

English Language Teachers' Perceptions of Educational Research

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Abstract : Teachers' awareness of and involvement in educational research (ER) is regarded as an indispensable aspect of professional growth and development. It is also believed to be a catalyst for effective teaching and learning. This strong emphasis on the significance of teacher research engagement has sparked inquiry into how teachers construe ER and whether or not they practice it. However, there seems to exist a few researches on teachers' perceptions of and experience with ER in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT). The present study thus attempts to fill this gap in the ELT literature and aims to unearth English language teachers' perceptions of ER. Understanding these perceptions would undoubtedly aid in the development of strategies to promote teacher interest and involvement in research. The participants of the present study are 70 English language teachers in public and private schools in Turkey. A mixed-method approach has been used in the study. Both qualitative and quantitative data have been gathered by means of a questionnaire consisting of two parts. The first part of the questionnaire consists of 20 close-ended items of Teachers' Attitude Scale Towards Educational Research (TASTER). The second part of the questionnaire has been developed by the researchers via an extensive literature review and consists of a mixture of close- and open-ended questions. In addition, 15 language teachers have been interviewed for an in-depth understanding of the results. Descriptive statistics and dual comparisons have been employed for the quantitative data, and the qualitative data have been analyzed by means of content analysis. The present study provides intriguing information as to the English language teachers' perceptions of the usefulness and practicality of ER as well as the value they attain to it. The findings are discussed in relation to language teacher education. The research has implications for the teacher education process, teacher trainers and policy makers.

Keywords : attitudes toward educational research, educational research, language teachers, teacher research

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