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The Reconstructions at Pre-service Teacher Training Systems in Turkey (1998-2012)

Didem İşlek,^{a1} Gülsün Atanur Baskan^b

^aNear East University, *Department of Computer Education and Instructional Technology*
Nicosia, Cyprus

^bHacettepe University, *Department Of Educational Science Faculty Of Education*
Ankara, Turkey

Abstract

Teacher training systems and teacher qualifications have a large impact on educating future generations that will continue the social life of a community. In recent years, the problems with teachers qualification levels made a lot of countries re-question its teacher training systems and so start reconstructing them to promote social harmony, teaching fulfilment and national development. This is where Turkey, caught attention by making studies for reconstruction to solve the problems with its teacher training systems. At this study, first of all, the teacher training systems during 1998 -2012 periods were analysed and the changes that happened at that period were evaluated. In Turkey, as a result of this evaluation, it has been clear that the problems with the teacher training systems still continue, the increase in the rate of teachers could not be prevented and permanent solutions to the problems could not be found. The study was completed, by only making some recommendations in order to solve the subject matter.

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1. Introduction

Teachers, who have important roles to increase the quality of education system in a country and to educate individuals shipshapely, are the milestones of education. (Baskan & Aydın & Madden, 2006; M. Dahar & R. Dahar & R. Dahar & Faize, 2011). In this context, teachers, who have an important role in teaching-educating period and development of an individual, should have enough competency to improve teaching quality and students' qualifications. (Akbaba & Gürü & Yaran & Çimen, 2006; Hussain & Ali & Khan & Ramzan & Qadeer, 2011). To train fully qualified teachers, have a big effect on reaching success in the education systems of communities. (Özoğlu, 2010).

In recent years, the problems with teachers' qualification levels made a lot of countries re-question its teacher training systems and start reconstructing them. (Baskan, 2001; Kothagen, Loughran, Russell, 2006). This is where Turkey, caught attention by making studies for reconstruction to solve the problems with its teacher training systems (Kavak & Baskan, 2009). When the new construction systems are taken into consideration, the results that can be come across are these:

¹ Corresponding author: Didem İşlek Tel.: +90 392 2236464
E-mail address: didemislek@hotmail.com

- It was decided that the Ministry of Education teacher training institutions would gather under Higher Education Council on July 20 1982 by the 2457 Law of Higher Education passed in 1981. After this decision, the most comprehensive reconstruction study was made in 1998. (Baskan & Aydın & Madden, 2006; YÖK, 2007; Özoğlu, 2010 ; Azar, 2011).
- After the 8 years between 1998-2006, the first comprehensive regulation about “ updating teaching programmes” was made in 2006. (Kavak, 2009).
- New structures for teacher training were regulated almost every year from 2006 to 2012. (Özoğlu, 2010; Azar, 2011).

2. Purpose of The Study

When the literature review is looked through, it is seen that the studies, which were made on the subject matter, mostly took into consideration the reconstructing systems made between from 1998 to 2010. In this prepared study, it was attempted to eliminate the lack in this area by taking into consideration the years from 1998 to 2012. The main purpose of this study is to analyse the reconstructing systems of teacher training systems and to evaluate the changes happened between the years 1998-2012.

3. Methodology

This study is descriptive. The subject matters of this study are the regulations and decisions made by Ministry of Education and Higher Education Council related with teacher training systems.

4. Findings

The results have been analysed under six headings. Under the first heading, the 1998 construction study, which was one of the most comprehensive studies, was analysed, and under the other five headings the construction studies from 2006 to 2012 were addressed.

4.1. The Reconstruction in 1998: Reconstructing Education Faculties

A project, which was involved in the Higher Education Council World Bank Pre-Service Teacher Training Project in cooperation with Ministry of Education and Higher Education Council, made to be applied in 1998. As a part of this project from 1998 onwards “ Reconstructing Education Faculties” have been carried out and applied. (Üstüner, 2014; Baskan & Aydın & Madden, 2006). The main purpose of this application is to bring the teacher training quality to the foreground and to eliminate the lack in the teacher training programme. (Üstüner, 2004; Azar, 2006).

When the applied activities during reconstruction studies in 1998 are taken into consideration, the new regulations can be ordered as:

- Master`s programmes without thesis started to be applied for the secondary school teacher candidates, and the length of secondary school subject teacher education programmes in Education Faculties extended to 5 years. Besides, it was pointed out that the education faculties` students could take lectures related with their subject in the first 3.5 (first seven half semesters) and formation lectures in the education faculties in the last 1.5 year. (Özoğlu, 2010).
- It was also indicated that Science-Literature students could take the advantage of the master`s programmes without a thesis. Moreover, it was explained that Science- Literature graduates who want to be teachers, after a 4-year undergraduate study, can continue a 1.5-year master`s programme without thesis and can be teachers at the end of 5.5 years. (Kavak, 2009).

