

Innovative Educational Approaches of Teachers as a Condition for Psycho-Emotional Well-Being of Schoolchildren

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Abstract

The current era emphasizes on the integration of modern educational technologies, including competency-based and activity-oriented approaches as well as information and communication technologies (ICT), wherein teachers play a critical role in their readiness to implement innovation. This study aimed to explore the significance of fostering an innovative educational environment that supports the professional development of teachers and the psychological well-being of students. The study also investigated teachers' motivational readiness for innovation, revealing varied levels of engagement and underscoring the need for sustained professional development and institutional support. The study adopted a mixed-method research design, approach, incorporating quantitative diagnostics and qualitative reflections to assess teachers' readiness for innovative pedagogical activities and their implications for students' psychological well-being. The sample comprised 56 teachers who were tested on four standardized diagnostic tools. The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistical methods, while the qualitative analysis included thematic coding of participants' reflections on innovation, gathered during informal group discussions held as part of methodological associations. Findings from a diagnostic assessment indicate that while a minority of teachers (19%) demonstrate high motivation for innovation, the majority (60%) show moderate interest, and a significant proportion (21%) exhibit low engagement. These results underscore the importance of involving teachers in reflective, collaborative innovation processes and provide a foundation for further research into the intersection of educational innovation, teacher development, and student well-being.

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Keywords: Innovative Educational Environment, Teacher Readiness for Innovation, Psychological Well-Being of Students, Teacher Professional Development, Competency-Based Approach, Pedagogical Creativity.

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Introduction

The modern era has witnessed advancement in educational technology through the involvement of Internet and multimedia, which are parts of the innovation process in education. These innovations have increased the capability of educational technology to achieve goals related to making education universal, and prepare teachers to meet 21st century challenges, and upgrade curricula. Innovative educational approaches have brought a paradigm shift in methods, processes, and products used to accomplish educational goals. This involves both systematic identification of the educational goals and identifying the innovative approaches in accordance with the diversity of learners' needs and the contexts in which learning must take place. This also requires pedagogical innovation to monitor students' psycho-emotional and academic outcomes. In the 21st century, the educational landscape has been increasingly shaped by the pressures of globalization, technological advancement, and the changing psychological needs of students. These developments necessitate the implementation of innovative approaches in teaching and learning that are not only pedagogically effective but also psychologically supportive. The traditional knowledge-transfer paradigm is being replaced by a competency-based, learner-centered model that prioritizes holistic student development—including cognitive, social, and emotional domains (Atanov et al., 2015). This concept of an innovative educational environment encompasses more than the mere introduction of technology or new teaching methods. It involves a systemic transformation of the learning space, pedagogy, and teacher-student interaction. Central to this shift is the idea of fostering an atmosphere that supports both professional growth for teachers and psycho-emotional well-being for students (Natalia, 2013) Место для ввода текста.. These environments are often characterized by flexible spatial organization, digital integration, inclusive practices, and pedagogical creativity (Elmurodov, 2025).

Despite mounting evidence on the benefits of innovation in education, many barriers persist, including a lack of resources, inadequate administrative support, rigid bureaucracies, and the psychological burden placed on teachers (Natalia, 2013; Tatto, 2021). Institutional change must therefore be supported by a deliberate strategy that includes training, mentoring, collaborative planning, and ongoing evaluation of implemented innovations. The current study aims to examine the readiness of teachers for innovative activity and explore how this readiness affects the creation of an educational environment conducive to the psycho-emotional well-being of schoolchildren. The research draws on both theoretical foundations and empirical data collected through diagnostic assessments of teacher motivation, creativity, and professional engagement. In doing so, it contributes to the understanding of how innovation can be sustainably integrated into educational practice and what organizational and pedagogical conditions are needed to support both teacher development and student flourishing. Furthermore, this research contributes to applied linguistics by examining how teacher communication styles, language use in innovation-driven classrooms, and reflective pedagogical discourse impact the emotional and cognitive development of students. Language is not only a medium of instruction but a core component of creating psychologically supportive educational spaces, making this study relevant to the linguistic dimensions of educational practice.

