing teacher; therefore, I think it made a very positive effect on me to adapt. The opportunity concerning asking questions when I cannot figure out something made a very positive impact on me. It also gave benefits in terms of teaching. She also invited me to her lessons and it influenced me positively as I always observed her lessons (T1).

My mentor helped me with the questions I asked regarding my subject matter. In the beginning, we do not know anything such as what to do, how to assess student success, how many examinations we will hold. As I appreciate it, he was always concerned about us individually. He mentioned some instructional issues such as how we would start the lesson better, and what would be suitable to teach. This process was pretty good, they helped a lot (T8).

4.3.2.3 Personal Factors

Based on the analysis of the data, the third and the last sub-theme emerged as strengthening factor for teacher commitment is personal factors. They refer to the teachers' feelings, goals, or beliefs, such as desire for making difference in students' lives, feeling of job satisfaction, making effort for professional development, and sense of responsibility towards students.

During the interviews, teachers mentioned their goals for making a difference in students' lives by emphasizing the limited opportunities of students due to living in disadvantaged regions. Thus, they stated that they have a high sense of responsibility towards students for contributing to their lives. Also, they underlined that touching students' lives makes them feel job satisfaction, leading teachers to make more effort for students. Regarding these, they stated the followings:

> As I feel that students need me, I do my best to accommodate that need. For instance, let's take online classes; students from the western regions have all the opportunities. They even have printers at their homes. Computers, telephones are at their service. If I were a teacher working there, I would not be so worried when a student cannot attend a class. But now as a teacher who works here, I would like to do more for these students due to their limited opportunities. At that point, my commitment rises (T24).

> Villages have a huge lack of facilities. Touching the hearts of the students there is professionally satisfactory, it gives me a sort of professional pleasure (T8).

> When you see the smile of a student or feel that you have been useful, you feel yourself competent and get the feeling that you are of service to someone. To continue in the profession willingly, that feeling of satisfaction is important more than anything else (T6).

Lastly, some teachers stated that they have more sense of teacher commitment when they do something for professional development and feel that they develop themselves. A sample quote regarding this issue is provided below:

> At the moment when I feel that I have become more capable, my motivation and commitment enhance. It could be a film, a book, or something different that as a light bulb goes on in my head, I really like it (T27).

4.4. Novice Teachers' Suggestions for the Sustainability and Increase of the Sense of Teacher Commitment

The fourth research question aims to be informed of the suggestions of novice teachers for sustaining and strengthening the sense of teacher commitment. Thus, the research question is asked as "What do novice teachers suggest for the sustainability and increase of the sense of teacher commitment?". During the interviews, novice teachers came up with various suggestions. Therefore, there emerged five themes, they are as follows: (1) suggestions for Pre-service Teacher Education, (2) suggestions for MoNe (3) suggestions for school administrators, (4) suggestions for mentoring period, (5) suggestions for novice teachers. The themes are summarized in Table 4.4. The details of the themes are provided in the following paragraphs one by one.

Table 4.4

The Themes and Sub-themes of Suggestions for Sustaining and Increasing Teacher Commitment

Themes	Sub-themes
1. Suggestions for Pre-Service Teacher Education	1.1. Ensuring the congruence of theory and practice 1.2. Effective school experience period
2. Suggestions for MoNE	2.1. Ensuring equal opportunities for schools 2.2. Providing effective seminars

Table 4.4 (continued)

3. Suggestions for School Administrators	3.1.Providing support and guidance 3.2.Appreciating teachers' efforts 3.3.Having fair attitude
4. Suggestions for Induction Period	4.1.Providing support and guidance 4.2.Attending a mentorship training 4.3.Enriching the content of seminars
5. Suggestions for Novice Teachers	5.1.Avoiding discouraging issues 5.2.Keeping expectations low 5.3.Keeping motivation high 5.4.Caring about professional development

4.4.1. Suggestions for Pre-Service Teacher Education

Based on the findings of the present study, the first theme of the fourth research question is about the suggestions for pre-service teacher education programs about the things to be done for the sustainability and increase of the sense of teacher commitment. All teachers provided suggestions for pre-service teacher education in terms of various aspects. The emphasized issues were related to the theoretical courses and school experience course.

First of all, teachers emphasized that there needs to be congruence between theory and practice because they mentioned the reality shock they had when they first started the profession and how it negatively affected their sense of teacher commitment. They stated that the content of pre-service teacher education program courses needs to be adaptable for real classrooms settings. Therefore, they first highlighted the significance of more realistic and practice-oriented content. They expect lecturers to integrate real classroom examples while teaching the theoretical content and provide teacher candidates with an opportunity to put into practice the things they have learned. According to the teachers, the aim should be to raise teacher candidates' awareness of real classroom issues because real classrooms embrace students from different backgrounds with individual differences, which refers to readiness levels, achievement

levels, and interests. Also, teachers pointed out that more realistic preparation can be achieved by taking into consideration the needs and conditions of various school settings in different regions of the country. Some sample quotes are presented below regarding the significance of more realistic preparation for the teaching profession by considering various real classroom settings with diverse types of students.

Regarding the fixing incongruence between theory and practice caused by not offering courses with adaptable content for various settings, the followings are provided as examples:

> Educational sciences courses that were offered at the university are a world far from reality. It does not have any bonds with real life. Teachers could go to any place around Turkey, but the lecturers convey the content as if we would teach at a school in the center of Ankara. The subjects that were covered during the educational sciences courses of my university and what I have been living right now are totally different from each other. If the lecturers at universities have teaching experiences at schools in deprived areas, it would be better since they would share their experiences with us (T25).

> We learned things through rose-colored glasses, the reality is not like that. Alright, we have learned every rule, instructional method and technique, we all know them. However, students or schools are never the ones we assumed in our lectures. I think it must be more realistic. We did our internships in central districts, but our appointed schools are mostly village schools with limited opportunities. These two types of schools are very disparate. If there was a chance to go to villages for an internship, seeing these places would be great. So, during internship I think teacher candidates should be prepared for different real life scenarios that they might confront (T9)

More specifically, concerning the classroom teaching and real classroom issues about individual differences of students and other possible problems, the following quotations are stated by teachers as explaining the lacking points of pre-service teacher education and providing suggestions.

> I think the educational process at university should be a simulation of a real school environment. We used to do demo lessons at university but the negative aspects are not emphasized as if everything was perfect in the real classroom as well. No one tells you much that you might meet disrespectful students, could face problems with your colleagues or might have troubles with parents. Or you prepare a lesson plan, but it is not mentioned that you might not finish

it in the expected time span in a real classroom. If these aspects were explained in detail and in accordance with real life, we would benefit more. In the educational sciences courses, some clues can be provided about how to resolve these problems (T12).

At school I can see that a child in the sixth grade cannot recognize the letters or cannot read and write. What could be done, what we would do if we encounter such a situation, or how we could help a student with dyslexia or a special learning disability were not clarified at university. I personally do not know what can be done. I try to read some materials about those. In higher education, they could be emphasized more (T22).

When it comes to the school experience phase of the pre-service teacher education programs, during the interviews, almost all teachers mentioned the importance of enriching the school experience period by extending the period of the school experience in order for teacher candidates to develop a sense of teacher commitment. Also, teachers stressed that during the school experience, teacher candidates need to be provided with the opportunity of more hands-on practice, which refers to teaching more.

A teacher candidate encounters students and experiences school life in their senior year for an internship, but the senior year is too late. One of my best friends realized that she does not want to be a teacher during her internship in the senior year. When she noticed that, we were in our senior year; there were four year of effort. Even worse, there are people who are aware that they do not want or love teaching profession, but remain in the profession just because of financial worries. From their freshman year on, teacher candidates should get to know school environments, visit schools, and attempt different activities targeting students and schools. I believe that senior year is too late for an internship. The first shortcoming coming to my mind is this, it could be improved (T7).

I think internship period should be longer. While doing an internship, interns could be integrated into the school environment more. I think that would be more effective. Students make progress all the time unlike our childhood times, they are different. I had problems stem from unproductive internship period. They should extend the time for internship, it should start in early years. We could have had a close contact with the state schools. We could have spent more time there. It would have been much better to see, observe and know students there in order to develop a sense of teacher commitment (T8).

It was theoretically well, but in terms of practice, I would have wanted to be more active during internship. I would have wanted to teach more lessons and

to be in the profession more. During the internship, we sat down at the back of the class. We only practiced teaching when our lecturer from the university visited. I would have wanted to teach more actively during the internship (T24).

4.4.2. Suggestions for MoNE

Concerning the findings of the current study, the second theme refers to the suggestions for the Ministry of National Education. Most teachers provided suggestions in terms of several aspects. First of all, teachers emphasized the importance of ensuring equal opportunities among schools located in different regions. They stated that schools need to be improved and supported with financial support to improve the conditions to create a healthier environment, affecting teachers' sense of commitment positively. Regarding this issue, the followings are stated by teachers.

> Social, economic and cultural differences among schools are needed to be diminished by the ministry as much as possible. Of course all the schools could not have the same standards, that would be a utopia. However, as I said, working to eliminate the differences as much as possible is significant. For instance, schools with poor conditions should be detected and what could be done for these schools should be considered (T11).

> The physical conditions of the schools could be improved. Most of the schools in the western regions are in good condition, but the village schools in the eastern and southeastern parts are a serious problem. Schools should be supported financially. That includes opening labs, fulfilling the requests of the school, providing cleaning stuff. This must be done. When all these points are done, the gap concerning educational quality between the regions of Turkey is minimized (T27).

Other than the physical conditions and facilities of the schools, teachers pointed out that the seminars organized by MoNe are not effective in terms of the content and responding to the needs of teachers. Therefore, teachers suggested that more effective seminars that involve them actively need to be organized for helping novice teachers find a way to deal with difficulties because they stated that they feel a decrease in their sense of teacher commitment when they have complex challenges to handle. Thus, according to teachers, effective seminars are needed that will meet novice teachers' needs. The following quote is provided as an example of this issue.

To be exact, none of the seminars are useful. If seminars where teachers have a say as participants were to be organized, there would be better knowledge flows. Then these seminars can cease to be meetings where only one speaker dominates. For example, the learning outcomes of the subjects could be evaluated with all the teachers. Teachers could brainstorm there. It could be more efficient if it targets practice with the thoughts over how to teach better (T16).

4.4.3. Suggestions for School Administrators

With regard to the findings of the content analysis, the third theme regarding the suggestions is for school administrators. Most teachers had suggestions for school administrators regarding different issues, such as appreciation of teachers' effort, support and guidance for teachers, and having a fair attitude towards all teachers.

First of all, as most of the teachers stated that they want their school administrators to value their work and appreciate their effort. Teachers emphasized that they are working their initial years in the profession, so they sometimes feel the need to be appreciated to be sure that they are on the right track. Also, most school administrators focus on only the mistakes of novice teachers that make teachers feel stressed. Therefore, teachers highlighted the importance of being appreciated. Regarding this issue, a quote is provided below.

I believe what a teacher has done must be regarded. When a successful outcome is accomplished, teachers need to be appreciated. I have never experienced that. I have taken many project awards, but there was not even a congratulation made by the administration. This makes a person sad when you cannot get positive feedback. I believe appreciating the effort of teachers is crucial in terms of encouraging teachers, so school administrators should consider this (T23).

Moreover, teachers stated that they need to be encouraged and supported to be willing to make more effort for the teaching profession. Teachers relate this issue with teacher commitment, and they think that teachers would have more sense of teacher commitment if they are encouraged and guided more by their school administrators. Also, teachers underscored that if school administrators stand behind them in case of any problems with parents or students, they feel safer. Concerning this issue, two

quotes from teachers regarding their suggestions about the issues mentioned above are provided below.

> I believe that being supported increases commitment. There are two types of people. There is someone discouraging you, whereas the others motivate you by saying "you can do it, well done!" These statements give courage to everyone in any way. As it is valid for all age groups, it is the same for us. If someone supports you and you feel that person stands behind you, this really makes you motivated (T29).

> Instead of considering the parents' remarks only, administrators can protect the rights of teachers and taking care of them. I cannot exemplify it with a specific example, but I can say that it is the act of standing behind teachers (T15).

Lastly, most teachers stated that sometimes they find their administrators' attitudes unfair in some situations. They stated that while administrators consider the needs and requests of certain teachers and value their ideas, they do not treat other teachers in the same way. Thus, teachers expressed that this situation creates a not welcoming atmosphere that causes a decrease in their sense of commitment since it prevents teachers from attempting to do something or ask for help. Regarding this, a quote of suggestion regarding the unfair attitude of school administrators is as follows:

> No matter who a person is close with, an administrator should be objective and fair. He should be just and fair to anyone. There are no troubles occurred in schools with fair administrators. A teacher who sees that the principal is fair does not complain about anything. However, if anything is unfair, this causes problem since it causes injustice (T9)

4.4.4. Suggestions for the Induction Period

According to the findings from the interviews, the fourth theme of the suggestions is for the induction period referring to the support and guidance by mentors and their training, and the compulsory seminars organized for induction period.

Induction period takes place in the first year of the teaching profession. Thus, participant teachers emphasize its importance since the first year is the one that they explore a lot of unknown things within the school environment. They also stated that mentors are the colleagues that they can easily turn to when they have any issues to

discuss or ask because mentors are the ones who are assigned for induction purposes. period. However, some teachers underlined that mentors are not supporting novice teachers or guide them as it is supposed to be. Therefore, they suggested some issues regarding the expected support and guidance for the adaptation of novice teachers; they are as follows:

> For administrative affairs, they are really supposed to help. We do not know how to write the report of the branch teachers' committee or ŞÖK report. When we first write them, we definitely make mistakes. I would have expected some explanations from my mentor about these processes. She could at least explain what and how to write. She also could offer help concerning how to be active in class, how to explain subject matters to students or how to make students participate in lessons (T10)

> First a mentor is supposed to make the candidate teacher adapt to the setting in a very good way. If I become a mentor, I plan to do it this way. Not limited to paperwork or teaching-related issues, everything must be taught. I think getting used to the school setting is crucial (T11).

Another issue regarding the induction period is the training of mentors. As teachers stated during the interviews, most mentor teachers do not know their duties during this period. Some teachers stated that their mentors ask them what to do in this period rather than guiding the process. A quote regarding this issue is provided below.

> I believe they need to be trained for mentoring because as far as I know mentors are not given any information, seminars in any way. They also do not know what to do. If these teachers were given information and trained by being introduced to the documents, how to fill out them, the procedure of the observations, it would be better for them (T15)

Teachers especially emphasized the seminars offered during the newly appointed teachers' induction period. They underlined that the content of induction period seminars should be revised to meet the needs of novice teachers during their initial years. They stated that more helpful content could be specified considering the needs of different school settings and novice teachers' needs regarding their lack of experience and non-teaching paperwork with which they are not familiar. A sample quote regarding these issues is provided below:

> I wish they can offer us more practical and useful in-service training. For example, during induction period seminars, if they taught us the details of paperwork it would be better. Or it would be about the situations that we can

possibly face in the cities or towns we work so that we learn how to deal with the problems. In this process, sharing teaching experiences could have been more efficient. All the people could come and express one memory that they have lived or share the difficult or pleasant moments. If those could have been conveyed, it could be more productive for novice teachers than only reading from the slideshows (T8)

4.4.5. Suggestions for Novice Teachers

Based on the findings of the present study, the last theme for suggestions is participant teachers' personal suggestions to novice teachers. Teachers made several suggestions based on their experiences regarding sense of teacher commitment.

To begin with, teachers suggested that novice teachers should avoid discouraging factors, such as unmotivated teachers and discouraging comments from other teachers. Also, they highlighted those novice teachers should focus on the positive sides of things. Otherwise, their sense of teacher might be affected negatively. The following quote is a sample regarding this issue:

> Teachers should not care much about the others. It is necessary not to spend much time with burnt-out teachers as we are affected by people around us positively or negatively. For instance, when I do an activity, some say: "Let it be, why do you bother so much". When you consider that as a true comment, teacher commitment vanishes. Therefore, the remarks of people should not be taken into consideration too much. Positive aspects should always be focused on and seen (T11).

Furthermore, teachers talked about the high expectations of novice teachers before starting the profession. They stated that because of the idealistic pre-service teacher education programs, novice teachers all have ideal classes in their minds because they are not aware of the real classroom problems. However, as participant teachers stated, new teachers should keep their expectations low in order not to get affected negatively when they face challenges. Regarding this, the following quote is presented:

> Newly appointed teachers should not have high expectations. I may not say that if we do this and that, our commitment rises; however, as I said, I would advise them to minimize their expectations and plan accordingly when they arrive at school. Concerning the activities and teaching styles planned to be used and adopted in classes, they should not have any high expectations. They

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should start from the bottom, so they can feel lucky and happy while developing more. I think starting with expectations is not fine (T1).

Moreover, teachers emphasized that new teachers need to have a strong motivation in order not to lose it when they confront difficulties in their new environment. The teachers mainly suggested that new teachers keep in mind that every challenge has a solution and will not last forever. Teachers also advise that novice teachers never give up; instead, they are advised to seek ways to adapt to situations, especially by setting a good relationship with their students. With regard to these issues, the followings are stated by teachers:

> I recommend them to keep their motivation up all the time. I would like them to realize that nothing is permanent in life and their problems at the moment are not permanent, but temporary. I endure and tolerate this way (T20).

> Definitely a novice teacher should never give up. There are certainly people who experience difficulties in classroom management, but it should not be said by giving up that I do not want this class and be the teacher of this class. The bond with children should be established first to solve the problems instead of giving up. There definitely could be hardships, but the most significant step is not to give up during this process (T10).

Lastly, as a suggestion for novice teachers, some teachers talked about the importance of professional development in terms of helping teachers feel competent enough and have a sense of self-efficacy that will, in turn, increase the sense of teacher commitment.

> We get to know ourselves as novice teachers. After such self-knowledge, you think about what motivates me, what improves me as I should move on. Teaching or being a teacher or being efficient are not being static. Life goes on, environmental factors, everything evolve. We need to show a progress accordingly. Working for students and the profession is a must. If we do a job, there is no such thing as incomplete success, but there is only complete success (T17).

4.5. Summary of the Findings

The present study aims to explore the sense of teacher commitment through the perspectives of novice teachers. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews from 30 novice teachers. The interview data were analyzed with content

analysis. Based on the analysis, themes, sub-themes, and codes emerged for each four research question and presented accordingly with direct verbatim quotations and the details are summarized in tables.

For the first research question which was addressed to explore novice teachers' perception of teacher commitment, there came up two themes as follows: (1) emotional aspects and (2) practical aspects. For the first theme which is emotional aspects, teachers mentioned love of students and love of the profession. As for the second theme that is practical aspects, it refers to fulfilling job requirements, devoting extra time and effort for students, and endeavoring for professional development. Teachers mentioned the practical aspects as an enactment of emotional aspects in the professional context. To clarify, loving students and the profession is perceived as an integral component of practical aspects because teachers highlighted that their love of profession and students is driving force for the effort made for the profession.

For the second research question which aims to examine the experiences of novice teachers in terms of their sense of teacher commitment, there emerged three themes as follows: (1) perceived level of teacher commitment, (2) dimensions of teacher commitment, and (3) teacher retention. For the first theme of perceived level of teacher commitment, two sub-themes came out as committed teachers and partially committed teachers because while some teachers stating clearly that they feel committed for their profession, some others have some hesitations regarding the inadequate experience, low sense of self-efficacy beliefs, and feeling the need for professional development. As for the second theme which is dimensions of teacher commitment, the sub-themes are as follows: commitment to the teaching profession, commitment to teaching work, commitment to students and their learning, and commitment to professional development. Regarding the first sub-theme which is commitment to teaching profession, teachers statements refer to the satisfaction with the choice of profession, love and appreciation of the profession, carrying out job responsibilities, and spending extra time and effort. For the second sub-theme which is commitment to teaching work, teachers mainly talked about the love of the subject matter, desire for and love of teaching, getting prepared for the lessons, and striving to improve instruction. When it comes to the third sub-theme which is commitment to students and their learning, it

was the part where all teachers had something to express. They chiefly talked about two main things in terms of the sense of teacher commitment regarding students and their learning. These two main things came out as caring about students and making effort for students' learning. Regarding caring about students, teachers touched upon various aspects, such as establishing good relationship with students by loving and knowing about them, and having good interaction in order to show students that they value their presence and their needs. Teachers also stressed the significance of making effort for touching students' lives by having goals for them to broaden their horizons and encouraging them to perform better for their future lives. Besides, teachers underlined that providing help for students' problems and needs is another essential part of caring about students. When it comes to the second main issue regarding commitment to students and their learning is making an effort for students' learning. This issue refers to the academic component of commitment to students. Teachers emphasized the sense of teacher commitment for students' learning as making effort for student engagement by encouraging them to participate in the activities, getting their attention, considering their interests and individual differences, and praising their effort. Also, teachers mentioned that they consider students' individual differences and provide help for them in terms of academic development by spending extra time and effort, and providing material support. As the last sub-theme of the second questions, commitment to professional development is referred as another effort for staying up-to-date and collaborating with colleagues. Regarding the professional development dimension of commitment, while some teachers express their willingness for professional development, the others stated that they are not willing for it since there is lack of opportunity for professional development and for implementing what they have learned. Also, most teachers indicated that they do not feel the need for improving themselves since they think they are competent enough to serve the needs of the current students.

