

Department of Primary Education Students' Opinions Regarding the Necessity of Graduate Education

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ABSTRACT Today, increasing importance of knowledge and not considering teacher as the only source of knowledge, changes the role of teacher dramatically. Teachers need to improve themselves continuously to match the demands of the roles future brings them. To improve oneself as a teacher requires pursuing life-long learning as a principle, and attaining professional skills like providing more student-centered educational conditions and environments to students and contributing to their multi-dimensional development. Higher education, especially graduate education has a great role to help the teacher with this task. The aim of this research is to obtain primary teachers' opinions regarding the necessity of graduate education. The sample of the research consists of 82 pre-service teachers who were enrolled to Dumlupinar University department of primary education during the 2010-2011 academic year. The research using the survey analysis methodology is descriptive in nature. Data were collected through the survey, as developed by the researcher. Based on the results, 43.9% of the candidates believe graduate education is somewhat necessary while 35.4% believe the reason for pursuing a graduate education is to continue professional development and 45.1% of them would like to pursue graduate education. On the other hand, 48.8% of the candidates want to pursue graduate education to develop their higher-order thinking skills and 45.1% of them want to receive graduate education to obtain old/new knowledge and skills in their own field. These results are important in terms of understanding the base of the criteria which primary teacher candidates' point of views are being shaped by regarding graduate education as well as measure the level of their desire to pursue graduate education.