Literature Review

Numerous studies have emphasized the importance of teacher readiness for innovation, which involves more than technical skills—it includes motivational, cognitive, and emotional preparedness (Khikmatovich, 2022). Kryukova (2015) identifies five key components of psychological readiness: motivation, cognition, volition, reflection, and personality traits such as creativity and adaptability. Teachers must not only possess knowledge of innovative strategies but also have the internal drive and institutional support to apply them. Yet, research shows that many teachers remain hesitant to adopt innovations due to uncertainty, lack of confidence, or fear of failure (BourantaBouranta & PsomasPsomas, 2024; Valitov & Khakimov, 2015). In this context, continuous professional development becomes essential. Models such as those used in Hong Kong have shown that sustained training, mentorship, and integration of moral and civic education contribute to teacher effectiveness and student success (Lam, 2015). Teachers who actively engage in reflective and collaborative practices are more likely to adapt to changing educational demands and contribute to innovation within their institutions (Sarmurzin, 2024). Simultaneously, a growing body of international literature highlights the interdependence between the school environment and students' psychological well-being. (van den Bogerd et al., 2020) found that classrooms enriched with natural elements such as plants or green walls significantly improved students' attention levels, stress recovery, and emotional regulation. Similar findings are presented in studies on spatial design, such as those by Dugdale, Torino, & Felix (2009) and Kamalipour, Kermani, & Houshmandipanh (2014), which propose educational spaces structured into flexible hubs that promote interaction, creativity, and comfort. These architectural innovations—ranging from open learning studios to “learning corridors”—have been shown to enhance student engagement and satisfaction (Byers, Imms, & Hartnell-Young, 2018).

The psychological well-being of students is increasingly recognized as a fundamental condition for learning. It influences motivation, academic achievement, and long-term development. Educational institutions that adopt inclusive, emotionally safe, and cognitively stimulating environments contribute significantly to student resilience and self-actualization (van den Bogerd et al., 2020). In Kazakhstan, efforts to modernize education

include the implementation of inclusive education policies, the promotion of digital and hybrid learning platforms, and the strengthening of teacher competencies through national strategies and training programs (Abdizhamalova, Tulekova, & Antikeyeva, 2023). However, systemic gaps remain in translating policy into practice—particularly in rural and resource-constrained contexts. Teachers often express uncertainty regarding the integration of inclusive practices and the use of new technologies (Akbar & Cohen, 2025). Место для ввода текста., suggesting a disconnect between the design and the enactment of innovation. Furthermore, the competency-based approach (CBA) has gained traction globally and in Kazakhstan as a foundation for educational innovation. Unlike traditional models, CBA centers on developing transferable skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, and self-regulation (Biletska et al., 2021). The approach views learning as an active, student-driven process and redefines the teacher's role from knowledge-transmitter to facilitator and mentor (Kurakbayeva & Xembayeva, 2025). However, successful implementation depends on educators' ability to adapt, which is conditioned by their own professional development pathways and the institutional climate they operate in.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a mixed-method approach, incorporating quantitative diagnostics and qualitative reflections to assess teachers' readiness for innovative pedagogical activities and their implications for students' psychological well-being. A comprehensive diagnostic assessment was conducted to measure motivational, cognitive, and creative readiness among teachers, supplemented by an analysis of theoretical foundations and existing literature on innovative educational environments.

Sampling and Population

The sample included 56 teachers from Municipal State Institution, Secondary School №42, which includes an affiliated boarding school, located in Semey, Kazakhstan. Participants represented diverse backgrounds in terms of teaching experience, age, and specialization, providing a representative cross-section of the institution's educational staff. All participants provided informed consent and were informed about the confidentiality of their responses.

Instruments and Procedure

Four standardized diagnostic tools were utilized to evaluate distinct components of teachers' innovative readiness: (1) Self-Analysis of Innovative Activity Questionnaire: Assesses teachers' perception of their readiness for pedagogical creativity and innovation. The tool categorizes readiness into high, medium, and low levels based on teachers' self-reported engagement with and attitudes toward innovation. (2) Assessment of Teachers' Abilities for Innovative Activity: Measures cognitive and practical skills necessary for successfully implementing innovative teaching methods. (3) Readiness for Pedagogical Creativity and Innovation Scale: Evaluates motivational readiness and willingness to adopt innovative pedagogical practices, reflecting both intrinsic motivation and openness to innovation. (4) Your Creative Potential Test: A validated instrument measuring teachers' inherent creative potential as a critical indicator of their capacity for pedagogical innovation. Scores range from low (below 24 points), medium (24–48 points), to high (49 points and above). Data was collected during structured diagnostic sessions at the participating institution over two weeks. Teachers completed all diagnostic instruments in a controlled environment to ensure uniformity and reliability. Responses were collected anonymously to minimize response bias and encourage honesty.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data from diagnostic tools were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods, including frequency distributions, percentages, and categorization into distinct readiness levels (high, medium, and low). Scores from the "Your Creative Potential" test were similarly categorized to reflect levels of creative potential. The results were subsequently visualized using charts and tables to facilitate clear interpretation. Qualitative analysis included thematic coding of participants' reflections on innovation, gathered during informal group discussions held as part of methodological associations and creative groups. This qualitative component provided richer insight into teachers' perspectives, motivations, and challenges in adopting innovative practices. The study adhered strictly to ethical guidelines, ensuring participant confidentiality, informed consent, and the right to withdraw at any stage of the research process. Approval from the institutional administration was obtained prior to initiating the research activities, and participants were assured that findings would be used exclusively for academic purposes.