Regarding the third research question which aims to explore the factors affecting the teacher commitment of novice teachers, there came out two themes as (1) weakening factors and (2) strengthening factors. Concerning the weakening factors, teachers talked about the reality shock they had because of the gap between theory and practice,

environmental and cultural issues, student profile, non-teaching paperwork, and physical conditions and facilities of schools. Teachers also stated that reality shock they had caused them to feel disappointed which has negative effect on their sense of teacher commitment. Another weakening factor was about professional factors which include teaching-related, online teaching, school-related, and job-related factors. Regarding the teaching-related issues, teachers mentioned student-centered factors, unable to get the reward of efforts, and problems about classroom management because of students' misbehaviors. Teachers also mainly focused on the online teaching factor as weakening their commitment due to low student attendance because of lack of facilities, problems with teaching process in terms of effectiveness since there is lack of interaction among teachers and students, and heavy workload and responsibilities during the online teaching period. Moreover, almost all teachers touched upon the lack of facilities and poor conditions of the schools which hinders them perform their job effectively. As the last factor under the professional factors, job-related issues were mentioned by teachers. They stated that low status of the teaching profession and excessive amount of non-teaching paperwork affect their sense of teacher commitment negatively. Moreover, relational factors emerged as having weakening aspects. It refers to the relations with colleagues, administrators, and parents. In general, for all these three relational factors, teachers mentioned the lack of support, communication, guidance and encouragement. Lastly, teachers also talked about some personal factors, such as lack of self-efficacy beliefs, job satisfaction, and feeling of regression in the field knowledge. Teachers emphasized that these personal factors also affect their sense of teacher commitment.

As for the second theme of the third research question, the same categories with weakening factors appeared. They are as follows: professional factors including teaching-related and job-related issues. Regarding the teaching related issues, teachers mentioned student engagement, contributing to students' learning, getting the rewards of the efforts, and positive feedback from students. As the last factor under the professional factors sub-theme, job-related issues which refer to the prestige of the teaching profession is pointed out by most teachers. When it comes to another sub-theme of the strengthening factors, relational factors referring to students, colleagues,

administrators, mentors, and parents are stressed by teachers during the interviews in terms of the communication, support, guidance, and encouragement leading increase in the sense of teacher commitment. As the last sub-theme of strengthening factors, teachers mentioned some personal issues, such as desire for making difference in students' lives, feeling of job satisfaction, and effort for professional development.

Concerning the last research question which is posed for being informed of the suggestions from novice teachers about the sustainability and increase of the level of teacher commitment. There appeared five themes regarding this question as suggestions for pre-service teacher education, MoNe, school administrators, mentors, and personal suggestions for novice teachers. Regarding pre-service teacher education, teachers mainly emphasized that the congruence between theory and practice should be ensured and practice teaching period needs to be extended and enriched to prevent teachers from facing reality shock when they start teaching. When it comes to suggestions for MoNE, teachers underlined the need for the equality of opportunities for all schools, and organizing effective seminars for meeting the needs of novice teachers. Other than that, teachers had some suggestions for school administrators regarding providing support and guidance, appreciating teachers' effort, and having fair attitude towards all teachers. Moreover, some teachers also mentioned the mentoring period as an influential period in terms of novice teachers' adaptation. They suggested that mentor should be provided with mentorship training, and mentors should provide support and guidance for novice teachers. As the last themes of suggestions include teachers' personal suggestions for novice teachers, such as focusing on positive sides, avoiding unmotivated teachers and discouraging attitudes of them, keeping expectations low before starting the profession, keeping motivated in order not to give up in case of any challenges, and developing themselves professionally.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter first presents the discussion of the findings based on the research questions in light of the relevant literature. After findings are discussed for each research question, implications for practice and further research are presented.

5.1. Discussion of the Findings

In the present study, the purpose is to understand how novice teachers who work at lower secondary schools (i.e., middle schools) perceive teacher commitment, the experiences of novice teachers regarding the sense of teacher commitment, and what factors affect their sense of teacher commitment. Also, the suggestions of novice teachers regarding the sustainability and increase of the sense of teacher commitment have been explored. This section presents the discussion of the findings in line with each research question consecutively. First, a summary of findings for each research question is provided, and then they are discussed based on the related literature.

5.1.1. Novice Teachers' Perceptions of Teacher Commitment

The first research question was asked to explore the perceptions of novice teachers regarding teacher commitment. They provided answers in the form of definitions of teacher commitment or describing the characteristics of a committed teacher. The answers to this research question provide us with a big picture to demonstrate the aspects of teacher commitment perceived by novice teachers because, as it is also

stated in the literature, teachers perceive the phenomenon of teacher commitment in various ways (Louis, 1998; Nias, 1981; Tyree, 1996).

Based on the answers of novice teachers, it was observed that they perceive teacher commitment from two different aspects: emotional and practical aspects. From teachers' perception of the emotional aspect, teacher commitment requires emotional attachment to the teaching profession because almost all teachers emphasized the necessity of love of the profession for defining a teacher as a committed one because they pointed out that the teaching profession is not a job that could be performed without having an emotional bond with it. In the literature, teachers' having an emotional attachment to their job is regarded as no longer a luxury; instead, it is emphasized that it is a professional necessity (Nias, 1981; Fried, 2001). Both in the present study and in the literature (Nias, 1981; Elliott & Crosswell, 2001; Day, 2004), it is emphasized that the complexity of the teaching profession requires teachers not only to get involved in it practically but also engage in the profession emotionally, namely with their hearts besides their minds. Apart from the love of the profession, teachers also emphasized the significance of having affectionate bond with students, and they defined committed teachers as the ones having love for students. In relation to this, in the present study, participant teachers highlighted the enactment of love of the job and students in a professional context, which refers to the practical aspects of the teacher commitment, such as fulfilling job requirements, devoting extra time and effort to students, and endeavoring for professional development. Similarly, Crosswell (2006) investigated the conceptions of teacher commitment from the perspectives of teachers and grouped teachers' conceptions as personal dimension referring to the teachers' passion for teaching profession and enactment dimension which includes categories, such as focusing on students, maintaining professional knowledge, and transmitting knowledge. Based on the results and the related studies in the literature, it can be stated that teaching profession is an emotional label which necessitates an affectionate bond for the sustainability of the commitment (Zehm & Kottler, 1993).

In terms of practical aspects regarding teachers' perceptions of teacher commitment, fulfilling the requirements of the job is touched upon by teachers since they view it both as a basic necessity for all teachers and as a responsibility that committed teachers

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are expected to do more willingly by paying more effort for completing their tasks in the best way. Again, the importance of having an emotional attachment to the job is emphasized as an internal urge for carrying out the job-related tasks with desire and showing more care about what they do. Along the same lines, Fox (1964) also stated that committed teachers fulfill their job responsibilities willingly and make an effort for qualified teaching. Similarly, teachers referred to being conscientious in terms of teaching and making an effort for its being effective. Conscientiousness is a significant issue for a teacher to be regarded as a committed teacher because during the interviews teachers stated that the teaching profession is totally left to the conscientiousness of the teachers because in most of the schools there is no one evaluating the effectiveness of the process or supporting teachers for getting better. In line with this, some empirical studies emphasize the importance of conscientiousness for teaching effectiveness (Kim, et al. 2018; Garcia, et al. 2011).

Besides preparing for teaching and taking the job seriously, teachers pointed out that a committed teacher can teach under all circumstances; even though they have limited opportunities, they can still find a way to teach with the facilities in hand because they have love of the profession and of their students which are strong feelings that help teachers deal with various circumstances. Therefore, for novice teachers, having emotional involvement with the profession can be a way to handle challenges during the initial years without losing their sense of teacher commitment (Day, 2004; Watson & Hatton, 2002).

As an enactment of a teacher's love of the profession and love of the students in the school context, the sub-theme of devoting time and effort to students emerged as one of the practical aspects. Similarly, in Crosswell's (2006) case study conducted with teachers to explore the conceptions of teacher commitment, focusing on students appeared as a component of enactment dimension of the conceptions as the reflection of love of profession in the teaching context. Moreover, Elliott and Crosswell (2001) reported the conceptions regarding teacher commitment in their study, the findings were about investing emotional energy since teachers are willing for making extra effort to care about students beyond their basic duties and within their personal time. Relevant to these findings, in the present study, participant teachers highlighted that

since committed teachers love their profession and students, they tend to be altruistic most of the time by investing extra effort and time for showing care for their students. In line with these results in the literature, committed teachers are defined as they care about the students and their development, and view them as a significant part of their job (Day, 2004; Altun, 2017). So, in terms of teacher commitment, caring about students includes willingness of committed teachers to touch students' lives, contribute to their academic development by being a role model and guiding them. In the same vein, in a study of Nahal (2010) it is stated that all participant novice teachers reported that they love spending time for students and making differences in their lives. Fox (1964) also defines a committed teacher as they like to work with children and youth and have a desire to help them develop their potential. Achieving these is only possible with establishing good relationship and having good communication with students because when students understand that a teacher care about them, then they tend to convey their struggles to their teachers and start to ask for help thanks to the positive atmosphere in the classroom. As participant teachers also highlighted that as well as having good relations with students, teacher commitment also includes attending students' struggles and providing them with emotional support by showing affection because some parents are totally indifferent. In line with these results, in the literature, teachers with high sense of teacher commitment are described as respecting and valuing students in order to establish a strong relationship with them (Altun, 2017) as well as concerning about their well-beings (Crosswell, 2006), and dealing with students having personal problems (Louis, 1998).

Moreover, in the current study the significance of acknowledging the students' presence by calling them by their names, knowing about their lives outside is regarded as one of the ways to make students feel valued which in turn have an effect on student achievement. A teacher's having dedication to students' learning is a differentiating feature. Fried (2001) claimed that there is a significant relationship between teachers' commitment with students' learning because when students are aware that their teachers are focused on their work and devote themselves, they take their studies more seriously too.

Lastly, based on the results of the present study, teacher commitment is perceived as paying effort for professional development in order to remain up-to-date because teachers defined a committed teacher as seeking ways for developing himself/herself especially in terms of teaching. In accordance with the present results, previous studies have demonstrated that teacher commitment involved having a strong desire for professional development in order to enhance the professional knowledge and add to the teaching skills of teachers (Shukla, 2014; Sonia 2003).

All of these above-mentioned perceptions regarding the sense of teacher commitment includes especially emotional attachment to the profession and students which are necessary core issues encouraging teachers to fulfill the job requirements, invest extra time and effort for students, and making effort for professional development. Thus, the relationship between emotional aspects and practical aspects of teacher commitment can be described as concentric as it is demonstrated simply in Figure 5.1 where emotional aspects take part in the center. The conceptions of teacher commitment also provide us with the indicators for distinguishing committed teachers.

Figure 5.1

Teachers' Perceptions of Teacher Commitment
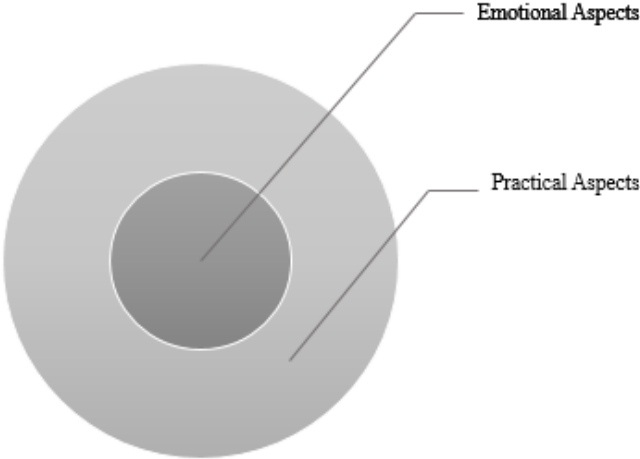
In this section teachers only mentioned their perceptions of teacher commitment by imagining a committed teacher and describing their expectations from this teacher.

However, in the following section, experiences of novice teachers regarding the phenomenon of teacher commitment in their own professional context has been explored from their perspectives.

5.1.2. Novice Teachers' Experiences of Teacher Commitment

The present study sought to explore the experiences of novice teachers regarding the sense of teacher commitment via the answers elicited for the second research question. After seeing the big picture of perceptions about teacher commitment based on the results from the first research question, the aim of the second research question was to discover the details of participant novice teachers' personal experiences of teacher commitment in their professional context. Based on the teachers' answers, different dimensions of teacher commitment emerged and they were discussed in the following paragraphs. Moreover, teachers mentioned perceived level of their teacher commitment as feeling committed and partially committed which were also discussed in line with the literature and by touching upon the teachers' tendencies to remain in the profession or leave it.

Teacher commitment is a complex phenomenon with various facets due to the complexity of the nature of the teaching profession, as it is also mentioned in the literature, teacher commitment has several dimensions (Day, 2004; Tyree, 1996). Therefore, based on teachers' experiences of teacher commitment, various dimensions emerged in the current study. There came out four dimensions of teacher commitment which are as follows: commitment to the teaching profession, commitment to teaching work, commitment to students and their learning, and commitment to the professional development. In accordance with the present results, Shukla (2014) also mentioned the multidimensionality of teacher commitment and found out the dimensions of commitment to the learners, commitment to the profession, and commitment to attaining excellence for professional actions which refers to the professional development in the current study. Also, Crosswell and Elliott (2001) came up with dimensions regarding students, teaching profession and professional knowledge base. As for some other studies in the literature, they highlighted the dimensions of

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commitment to teaching and commitment to student learning (Firestone and Pennell, 1993; Dannetta, 2002; Jong, 2015) as they also emerged in the present study. All four dimensions of teacher commitment emerged in the current study were explored in different studies with various combinations in order to understand the enactment of the sense of teacher commitment in various professional contexts since teacher behaviors are greatly affected by the sense of commitment (Nias, 1981; Firestone & Rosenblum, 1988; Kushman, 1992). The more in-depth exploration and explanation regarding the dimensions of teacher commitment is provided in the following paragraphs.

To begin with, in the present study, commitment to teaching profession itself has emerged as one of the dimensions of teacher commitment. The results of this section were so similar to the ones discussed in the first question which aimed to understand teachers' perceptions of teacher commitment regardless of their own experiences. Along the same lines with their perceptions, most teachers expressed their love and appreciation of the job, willingness for carrying out job requirements and investing extra time and effort for the job responsibilities.

Most of the novice teachers participating in the study expressed their love of the profession as a strong indicator of their commitment to the teaching profession and they emphasized that loving the profession is the best way to deal with the encountered difficulties in the profession. This finding also accords with previous studies which argue that love of the job is what motivates teachers and help them overcome the difficulties they face on daily basis because lack of commitment to the teaching as a profession may cause teachers to lose their idealism when they faced with challenges of initial years (Britt, 1997; Crosswell, 2006; Başer & Karaman, 2015). Therefore, commitment to profession itself seems to be a necessary element to maintain teachers' interest in their job. Based on these, it can be stated that for the teaching profession, subject area knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and teaching skills are required elements; however, the passion and love for the profession is an indispensable element for the success in the profession as Rikard (1999) and Turhan, et al. (2012) also emphasized in their studies. In line with this, during the interviews, teachers indicated their commitment to the profession by stating that teaching profession is not a job, it is an entirely different feeling for them just as it is the case in the study of

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Crosswell (2006) where teachers described teaching profession as a lifestyle rather than a job. In addition to this, in the present study, since teacher do not see the teaching profession as an obligation or as a job, they perform their job just for the sake of their love of the profession as Day (2000) in his study also confirms that teachers who are committed to the profession perceive teaching to be not just a job.

Besides loving the profession, teachers appreciate their profession by valuing, respecting, and being proud of it. These results are in line with the study of Celep et al. (2000) in which it was found that teachers are proud of their jobs and view its status as higher than other professions. These are important components of commitment to profession because the value and respect given to the job can be the determinant of the amount of effort spent on it as it is emphasized in the literature as well (Coladarci, 1992; Shukla, 2014).

Moreover, even though carrying out the job requirements is responsibility of each teacher regardless of their being committed or not, fulfilling these requirements willingly and by investing extra time and effort when it is needed to carry out them in the best way are the things that exactly serve the meaning of commitment to the teaching profession as Kozikoğlu (2016) also claimed that spending extra time and effort for the job is directly related with commitment to the teaching profession. The significance of commitment to the teaching profession stems from its potential impact on the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process because the integral component of commitment of teaching profession is the love of profession that is an intrinsic urge for fulfilling the job requirements on time and in a great way. These findings are confirmed by the study of Kanste (2011) where the researcher emphasized that commitment to teaching profession is a motivational factor for work-related well-being. It is characterized by the concepts of effort and devotion. Effort means giving a high level of energy and mental self in work, willingness to strive for work, and persistence even in the face of difficulties. Devotion refers to being fully concentrated and focused on the job which is also emphasized by some scholar in the literature that in a rapidly changing world teaching profession requires continuous commitment by engaging in the job fully with dedication which in turn encourages teacher to strive to improve themselves professionally for updating themselves as well as they work hard

for the development of students and meeting their needs (Fried, 2001; Mart, 2013; Shukla, 2014).

Based on above-mentioned points, commitment to teaching profession includes core elements, such as love, effort, devotion, value, and respect given for the profession. All of these elements are also present in other dimensions (i.e., commitment to teaching work, commitment to students and their learning, commitment to professional development) of teacher commitment, so these core elements can be regarded as driving forces for the emergence of other dimensions. The reason is that, these dimensions are more practice-oriented which can be described as the enactment of certain beliefs, feelings, and values in the professional context. This situation may be explained by the fact that the phenomenon of teacher commitment is complex in its nature including intertwined details affecting each other, the underlying reason of which is more likely to stem from the complex nature of teaching profession.

When it comes to the second dimension of teacher commitment which is commitment to the teaching work, the prominent points mentioned by teachers in this regard are as follows: teachers' love of subject matter, their desire for and love of teaching, effort they made for preparing the lessons, and striving to improve their instruction based on students' needs and interests by including various activities. Teachers mentioned these as indicators of their sense of commitment regarding the teaching work.

First of all, teachers underlined their love of teaching and desire for it as they enjoy it and get satisfaction from it. In line with this, in the literature, it is argued that there is a strong positive correlation between the love of teaching and high level of teacher commitment because commitment is defined as a love of particular aspects of teaching (Garrison & Liston, 2004; Crosswell, 2006). Moreover, while some teachers expressed their love of subject matter as a requirement for enjoying teaching, some of them indicated that if they had a second chance, they would choose a different subject matter which is more suitable for their interests and personality. This result is in agreement with Hargreaves' (1995) statements which claim that good teaching is not just a matter of being efficient, developing competence, or possessing the right kind of knowledge; it also involves emotional work which refers to pleasure, passion, and joy. Also, Voss

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and Kunter (2019) claims that the enjoyment of the subject matter is a significant source which helps teachers deal with the professional challenges.

As almost all teachers underscored that desire and love for teaching and the subject matter areas are of great importance in terms of the direct effect of teachers' willingness to teach on students' motivation and engagement because when students feel and observe that teachers have desire for teaching something and giving effort for doing it in the best way, they tend to pay more attention and give more effort for participating, which in turn might encourage teachers' sense of teacher commitment. These findings are consistent with the arguments reached in some studies in the literature. In these studies, it was argued that teachers' teaching passionately influences willingness of students and their engagement, and teachers become more satisfied with teaching and they desire to achieve good instruction because they care about their performance and seek ways to teach better (Somech & Bogler, 2002; Hargreaves, 1997). Accordingly, in the present study, it was found that teachers make an effort for preparing for the lessons in order to convey the content effectively with suitable activities responding to students' needs and interests since teacher's instruction has great effect on students' motivation as Czubaj (1996) claimed as well.

Also, teachers pointed out that sometimes they feel as if they were not able to teach students effectively, so they feel lack of self-efficacy in teaching. In these kinds of situations their sense of commitment to teaching work leads them to reflect on their effectiveness of the teaching rather than giving up even though they feel hopeless from time to time as the literature also confirms the association between commitment and teacher self-efficacy because teacher commitment decreases when teachers think that they are unable to teach effectively (Coladarci, 1992; Bandura, 1997). Based on the self-reflection, teachers strive to improve lacking points by including various methods and activities, or getting help from various sites, such as books, online platforms, or colleagues. These findings are in agreement with various studies in the literature because Fox (1964) stated the characteristic of a committed teacher as someone who wants to be a qualified teacher by evaluating his/her own teaching to find out weaknesses and make effort for strengthen them, and as Altun (2017) claimed that committed teachers always look for instructional strategies which will help students

learn better. Similarly, Fried (2001) define great teachers as willing for reflecting on their performance.

Based on the findings from the present study and evidences supporting them from the literature highlight the importance of the sense of commitment to teaching work for an effective educational process for both students and teachers.

As for the third dimension regarding the students and their learning, it was the mostly referred dimension during the interviews because while teachers were talking about how they experience teacher commitment, they all mentioned the things they do for their students. They value students and see them as one of the influential factors for making an effort because they indicated that children are the integral assets of the teaching profession. This result is in line with the Crosswell's (2006) study where the dominant dimension appeared as focusing on students, and a committed teacher is defined as the one having passion for working with children, so it is defined as a key theme during the interviews which is also the case for the present study.

Teacher commitment towards students and their learning is examined under two groups as caring about students and making effort for their learning. While the former one is more general, the latter is focused on academic component. This accords with the earlier studies in the literature where commitment to students is examined from two aspects as caring for their emotional well-being and their academic development (Nias, 1981; Biklen, 1995; Tyree, 1996; Crosswell, 2006).

First of all, in line with teachers' perceptions of teacher commitment in the first research question, teachers again emphasized the parallel things with the importance of affectionate bond with their students. This affectionate bond is crucial in terms of motivating teachers to put more effort for students and at the same time it helps teachers deal with challenges without losing their sense of commitment as similar discussions also made in the literature (Choi & Tang, 2009).

When there is an emotional attachment between teachers and students, then it is easier to establish a good relationship. Most teachers underscored the importance of creating a welcoming and positive atmosphere by having good relations so that students can

feel and at the same time learn better. Moreover, teachers stated that they strengthen their relationship with students by interacting with them since they already like spending time with student. Also, teachers pointed out that they have always kept in touch with students during online teaching period even though most of the students does not have equipment and materials to attend the online sessions. Teachers give importance to let students feel that teachers are always available for providing help for their problems and needs, which is a strong indicator of teachers' sense of commitment towards students. When students know that teachers have high sense of commitment, students' commitment might also increase at least towards their teachers and lessons. In line with this, Firestone and Pennell (1993) also argued that a sense of commitment to students might contribute to a caring and supportive climate which is likely to decrease the dropout rate of students.

Other than these, teachers have certain goals for their students both academically and morally. Most teachers put more emphasis on raising students as good citizens as a whole person with necessary moral values instead of expecting only high achievements from students as this was also emphasized by Fox (1964) while describing the characteristics of a committed teacher as opposed to Coladarci (1992) defining teacher commitment as making effort for students' academic success. Moreover, since most students live in small villages and towns, teachers give importance to encouraging students for future goals by broadening their horizons in order to raise their consciousness for the necessity of pursuing education in today's era. Another reason is that most of the students are not supported by their parents in terms of academic achievement since parents do not intend to help students pursue their education due to their negative attitudes towards education. Therefore, teachers are making effort for touching students' lives as much as they can through above-mentioned ways since they are aware of the limited opportunities of students due to the culture they are part of, so these issues keep teachers' sense of commitment high.

Besides caring about students in general sense, teachers also make effort for students' learning since almost all of them have a sense of teacher commitment in terms of their students' learning and they are willing to take the responsibility of student behaviors and their learning as it is confirmed in the previous studies (Kushman; 1992; Glickman

et al., 2005; Brock and Grady, 2007; Altun, 2017). Therefore, teachers emphasized their primary aim as contributing to students' learning, so they do their best in terms of teaching by providing materials for students if they are in need. Regarding this, Hussen et al. (2016) underscored that commitment to student learning requires teachers to be sensitive and understanding in terms of children's needs because students need teachers who understand their learning needs together with their abilities and potentials.

Since teachers value student learning, they put much effort for student engagement in terms of encouraging their students by attracting their attention with various activities or methods in accordance with students' interests. This leads teachers to invest more time for students, and it is another strong indicator of their commitment to students and their learning as Crosswell (2006) claimed that teachers invest time into the things they feel attached with which refers to students in the current context. Based on the interviews, the efforts of teachers, namely their commitment to students learning was noticed to be influential on students' achievement as Rosenholtz (1989) also claimed in his study. A possible explanation for this finding might be that teachers' effort, enthusiasm and willingness for contributing to students' learning lead teachers to develop themselves and integrate various strategies for teaching them better, which in turn make students understand that teachers have high level of commitment to students and their learning. When students witness that teachers are highly committed, they also tend to engage more and put more effort for being successful. These findings are in agreement with related studies in the literature which claimed that the students of committed teachers perform better (Huberman, 1993; Ligaya et al., 2015).

Nevertheless, most of the time things does not go well as teachers planned beforehand because in a classroom there are lots of students with individual differences in terms of learning speed and learning style. Also, there might be students with different level of readiness causing variety in students' level of achievement. As teachers mentioned, there might occur problems regarding these issues; however, they underlined that since they are willing for contributing to students' learning and caring about them, they put emphasis on these differences in order to solve them for the well-being of the educational process and achieving the learning outcomes of the lesson without causing a gap among students' success levels and create a discrimination among them. In

accordance with this, Fox (1964) defined a committed teacher as a teacher who recognizes that students may vary in background, intelligence, motivation, color, and creates a classroom environment which allows all teachers with opportunity to develop themselves. As Kushman (1992) also explained that commitment to students is making effort for contributing to students' learning regardless of their differences in terms of academic achievement levels and social backgrounds. According to the statements of teachers during the interviews, it can be stated that committed teachers try hard for coping with these differences by developing themselves professionally instead of seeing these differences as challenges even though it creates fluctuations in their commitment levels.

In relation to the above-mentioned dimensions, the last one is commitment to professional development mentioned by teachers during the interviews, especially while they were expressing their ideals for the teaching profession, such as performing the job in a qualified way. Confirming this, Fox (1964) also stated the desire for doing the teaching profession at mastery level as the most important feature among the characteristics of a committed teacher.

In terms of professional development, teachers touched upon two main points which are staying up-to-date and collaborating with colleagues. They emphasized the importance of being knowledgeable about new instructional methods, materials, and technological tools since there are rapid changes in the current era which in turn causes changes in students' needs. Similarly, Skilbeck and Connell (2004) view the dimension of professional development as critical in terms of transforming teachers as knowledge workers of today's information age. Correspondingly, in the present study, most of the participant teachers stated that professional development does not end since the era is continuing to change and the new generations are growing up with different needs, so in order to keep up with the developments in the field, and to adapt to changes, teachers need to be aware of the differences and get prepared for them with the help of professional development activities. In line with this, Hussen et al. (2016) emphasize the importance of commitment to professional development and states that professional development enhances teachers' professional knowledge and improves each teacher's ability to teach in accordance with students' needs. Similarly, Crosswell

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(2006) also mentioned the influence of commitment to professional development on teachers' capacity to meet the changing demands of the current era. Teachers mentioned certain professional development activities including attending seminars, following various online platforms or publications in order to learn about various innovative methods and techniques of teaching for implementing in the classes to make the teaching and learning process more effective. Along the same lines, in the literature it is stated that a committed teacher is willing to seek improvement for doing things at an excellent standard. (Coladarci, 1992; Choi & Tang, 2009). In addition to these, there are some teachers pursuing their graduate studies with the aim of developing themselves in their field with more in-depth knowledge.

Even though most of the teachers were willing to improve themselves for continuing their job in a qualified way by addressing current needs and interests of their students, some teachers had low sense of commitment to professional development because they mentioned the lack of opportunity for attending professional development studies and implicating them even though they learn because of the poor conditions of the school and the region they work. Here, it is clear that the influence of physical conditions hinders teachers' professional development.

However, the reason for low commitment was not only up to the physical issues, there was also effect of teachers' beliefs regarding their efficacy in terms of meeting the needs of current students. Since their current students are low-achievers, teachers think that their knowledge is enough for these students, so they do not feel the need for developing themselves. Therefore, it can be stated that for teachers' being committed to professional development, physical conditions need to be suitable for both attending seminars and having resources and materials for implementing the things they have learned. Also, the student profile is of great importance in terms of teachers' self-reflection on their efficacy beliefs because they stated that if they work with high-achievers in the future, they would be more willing for seeking for ways to improve their instruction and enrich their field knowledge.

Other than these, the collaboration among colleagues was underlined by teachers because some of them conduct projects with their colleagues which are beneficial both for their own professional development and for students' development as well. Some

teachers expressed that they share experiences and materials with their colleagues which they find valuable since they take part in the same educational process with their colleagues and strive to achieve the same goals for their students and this also strengthen social ties among teachers (Grodsky & Gamoran, 2003). Similarly, in the literature, committed teachers are described as the ones working collaboratively with their colleagues by evaluating instructional materials, discussing various teaching approaches in order to make the learning process better for students as well as the teaching phase (Coladarci, 1992); and they also want to improve themselves by learning new things for effective educational process (Fried, 2001). In the literature, most studies (Firestone & Pennell, 1993; Grodsky & Gamoran, 2003; Fransson & Frelin, 2016) come to a common conclusion that when teachers are willing for professional development and they learn new things that will help them deal with challenges, they feel competent and effective which in turn increases their teacher commitment. To sum up the dimensions of teacher commitment, it can be stated that all dimensions of teacher commitment are interrelated as it is presented in Figure 5.2; that is why, it is preferred to be discussed with a holistic view by emphasizing the distinctive features of each dimension.

Figure 5.2

Interrelated Nature of Teacher Commitment Dimensions

No matter how specific characteristics each dimension has, there is always a point where each one meets. Most of the time, these common points are love of the profession and love of the students which act as the intrinsic urge to enhance teachers' willingness for each components of educational process, namely the dimensions of teacher commitment examined above.

After discussing the detailed dimensions of the teacher commitment phenomenon, it is highly important to mention teachers' satisfaction with the choice of the teaching profession, their perceived level of teacher commitment, and their tendency to remain in the profession or leave it because these three topics are closely related with each other. Also, discussing these concepts might lead to clearer understanding of the importance of exploring the factors affecting the sense of teacher commitment of novice teachers.

During the interviews, while teachers were talking about their perceived level of teacher commitment they were asked about their satisfaction with the choice of the teaching profession. In the literature, it is also emphasized that the commitment can be examined by asking teachers whether they would again choose teaching profession if they were given a chance (Coladarci, 1992; Fresko et al., 1997). Most teachers expressed that they are satisfied with the choice of the profession and they emphasized that they would choose the teaching profession if they were given a second chance. This is a strong indicator of teachers' being committed to the teaching profession. Even though they have lots of difficulties during their initial years, they can still express their satisfaction with the choice since they have intrinsic reasons for choosing the profession, such as love of children, spending time with the youth, and appropriateness of the job to their personality traits (Jong, 2015). On the other hand, a few teachers expressed their dissatisfaction with the choice of the teaching profession since there were extrinsic reasons while they were choosing it, such as influence of family and job guarantee. They stated that if they were given a second chance, they would think twice before choosing teaching profession, or they would look for other job opportunities. As Mkumbo (2012) and Jong (2015) also claimed that the intrinsic and extrinsic reasons for choosing the teaching profession is influential on teachers' commitment to teaching profession.

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In addition to these, there was an interesting finding that although some teachers chose the profession just because of external factors, these teachers realized during the preservice teacher training and when they start the profession that this job perfectly fits with their personality traits, so they started to love their profession. A possible explanation for this finding might be that the quality of teacher education, or some prejudices regarding the teaching profession and its status, or lack of self-awareness of individuals before choosing the profession can be the reasons of it.

Since satisfaction with the choice of the teaching profession goes hand in hand with teacher commitment, they touched upon their perceived level of teacher commitment in a general sense by stating it in two different ways. While some of the teachers could clearly express that they are committed teachers, some others could not be that much clear since they do not feel fully committed. Both groups of teachers have certain reasons for their perceived level of commitment.

First, teachers explained their reasons for feeling committed as their love of the profession and willingness to do the best for their students. This finding can be explained by the fact that these are important components for the internal motivation since they are related to the emotional aspect of teacher commitment.

When it comes to partially committed teachers, they stated that it is due to insufficient experience and lack of adaptation to school since there started online teaching due to COVID-19 pandemic. A possible explanation for this can be that adaptation to school is a critical issue since novice teachers feel not competent enough to handle each and every issue in the profession, which refers to their lack of self-efficacy beliefs. The self-efficacy belief is formed during the early period starting from preservice teacher education and be fragile to decrease during the initial years of the profession since novice teachers face various settings and school-related issues that they have not experienced before. As Hoy and Spero (2005) stated that to make self-efficacy beliefs permanent, they need to be used many times. Therefore, initial years are of great importance because if they fail in developing strong sense of self-efficacy because of bad experiences, they may lose their sense of teacher commitment, or as the worst result, this situation might even cause them to leave the profession since the self-

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efficacy belief and sense of teacher commitment are closely related with each other (Chesnut, 2017). In contrast, if novice teachers feel satisfied with their performance, they will develop a firm sense of self-efficacy that would lead them to put much effort for performing their job better since they would feel more committed (Malik & Rani, 2013). Moreover, regarding the insufficient time for getting experience in terms of feeling committed, the literature has conflicting views. Some studies claim that a teacher's commitment decrease as the time passes (Huberman, 1993). In contrast, other studies argue that the teacher commitment can sustain, and it can even increase as teachers experience it more (Boylan & Mcswan, 1998). Thus, it can be concluded that the length of the time spent in the profession can be influential on commitment levels. Also, the length of time spent is not influential on its own solely, the quality of the time spent and content of the experiences is of great importance.

Other than these, in the literature, the sense of commitment teachers have and career continuance are mentioned as closely related with each other (Nias, 1981; Tyree, 1996; Taiti, 2008) because one of the most important features of teacher commitment is the willingness of teachers to continue in the profession as Meyer and Allen (1991) also came up with career continuance dimension of teacher commitment. In the literature, it is also emphasized that the commitment can be examined by looking at the attrition tendency and reasons of teachers (Coladarci, 1992; Fresko et al., 1997). Regarding these, in the present study there came up two contrastive views. While most of the teachers expressed their willingness for continuing in the profession, some of them mentioned their tendencies to leave the profession because of ineffective online teaching period, interests for different job opportunities, and the workload they have. These findings are similar with the teachers' expressions regarding their reasons for being not fully committed. Therefore, it can be concluded that low sense of teacher commitment can cause teacher attrition while being committed leads to continuance in the profession. Therefore, in the following research question, an in-depth exploration of factors affecting teacher commitment are discussed.

5.1.3. Factors Affecting Novice Teachers' Commitment

In the present study, one of the aims was to explore the factors weakening and strengthening the sense of teacher commitment of novice teachers. While discussing the results related to novice teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding the phenomenon of teacher commitment, the importance of factors affecting teacher commitment came to the forefront since teacher commitment is a significant requirement for the continuance of profession in a qualified way as Solomon (2008) also emphasized that teacher commitment is an indication of how meaningful a teacher's professional life is. In line with this, Day and Gu (2010) argued that the issue should be focusing on how teachers can be committed to their profession as well as questioning whether they are committed or not. Therefore, the critical issues which act as key influences on teachers' professional lives need to be explored with a focus on the sense of teacher commitment. In the current study, based on the participant novice teachers' statements, factors affecting their sense of commitment were discussed from two aspects as weakening and strengthening factors. In the literature, there are also studies focusing on the factors causing ups and downs in the sense of teacher commitment of teachers (Huberman, 1989; Firestone & Pennell, 1993; Day & Gu, 2010; Day et al., 2005; Crosswell, 2006; Fransson & Frelin, 2016). In the current study, factors are categorized as reality shock, professional factors, relational factors, and personal factors. They are all comprehensively discussed in relation to one another in the following paragraphs.

To begin with, according to the results of the interviews, the most striking issue affecting novice teachers' sense of teacher commitment was the shock they had and the discomfort they felt when they confronted with unexpected situations in terms of the realities of the teaching profession. In the literature, Veenman (1984) and Gaede (1978) described this period as reality shock which means experiencing a state of shock and collapse of ideals when teachers confront with the harsh realities of the complex and demanding nature of the real classrooms. Even though a shock is a short-term feeling, adjusting to the realities of teaching profession is likely to last for the first two or three years of the teaching career (Brock & Grady, 2007). This claim is evident in the current study because even the teachers with two or three years of

experience primarily mentioned the reality shock they had, and the challenges they are still trying to cope with.

Participant novice teachers described their shock as feeling like a fish out of water because the situation they confronted was just like dreams or utopia versus realities. In line with this, Brock and Grady (2007) described it as a bubble of idealism which has burst, and the teacher has entered the harsh reality of the classroom. Similarly, in the literature, there are lots of metaphors that are used to describe the reality shock of novice teachers as follows: swim or sink (Grant and Zeichner, 1981), a painful beginning (Huberman, 1989), culture shock (Wideen, et al., 1998), or it is described as immigrants in new country by Sabar (2004). These descriptions are representative enough for expressing the challenging nature of initial years of the teaching profession. All these metaphors also show that the real teaching settings has little in common with teachers' ideals in mind, which causes disillusionment in teachers because of unmet expectations. Along the same lines, most of participant teachers claimed that there is an incongruence between theory and practice since they think that preservice teacher education is too theoretical and utopian for actual teaching. Internship opportunities are not sufficient because of a limited time, which lasts for only one year in a certain region. Also, the content of the teacher training is too general to be adapted for each school setting because in Turkey, different regions have various cultures, facilities, and conditions. Therefore, even though the preservice education and internship experiences seem sufficient, real school settings might be very different from the internship experiences of student teachers in terms of environmental conditions, physical conditions of schools and facilities, class size, and student profile. Thus, even though it might not be expected from novice teachers to be fully prepared for the profession before starting it, at least they can be informed of the realities without being filtered through rose-colored glasses as one of the novice teachers stated during the interviews. As supportive findings for the current study, Senom et al. (2013) and Doğan (2015) found out in their studies that the inefficiency of preservice teacher training causes teachers to have reality shock when they face with real classroom settings. Similarly, Corcoran (1981) described this issue as transition shock since it refers to the period of not knowing even though receiving a preservice education

beforehand because the student teachers' teaching experiences can only be a simulation of actual teaching settings.

In the present study, during the interviews, novice teachers stated that they start the profession with great expectations, but the realities were slaps in their faces when they went to real classroom settings because they were totally different from their ideals both physically and academically that developed in their minds throughout the preservice teacher education. Thus, they feel like they left the utopia and got back to the reality which is full of challenges to handle. This result is consistent with some studies in the literature that focuses on the challenging initial years of the teaching profession causing reality shock due to incongruence between theory and practice (Jarvis & Algozzine, 2006; Senom et al., 2013; Öztürk & Yıldırım, 2013) which also affect novice teachers' sense of teacher commitment in a negative way as participant novice teachers mentioned throughout the interviews. The following Figure 5.3 represents the participant teachers' having reality shock due to theory vs practice and several reasons stemming from this incongruence.

Figure 5.3

Reasons for the Reality Shock of Novice Teachers
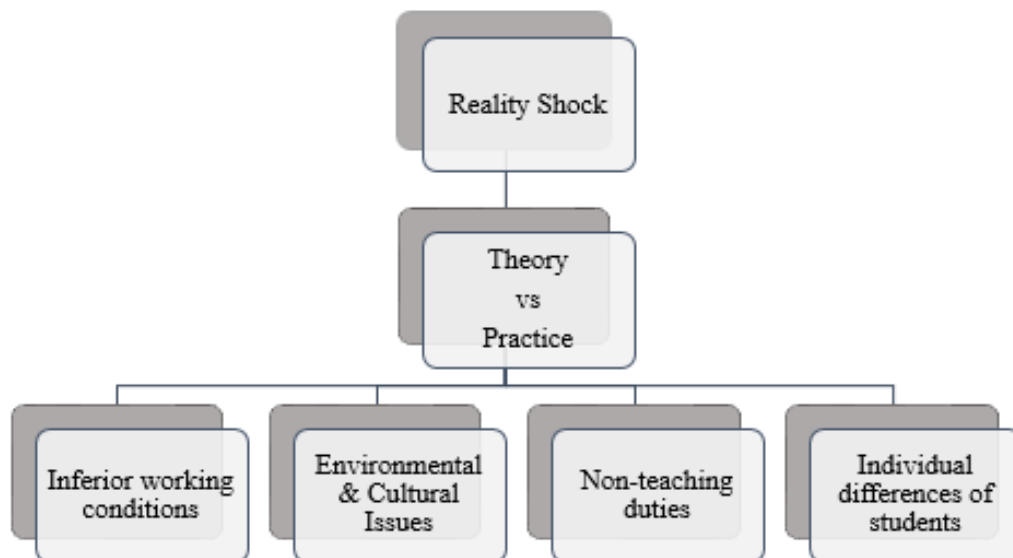
In relation to the above-mentioned importance of being aware of real settings, novice teachers had difficulties because of the environmental and cultural issues along with the poor physical conditions and facilities of the schools to which they were appointed. They highlighted the adaptation problems they had due to the unfamiliar environmental conditions because in Turkey, novice teachers mostly start the profession in the eastern and southeastern part of the country which have low socio-economic development level, different cultural traditions and language backgrounds. Therefore, teachers have adaptation and communication problems with some students and parents due to language barrier that causes decrease in their enthusiasm from time to time. Also, most of the participant teachers have grown up in big cities, so current poor conditions of small towns and villages do not appeal to them. Along the similar lines, in the literature, there are studies which found that novice teachers have adaptation problems to the culture including language differences and the unfamiliar life conditions that they work in (Knauth & Kamin, 1994; Doğan, 2015; Yıldız, 2011; Akbaşlı & Meydan, 2009).