Results

This study examined three critical dimensions of teachers' readiness to engage in innovative educational practices: (1) readiness for pedagogical creativity and innovation, (2) motivational–semantic readiness, and (3) creative potential. Each dimension is crucial as it directly influences the effectiveness of implementing

innovations within educational environments. Table 1 summarizes the overall diagnostic outcomes, illustrating significant variations across the three dimensions assessed.

Table 1: Summary of Teachers' Readiness for Innovative Activities.

Metric	High	Medium	Low
Pedagogical creativity & innovation readiness	21 %	56 %	23 %
Motivational–semantic readiness	19 %	60 %	21 %
Creative potential	0 %	100 %	0 %

The first diagnostic tool assessed general readiness for pedagogical creativity and innovation using Nikishina's "Self-Analysis of Innovative Activity" methodology. As shown in Figure 1, 21% of teachers demonstrated a high level of readiness, indicating strong creative initiative, willingness to innovate, and professional adaptability. These educators are often active contributors to institutional innovation, experimenting with new instructional techniques and participating in reflective practice. A majority—56%—exhibited a medium level of readiness, reflecting a neutral or passive stance toward innovation. These teachers tend to adopt innovations cautiously, often waiting for broader approval or administrative guidance before engaging in new pedagogical methods. Finally, 23% fell into the low-readiness category, signifying reluctance or resistance to depart from traditional teaching methods. This group may experience psychological barriers such as fear of failure or a lack of confidence, often reinforced by limited institutional support or professional development opportunities.

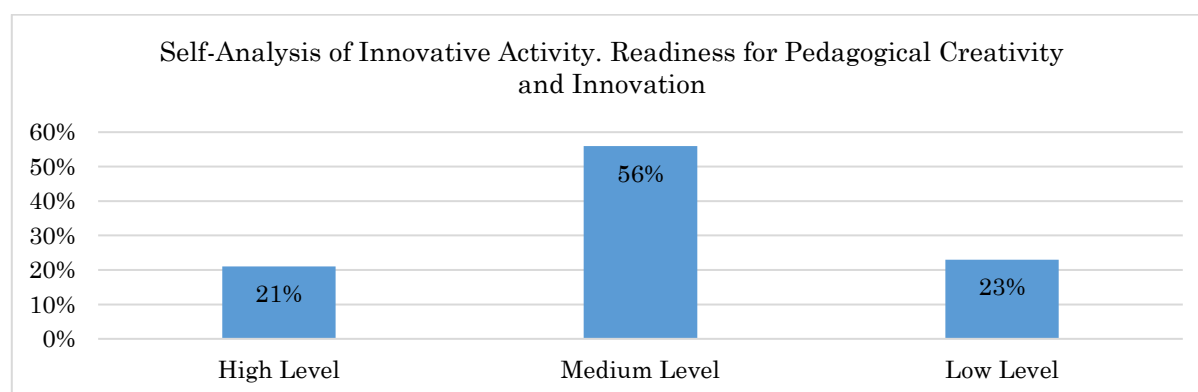


Figure 1: Teachers' Distribution by Level of Readiness for Pedagogical Creativity and Innovation.

These findings suggest a diverse landscape of readiness. High-readiness educators can serve as peer mentors and innovation champions. Medium-readiness teachers represent a pivotal group that, with proper support, can transition toward higher engagement. Low-readiness educators may benefit from individualized coaching and scaffolded professional development interventions that address self-efficacy and build trust in the innovation process. The second dimension explored was teachers' motivational and semantic readiness, focusing on their emotional, attitudinal, and value-based engagement with pedagogical innovation. As illustrated in Figure 2, 19% of teachers displayed high motivational readiness, characterized by internal motivation, positive attitudes toward change, and an awareness of the value of innovation for both personal and student development. A substantial 60% of teachers exhibited a medium level of motivational-semantic readiness. While open to change, this group may not consistently act upon it without external support or incentives. Their engagement with innovation is often reactive rather than proactive. The remaining 21% showed low motivation, indicating emotional detachment from the innovation agenda and possibly professional stagnation.