As for the schools, most novice teachers mentioned that schools have inferior working conditions, such as poor heating system, unstable electricity and internet connection, lack of hygiene in classrooms, and lack of instructional materials. The physical conditions and facilities are of great importance for students' and teachers' psychological well-being that has close relations with the sense of teacher commitment. In the literature, Steele's (1973) six functions of the classroom setting are worth to consider in order to understand the priority of physical issues. Among Steele's six functions, security and shelter is the most fundamental function of a physical setting because it is a precondition for higher level needs. It refers to the basic physical protection that deals with weather, extreme heat or cold, noise, etc., that would hinder the effectiveness of teaching and learning process. Based on this, the poor conditions of the schools need to be addressed first, then we can discuss other needs of the classrooms because physical environment affects human beings a lot. As participant teachers emphasized that those poor conditions were highly discouraging factors in the sense of teacher commitment because even though they are willing to carry out instructional activities, the inferior conditions and lack of facilities hinder

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them which in turn weaken their sense of commitment because they cannot solve this problem on their own, so they feel discouraged. Also, they cannot perform as effective as they want because of the lack of facilities, which causes teachers feel lack of job satisfaction as some teachers mentioned during the interviews. This is a significant issue since teacher commitment and job satisfaction is associated with each other. It is also emphasized in the literature that job satisfaction is a factor which weakens or strengthens the sense of teacher commitment (Watson & Hatton, 2000; Bashir, 2017).

Furthermore, there are related studies in the literature which support the findings of the current study about the influence of poor conditions and lack of facilities on novice teachers. For example, Veenman (1984) and Yalçınkaya (2002) stated that starting the profession in deprived areas and small schools with limited opportunities makes the experiences of initial years more challenging for novice teachers. Also, Buckley, et al. (2005) argued that the lack of facilities and necessary materials might even cause novice teachers to leave the profession.

In contrast to findings of the current study and earlier studies in the literature, no negative effects of inferior conditions were found in the studies of Day et al. (2007) and Michel (2013); instead they reported that the resilience and passion which are two key issues for teacher commitment were stronger in those teachers working at low SES schools. Those teachers were passionate about teaching and more importantly, they were passionate about affecting the lives of students who have limited opportunities. Based on this, Michel (2013) also found out that teachers were aware of the unequal opportunities, so they viewed students' education as a solution to this problem by empowering students to deal with the inequalities they experience on their own. Interestingly, in the current study, some novice teachers also highlighted that the limited opportunities of their students make them more willing to give more effort for them because teachers feel responsible towards their students since students do not have even the most basic facilities or conditions, and teachers are there to help them even though they do not have nothing other than the willingness and the effort they made for providing students with better education. However, while some teachers are so willing for this and view it as an indicator of high sense of teacher commitment and strongly believe that they need to dedicate themselves to their job, other teachers

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pointed out that fixing the poor conditions, such as cleaning the classes, fixing the desks are not the responsibilities of teachers, so they are not related with the sense of teacher commitment. Thus, they emphasized that necessary conditions and facilities for a healthy teaching and learning need to be ensured already, and teachers should be responsible with only teaching phase. In line with this, a report published by ERG (2021) touched upon this issue by emphasizing that heroizing teachers in a way that perceiving them as they need to fix all factors for creating a teaching and learning environment can make already demanding profession more stressful (Aktaş-Salman, 2020).

To provide more details regarding the factors affecting novice teachers' sense of teacher commitment, in the present study, novice teachers highlighted the student-centered issues of the teaching process as affecting their sense of teacher commitment adversely. As novice teachers, they had difficulties with the individual differences of students. They argued that this problem was one of the results of the mismatch between theory and practice in preparing teachers for real classrooms with a possibility to have all diversity types in one classroom simultaneously. The individual differences of students refer to diverse types of students coming from different backgrounds, speaking different languages, having special needs, and the ones with different readiness levels, achievement levels, and learning styles. Along with the results from the interviews, in the literature, Brock and Grady (2007) argued that when novice teachers face diverse types of students, they have reality shock and have many hardships. This finding is in line with Veenman's (1984) study in which dealing with students' individual differences was among the third most frequently reported problem of novice teachers. These individual differences cause teachers to have challenges before and during the classroom instruction in terms of deciding the level of activities, the scope, and breadth of the content, and the teaching methods and materials in a way that appealing to all students and responding to their cognitive needs and interests as Feiman-Nemser (2003) also reported that meeting the needs and interests of diverse students is a challenge for novice teachers.

Regarding the individual differences, a specific and most common point almost all teachers pointed out is that most students have a low level of readiness for the intended

learning outcomes and some of them do not even know how to read and write although they are studying at the lower secondary level. This was a big shock and challenge for teachers since it seems almost impossible for them to follow the strict curriculum provided by MoNE and achieve the objectives by building on the existing prerequisite knowledge. Therefore, a low level of readiness hinders teachers from carrying out the instruction in its ideal way even though they are willing to carry out the instruction as it is supposed to be since there are a few high-achievers in the class. In line with this finding, in the study of Doğan (2015), it was revealed that novice teachers have difficulties in handling classroom instruction due to students' level of readiness. Based on the findings of the current study, this situation, in turn, weakens novice teachers' sense of teacher commitment because teachers feel overwhelmed most of the time while trying to decide on appropriate teaching materials and strategies as Kubat (2018) also emphasized its difficulty in his study focusing on students' individual differences.

Even though the problem of low level of readiness is a serious one on its own, it also causes a more severe issue: low achievement level of students. Although teachers try hard to respond to both low achievers and high achievers, which is a complicated issue, they think that the instruction is not effective for all students. However, it should be noted that the only reason for low achievement is not a low level of readiness; there may also be student-specific factors, such as reluctance to learn, being uninterested, etc. Whatever the reason is, most students fail in the classroom activities or in the exams, which causes a decrease in teachers' sense of teacher commitment. Consistent with the present study's findings, other studies in the literature confirm the influence of student achievement on the sense of teacher commitment of novice teachers (Firestone & Rosenblum, 1988; Kushman, 1992; Firestone & Pennell, 1993).

In the current study, regarding the teaching process, teachers highlighted the importance of student engagement because during the lessons, the prominent figures are students for teachers, and almost all participant novice teachers indicated that they care a lot about the engagement of students since student-centered issues are an integral part of the sense of teacher commitment. That is why participant teachers mentioned student engagement as both a weakening and strengthening factor for their sense of teacher commitment. Almost all teachers touched upon the lack of student

engagement stemming from students' reluctance to learn and to participate in the activities and their lack of effort for any task given. Teachers mentioned the feeling of exhaustion during the lessons when they cannot get any little reaction from most of the students. They do not make any attempt, request, or effort to engage in the lesson because they are reluctant to learn anything and are uninterested because of their low level of readiness, which is hard to compensate by current teachers' effort. Also, some of them have negative attitudes towards education, so it makes them unmotivated for learning, affecting teachers' willingness adversely. Most teachers mentioned that they make an effort to involve them by including various activities and try hard to adjust the instruction to meet their individual differences. Also, they make verbal appraisals to encourage them. However, after all these efforts, even extra hours spent for preparing for the lesson when students still do not participate and make an effort for any given task, teachers feel that they are paying futile effort because they cannot get any reward for their efforts except the participation of just a few students which is not always enough for encouraging teachers to keep going with the same amount of energy, willingness, and enthusiasm. Even worse, they start to question their ability to affect students, but when teachers' efforts and attempts are rejected by students, they develop low sense of teacher efficacy belief (Coladarci, 1992). Namely, teachers feel discouraged when they could not see the same effort and enthusiasm from students, and contribute to their learning, which significantly affects novice teachers' sense of teacher commitment adversely. Correspondingly, in the literature, even though studies are discussing both negative and positive effects of student engagement on teachers' sense of teacher commitment (Day & Gu, 2010; Crosswell, 2006; Brock and Grady, 2007; Michel, 2013), they put more emphasis on the encouraging effect of student engagement on teachers' sense of commitment because it was found to be one of the highly influential factors for strengthening teacher commitment which is a crucial need for novice teachers to cope with the challenges without feeling burnout. In line with this, in the current study, students' willingness for learning, their interests in the subject matter, and participation in the activities were among the most potent factors for strengthening the sense of teacher commitment as teachers stated that they feel more committed to make an effort and spend time for their profession. During the interviews, novice teachers mentioned how encouraged and motivated they felt when

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students were willing to participate, answer the questions, and ask further questions to understand the topics. Similary, Kushman (1992) and Crosswell (2006) emphasized that teachers working with motivated and affluent students are more committed than other teachers since student engagement is a highly influential factor for commitment. Participant novice teachers mostly underlined the positive effect of ensuring students' learning and feeling satisfied when they contributed to students' learning. Similarly, Michel (2013) also stated that in her study, novice teachers also mentioned their ah-ha moments that they enjoyed seeing in their students, and the researcher stated that she observed how students' progress was rewarding for novice teachers. This finding is precisely in line with the current study because participant novice teachers underscored the importance of getting the reward of the efforts by ensuring students' learning or getting positive feedback from students, colleagues, or parents. They make them eager to do more both for their students and for the job itself since. Consistent with these findings, Brock and Grady (2007) also stated that teachers feel more motivated when people around them rewarded their efforts by giving constructive feedback. These feedbacks enhance the sense of teacher commitment of novice teachers and help teachers make sure that they can carry out effective teaching. This also fosters their self-efficacy, which is a significant predictor of teacher commitment in the literature (Evans & Tribble, 1986; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). To make it brief, Day and Gu (2010) also claim that getting rewards of effort from students' progress, engagement, and positive feedback are sources of motivation that directly strengthen teacher commitment to ensure its sustainability.

Regarding the teaching-related issues affecting teacher commitment, another prominent issue that came up during the interviews was classroom management focusing on dealing with students' misbehavior. This finding is highly in line with the literature because most studies conducted with novice teachers have found out that classroom management was among the most severe problems of novice teachers that affect their intellectual and emotional well-being in their professional lives (Veenman, 1984; Gavish & Friedman, 2010; Gergin, 2010; Çakmak, 2013). Participant novice teachers touched upon these challenges as weakening factors for teacher commitment because most of the teachers expressed that they sometimes feel overwhelmed and

powerless, and some even stated that they thought about leaving the profession. These findings are in line with Jeanlouis (2014) study, which found out that classroom management issue was one of the prominent reasons for high attrition rates of novice teachers. This situation can be explained by the fact that novice teachers do not have sufficient real classroom experiences since the allocated time for it and locations of schools are not helpful enough for seeing various settings and students. Since they cannot know how to approach the misbehaviors of students, they have significant challenges with managing the classroom with all its complex aspects. Accordingly, Doyle (2006) suggests that classrooms have various dimensions, such as unpredictability, simultaneity, and multidimensionality, representing the complexity of classroom environments. Therefore, it takes time for novice teachers to get accustomed to the settings and deal with the issues accordingly since their preservice teacher education is insufficient, as Kozikoğlu and Senemoğlu (2018) and Çakmak et al. (2019) pointed out in their studies.

Moreover, some novice teachers mentioned the problem of the large class size that hinders teachers from using engaging activities in accordance with the individual differences of students since teachers do not have a chance to monitor the needs of each and every student in a class with 50 students (Kozikoğlu, 2018). Since teachers cannot engage all students in the lessons, controlling the flow of the lesson becomes challenging, and students tend to misbehave more in crowded classes. Yaman (2009) and Toker-Gökçe (2013) also touched upon large class sizes in terms of causing challenges in classroom management. Other than this, participant novice teachers highlighted that even though they are so willing to teach the content and come to class very well-prepared, they have to spare time to deal with students' misbehavior rather than implicating their lesson plans. Therefore, this situation is viewed as a loss of time. In the literature, besides studies that focus on the classroom management problem from a broader perspective, in some of them, misbehaviors of students are highlighted more as it is the case in the current study (Brock & Grady; Day & Gu, 2010; Choi & Tang, 2009). Moreover, the actual reason why their sense of commitment weakens is that even though they spent time for solving students' behavioral problems, most of the time they cannot make a difference in them. Based on the findings of the current study

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and the related literature, it can be said that classroom management has been considered as a challenging and problematic area for novice teachers, which weakens their sense of teacher commitment.

Apart from those mentioned above, school-related and teaching-related aspects affecting teachers' sense of teacher commitment, most novice teachers talked about the online teaching period, which started due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They stated that it is a weakening factor for their sense of commitment since it decreases their enthusiasm for several reasons that some teachers even thought about leaving the profession. This period prevented novice teachers from adapting to the school environment since it hindered them from spending time at school face to face with their students and colleagues. Some of the teachers pointed out that for being a committed teacher they need to spend a certain amount of time at school by experiencing various aspects of the profession, but most of them did not have a chance for it; they just spent a semester at school, then the pandemic erupted. Most of the teachers work in deprived areas with low SES students, so most students do not have the required facilities for online teaching, such as tablets, smart phones, computers, and internet connection for attending online classes. At that point, teachers felt responsible for reaching all students since students cannot join lessons because of limited opportunities; however, providing students with technological devices is not something that teachers can do independently. This feeling of not being helpful for students was a deteriorating issue for teachers' sense of commitment as opposed to the encouraging effect of contributing to students' lives, as novice teachers mentioned before. Therefore, their responsibilities became more like burdens on their shoulders since they have difficulties in reaching students and excessive workload due to distance working, which is an unexpected thing added up to already unfamiliar conditions they confronted when they start the profession and affect them as reality shock. In line with the workload issue, Allen et al. (2020) also emphasized that the quick transition to online tools led to excessive workloads for teachers. At that point, Baloran and Hernan (2020) underlined the importance of remaining committed during a pandemic for providing students with accessible and quality education. However, this is not the case in the current study since the problem is so fundamental that it is

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about lack of facilities, but it is hard to solve by the teachers alone. Other than these, as a result of lack of facilities, the problem of low student attendance rate is demotivating for teachers as some of them even stated that since sometimes no student join the lesson, they do not teach for days and just wait in front of the computer with a hope of a student to attend the lesson. Therefore, they stated that they let aside feeling committed; they do not even feel like a teacher because of not reaching any student to teach to be able to experience the sense of teacher commitment. The teachers who have a few students attending the class highlighted the problems during the class hour that there is a lack of student-teacher interaction since they cannot monitor students as it is in face-to-face classes. Therefore, they feel that the teaching is ineffective since they cannot get feedback from students. Also, feeling a lack of control due to not being able to see students' faces and hearing their voices make teachers as if they were paying futile efforts because students are not willing to participate and answer any question. All these issues cause teachers to lose their motivation since the lacking things are the ones that teachers mentioned as the factors enhancing their sense of teacher commitment. In contrast to these findings, the study of Baloran and Hernan (2020) found that public school teachers who participated in their study had a high level of commitment during the pandemic. Also, based on their findings, they suggested that teachers need to develop adaptability for directing their emotions to adapt to uncertain situations since they proposed that uncertainty management best predicts teachers' commitment to the profession during the crisis.

So far, mainly the teaching part of the profession has been discussed. Other than the teaching phase, the issues related to the job itself are of great importance to consider since participant teachers touched upon non-teaching paperwork and the profession's status. In terms of non-teaching paperwork, novice teachers noted that they had difficulty with them since preservice teacher education did not prepare teachers for or inform them of non-teaching paperwork and for the formal procedures take place at school, which is in line with the findings of Doğan (2015) and Gömleksiz et al. (2010) arguing that novice teachers do not know anything about non-teaching duties at school. As Friedman (2001) also stated, training programs mainly emphasize what and how to teach, instead of teaching how to be a teacher in a general sense involving the

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organizational reality of the teaching profession. In line with this, in the current study, novice teachers indicated that at least their awareness about the non-teaching procedures could have been ensured during the school experience period because when they start the profession, they had reality shock because of the unfamiliar and excessive paperwork. Since they are not knowledgeable enough to fulfill the non-teaching duties, they spent too much time for them, which results in a lack of time for preparing for the classroom teaching. This situation makes novice teachers stressed since they had to spend most of their time on non-teaching issues rather than striving to improve their instruction (Kent, 2000). At this point, they had to spend their free time on professional issues since they do not want to lack any points. Therefore, they had difficulty balancing their personal and professional lives, resulting in a blurred line or not even a line between their personal and professional lives. Even though most of the participant teachers feel committed and prone to spent extra time and effort for students and their job, sometimes they might find it excessive to make them think of leaving the job as Fransson and Frelin (2016) also touched upon that the reaction of teachers can be responding with resilience to sustain their commitment or being vulnerable to lose their commitment because of excessiveness that weakens their sense of commitment as it is the case in the current study as well.

Another issue regarding the job itself was related to the status of the profession. While a group of participant teachers mentioned the job's prestige as a strengthening factor for their sense of teacher commitment, others talked about the low status of the job in society, which causes their sense of teacher commitment to weaken. As a supportive finding for contrastive views regarding the status of the profession, in International Teaching and Learning Research findings, Ainley and Carsterns (2018) reported that only 26 percent of secondary school teachers in Turkey think that the teaching profession is valued in society. In line with this, in the current study, teachers stated that being respected and getting positive feedback from parents, students, and other people contributes to their sense of commitment since they feel valued. Thus, it can be said that they become more willing to make an effort to contribute to society as a reward for people's appreciation of the teaching profession. On the other hand, some teachers pointed out that they do not get what they deserve from the parents, students,

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and other people regarding the status of the job. They think that the teaching profession has low status in society, so teachers face respect problems in their professional and daily lives, which gradually weakens teachers' sense of teacher commitment. In line with the current study, the related studies are available that emphasizes the low status of the teaching profession and points out the importance of it on teachers' performance (Doğan, 2015; Özpınar & Sarpkaya, 2010; Mkumbo, 2012).

In the current study, other influential factors on teacher commitment emerged as relations with students, colleagues, administrators, mentors, and parents. These relational factors have both weakening and strengthening effects on the sense of teacher commitment which are discussed in the following paragraphs. For novice teachers, relational factors are of great importance for continuing the job willingly and effectively. Along the same lines, Day and Gu (2010) claimed that for teachers in the early phase of the teaching profession which refers to 0-3 years, good relationship, support and the recognition with the school context are of crucial importance to increase their willingness because in their study, during the first three years of the profession novice teachers had a negative commitment trajectory. The reason is most likely to be that novice teachers are challenged with many issues in the school during initial years. Therefore, in-school support, having good relationship with students, colleagues, and administrators are very important for them since the first three years of experience corresponds to most stressful times of the profession as Martin et al. (2001) argued. Thus, it is beneficial to learn how colleagues, students, parents, and administrators can influence the well-being of novice teachers (Day & Gu, 2010; Jong, 2015).

To begin with, almost all participant teachers value having good relationship with students, so they pay attention to show their love to their students by behaving accordingly. Students also love their teachers, so this relationship was defined as having affectionate bond with students by some participant teachers. Teachers mentioned this affectionate bond as highly effective in terms of strengthening their sense of commitment, which is in line with their statements about their commitment to students. This finding supports the work of other studies which point out that emotional connection and interaction between students and teachers is a contributing

factor to strengthen and sustain teacher commitment (Friedman, 2004; Choi & Tang, 2009; Fransson & Frelin, 2016)

As for relations with colleagues, novice teachers emphasized both weakening and strengthening influence of it on teacher commitment. It can be thought as an indispensable part of the school context that have an impact on sense of teacher commitment of novice teachers. As Feiman- Nemser (2003) also underlined the powerful role of colleagues on novice teachers' professional lives because new teachers tend to learn from the experiences of colleagues. In the current study, teachers touched upon that their colleagues helped them during adaptation period and they support each other and guide in terms of profession-related matters. They work collaboratively to improve the current situations and problems in the school, which makes teachers more willing for carrying out their job responsibilities without feeling exhausted. This finding is in line with the literature emphasizing the importance of colleague support as Friedman (2000) highlighted the importance of the feeling of not being alone. Also, Elliott and Crosswell (2002) stated that supportive colleagues are the factors impacting novice teachers' sense of commitment. Other than these, sharing experiences and ideas with colleagues and getting feedback from them is highly important for the sustainability of novice teachers' commitment because in this way they can feel that they are going in the right direction, so they have the teacher self-efficacy beliefs which directly lead to higher teacher commitment. Also, when novice teachers realize that they all share similar problems with other teacher, they relieved that they are not alone, and the they give up perceiving problems as unique to themselves, which help them continue in the profession without feeling isolated and incompetent. In line with this, Brock and Grady (2007) found out that teachers tend to blame themselves if they do not know that the problems encountered are common among colleagues, but being aware of it makes novice teachers relaxed. Contrast to strengthening influences of colleagues on teachers' commitment, some teachers mentioned the unwillingness of some teachers to collaborate and share something. This makes novice teachers feel isolated and lose their enthusiasm during their initial years of the profession (Cohen, 2005). Also, according to the findings of the current study, there are even teachers who demotivates novice teachers with their discouraging

attitudes towards the effort and willingness of new teachers for their job. These teachers always criticize the innovative activities that novice teachers try to implicate in the classes, and unfortunately, this lowers novice teachers' desire for making effort because they expect support from their colleagues to be able to feel that the things they do works well. Therefore, as Rikard (1999) also argued that having relations with highly committed teachers is encouraging factor for novice teachers' sense of teacher commitment because colleagues can be a model for them throughout their professional lives.

When it comes to the relations with school administration, in the present study, support and guidance came to the forefront as weakening or strengthening factor for teacher commitment. Based on the findings, school administrators mostly focus on the lacking points in teachers' performances rather than appreciating teachers' efforts and success in the profession. This situation causes teachers to feel worthless, and feel lack of self-efficacy since they look for affirmation from administrators if they are doing the things accurately (Brock & Grady, 2007), but they cannot get positive feedback for their works and their efforts are disregarded by administrators at school, especially the new ideas and innovations are not welcomed by most school administrators for which Balay (2004) stated that school administrator should facilitate the change and innovation instead of resisting it. All these mentioned situations also result in having fear of making mistakes even though teachers have willingness to do something new. Therefore, novice teachers tend to put less effort, and start to carry out just the basic responsibilities, nothing extra. Accordingly, Day (2004) claimed that lack of administrator support and guidance is closely connected with the feeling of helplessness and leaving the profession At that point, the importance of encouragement, support, and guidance to be provided by administrator were found out to be a necessity for encouraging teachers and enhancing their sense of teacher commitment because some participant novice teachers mentioned how the positive relationship they have with their administrators and their support and guidance enhances their motivation to strive to perform better and feel encouraged to make extra effort job without being challenged by difficulties.. Administrator support and guidance also ensures a positive teacher-administrator relationship, which help

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teachers become less worried about but more encouraged for performing better. In the literature there are related studies which discuss the influence of school administrators on teacher commitment of novice teachers (Rikard, 1999; Firestone & Pennell, 1993; Singh & Billingsley, 2001; Crosswell, 2006; Ni, 2017; Jo, 2014). In addition to support and guidance issues, novice teachers pointed out that school administrators do not have a fair attitude towards all teachers because they favor some teachers more and act accordingly regardless of the other teachers' needs and ideas as Doğan (2015) found out in his study.

During the interviews, some novice teachers also touched upon the positive influence of having a mentor throughout the first year of the profession since they always needed someone to turn to ask questions regarding non-teaching tasks and instructional process. Therefore, it can be argued that support and guidance provided by mentors throughout the most challenging period of the profession contributed a lot to their retention in the profession and enhancing the teacher commitment despite the fluctuations in it. In the literature, consistent with these findings, studies pointed out that novice teachers having supportive mentors tend to show higher commitment which in turn ensures remaining in the profession (Rots, et al., 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2003)

Except teachers' relations in their professional context, the relation with parents is also mentioned as an influential factor affecting teachers' willingness and enthusiasm in the profession because participant novice teachers emphasized that parents are one of the most important and integral components of the educational process. However, there are parents that they cannot even communicate or never met. This disinterest of parents is a factor that weakens teachers' sense of teacher commitment. In the literature, lack of parent involvement and their indifference were also emphasized in the study of Yıldız (2011). Parents' lack of involvement in the process due to their indifference towards their children's education makes novice teachers feel more burden on them because when there are problems about students, novice teachers need parent support to find a solution in collaboration with them. When novice teachers have eager parents, they feel more potent since they know that these parents are ready to provide support by getting involved in the situation when it is needed. Along the same lines, in the

literature, Friedman (2004) stated that parents are expected to involve in the educational process and provide support which will encourage teachers' success and effectiveness with challenges regarding students. Additionally, getting positive feedback from parents increases the teacher commitment of novice teachers since it helps novice teachers make sure about their professional performance (Taneri, 2004). Therefore, it can be stated that while the support, involvement and positive feedback of parents enhance teachers' motivation and commitment since they feel relaxed about dealing with problems, the lack of support and lack of involvement stem from disinterest of parents weakens novice teachers' teacher commitment.

Since initial years are of great importance for the well-being and continuance of teachers in the profession, dealing with reality shock that weakens teachers' sense of teacher commitment and other influential strengthening factors are necessary to explore to sustain teacher commitment for ensuring teacher retention and a quality educational process for both teachers and students. During the interviews, some teachers underlined the disillusionments they had, which cause them to lose their sense of teacher commitment gradually because they became less willing since they had been disappointed. In line with this, the relations of various influential factors and teacher commitment can be supported with the literature as Gergin (2010) highlights that during this challenging period, teachers either cope with the challenges by getting motivated with the positive experiences or continue their career unwillingly, or quit their job as the worst possibility. Lastly, Fox (1964) stated that the power of any profession is up to the commitment level of its members. Thus, for further understanding of the things to be done about the sustainability and increase of novice teachers' sense of teacher commitment, the following section provides valuable suggestions from novice teachers' themselves.

5.1.4. Novice Teachers' Suggestions for the Sustainability and Increase of the Sense of Teacher Commitment

As the last purpose of the current study, it was aimed to elicit participant novice teachers' suggestions regarding the sustainability and the increase of the sense of

teacher commitment. After an in-depth exploration on novice teachers' perceptions of teacher commitment, their personal experiences regarding the teacher commitment, and the factors affecting novice teachers' sense of teacher commitment; it is of great importance to elicit novice teachers' suggestions since they are the agents who are experiencing the phenomenon of teacher commitment in professional settings. Also, being informed of their suggestions is beneficial for coming up with implications that fully serve the needs of novice teachers. They came up with suggestions regarding pre-service teacher education, Ministry of National Education, school administrators, induction period, and novice

Pre-service teacher education has been the most commonly mentioned area to be improved since almost all teachers touched upon the big problem of incongruence between theory and practice. This gap between theory and practice causes novice teachers to have reality shock during the initial years, which is highly influential on teacher commitment negatively. In line with their experiences, participant novice teachers suggested that the content of the pre-service teacher education needs to be adaptable for real classrooms. Concerning this, Kozikoğlu and Senemoğlu (2018) and DePaul (2000) found out that pre-service teacher education is insufficient to prepare students for real classrooms. Accordingly, the participant teachers of the current study expressed their ideas that congruence can be achieved by including examples of actual classroom problems and working on them for finding solutions by putting into practice the theoretical knowledge they have learned. Also, they emphasized that this can be achieved best with university instructors who have teaching experiences in various settings. Most of the time, instructors only teach specific methods or techniques, but they do not provide teacher candidates with a chance to practice them. Consistent with this, Friedman (2000) reported that his study participants expressed their preference for practical studies, not theoretical ones.

Other than the content of the theoretical courses, novice teachers also gave suggestions for the school experience period, which includes an internship at a school for one year. The first thing they suggested is that the length of the school experience period should be longer, so it needs to start in the early years of the pre-service teacher education. The importance of this can be explained by the fact that teachers need to spend more

time at school to develop a strong sense of commitment that will not be affected easily by challenges they would face. Also, the early start of the school experience period can help teacher candidates decide if the teaching profession is appropriate for them before being too late to leave it. Before the internship period starts, they only can do demo lessons in their university classes with their classmates as if they were actual students. However, they do not find it helpful since it is not so realistic and insufficient for observing diverse types of students, experiencing how to deal with individual differences, or coping with student misbehavior in actual classes. The opinions of novice teachers mentioned above are the primary sources of a low sense of teacher commitment, indicating the importance of trying to close the gap between theory and practice. In line with these findings, the studies in the literature related to novice teachers touched upon the necessity of fixing the incongruence as well (e.g., Friedman, 2000; Doğan, 2015; Liston et al., 2006).

Other than the pre-service teacher education, novice teachers made some suggestions for which MoNE can take measures. The first one was about ensuring the equality of opportunities in schools located in deprived areas. Participant novice teachers had commonly mentioned poor school conditions and facilities as a weakening factor for their teacher commitment since they cannot carry out the lessons as effectively as they want. So, this problem needs to be taken into consideration by MoNE. In the literature, similar suggestions have been made regarding the equality of opportunity in schools as it was also touched upon in the studies of Doğan (2015) and Öztürk (2008) where they focused on the problems encountered by novice teachers.

Another point to be noted here is that some novice teachers had already emphasized that the poor condition of a school is not a problem that can be solved by teachers even though there is a general understanding in people that a teacher can do everything. Most of the novice teachers expressed opposition to this understanding that defines a committed teacher as the one who can even improve the physical conditions of the school. This heroic attribution to the teaching profession creates an unnecessary burden on teachers (ERG, 2021) and puts them in an effort to meet expectations for even the things they are not responsible for. Therefore, teachers' suggestion regarding the physical conditions and facilities is vital to be solved for helping teachers focus on

only the professional necessities for an effective teaching and learning process as Kozikoğlu (2017) pointed out its significance and necessity in his study conducted as a content analysis of novice teacher problems.

Moreover, novice teachers made suggestions for in-service teacher training by referring to the seminars organized for teachers. Almost all of the participants made criticisms of the effectiveness of these seminars in terms of ensuring the active involvement of teachers while teaching them the content. Therefore, it can be said that teachers want to be more active during the seminars, or all of them can be organized as workshops which allows for more interaction as Gergin (2010) touched upon in her study with novice teachers.

Also, the focus of participant novice teachers while making suggestions was on the school administrators since it was found out that they were one of the highly influential factors on the decrease or increase of the sense of teacher commitment. Since novice teachers are new in the school environment and the school administrators is the one who is responsible for everything and the authority that they meet when they first start the profession; novice teachers tend to expect support and guidance from them to make sure that they are carrying out their responsibilities as expected because novice teacher stated that they become more committed and willing to make effort for the profession when they are guided, supported, and encouraged by the school administrators. Also, they expect administrators to stand behind them when there is a problematic issue related to students or their parents because they feel safer in that way. Along the same lines, Beltman et al. (2011) emphasized the administrator support and guidance as protective factors for novice teachers in the school environment.

Another widely mentioned negative influence of school administrators is that most administrators disregard the efforts of teachers, they rather focus on the mistakes of novice teachers. Therefore, the common suggestion for school administrator was that they should pay attention to giving the reward of teachers' effort by appreciating their efforts with constructive feedbacks because novice teachers are already fragile in terms of how effective they are performing the job or meeting the expectations of students, parents, and administrators. Therefore, they need encouragement by school

administrators. The importance of this is also highlighted in the literature by Çakmak et al. (2019) and Kozikoğlu and Senemoğlu (2018) that novice teachers have good relations and better performance when administrators have encouraging attitude.

The last suggestion for school administrators was having a fair attitude towards all teachers in the school. This is a critical issue because novice teachers feel themselves as new immigrants in a new country (Sabar, 2004) when they first start teaching. So, not to make this feeling deeper and make this process more difficult for newly appointed teachers, school administrators need to hold a fair attitude all the time, which would create a collegial and welcoming environment among colleagues that veteran teachers do not tend to view novices as new comers. In line with these findings, Toker-Gökçe (2013) also argued that the attitudes of school administrators are very influential in the school atmosphere.

The next suggestions from novice teachers are about the induction period through which they have attended compulsory seminars, filled out forms related to their weekly activities, and worked with a mentor for observing the classes. Regarding this period, the issues that participant teachers highlighted were mentors and the seminars. Teachers indicated that there was lack of support and guidance from mentors even though they were assigned as mentors for novice teacher. Novice teachers expect from mentor not only teaching-related or school-related support and guidance, rather they expect them to help novice teachers adapt to the teaching profession by considering all of its components as Çakmak et al. (2019) also emphasized that novice teachers expect help and support from mentors. As mentioned earlier, since novice teachers may be stressful throughout their initial years because there are lot of things they have to deal with and an induction period with lots of requirements to fulfill; they need a knowledgeable person regarding both profession-related and tasks to be completed throughout the period. However, mentors were not knowledgeable enough about the induction period. Therefore, novice teachers suggested that mentors should attend a mentorship training before the term starts because when they do not know what to do and how to do, it turns out to be just a workload which is carried out in vain. Moreover, novice teachers suggested that the compulsory seminar series need to be enriched with more useful content, such as paperwork at school, problems experienced in the

classroom, and communication with parents, colleagues, and administrators as Kandemir (2019) also recommended in her study. Since these are the challenges of most novice teachers, this suggestion is of quite importance. Also, novice teachers pointed out that while enriching the seminars, they also need to consider the differing needs of novice teachers working at various settings of the country because each setting has unique characteristics as it is the same for students receiving education in disparate parts of the country.

Other than suggestions that was addressed to stakeholders, participant novice teachers made personal suggestions addressing to novice teachers themselves for going through the initial years of the profession as committed teachers. First, they pointed out that novice teachers should avoid discouraging attitudes of other teachers and their comments. Rather, they should focus on the best sides of the profession because both negative and positive things can affect their sense of commitment, and their attitudes might start to get similar to other teachers. The reason of it can be that since they are new inexperienced teachers, they are prone to observe veteran teachers since they are going through the initial years of the profession which are full of learning phases and experiencing. Also, their emotional and psychological well-being might be sensitive to others' attitudes. Therefore, while communicating and sharing something with a motivated and committed teacher encourages novice teachers to be like them, the opposite situation can affect them adversely. Therefore, they highlighted that novice teachers should avoid negative attitudes and unenthusiastic teachers as DePaul (2000) pointed out that novice teachers should keep themselves away from the negative teachers' lack of enthusiasm. Furthermore, they suggested that novice teachers should keep their expectations low. The reason is that the clash of ideals in mind and the realities in classrooms weakens their commitment a lot since it causes a shock at the beginning of the profession, and it lasts for at least two or three years to cope with as it is the case in the current study. While keeping their expectations low, novice teachers should not forget to have a strong motivation and keep it high to not lose it in case of any challenge they face during their initial years. To have high motivation, they should never forget that every challenge they face has a solution and will end one day. Therefore, they should focus on seeking ways for their challenges instead of giving up

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making an effort. As the last suggestion from participant novice teachers to all new teachers, they pointed out the importance of making an effort for professional development because as teachers feel that they develop themselves, they will have a high sense of teacher efficacy, which will strengthen their sense of teacher commitment.

5.2. Implications for Practice

Teacher commitment has been explored through the perspectives and experiences of novice teachers to have an in-depth understanding of it and dwell on it more by learning about the suggestions of novice teachers for sustaining and increasing the sense of teacher commitment. All these findings are worth of considering. Thus, the current study aims to present certain implications for practice in terms of issues regarding the pre-service teacher education and in-service teacher training period.

To begin with the implications for pre-service teacher education, in the current study, one of the common points that all novice teachers met is the gap between pre-service education and actual teaching context. For bridging this gap, the content of the pre-service teacher education needs to be enriched with more realistic and hands-on practices to prepare teacher candidates for actual classroom realities. To achieve this, Classroom Management course can be enriched in a way that focuses on initial years of teaching profession by including actual classroom realities and problems to be worked on. Also, both novice teachers and veteran teachers can be invited as guest speakers periodically, and they can share their experiences regarding that week's topic. Or, video recordings can be shared from different classroom settings. In this way, teacher candidates have at least an awareness of the realities of the actual classrooms to prevent them having reality shock that would weaken their sense of teacher commitment.

Secondly, school experience period can be started earlier and continues till the last year ends. The earlier is the better because throughout the pre-service teacher education period novice teachers create an idealized image of a good teacher in their

minds because most of the time they are only conveyed what a good teacher must be and must do without touching upon the various actual classroom settings, challenges, student profiles, colleagues, administrators, parents, and physical conditions. Therefore, when student teachers start the profession after the pre-service education, they as novice teachers always try to reach the ideal image of the teacher they had in their minds, but working conditions or some other external factors may not allow them to reach it. That is why, not to let them have disillusionment and develop low teacher efficacy beliefs when they start teaching, their awareness of realities of the teaching profession need to be raised in the earlier periods. Thus, within the scope of the school experience course starting earlier than the fourth year, regular visits can be made to schools located in various regions of the country. In these schools, student teachers can spend a period of time and make observations for specific tasks, such as classroom management, dealing with individual differences, and poor working conditions. As a result of this, the gap between their ideals and the reality they would experience might be bridged. Also, teacher candidates can make sure if the teaching profession is appropriate for them or not. All these contribute to develop a firm sense of commitment in teacher candidates starting from the earlier period, so the resistance of their sense of commitment becomes strong in case of any challenge when they start teaching.

Moreover, based on the results of the present study and the literature, most novice teachers face challenges regarding their practices at schools and they question their competency too much that it can even lead to lack of teacher efficacy beliefs, which directly weakens their sense of teacher commitment. Therefore, to make them feel empowered by reflecting on their daily practices, a course for raising teachers as researcher teachers can be offered during pre-service teacher education program. As a result of this, they can detect any problem in the classroom and conduct an action research study to examine the problem in a more detailed way and try to find a solution. With the help of these studies, they can make sense of their own practices in order to come up with solutions for the problems. This helps them avoid feeling helpless that would cause them to fail to remain in the profession, or to become an uncommitted teacher.

When it comes to the in-service period of teaching profession, there are several implications to be offered. First, after pre-service teachers graduate, they are appointed to a school, especially in deprived areas of the country. Since these areas differ in many ways, novice teachers should not be left alone, instead, their lecturers from university should monitor the progress of them even after graduation, listen to their problems, and inform them about professional development opportunities. This helps novice teachers to get through the initial years without losing their sense of commitment because support and guidance are among the key terms for the sustainability of their commitment.

Also, since novice teachers care about other teachers' experiences and get help from them, and feel relaxed when they know that all teachers experience almost the same challenges because they are prone to feel themselves alone and with low self-efficacy belief when they confront problems. Thus, there can be established an online platform for gathering all novice teachers from different regions of the country to meet and share their experiences or materials with each other. This can create a sense of unity. Also, the involvement of volunteer veteran teachers and school administrators can be ensured as well since they would help novice teachers with their experiences and guiding, which would help novice teachers handle the issues without losing their teacher commitment.

An important phase of the teaching profession is induction period which is provided for novice teachers during the first year of the profession. This period starts after the school year begins, through the mid-semester. However, for novice teachers, induction period seminars should begin before the term starts. In that way, novice teachers will be prepared for the term better. In addition to this, regarding the content of this induction period seminars, it can be suggested that there should be more practical issues including hands-on practices regarding classroom management, preparing annual plans, individual differences of students, communications skills, paperwork duties at school because most novice teachers stated that they took courses for these important issues, but they were not practice-based. Thus, they want to be active participants of the seminars where they can share ideas, do brainstorming activities around the important issues for their practice with their colleagues. Developing

themselves professionally and feeling prepared for the classes help them feel motivated and more committed for making effort and fulfill the tasks.

Additionally, even though they received an undergraduate education, they still need guidance since actual classrooms can be different from the ones in theory. Most novice teachers find mentoring useful, but they believe that the selection of mentors should be done carefully since not every veteran teacher can fulfill the responsibilities of being a mentor. First of all, mentor teacher should be chosen among the volunteers who are enthusiastic and from the same branch with novice teacher. Otherwise, novice teachers might not find mentoring process useful. Also, based on the findings of the current study, most novice teachers pointed out that not all mentor teachers know their duties to fulfill as a mentor, so they have to attend a mentorship training before being assigned as a mentor teacher. Knowing that there is a mentor that they can trust make novice teachers feel relaxed and this situation contributes to their sense of commitment because they feel that they are supported.

Furthermore, administrators have things to do as the leading persons of the schools. First of all, an open-door policy should be adopted as a signal which means that the leader is approachable, open to feedback and available to give guidance. Administrators should pay attention to be always in contact with teachers to provide support. Also, they should create a welcoming environment for new teachers by introducing novice teachers to others when they first come and schedule meetings for social activities, and involve all teachers to create a collegial and involving atmosphere in order not to make new teacher feel alienated.