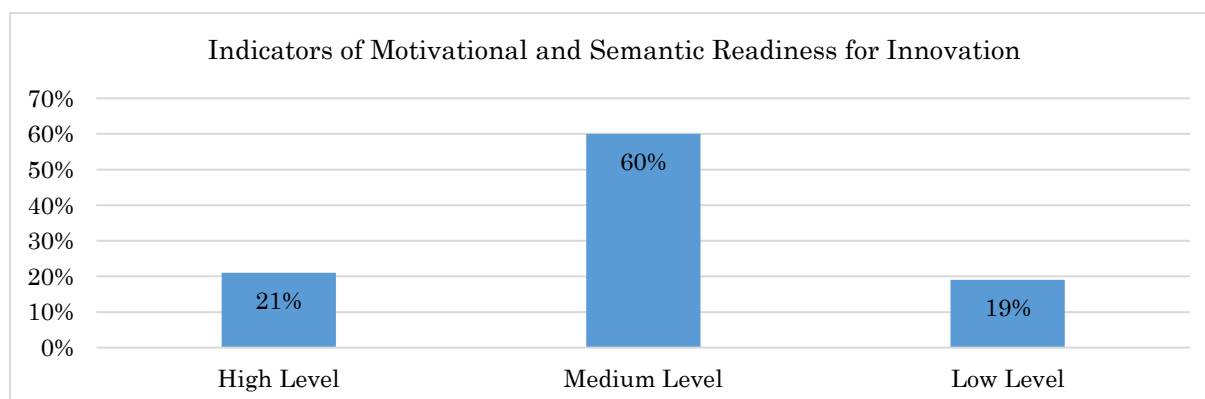


Figure 2: Teachers' Distribution by Level of Motivational and Semantic Readiness for Innovation.

These results affirm previous findings in the literature that motivational engagement is central to sustaining innovation (Kryukova, 2015). Without a strong internal drive and sense of purpose, even well-trained educators may avoid meaningful change. Encouraging participation in collaborative innovation efforts—such as methodological associations or teacher-led design groups—can foster ownership and raise motivation levels. The third instrument, “Your Creative Potential” diagnostic, assessed the personal creative potential of teachers—a key enabler of innovation. Notably, none of the 36 respondents reached the high creative potential threshold. However, all participants were categorized as possessing a medium level of creative potential, suggesting that foundational capabilities for innovation exist but are not being fully expressed or cultivated in the current educational environment. This uniform distribution reflects a latent capacity for creativity that may be constrained by institutional culture, workload, or limited opportunities for creative engagement. Developing this potential requires not just training in innovative methods but also deliberate cultivation of an emotionally safe and psychologically supportive school climate—one that values experimentation, embraces risk-taking, and promotes reflection.

Discussion

The findings of this study highlight a nuanced and multidimensional picture of teacher readiness for innovation, one that carries critical implications for both institutional transformation and the psycho-emotional well-being of schoolchildren. The data suggest that while a proportion of teachers demonstrate the capacity and motivation to engage in innovative educational practices, the majority operate at a moderate level, and a substantial minority lack sufficient readiness to meaningfully contribute to the innovation agenda. The results on pedagogical creativity and innovation readiness reflect a fragmented distribution, with only 21% of teachers classified as highly ready. This finding resonates with earlier studies that note systemic barriers in Kazakhstani education, where policy initiatives are not always matched by sufficient training or support at the school level. The majority of teachers (56%) are situated in a transitional zone, neither resisting innovation nor leading it—which suggests that institutional change is possible but requires activation through leadership and support mechanisms. A total of 23% of teachers with low readiness represent a vulnerable group. This aligns with Kryukova (2015) framework, which emphasizes the role of volitional and motivational components in enabling teachers to overcome challenges and take ownership of innovation. Without these psychological enablers, even well-intentioned reforms may encounter passive resistance or superficial compliance.

The motivational and semantic readiness data further support this interpretation. With only 19% of teachers in the high-motivation category, and 21% displaying low motivational engagement, it is evident that emotional and attitudinal barriers significantly affect innovation potential. These findings confirm that psychological readiness is not merely a by-product of training but a central determinant of teacher behavior in the innovation process. Teachers in the medium group (60%) appear responsive but not intrinsically driven. This is particularly concerning given that effective innovation requires sustained effort, emotional labor, and professional risk-taking. The literature suggests that these qualities emerge only when teachers feel supported, empowered, and safe to experiment (Lam, 2015; van den Bogerd et al., 2020). Thus, fostering a psychologically supportive school climate is not a peripheral concern but a strategic necessity.