Moreover, administrators should pay attention not to assign problematic classes to the novice teachers because they are already going through a stressful period, if they start the profession with the problematic classes of the school, they might have serious problems regarding their teacher competencies, self-efficacy beliefs, professional identities, all of which have great influence on the sense of teacher commitment. Instead, novice teachers can make observations in these classes while veteran teachers are teaching. This can be a fruitful activity for novice teachers to be get prepared for this challenging students with whom they might encounter during their careers.

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Classroom visits can be done by administrators or other veteran teachers but not in a mood of strict evaluation of the performance of novice teachers, but instead for the aim of appreciating teachers' effort and giving constructive feedback useful for their practices in the classrooms because most of the time novice teachers wait for approval or confirmation from an authority to make sure that the are on the right track, and continue willingly without having loss in their sense of teacher commitment.

Professional development opportunities can be provided for novice teachers in the school context regardless of the compulsory seminars because each school has unique needs. If novice teachers feel that they develop themselves, learn the ways for handling the school-related issues, it enhances their sense of teacher commitment because they value developing themselves.

Other than this, the shared weakening factor for teacher commitment was student engagement. Most teachers touched upon the lack of motivation, desire, and low achievement level of students that was so influential in weakening the sense of commitment of novice teachers. School administrator and school counselors can organize activities for student motivation and the teacher motivation at the same time, which would directly appeal to teacher commitment.

Lack of parent involvement and support emerged as a weakening factor for novice teachers' sense of teacher commitment, so school administrators can make an effort for informing parents in order to emphasize the importance of their involvement in the process, or the teacher-parent conferences can be made compulsory. Besides, both school administrators and teachers can make home visits to create a close relationship with them to encourage their involvement, which will in turn help teachers sustain their sense of commitment because they will not feel helpless when there is a problem regarding students.

As most novice teachers get motivated when they receive a positive feedback from students, administrators, or parents; there can be created a line for appreciating teachers' effort. Currently, a line exists for this purpose, but it becomes active only on teachers' day. However, based on the findings of the current study, being rewarded for the efforts is a necessity for novice teachers to feel encouraged for making more effort

in their profession. Therefore, the line used for thanking teachers needs to be encouraged to be used actively all the time in order to strengthen the sense of teacher commitment of novice teachers.

Lastly, for encouraging novice teachers' motivation and strengthen the feeling of commitment, weekly or monthly magazines can be published including the best examples and works of committed teachers. Also, booklets can be prepared for novice teachers including practical tips for initial years of the profession. These booklets can be prepared based on needs assessment done with novice teachers. These publications contribute to emotional well-being of novice teachers along with its practical help because novice teachers can feel that they are valued and their needs are taken into consideration.

5.3. Implications for Further Research

The current study presents recommendations and implications for further research studies in light of its results. This study has been conducted as a qualitative study with phenomenological design in order to get in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of teacher commitment from the perspectives and experiences of novice teachers by collecting data through interviews.

In the further studies, for reaching more enriched data, classroom observations can be done, the views of school administrators and veteran teachers can be involved since they are in the close circle of novice teachers.

Since the sense of teacher commitment tend to fluctuate as the time passes, and it is prone to get influenced by various factors, longitudinal studies through various career stages can be conducted to better understand the teacher commitment phenomenon.

Pre-service teachers' entry beliefs and its changes can be examined as a longitudinal study with a focus on teacher self-efficacy and teacher commitment as two intertwined and highly important beliefs for the teaching profession. It helps university educators to take action in order for helping pre-service teachers have strong beliefs of teacher

efficacy and teacher commitment that will make the initial years of the profession go smoothly under favor of beliefs that would act as intrinsic motivation to help them deal with actual classroom challenges.

Lastly, this study can be carried out as a quantitative study for examining the correlation in order to focus on the complexity of relationship among teacher commitment, effective teaching, and self-efficacy beliefs.

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APPENDICES

A. SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW FORM

MESLEĞE YENİ BAŞLAYAN ÖĞRETMENLERİN MESLEĞE ADANMIŞLIKLARI
ÜZERİNE GÖRÜŞME FORMU

Değerli Öğretmenim,

Ben Fadime Ural. ODTÜ Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümünde yüksek lisans öğrencisi ve araştırma görevlisiyim. Yüksek lisans tezimde mesleğe yeni başlayan öğretmenlerin mesleğe adanmışlıklarını ve buna etki eden faktörleri incelemek amacıyla bir araştırma yürütmekteyim. Bu kapsamda, devlet okullarının ortaokul kademesinde görev yapan mesleğinin ilk üç yılında olan öğretmenler ile görüşmeler yapmaktayım. Görüşme formu üç bölümden oluşmaktadır. Formun ilk bölümünde kişisel bilgiler, ikinci bölümünde öğretmenlik ile ilgili sorular ve üçüncü bölümünde ise mesleğe adanmışlığa yönelik sorular yer almaktadır.

Bu görüşmede, size yönelteceğim sorularla bu konulardaki görüşlerinizi almak istiyorum. Mesleğinin ilk yıllarını çalışmakta olan bir öğretmen olarak görüşleriniz bu çalışma için büyük önem taşımaktadır. Bu görüşme sırasında paylaşacağınız tüm bilgiler yalnızca bilimsel amaçlar doğrultusunda kullanılacak ve kimliğiniz araştırmacı tarafından gizli tutulacaktır. Görüşme soruları kişisel rahatsızlık verecek sorular içermemektedir. Ancak görüşme sırasında sorulardan veya başka bir nedenden dolayı kendinizi rahatsız hissederseniz görüşmeyi yarıda bırakabilirsiniz. Kabul ederseniz herhangi bir noktayı kaçırmamak için görüşmeyi kaydetmek istiyorum. Görüşmeyi yarıda bırakmanız durumunda yapılan kaydın silinmesini isteyebilirsiniz. Görüşme yaklaşık 30-40 dakika sürecektir.

Görüşmeye başlamadan önce araştırma hakkında sormak istediğiniz bir soru varsa memnuniyetle cevaplayabilirim. Görüşme sonrasında araştırmacılara ulaşmak isterseniz Fadime Ural ile fural@metu.edu.tr e-mail adresi üzerinden iletişime geçebilirsiniz. Değerli vaktinizi ayırarak görüşlerinizi paylaştığınız ve çalışmaya katkı sağladığınız için şimdiden çok teşekkür ederiz.

<div style="text-align: right">

Arş. Gör. Fadime Ural
Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü
İletişim: fural@metu.edu.tr
Prof. Dr. Ahmet Ok
Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü

</div>

GÖRÜŞME SORULARI

A. Kişisel Bilgiler

Cinsiyet:_____ Branş: _____ Görev Yaptığı İl/Yerleşim Yeri :_____/_____

1. Kaç yaşındasınız?

2. Kısaca eğitim geçmişinizden bahseder misiniz?

    2.1. Hangi üniversiteden kaç yılında mezun oldunuz?
    2.2. Mezun olduğunuz bölüm nedir?
    2.3. En son aldığınız eğitim dereceniz nedir? Bu dereceyi hangi bölümden aldınız?

  B. Öğretmenliğe Yönelik Bilgiler

1. Kaç yılında öğretmen olarak atandınız?

2. Atandığınız okul ile ilgili bilgi verebilir misiniz?

    1.1. Okulun fiziksel durumu ve olanakları nasıl?
    1.2. Öğrenci sayısı ve sınıf mevcudu ne durumda?
    1.3. Öğretmen ve yönetici sayısı ne kadar?

3. Haftada kaç saat derse giriyorsunuz?

4. Okulda sizden başka yeni atanan kaç meslektaşınız var?

5. Sizden sorumlu danışman (rehber öğretmen/mentor) var mıydı? Branşı neydi?

6. Şu an çalıştığınız okula atanmadan önce herhangi bir yerde öğretmenlik yaptıysanız ne kadar süre ve hangi branşta çalıştınız?

7. Öğretmen olmaya nasıl karar verdiniz? Bu kararı vermede etkili olan durum, kişi ya da koşullar nelerdi?

  C. Mesleğe Adanmışlık

1. Size ikinci bir şans verilse, yine öğretmenlik mesleğini seçer misiniz? Neden?

2. Öğretmenlik mesleğinde adanmışlık sizin için ne ifade ediyor?

3. Sizce mesleğe adanmış bir öğretmenin en belirgin özellikleri neler olabilir?

4. Kendinizin öğretmenlik mesleğine adanmışlığınız ile ilgili neler düşünüyorsunuz?

  4.1. Mesleğin kendisine olan adanmışlığınız konusunda ne düşünüyorsunuz?

    4.1.1. Mesleğinizi severek yaptığınız konusunda ne düşünüyorsunuz?
    4.1.2. Mesleğinizi devam ettirme konusunda ne düşünüyorsunuz?
    4.1.3. Mesleğinizi değiştirmeniz için iyi bir neden ne olabilir?

  4.2. Öğretime olan adanmışlığınız konusunda ne düşünüyorsunuz?

4.2.1. Öğretim yapmaya olan istekliliğiniz konusunda ne düşünüyorsunuz?

4.2.2. Öğretime olan istekliliğinizi nasıl gösteriyorsunuz?

4.2.3. Öğretiminizi iyileştirmek için neler yapıyorsunuz?

4.2.4. Öğretim aşamasında meslekteki adanmışlığınızı zayıflatan durumlar neler oluyor?

4.2.5. Öğretim aşamasında meslekteki adanmışlığınızı güçlendiren durumlar neler oluyor?

4.3. Öğrencilerinize ve onların öğrenmelerine olan adanmışlığınız konusunda ne düşünüyorsunuz?

4.3.1. Öğrencilerle iletişiminiz genel olarak nasıl?

4.3.2. Öğrencileriniz için hedeflediğiniz şeyler neler?

4.3.3. Öğrencileriniz için hedefledikleriniz adına neler yapıyorsunuz?

4.3.4. Öğrencilere olan adanmışlığınızı nasıl gösteriyorsunuz?

4.3.5. Öğrencilerinizle yaşadığınız hangi durumlarda adanmışlığınızın güçlendiğini hissediyorsunuz?

4.3.6. Öğrencilerinizle yaşadığınız hangi durumlarda adanmışlığınızın zayıfladığını hissediyorsunuz?

4.4. Mesleki gelişim konusundaki adanmışlığınız hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?

4.4.1. Mesleği nitelikli olarak devam ettirmek için neler yapıyorsunuz?

4.4.2. Mesleki gelişimin öğretmen adanmışlığınız üzerindeki etkileri konusunda ne düşünüyorsunuz?

5. Meslektaşlarınız ile yaşadığınız deneyimlerin meslekteki adanmışlığınız üzerindeki etkileri hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?

5.1. Meslektaşlarınız ile iletişiminiz ne durumda?

5.2. Meslektaşlarınız ile işbirliğiniz konusunda ne düşünüyorsunuz?

5.3. Meslektaşlarınızla yaşadığınız hangi deneyimler meslekteki güçlendiriyor?

5.4. Meslektaşlarınızla yaşadığınız hangi deneyimler meslekteki zayıflatıyor?

6. Danışmanınız ile yaşadığınız deneyimlerin meslekteki adanmışlığınız üzerindeki etkileri hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?

6.1. Danışmanınız ile iletişiminiz nasıldı?

6.2. Danışmanınız ile hangi konularda paylaşımda bulundunuz?

6.3. Danışmanınız ile meslekteki adanmışlığınızı güçlendiren ne gibi deneyimler yaşadınız? 6.4. Danışmanınız ile meslekteki adanmışlığınızı zayıflatan ne gibi deneyimler yaşadınız?

7. Okul yönetimi ile yaşadığınız deneyimlerin meslekteki adanmışlığınız üzerindeki etkileri hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?

7.1. Okul yönetimi ile iletişiminiz nasıl?

7.2. Okul yönetimi ile işbirliğiniz ne durumda?

7.3. Okul yönetimi ile yaşadığınız hangi deneyimlerin meslekteki adanmışlığınızı güçlendirdiğini düşünüyorsunuz?

7.4. Okul yönetimi ile yaşadığınız hangi deneyimlerin meslekteki adanmışlığınızı zayıflattığını düşünüyorsunuz?

8. Veliler ile yaşadığınız deneyimlerin meslekteki adanmışlığınız üzerindeki etkileri hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?

8.1. Veliler ile ilişkileriniz nasıl?

8.2. Veliler ile işbirliğiniz konusunda ne düşünüyorsunuz?

8.3. Veliler ile yaşadığınız durumlardan sizin meslekteki adanmışlığınızı güçlendiren durumlar neler oluyor?

8.4. Veliler ile yaşadığınız durumlardan sizin meslekteki adanmışlığınızı zayıflatan ne gibi durumlar oluyor?

9. Kendinizin ve çevrenizdeki öğretmenlerin yaşadıkları deneyimlerden yola çıkarak öğretmenlik mesleğine adanmışlığın sürdürülmesi ve güçlendirilmesi ve için nelere ihtiyaç duyuyorsunuz?

10. Mesleğe adanmışlığınızın sürdürülmesi ve güçlendirilmesi için duyduğunuz ihtiyaçların karşılanması için neler yapılmasını önerirsiniz?

11. Bunların dışında neler eklemek istersiniz?

B. APPROVAL OF METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER

ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
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02 KASIM 2020

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Prof.Dr. Ahmet OK

Danışmanlığını yaptığınız Fadime URAL'ın "Öğretmenlerin Mesleğin İlk Yıllarındaki Deneyimleri ve Mesleğe Adanmışlıkları" başlıklı araştırmanız İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülmüş ve 307-ODTU-2020 protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Saygılarımızla bilgilerinize sunarız.

Prof.Dr. Mine MISIRLISOY
İAEK Başkanı

C. LEGAL PERMISSION OF MoNE

DIRECTORATE OF STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

T.C.
MİLLÎ EĞİTİM BAKANLIĞI
Strateji Geliştirme Başkanlığı

Sayı : E-49614598-605.01-23733009   06.04.2021
Konu : Araştırma Uygulama İzni Talebi

DAĞITIM YERLERİNE

İlgi: a) Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Rektörlüğünün 27/11/2020 tarihli ve 54850036-605.01-E.253
sayılı yazısı.
b) Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın 21/01/2020 tarihli ve 2020/2 Nolu Araştırma Uygulama İzinleri
Genelgesi.

İlgi (a) yazı ile Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Anabilim Dalı Yüksek Lisans
Programı öğrencisi Fadime URAL'ın "Öğretmenlerin Mesleğin İlk Yıllarındaki Deneyimleri ve Mesleğe
Adanmışlıkları" konulu araştırmasına veri sağlamak amacıyla anket çalışması yapma izin talebine ilişkin
yazı ve ekleri Başkanlığımız tarafından incelenmiştir.

Araştırmanın virüsün etkilerinden korunmak amacı ile Bakanlığımıza bağlı resmi/özel okul ve
kurumlarda öğrenci, öğretmen ve okul yöneticilerinin katılımı ile yapılması planlanan il/ilçe, ulusal ve
uluslararası düzeydeki sosyal etkinliklerin (toplantı, çalıştay, sempozyum, konferans, forum, ödül töreni,
spor müsabakası, yarışma vb.) tedbiren iptal edilmesi ve yüz yüze eğitim öğretime ara verilmesi göz
önüne alınarak örgün eğitimin tam olarak başlamasıyla birlikte ilgili genel müdürlüklerin izni ile
denetimi il/ilçe milli eğitim müdürlükleri ve okul/kurum idaresinde olmak üzere, kurum faaliyetlerini
aksatmadan, gönüllülük esasına göre; onaylı bir örneği Bakanlığımızda muhafaza edilen ve uygulama
sırasında da mühürlü ve imzalı örnekten çoğaltılan veri toplama araçlarının uygulanmasına ilgi (b)
Genelge doğrultusunda izin verilmiştir.

Gereğini bilgilerinize rica ederim.

Mehmet Fatih LEBLEBİCİ
Bakan a.
Başkan

Ek: Onaylı Veri Toplama Araçları (4 Sayfa)

Dağıtım:
Gereği: Bilgi:
Gaziantep, Kars, Konya. Kahramanmaraş,   Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Rektörlüğüne
Sivas, Şanlıurfa, Aksaray, Batman, Iğdır
ve Şırnak Valiliklerine
(İl Millî Eğitim Müdürlüğü)

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D. INVITATION CALL

BİLİMSEL ÇALIŞMAYA KATILIM DAVETİ

Sayın Öğretmenim,

Ben Fadime Ural. Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümünde yüksek lisans öğrencisi ve araştırma görevlisiyim. Yüksek lisans tezim için ODTÜ Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü öğretim üyesi Prof. Dr. Ahmet Ok danışmanlığında mesleğe yeni başlayan öğretmenlerin mesleğe adanmışlıklarını incelemek amacıyla bir araştırma yürütüyoruz. Bu kapsamda, devlet okullarının ortaokul kademesinde görev yapmakta olan mesleğinin en az bir en fazla üçüncü yılında olan öğretmenler ile görüşmeler yapmaktayız. Mesleğinin ilk yıllarını geçirmekte olan bir öğretmen olarak belirlenen kriterlere uygunluğunuz sayesinde görüşlerinizin bu çalışmaya büyük katkılar sağlayacağına ve alan yazına faydalı bir çalışmanın kazandırılmasında değerli bir paydaş olacağınıza inanıyoruz.

Sizinle yapacağımız görüşmelerde paylaşacağınız tüm bilgiler yalnızca bilimsel amaçlar doğrultusunda kullanılacak ve kimliğiniz araştırmacı tarafından kesinlikle gizli tutulacaktır. Görüşme soruları rahatsızlık oluşturacak ayrıntılar içermemektedir. Ancak görüşme sırasında sorulardan veya başka nedenlerden dolayı rahatsızlık hissederseniz görüşmeyi yarıda bırakıp çıkma hakkına sahip olacaksınız. Görüşmelerimiz çevrimiçi araçlar ile yapılacak ve 30-40 dakika sürecektir.

Çalışmaya katkı sağlamak isterseniz araştırmacılardan Fadime Ural'a aşağıda belirtilen iletişim bilgileri ile dilediğiniz şekilde (e-mail veya telefon) ulaşabilirsiniz. Değerli vaktinizi ayırıp davet metnini okuduğunuz ve çalışmaya sağlayacağınız katkılar için şimdiden çok teşekkür ederiz.

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E. INFORMED CONSENT FORM

KATILIM KABUL FORMU

Sayın Katılımcımız,

Bu çalışma, "Öğretmen Adanmışlığının Mesleğe Yeni Başlayan Öğretmenlerin Bakış Açısıyla İncelenmesi" başlığıyla, ODTÜ Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü yüksek lisans öğrencisi ve araştırma görevlisi Fadime Ural tarafından Prof. Dr. Ahmet Ok danışmanlığında yürütülen yüksek lisans tez çalışmasıdır.

Çalışmanın amacı mesleğe yeni başlayan öğretmenlerin mesleğe adanmışlıklarının incelenmesi, öğretmenlerin mesleğin ilk yıllarında öğretmen adanmışlığı bakımından ne gibi deneyimler yaşadıklarını ve bu deneyimlerin onların adanmışlıklarındaki etkilerini derinlemesine incelemektir. Bu çalışmanın sonucunda elde edilecek veriler mesleğe yeni başlayan öğretmenlerin adanmışlıklarının artırılarak sürdürülmesi için duydukları ihtiyaçların belirlenerek mesleğin kaliteli bir şekilde devamlılığı konusunda alınabilecek önlemler veya yapılabilecek değişiklikler açısından alana katkı sağlayacaktır.

Bu çalışma Türkiye genelinde resmi ortaokullarda görev yapan 2018 ve 2019 yıllarında atanmış öğretmenlerle görüşmeler yapılarak sürdürülecektir.

Mevcut çalışma T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın izni ile gerçekleşmektedir. Araştırma uygulamasına katılım tamamıyla gönüllülük esasına dayalı olmaktadır. Çalışmada sizden kimlik belirleyici hiçbir bilgi istenmemektedir. Cevaplar tamamıyla gizli tutulacak ve sadece araştırmacılar tarafından değerlendirilecektir. Veriler sadece bilimsel yayınlarda kullanılacak ve üçüncü kişilerle paylaşılmayacaktır.

Yapılacak görüşme kişisel rahatsızlık verecek sorular ve durumlar içermemektedir. Ancak, görüşme sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi bir nedenden dolayı rahatsız hissederseniz görüşmeyi yarıda bırakabilirsiniz. Böyle bir durumda görüşmeyi yapan kişiye görüşmeyi tamamladığınızı söylemek yeterli olacaktır.

Görüşme öncesinde sormak istediğiniz herhangi bir konu varsa sormaktan çekinmeyiniz. Çalışma bittikten sonra çalışma hakkında daha detaylı bilgi edinmek ve sorularınızı sormak için aşağıda iletişim bilgileri bulunan araştırmacı Fadime Ural'a telefon veya e-posta ile ulaşarak soru sorabilir, sonuçlar hakkında bilgi isteyebilirsiniz. Katılımınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz. Saygılarımızla,

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Araştırmaya katılmayı tamamen gönüllü olarak kabul ediyorum ve istediğim zaman yarıda bırakıp çıkabileceğimi biliyorum. Verdiğim bilgilerin bilimsel amaçlı yayınlarda kullanılmasını kabul ediyorum.

Tarih   İmza

ÖĞRETMEN ADANMIŞLIĞININ MESLEĞE YENİ BAŞLAYAN
ÖĞRETMENLERİN BAKIŞ AÇISIYLA İNCELENMESİ

Giriş

Değişen çağda insanların çeşitli ihtiyaçlarına hizmet etmenin temel araçlarından biri eğitimdir. Eğitim, birbiriyle yakın ilişki içinde olan birçok faktörü içeren karmaşık bir süreçtir. Bu karmaşık ağda öğretmenler, eğitim sürecinin önde gelen temsilcileridir. Öğretmenlerin öğrencilerle doğrudan iletişimleri olduğu için eğitim sistemindeki diğer tüm yapı taşları doğrudan öğretmenlerle ilişkilidir (ERG, 2020). Bu bakımdan öğretmenler, sürecin en güçlü temsilcileri olarak eğitim sürecinde önemli bir sorumluluğa sahiptir.

Uygulamalardaki herhangi bir reform ve iyileştirme çabasının başarısı büyük ölçüde öğretmenlerin mesleki yeterliliğine, algılarına ve meslekteki adanmışlıklarına bağlıdır (MEB, 2018). Dolayısıyla kaliteli eğitime adanmış öğretmenlerin çalışmaları olmadan ulaşılamayacağı söylenebilir (Razak vd., 2010). Benzer şekilde Fox (1964), bir mesleğin etkililiğinin, o mesleğin temsilcilerinin adanmışlık düzeylerine bağlı olduğunu ve öğretmenlik mesleği için de bu durumun aynı şekilde olduğunu belirtmektedir. Bu nedenle öğretmen adanmışlığını öğretmenlerin performansı üzerinde etkili bir faktör olarak kabul edilebilir. Bu bağlamda bir öğretmenin mesleğe harcadığı emek ve zamanın, mesleki adanmışlığı ile doğrudan ilişkili olduğu savunulmaktadır (Kozikoğlu, 2016).

İyi bir öğretimi ve öğrencinin öğrenmesine katkıda bulunmak, sadece öğretmenlerin deneyim birikimi ile ilgili olabilecek bir şey değildir. Daha ziyade, öğretmen adanmışlığı eğitimin başarısı ve geleceği için önemli bir unsur olarak görülmektedir (Skillbeck ve Connell, 2004; Huberman, 1993). Day (2004) eğitim için isteğe bağlı olabilecek bazı öğelerin varlığından bahsederken iyi bir eğitim süreci için adanmışlığı

bunların dışında tutmaktadır. Benzer şekilde Day ve Gu'ya (2010) göre adanmışlık, öğretmenlerin mesleki kimliğinin bir parçası olarak algılanmaktadır.

Adanmışlık, etkili öğretmenliğin anahtarı olarak kabul edildiğinden, öğretmenlerin adanmışlık duygusuna sahip olmalarının bir seçenek değil, bir gereklilik olduğu belirtilmektedir. Bu nedenle mesleğe yeni başlayan öğretmenlerin, etkili performans göstermek için çabalamaları ve mesleğe devam etmeleri için gerekli faktörlerden biri olan öğretmen adanmışlığına sahip olmaları gerekmektedir (Shukla, 2014).

Öğretmen adanmışlığı doğası gereği karmaşık olmakla birlikte (Coladarci, 1992) iş yükü, meslektaşlar, öğrenciler ve veliler gibi çeşitli faktörlerden etkilenebilir (Chesnut, 2017) çünkü adanmışlık duygusu doğuştan gelmez, zamanla çeşitli bağlamlardaki deneyimler ile oluşur. Bu bağlamlar öğretmen eğitimi programları, öğretim deneyimleri, meslektaşlar ile çalışmak ve benzeri olabilir. Bu nedenle, öğretmen adanmışlığının köklerinin hizmet öncesi eğitim ve ilk yıllardaki öğretim deneyimlerinin kalitesinde bulunabileceği iddia edilebilir. Başka bir deyişle, mesleğin ilk yıllarında yaşanan deneyimler öğretmen adanmışlığını etkileyen faktörler olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Bu nedenle, öğretmen adaylarına ve hizmet içi öğretmenlere verimli bir ortam sağlamak, ne tür durumlarla karşılaşabileceklerinin farkında olmalarına yardımcı olmak ve öğretmen adanmışlıklarını geliştirmelerini desteklemek, öğretmenlerin meslekte etkililiği ve kalıcılığı için hayati önem taşımaktadır. Çünkü adanmışlık, öğretmenlerin olumlu deneyimleri sürdürmek veya olumsuz durumlarla başa çıkmak için çaba göstermeleri için bir motivasyon kaynağı olabilir. Dolayısıyla, öğretmenlik mesleğinin ilk yıllarının öğretmenlerin adanmışlığı için çok önemli olduğu ve aynı zamanda öğretmenlerin mesleklerini tatmin edici bir şekilde sürdürmenin yollarını aramaları veya mesleği bırakmaya eğilimli olmaları nedeniyle kariyerlerinin geri kalanını da etkilediği sonucuna varılabilir. Hudson, 2017; Okas ve diğerleri, 2014; Helms-Lorenz ve diğerleri, 2015; Andrews ve diğerleri, 2012). Bu nedenle öğretmenlerin adanmışlıklarını sürdürmeleri için desteklenip teşvik edilmeleri gerekmektedir (Louis, 1998; Day, 2000).

Huberman'ın da (1993) iddia ettiği gibi, eğitimin başarısı ve geleceği çoğunlukla kariyer boyu öğretmen adanmışlığına bağlıdır. Bu nedenle, yeni atanan öğretmenlerin adanmışlığını keşfetmek ve onu güçlendiren veya zayıflatan ilgili deneyimlerini

öğrenmek önem taşımaktadır. Ayrıca, bu öğretmenlerin meslekteki adanmışlığı sürdürmek ve arttırmak hakkındaki önerilerini almak onların zorlu koşullara uyum sağlamaları ve meslekte kalmaları açısından önem taşımaktadır.

Yukarıdaki gerekçelere dayalı olarak, bu çalışma için aşağıdaki araştırma soruları oluşturulmuştur:

1. Mesleğe yeni başlayan öğretmenler öğretmen adanmışlığını nasıl algılar?
2. Mesleğe yeni başlayan öğretmenlerin öğretmen adanmışlığı açısından deneyimleri nelerdir?
3. Öğretmen adanmışlığını etkileyen faktörler nelerdir?
4. Mesleğe yeni başlayan öğretmenler öğretmen adanmışlığının arttırılması ve sürdürülebilmesi için neler önermektedir?

Öğretmenlik mesleğinin zorlu yapısı ve öğretmenlerin mesleği bırakma oranları dikkate alındığında, öğretmenlerin mesleğe etkili bir şekilde devam edebilmeleri için en güçlü unsurlardan biri olan öğretmen adanmışlığının yüksek düzeyde olması, öğretmenleri mesleğe yönelik çaba göstermeye ve mesleğini sürdürmeye teşvik ettiği için ayrıca bir öneme sahiptir. Bu nedenle, öğretmen adanmışlığının doğası ve onu geliştirme yolları üzerinde durulmalıdır. Bu anlamda, meslekte yeni olan öğretmenlerin karşılaştığı zorlayıcı veya teşvik edici faktörleri belirlemek, bu faktörlerin öğretmenlerin adanmışlığını nasıl etkilediğini incelemek ve öğretmenlerin cesaret kırıcı faktörlerle başa çıkmalarına veya olumlu olanları sürdürmelerine yardımcı olmak için destek geliştirmek esastır ve çalışmanın sağlayabileceği katkının önemini vurgulamaktadır.

Yöntem

Mevcut çalışmada, merkezi olgu olarak belirlenen öğretmen adanmışlığının derinlemesine araştırılmasını sağlamak için nitel araştırma yönteminden yararlanılmıştır (Creswell, 2013). Buna dayanarak belirli bir olgunun bu olguyu deneyimleyen bireylerin algılarına dayalı olarak olgunun özüne ulaşmaya odaklanan fenomenoloji (olgubilim) araştırma deseni benimsenmiştir (Patton, 2002).

Bu çalışmada, örneklemin belirlenmesinde bilgi açısından zengin katılımcıları seçmek için amaçlı örnekleme kullanılmıştır (Patton, 2002). Amaçlı örnekleme yöntemlerinden ise ölçüt örnekleme ve maksimum çeşitlilik örneklemesinden yararlanılmıştır. Ölçüt örnekleme yöntemi kullanılarak katılımcılar Temmuz 2018, Mart 2019 ve Eylül 2019' da Türkiye'deki sadece resmi ortaokullara atanan öğretmenlerden seçilmiştir. Maksimum çeşitlilik örnekleme yönteminden yararlanılarak bu araştırmanın örneklemi branş ve görev yapılan ilin gelişmişlik düzeyi açısından çeşitlilik göstermektedir.

Örneklem belirleme süreci sonunda toplam 30 öğretmen çalışmaya dahil edilmiştir. Katılımcıların tamamı mesleğinin en az bir en fazla üç yılını çalışmakta olan 16'sı 2018'de, 14'ü 2019'da atanan öğretmenlerden oluşmaktadır. Katılımcılar cinsiyetine göre gruplandığında, 27 kadın ve 3 erkek öğretmen bulunmaktadır. Katılımcıların yaşları 25 ile 31 arasında olmakla birlikte ortalama yaş 26 olarak bulunmuştur. Öğretmenlerin görev yaptığı illere ilişkin bilgilere göre, Şanlıurfa'dan 9, Gaziantep'ten 6, Konya'dan 5, Batman'dan 3 ve Iğdır'dan 2 öğretmen katılmıştır. Bunlara ek olarak, Aksaray, Kahramanmaraş, Sivas, Şırnak ve Kars illerinin her birinden birer öğretmen çalışmada yer almıştır. Öğretmenler atandıkları şehirlerin farklı yerleşim yerlerinde çalışmaktadırlar. Katılımcılardan 7 kişi il merkezlerinde, 4 kişi ilçelerde görev yaparken, kalan 19 öğretmenin tamamı köy okullarında görev yapmaktadır. Katılımcıların branşlarına bakıldığında ise 9 İngilizce, 7 Matematik, 6 Türkçe, 3 Fen Bilgisi, 3 Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi ve 2 Beden Eğitimi ve Spor öğretmeni bulunmaktadır.

Bu çalışmada veri toplama aracı olarak yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu kullanılmıştır. Bu görüşme formu araştırmacı tarafından araştırma soruları ve alanyazın göz önünde bulundurularak geliştirilmiştir. Sonrasında, her biri eğitim bilimleri alanlarında doktora derecesine sahip biri profesör, ikisi doçent ve biri doktor unvanına sahip 4 öğretim üyesi ve 1 öğretim görevlisinden uzman görüşü alınmıştır. Alınan geribildirimlere uygun şekilde düzenlemeler yapıldıktan sonra yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formunun son hali kişisel bilgiler, öğretmenliğe yönelik bilgiler ve mesleğe adanmışlık olmak üzere üç bölümden oluşmaktadır ve bu üç bölüm toplamda 19 ana soru ve alt soru olarak yer alan sondalar içermektedir. Görüşme

formunun geçerlik ve güvenirliğini teyit etmek adına ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu ve MEB Strateji Geliştirme Müdürlüğü'nden onaylar alındıktan sonra üç aday öğretmen ile görüşme formunun pilot uygulaması yapılmış ve görüşmenin akışı, süresi, soruların uygunluğu test edilmiştir.

Görüşmeler, COVID-19 pandemisi nedeniyle 2019-2020 Güz Döneminde çevrimiçi videokonferans platformu olan Zoom aracılığıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir. Görüşme öncesinde katılımcılar gönüllü katılım formu imzalayarak e-posta yoluyla araştırmacıya göndermiştir. Görüşmelerin her biri 50 dakika ile bir buçuk saat arasında sürerken ortalama süresi 70 dakikadır. Her bir görüşme katılımcının onayı alınarak kayıt altına alınmıştır.

Kaydedilen görüşmeler deşifre edildikten sonra veriler kodlanarak alt tema ve temalar halinde düzenlenerek içerik analizi yoluyla MAXQDA 2020 yazılım programı ile analiz edilmiştir.

Araştırmanın güvenilirliği inandırıcılık, aktarılabilirlik, teyit edilebilirlik ve güvenilirlik ölçütleri karşılanarak sağlanmıştır. İnandırıcılığı sağlamak amacıyla görüşme formları için uzman görüşleri alınmış ve pilot uygulaması yapılmıştır. Ayrıca, veri toplama sırasında herhangi önemli noktayı gözden kaçırmamak adına görüşmeler kayıt altına alınmıştır ve bulgular sunulurken katılımcıların söylediklerinden doğrudan alıntılar yapılmıştır. Veri analizi aşamasında tek araştırmacı yanlılığını engelleyerek güvenirlik sağlamak amacıyla analizci üçgenlemesi ve akran çözümlemesinden faydalanılmıştır. Aktarılabilirlik için çalışmanın tüm adımları ayrıntılı olarak açıklanmış ve örneklem seçerken amaçlı örnekleme kullanılmıştır. Güvenilirlik ve teyit edilebilirlik açısından ise yapılan çalışmanın aşamalarının sistematik ve mantıklı ilerlediğini garantilemek amacıyla denetim yolu kullanılmıştır. Araştırmacının danışmanı tüm aşamalarda geri bildirim vererek denetim yolu ile güvenirlik sağlanmıştır.

Bulgular, Tartışma ve Öneriler

Mevcut çalışmada görüşme verilerinin analizine dayalı olarak her dört araştırma sorusu için temalar, alt temalar ve kodlar sunulup ilgili alanyazın ışığında önemli

noktalar tartışıldıktan sonra uygulamaya ve ileriki çalışmalara yönelik önerilerde bulunulmuştur.

Mesleğe yeni başlayan öğretmenlerin öğretmen adanmışlığı algılarına yönelik olan ilk araştırma sorusuna ilişkin bulgular aşağıdaki gibi iki tema altında derlenmiştir: (1) duygusal yönler ve (2) pratik yönler. Benzer şekilde alanyazında da öğretmen adanmışlığının çeşitli şekillerde algılandığı belirtilmektedir (Louis, 1998; Nias, 1981; Tyree, 1996; Crosswell, 2006). İlk tema olan duygusal yönler için öğretmenler öğrenci sevgisi ve meslek sevgisinden söz etmişlerdir. Dolayısıyla öğretmen adanmışlığının öğretmenlik mesleğine duygusal bağlılık gerektirdiği söylenebilir çünkü öğretmenlerin neredeyse hepsi bir öğretmeni adanmış olarak tanımlayabilmek için mesleği ve öğrencileri sevmenin gerekliliğine vurgu yapmışlardır ve öğretmenlik mesleğinin duygusal bağ kurulmadan yapılabilecek bir iş olmadığına dikkat çekmişlerdir. Alanyazında öğretmenlerin mesleklerine olan duygusal bağlılıkları bir lüks olarak görülmemekte; bunun yerine mesleki bir gereklilik olduğu vurgulanmaktadır (Nias, 1981; Fried, 1995).

Gerek bu çalışmada gerekse alanyazında (Nias, 1981; Elliott ve Croswell, 2001; Day, 2004), öğretmenlik mesleğinin karmaşıklığı, öğretmenlerin sadece fiili anlamda meslekte yer almalarından ziyade mesleğe duygusal anlamda yani akıllarının yanı sıra yürekleriyle de bağlı olarak devam etmelerini gerektirmektedir. Buradan hareketle Crosswell'in (2006) çalışmasıyla da uyumlu olarak, öğretmen adanmışlığının pratik yönleri duygusal yönlerin profesyonel iş ortamı bağlamında pratiğe yansıması şeklinde yorumlanabilir. Çünkü mesleğe yönelik duygusal bağlılık yani adanmışlığın duygusal olarak algılanan yönlerinin meslekle ilgili görevleri istekle yerine getirmek ve yaptıklarına daha fazla özen göstermek için içsel bir dürtü görevi gördüğü vurgulanabilir. Benzer şekilde, Fox (1964) adanmış öğretmenlerin iş sorumluluklarını isteyerek yerine getirdiklerini ve nitelikli öğretim için çaba harcadıklarını belirtmiştir. Bunlara dayanarak, öğretmen adanmışlığının duygusal yönleri ile pratik yönleri arasındaki ilişki, duygusal yönlerin merkezde yer aldığı eşmerkezli bir ilişki olarak tanımlanabilir, çünkü mevcut çalışmada öğrencileri ve mesleği sevmek pratik yönlerin ayrılmaz bir bileşeni olarak algılanmaktadır.

Meslekte yeni olan öğretmenlerin deneyimlerini öğretmen adanmışlığı açısından incelemeyi amaçlayan ikinci araştırma sorusu için şu üç tema ortaya çıkmıştır: (1) öğretmen adanmışlığının boyutları, (2) algılanan öğretmen adanmışlığı düzeyi ve (3) öğretmenin meslekte kalma durumu.

Öğretmen adanmışlığının boyutlarına ilişkin olarak, öğretmenlik mesleğine, öğretime, öğrencilere ve öğrenmelerine ve mesleki gelişime adanmışlık olmak üzere dört boyut bulunmuştur. Öğretmen adanmışlığının çok boyutluluğu alanyazında farklı kombinasyonlarla (Day, 2004; Tyree, 1996; Shukla, 2014; Croswell ve Elliott, 2001; Firestone ve Pennell, 1993; Dannetta, 2002; Jong, 2015) tartışılmaktadır çünkü öğretmen bağlılığı duygusu farklı profesyonel bağlamlarda araştırılmıştır (Nias, 1981; Firestone ve Rosenblum, 1988; Kushman, 1992).

Öğretmen adanmışlığının boyutlarından biri olan öğretmenlik mesleğine bağlılık, mesleğe duyulan sevgi ve verilen çaba, özveri, değer, saygı gibi duygusal unsurları içermektedir. Bu unsurların tümü, öğretmen bağlılığının diğer boyutları olan öğretime, öğrencilere ve onların öğrenmesine ve mesleki gelişime adanmışlıkta da mevcuttur. Dolayısıyla duygusal bileşenler diğer boyutların ortaya çıkması için itici güçler olarak yorumlanabilir. Bunun nedeni, öğretim işinin, öğrencilerin ve onların öğrenmelerinin ve mesleki gelişim boyutlarının, mesleki bağlamda belirli inançların, duyguların ve değerlerin hayata geçirilmesi olarak tanımlanabilecek daha çok uygulamaya yönelik boyutlar olmasıdır. Bu iç içelik durumu, öğretmen adanmışlığı olgusunun doğası gereği karmaşık olması ve birbirini etkileyen iç içe ayrıntıları içermesi ile açıklanabilir; bunun altında yatan nedenin ise öğretmenlik mesleğinin karmaşık yapısından kaynaklandığı düşünülebilir.

Öğretime adanmışlık olan ikinci boyut için öğretmenler ağırlıklı olarak branşlarını sevdiklerinden, öğretme arzusundan ve sevgisinden ve dersten aldıkları zevkten bahsetmişlerdir.

Bu doğrultuda alanyazında öğretim sevgisi ile öğretmen adanmışlığı arasında güçlü bir pozitif ilişki olduğu savunulmaktadır, çünkü adanmışlık kavramı öğretmenlik mesleğinin belirli yönlerini sevmek olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Garrison ve Liston, 2004; Croswell, 2006). Bu sonuç, Hargreaves'in (1995) iyi öğretimin sadece verimli

olma, yeterlikleri geliştirme veya doğru türde bilgiye sahip olma meselesi olmadığını, aynı zamanda keyif, tutku ve neşe gibi duygusal durumları da içerdiği ifadeleriyle uyumludur. Ayrıca Voss ve Kunter (2019), konu alanından keyif almanın öğretmenlerin mesleki zorluklarla başa çıkmasına yardımcı olan önemli bir kaynak olduğunu iddia etmektedir. Ayrıca, öğretmenlerin öğretmenlik mesleğine olan adanmışlığının öğrencilerin motivasyonu ve katılımı üzerinde doğrudan etkisi vardır ki bu da alanyazında, öğretmenlerin istekli bir şekilde öğretim yapmasının öğrencilerin istekliliğini ve onların katılımını etkilediği ve öğretmenlerin bu sayede öğretimden daha fazla tatmin oldukları ve iyi şeyler başarmak istedikleri şeklinde tartışılmaktadır çünkü adanmış öğretmenler performanslarını önemserler ve performansa ilişkin öz değerlendirmeye dayalı olarak daha iyi öğretme yollarını ararlar (Somech ve Bogler, 2002; Hargreaves, 1997).