Perhaps the most revealing result of the study is the complete absence of high scores on the creative potential diagnostic. While all respondents fall into the medium category, this uniformity masks a concerning lack of creative leadership among teachers. Creativity is not only a driver of pedagogical innovation, it is also essential for adaptive problem-solving, differentiation, and emotional connection with students. This result aligns with broader global patterns, where teachers often operate within tightly controlled curricula and assessment systems that leave little room for experimentation or risk-taking (Byers et al., 2018; Knissarina et al., 2025). In Kazakhstan, these constraints are amplified by bureaucratic inertia and limited resources for professional autonomy. However, the presence of medium-level creative potential across the sample also indicates a latent capacity—one that can be cultivated through institutional design and strategic professional development.

A central argument of this study is that the readiness of teachers for innovation is directly linked to the psycho-emotional well-being of students. Schools are not just knowledge-transmission hubs; they are emotional ecosystems. When teachers feel confident, motivated, and supported in using innovative practices, they create classrooms that are more inclusive, engaging, and emotionally safe. This aligns with international evidence showing that innovative and well-designed learning environments—particularly those that incorporate natural elements and flexible spatial design—positively influence students' stress levels, concentration, and academic engagement (Dugdale et al., 2009; van den Bogerd et al., 2020). Moreover, teachers with high creative potential are more likely to respond empathetically to student needs, adapt to diverse learning styles, and create meaningful, emotionally resonant learning experiences. Therefore, innovation should not be viewed solely as a technical or curricular matter—it is an emotional and relational process that shapes students' sense of safety, self-worth, and belonging. From a linguistic perspective, innovative pedagogical approaches inherently reshape classroom communication, discourse strategies, and teacher-student interaction. These shifts affect not only how knowledge is transmitted but also how emotional support and inclusive dialogue are fostered. In this way, the study intersects with key concerns in applied

linguistics, particularly the use of language as a tool for constructing emotionally safe and cognitively stimulating learning environments. The study underscores the need for strategic institutional support to develop innovation capacity. This includes five major areas: Targeted professional development focused on creativity, emotional intelligence, and reflective practice; Mentorship and peer networks that allow high-readiness teachers to support those with moderate or low readiness; Recognition and rewards for innovative practices to reinforce positive risk-taking; Collaborative planning and co-design of innovations through methodological associations and teacher-led initiatives; Flexible leadership structures that allow for grassroots innovation rather than top-down mandates. These strategies not only address individual readiness but also shape the collective culture of innovation within the school.

Conclusion

This study examined the multifaceted dimensions of teachers' readiness for innovation as a critical condition for fostering a psychologically supportive educational environment for students. Drawing upon empirical diagnostics and theoretical foundations, the findings highlight a complex but actionable reality: while a subset of teachers is equipped and motivated to implement innovative practices, the majority remain in a transitional state of moderate readiness, and a significant minority demonstrates hesitancy or resistance to change. Three primary conclusions can be drawn. First, pedagogical innovation cannot be sustained solely through the introduction of new technologies or educational frameworks. Its success depends on the psychological and motivational readiness of teachers—factors that are deeply rooted in institutional support systems, leadership practices, and school culture. The absence of high creative potential among participants suggests that while many educators possess latent capabilities, these have not yet been fully nurtured or activated within their professional environments.

Second, the emotional and motivational readiness of teachers must be seen as both a prerequisite and a driver of systemic change. Teachers who feel empowered, valued, and emotionally supported are far more likely to engage in reflective, experimental, and student-centered teaching. These characteristics, in turn, create learning spaces that promote the psycho-emotional well-being of students—enhancing engagement, resilience, and academic performance. Third, institutional strategies must move beyond technical training to include a broader emphasis on psychological safety, peer collaboration, and the cultivation of intrinsic motivation. Professional development should not only build competencies but also foster a culture of innovation that recognizes creative risk-taking and supports continuous growth. As demonstrated by successful international models, such as those in Hong Kong, a holistic and values-driven approach to teacher development can yield transformative results. Ultimately, this study reaffirms that innovation in education is not merely about implementing new tools or approaches, it is about cultivating the human capacities that enable meaningful, sustainable change. Schools must invest in their teachers not only as professionals but as creative, emotional, and relational beings whose well-being and growth are integral to the success of any innovation. By doing so, they lay the foundation for educational environments that support not just academic achievement, but the holistic development and psychological health of every child.

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