Üçüncü boyut olan öğrencilere ve onların öğrenmelerine adanmışlık söz konusu olduğunda, öğrencileri önemsemek ve öğrencilerin öğrenmeleri için çaba sarf etmek olarak iki alt tema ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu durum, alanyazında öğrencilere adanmışlığın, öğrencilerin duygusal iyi oluşlarına ve akademik gelişimlerine özen gösterilmesi olmak üzere iki açıdan incelendiği önceki çalışmalarla örtüşmektedir (Nias, 1981; Bilken, 1995; Tyree, 1996). Mesleğe yeni başlayan öğretmenler, öğrencilerin öğretmenlik mesleğinin ayrılmaz varlıkları olduğunu belirttikleri gibi onlara değer verdiklerini ve öğrencileri öğretmenleri çaba göstermeye teşvik eden etkili faktörlerden biri olarak gördüklerini ifade etmektedirler (Crosswell, 2006). Ayrıca öğrencileriyle aralarındaki sevgi dolu bağ öğretmenleri öğrenciler için daha fazla çaba sarf etmeye motive etmesi açısından çok önemlidir ve aynı zamanda alanyazında da benzer tartışmalar yapıldığı gibi öğretmenlerin adanmışlık duygularını kaybetmeden zorluklarla başa çıkmalarına da yardımcı olur (Choi & Tang, 2009).

Akademik başarı açısından ise öğretmenler öncelikli amaçlarının öğrencilerin öğrenmesine katkıda bulunmak olduğunu vurgulayarak, ihtiyaç duyduklarında öğrencilere materyal sağlayarak öğretim açısından ellerinden gelenin en iyisini yapmaktadırlar. Bununla ilgili olarak, Hussen vd., (2016), bir öğretmenin öğrencilerinin öğrenmesine olan adanmışlığın öğretmenlerin çocukların ihtiyaçları açısından duyarlı ve anlayışlı olmasını gerektirdiğinin altını çizmiştir çünkü

öğrenciler, öğrenme ihtiyaçlarını, yeteneklerini ve potansiyellerini anlayabilecek öğretmenlere ihtiyaç duymaktadırlar. Görüşmelere dayalı olarak ve Rosenholtz'un (1989) çalışmasında da iddia ettiği gibi öğretmenlerin çabalarının yani öğrencilerin öğrenmesine olan adanmışlıklarının öğrencilerin başarısı üzerinde etkili olduğu fark edilmiştir. Bu bulgu şu şekilde açıklanabilir; öğretmenlerin öğrencilerin öğrenmesine katkıda bulunma konusundaki çabası ve istekliliği öğretmenleri kendilerini geliştirmeye ve öğrencilerine daha iyi öğretmek için çeşitli stratejileri entegre etmeye yönlendirmekte ve bu durum da öğrencilerin daha iyi performans göstermesine yardımcı olmaktadır (Huberman, 1993; Ligaya et al. al, 2015). Bunların yanı sıra, mevcut çalışmada öğrencilerine ve onların öğrenmesine adanmış öğretmenlerin öğrencilerinin bireysel farklılıklarını önemsediği sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Benzer şekilde Fox (1964), kendini adamış bir öğretmeni, öğrencilerin sosyal arka plan, zeka, başarı, motivasyon ve ırk bakımından farklılık gösterebileceğini kabul eden bir öğretmen olarak tanımlamıştır. Bulgulara dayalı olarak, kendini adamış öğretmenler, öğrencilerin bireysel farklılıkları adanmışlıklarında dalgalanmalar yaratsa da bu farklılıkları birer zorluk olarak görmek yerine, kendilerini mesleki olarak geliştirerek bu farklılıklarla baş etmeye çalışmaktadırlar.

Mevcut çalışmada, öğretmen adanmışlığının son boyutu olan mesleki gelişim, güncel kalma ve meslektaşlarla işbirliği yapma çabası olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. İçinde bulunduğumuz çağda hızlı değişimlerin yaşanması öğrencilerin gereksinimlerinin de değişmesine neden olduğu için öğretmenler yeni öğretim yöntemleri, materyalleri ve teknolojik araçlar hakkında bilgi sahibi olmanın önemini vurgulamışlardır. Benzer şekilde Skillbeck ve Connell (2004) mesleki gelişim boyutunu, öğretmenleri günümüz bilgi çağının bilgi işçileri olarak dönüştürmek açısından kritik olarak görmektedir. Bunun yanı sıra alanyazında, kendini adamış bir öğretmenin, işleri mükemmel bir standartta yapmak için kendini geliştirme arayışında olduğu belirtilmektedir (Coladarci, 1992; Choi ve Tang, 2009). Ayrıca, çoğu çalışma (Firestone & Pennell, 1993; Gamoran, 2003; Fransson & Frelin, 2016), öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişim için istekli olduklarında ve zorluklarla başa çıkmalarına yardımcı olacak yeni şeyler öğrendiklerinde, öğretmenler kendilerini yeterli ve etkili hissederler, bu da öğretmen bağlılığını artırır.

Algılanan öğretmen bağlılığı düzeyi olarak belirlenen ikinci araştırma sorusunun ikinci temasına ilişkin olarak, adanmış öğretmenler ve kısmen adanmış öğretmenler olmak üzere iki alt tema ortaya çıkmıştır. İkinci sorunun üçüncü teması, mesleği bırakma ve mesleğe devam etme alt temalarını içeren öğretmenin meslekte kalması teması ile ilgilidir. Bunlarla ilgili olarak, tüm bu konular birbiriyle yakından ilişkili olduğu için öğretmenlerin öğretmenlik mesleği seçimindeki memnuniyetlerinden bahsetmek oldukça önemlidir.

Bu çalışmada, öğretmenlerin çoğu ilk yıllarında pek çok zorlukla karşılaşsalar da, mesleği seçmek için çocuk sevgisi, gençlerle vakit geçirmek, işin kişilik özelliklerine uygunluğu gibi içsel nedenleri olduğundan, meslek seçiminden duydukları memnuniyeti yine de ifade edebiliyorlar (Jong, 2015). Öte yandan, birkaç öğretmen öğretmenlik mesleğini seçerken aile etkisi ve iş garantisi gibi dışsal nedenlerin olması nedeniyle mevcut durumda seçimlerinden memnuniyetsizliklerini dile getirmişlerdir. Kendilerine ikinci bir şans verilirse öğretmenlik mesleğini seçmeden önce etraflıca düşüneceklerini veya başka iş fırsatları arayacaklarını belirtmişlerdir. Buna benzer olarak, Mkumbo (2012) ve Jong (2015) öğretmenlik mesleğini seçmenin içsel ve dışsal nedenlerinin öğretmenlerin meslekteki adanmışlıkları üzerinde etkili olduğunu iddia etmişlerdir.

Ayrıca öğretmenler, kendilerini adanmış veya kısmen adanmış olarak belirtmişlerdir. Kısmen adanmış hissetmelerinin nedenlerini ise online öğretim süreci, aşırı iş yükü ve diğer mesleklere olan ilgileri olarak ifade etmişlerdir çünkü bazıları öğretmenlik mesleğini dışsal nedenlerle seçmişlerdir. Öğretmenlerin sahip oldukları adanmışlık duygusu ile kariyer devamlılığının birbiriyle yakından ilişkili olduğu belirtilmektedir (Nias, 1981; Tyree, 1996; Taiti, 2008) çünkü öğretmen adanmışlığının en önemli özelliklerinden biri öğretmenlerin meslekte devam etmek için istekli olmalarıdır. Meyer ve Allen (1991) de çalışmalarında öğretmen adanmışlığının kariyer devam boyutunu ortaya çıkarmıştır. Alanyazında öğretmenlerin mesleği bırakma eğilimlerine ve nedenlerine bakılarak da adanmışlığın incelenebileceği vurgulanmaktadır (Coladarci, 1992; Fresko vd., 1997). Bu nedenle, düşük öğretmen adanmışlığının öğretmenin mesleği bırakmasına neden olabileceği gibi adanmışlığın ise meslekte devamlılığı sağladığı sonucuna varılabilir.

Aday öğretmenlerin adanmışlıklarını etkileyen faktörleri keşfetmeyi amaçlayan üçüncü araştırma sorusu ile ilgili olarak (1) zayıflatan faktörler ve (2) güçlendiren faktörler olarak iki tema ortaya çıkmıştır. Zayıflatan faktörlere bakıldığında, öğretmen adaylarının öğretmen adanmışlığını etkileyen en çarpıcı konu, öğretmenlik mesleğinin gerçekleri karşısında yaşadıkları şok ve beklenmedik durumlarla karşılaştıklarında hissettikleri rahatsızlık olmuştur. Alanyazında Veenman (1984) ve Gaede (1978) bu dönemi gerçeklik şoku olarak tanımlamıştır. Bu sonuç, öğretmenlik mesleğinin zorlu ilk yıllarına odaklanan ve gerçeklik şokuna neden olan alanyazındaki bazı çalışmalarla tutarlılık göstermektedir (Senom vd., 2013; Öztürk ve Yıldırım, 2013).

Öğretmenler, gerçeklik şokunun nedenini teori ve pratik arasındaki uyumsuzluğun sebep olduğu çevresel ve kültürel konularla ilgili sorunlar, öğrencilerin bireysel farklılıkları, evrak işleri ve kötü çalışma koşulları olarak vurgulamışlardır. Mevcut çalışmayı destekleyici bulgular olarak alanyazında hizmet öncesi öğretmen eğitiminin yetersizliğinin öğretmenlerin gerçek sınıf ortamları ile karşılaştıklarında gerçeklik şoku yaşamalarına neden olduğu tespit edilmiştir (Jarvis ve Algozzine, 2006; Senom vd., 2013; Öztürk & Yıldırım, 2013)

Öğretmen adanmışlığı duygusunu zayıflan diğer faktörler ise profesyonel faktörler adı altında toplanmıştır. Bunlardan ilki öğretim ile ilgili olanlardır ve öğrenci katılımı eksikliği, çabaların karşılığını alamama ve sınıf yönetimi ile ilgili sorunlar gibi öğretim aşamasındaki sorunları içerir (Veenman, 1984; Gergin; 2010; Çakmak, 2013). Katılımcı öğretmenlerin çoğu için öğrenciler sürecin ayrılmaz bir parçası olduğundan, öğretim ile ilgili zayıflatıcı faktörler çoğunlukla öğrenci odaklıdır. Tüm bu öğrenci merkezli sorunlar, öğretmenin boşuna çaba harcıyormuş hissine kapılmasına neden olmaktadır. Bunun aksine, öğrencinin derse katılımı, öğretmenlere çabalarının karşılığını aldıklarını hissettirir ve bu da onların öğretmen adanmışlığını güçlendirmektedir (Day & Gu, 2010; Brock and Grady, 2007; Michel, 2013). Bu güçlendirici faktör, öğretmenleri mesleklerini geliştirmek için çaba göstermeye teşvik eder. Bunların yanı sıra online öğretim süreci, çoğu öğrencinin derse katılma olanaklarının kısıtlı olması nedeniyle sorunludur ve öğrenci ve öğretmen arasındaki etkili etkileşimi de oldukça engellediğinden, fazlaca iş yükü oluşturduğundan (Allen, vd., 2020) meslekteki adanmışlığı olumsuz yönde etkilediği karşımıza çıkmaktadır.

İşle ilgili faktörlere gelince, öğretmenlerin çoğu öğretmenlik mesleğinin toplumda kendilerini değersiz hissetmelerine ve saygısız ebeveynlerle sorun yaşamalarına neden olan düşük bir statüye sahip olarak algılandığına inanmaktadır (Doğan, 2015; Özpınar & Sarpkaya). Bunun aksine bazı öğretmenler, toplumda kendilerine değer verildiğini ve saygı duyulduğunu hissettikleri için öğretmenlik mesleğini prestijli bir iş olarak görmektedirler. Toplumun bu olumlu yaklaşımı, öğretmen adanmışlığını güçlendiren bir faktördür. Ayrıca meslekteki iş yükü ve evrak işleri öğretmenler tarafından motivasyon düşürücü bulunmaktadır çünkü hizmet öncesi eğitim süresince veya yeni başladıklarında evrak işleri konusunda yeterince bilgilendirilmediklerinden çokça bahsedilmektedir (Doğan, 2015; Gömleksiz vd., 2010). Ayrıca, evrak işlerinden kaynaklı olarak iş yükü aşırı olarak nitelendirilmiş ve zamanlarının çoğunu derslere hazırlanmak yerine bu işlerle geçirmişlerdir (Kent, 2000). Bu durum öğretmenlerin derse hazırlıksız gittiklerinde öz-yeterlik eksikliği hissettikleri için öğretmen adanmışlıklarında düşüşe neden olmaktadır.

Öğretmen adanmışlığını etkileyen ilişkisel faktörlere gelince, meslektaşlar, yöneticiler ve ebeveynlerle ilgili ilişkiler söz konusu olduğunda, ortak paydada buluşulan nokta destek eksikliği, zayıf iletişim, rehberlik, teşvik ve işbirliği eksikliği idi ve tüm bu eksiklikler öğretmenler tarafından onların meslekteki adanmışlıklarını zayıflatan faktörler olarak ifade edilmiştir.

Ancak bu ilişkisel faktörler, meslektaşlar, yöneticiler ve velilere ek olarak danışman öğretmenler (rehber/mentor öğretmen) ve öğrencilerle olan ilişkiler de eklenerek güçlendirici faktörler olarak mesleğe adanmışlıkta etkili olmuştur. Dolayısıyla ilişkiler bileşeninin güçlendirici faktörler içinde daha fazla yer kapladığı söylenebilir. Bunun nedeni, mesleğe yeni başlayan öğretmenlerin meslektaşlarını gözlemleme eğiliminde olmaları ve doğru yolda olduklarından emin olmak için öğrencilerden, yöneticilerden ve velilerden olumlu geribildirim ve sarf ettikleri çabalara geri dönüt alarak onay alma ihtiyacı içinde olmaları olabilir. Benzer olarak alanyazında da olumlu ilişkilerin, okul içi desteğin ve teşvikin özellikle mesleğin ilk yıllarındaki olumlu etkisi vurgulanmıştır (Brock & Grady, 2007; Day & Gu, 2010; Feiman-Nemser, 2003; Fransson & Frelin, 2016).

Son olarak öğretmenler, öz-yeterlik inancı ve iş doyumu eksikliği hissi ve alan bilgisinde gerileme duygusu gibi bazı kişisel faktörleri meslekteki adanmışlığı zayıflatan etkenler olarak belirtirken, iş tatmini hissetmek, öğrencilere karşı sorumluluk duygusuna sahip olmak ve mesleki gelişim için çabalamak meslekteki adanmışlıklarını güçlendirmektedir. Özellikle öz yeterlik eksikliği ve iş doyumunun öğretmen adanmışlığı ile yakından ilişkili olduğu ve adanmışlık için oldukça önem arz ettiği söylenebilir (Evans & Tribble, 1986; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001; Bashir, 2017).

Mesleğe yeni başlayan öğretmenlerin adanmışlığın sürdürülebilirliği ve artırılmasına yönelik önerileri hakkında bilgi sahibi olmak amacıyla oluşturulan son araştırma sorusuna ilişkin katılımcılar hizmet öncesi eğitime, MEB'e, okul yöneticilerine, danışman öğretmenlere ve mesleğe yeni başlayacak öğretmenlere yönelik önerilerde bulunmuştur. Öğretmenler, teori ve uygulama arasındaki boşluğu doldurmak için (Friedman, 2000; Doğan, 2015; Liston ve diğerleri, 2006) hizmet öncesi öğretmen eğitiminin uygulamaya yönelik ve farklı bağlamlara uyarlanabilir bir içerikle zenginleştirilmesi gerektiği önerisinde bulundular. Bununla ilgili olarak Kozikoğlu (2016) ve DePaul (2000) da hizmet öncesi öğretmenlik eğitiminin öğrencileri gerçek sınıflara hazırlamak için yetersiz olduğunu bulmuştur. Ayrıca Doğan (2015) ve Öztürk'ün (2008) çalışmalarında vurgulandığı gibi öğretmenler tüm okullar için fırsat eşitliğinin gerekliliğinin altını çizmişlerdir ve ayrıca mesleğe yeni başlayan öğretmenlerin ihtiyaçlarının karşılanmasına yönelik daha fazla etkileşime izin veren etkili seminerler düzenlenmesi (Gergin, 2010) şeklinde MEB'e bazı önerilerde bulunulmuştur.

Bunun dışında öğretmenlerin okul yöneticiler için verdiği önerilerde yeni öğretmenlere destek ve rehberlik sağlama, öğretmenlerin çabasını takdir etme ve tüm öğretmenlere karşı adil davranma konularına değinmiştir. Okul yöneticilerinin öğretmen adanmışlığı duygusunun zayıflamasında ve güçlendirilmesinde oldukça etkili olduğu bulunmuştur çünkü onların desteği, rehberliği ve teşviki aday öğretmenleri oldukça etkilemektedir (Beltman, 2011; Kozikoğlu, 2018; Çakmak vd., 2019).

Ayrıca bazı öğretmenler göreve başlama dönemi olarak belirlenen, yeni öğretmenlere danışman atandığı ve bazı seminerlerin ve sosyal aktivitelere teşvik edildiği dönemden yeni başlayan öğretmenlerin uyumu açısından etkili bir dönem olarak bahsetmiştir. Fakat daha etkili olabilmesi için danışman (rehber/mentor) olarak belirlenen öğretmenlerin danışmanlık eğitimi almaları gerektiğine değinilmiştir çünkü bazı danışman öğretmenler süreç içindeki görev sorumluluklarının farkında değildir. Ayrıca seminerlerin daha etkili olması ve çeşitli ortamlardaki problemlerin çözümüne yönelik uyarlanabilir bir içeriğe sahip olması beklenmektedir. Önerilerin son kısmı katılımcı öğretmenlerin meslektaşlarına yönelik önerilerinden oluşmaktadır. Olumlu yönlere odaklanmak, motive olmayan öğretmenlerden ve caydırıcı tutumlardan kaçınmak, mesleğe başlamadan önce beklentileri düşük tutmak, zorlayıcı durumlarda pes etmemek için motivasyonu korumak gibi kişisel öneriler verilmiştir.

Tüm bulgulara, tartışmalara ve katılımcı öğretmenlerin önerilerine dayanarak, mevcut çalışmada pratiğe yönelik ve gelecek bilimsel araştırmalar için öneriler belirlenmiştir ve bu öneriler hizmet öncesi öğretmen eğitimi ve hizmet içi öğretmen eğitimi için uygulamaya yönelik öneriler olarak gruplandırılmıştır. Hizmet öncesi öğretmen eğitimi ile ilgili mevcut çalışmada, tüm aday öğretmenlerin karşılaştığı ortak noktalardan biri, hizmet öncesi eğitim ile gerçek öğretim bağlamı arasındaki boşluktur. Buna dayanarak, programın içeriğinin gerçek öğretim deneyimleriyle zenginleştirilmesine yönelik öneriler ve çeşitli ortamlarda gerçek yaşam deneyimleriyle daha uzun öğretmenlik deneyimi sağlanması yönünde öneriler verilmiştir. Hizmet içi öğretmen eğitimi söz konusu olduğunda, sunulan öneriler mesleğe yeni başlayan öğretmenleri çeşitli yollarla desteklemek, yönlendirmek ve teşvik etmek etrafında toplanmaktadır. Bunlar daha önceki üniversite hocaları, okul yöneticileri, meslektaşlar, danışman öğretmenler tarafından ve göreve başlama dönemi seminerlerine ek olarak mesleki gelişim olanakları sağlanarak yapılabilir. Ayrıca öğrenci ve öğretmen motivasyonu için etkinlikler düzenlenebilir ve veliler sürece dahil edilebilir çünkü öğrencilerin ve velilerin öğretmen adanmışlığını etkileyen önemli unsurlardan olduğu görülmüştür.

Gelecekteki araştırmalara yönelik verilere gelince, sınıf gözlemleri yoluyla veri toplanarak daha zenginleştirilmiş verilere ulaşılabilir ve buna ek olarak okul

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yöneticilerinin ve kıdemli öğretmenlerin görüşlerine yer verilebilir. Ayrıca, öğretmenlerin çeşitli kariyer aşamalarında öğretmen adanmışlığındaki dalgalanmaları gözlemlemek için boylamsal araştırmalar yapılabilir. Son olarak, bu nitel çalışma, öğretmen bağlılığı, etkili öğretim ve öz-yeterlik inançları arasındaki ilişkinin karmaşıklığına odaklanmak ve korelasyon incelemek için nicel bir çalışma olarak gerçekleştirilebilir.

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