- There were some changes in the number of “Teacher Profession Knowledge” lectures and their credit after the decision orientated formation lessons in 1998 construction. According to these changes;
 - Basic Education Lectures (education history, education philosophy, education sociology) except the education psychology have been removed from the programme. Besides this, general cultural courses are by and large no longer available.
 - Adding practical hours to the most formation courses has developed the application dimension of the programmes. Also education faculty and school cooperation has been obtained by increasing practical hours of students at schools. (Higher Education Council, 2007).
- Furthermore, Teacher Training Turkish National Committee has been established to control the teacher training programmes in faculties. (Özoğlu,2010).

4.2. *Reconstructions between 2006 and 2007*

After the 8 years between 1998-2006 the first comprehensive reconstruction “updating teaching programmes” was carried out in 2006 (Kavak,2009). The points in the regulations are:

- In the secondary school teaching programmes before 2006, 3,5 years subject education and 1.5 profession knowledge education used to be given. This application was ended in 2006, and it was decided in 2007 that education and subject education in faculties should be continued under one heading for five years. Integrated education for five years was started to be applied by disseminating profession knowledge lectures over five years. (Özoğlu, 2010).
- It was also decided to sustain the secondary school subject teaching master’s programmes without a thesis for science and literature faculties (4 years + 1,5 years) but to regulate the teaching programme.(Kartal, 2011).
- The rate of general cultural courses and the opportunities for elective courses which were removed by the regulations in 1998 increased again by the regulations in 2006. According to this application, 50-60% subject knowledge, 25-30% teaching profession knowledge and 15-20% cultural lessons were put into application. (Erdem, 2012).
- Practical course hours decreased again due to the problems with finding practical application schools. (Kartal, 2011).

4.3. *Reconstructions in 2008: Decreasing Secondary School Subject Teaching Master's Programme without a Thesis to One Year*

The Master’s programme without a thesis was reconstructed again in 2008 by changing its length and courses. With this regulation the length of 1.5 year Master’s programme for Science-Literature Faculties decreased to a year. (Kavak& Baskan, 2009). Therefore, the education length of science- literature faculties and education faculties were the same.

4.4. *Reconstructions in 2009*

The right by the 2009 regulation to take the formation courses in a four-year education period was given firstly to Uludağ University, İstanbul University and Marmara University Science-Literature and Theology Faculty by Higher Education Council on 27 August 2009. Then this right was given to Science-Literature Faculties on 21 January 2010 because of the objections of Dokuz Eylül, Erciyes, İnönü and Selçuk Universities. (Özoğlu,2010).

4.5. *New Regulation between 2010 and 2011*

In 2010 Higher Education Council decided to close down the Master Programmes without a thesis. Instead of that programme, Pedagogical Formation Certificate Education Programme opened. Accordingly;

- Pedagogical Formation Certificate Education Programme has been rearranged since 2010-2011. Science-Literature Faculties were given right to take advantage of this programme. Not only Science-Literature Faculty students during their education but also this faculty's graduates were given right to exploit the programme. There was a return to before 1998's Pedagogical Formation Certificate Education Programme by the regulations made in 2010-2011 (Azar,2006).

4.6. *Reconstructions in 2012-2013*

By the reconstruction in 2012, the right given to Science-Literature graduates to teach with pedagogical formation was cancelled. (Higher Education Council,2012a). According to this decision, Higher Education Council pointed out that this reconstruction did not cover the students studying their higher education and the graduates from these institutes, and these students could apply for new pedagogical formation programmes. Besides, this regulation applies for the students who would be offered a place in the education year 2012-2013. (Higher Education Council,2012b).

When the 2012-2013 education year came, it was understood by the Higher Education Council that this reconstruction had not been applied in universities. The new pedagogical formation certificate programmes, which started at the first semester in 2012-2013 education year, approved this. (Ankara University, 2012).

5. **Discussion & Conclusion**

When the teacher training policies in Turkey and the reconstructions about this are evaluated, it is clear that the problems with teacher training systems still continue. In Turkey recently organised Pisa exams' results show that teacher training systems should be reconsidered. (Eraslan,2009). One of the main reasons of Pisa's failure is the deficiency of qualified teachers in education system. (Eraslan,2009). Consequently, it is necessary to train qualified teachers in order to increase the competency level of the students. To train qualified teachers is connected with determining strategies that will provide permanent solutions to teacher training. It is necessary to assimilate teacher training in community not only as a government policy which is in the power but also as a state policy. Besides, new strategies should be developed by taking the countries' teacher training systems, which became successful in Pisa, as models. Also, the recommendations can be put into order as:

- The rights given to be a teacher with the Science-Literature Faculties Pedagogical Formation Certificate Programmes in Turkey alienates the faculties from its main purposes. Also it causes scientist deficiency. The continuity of this programme makes the unemployment problem bigger and bigger. The increase in the number of teacher in Turkey makes the teacher employment more difficult. First of all, the rights given for the Science-Literature Faculties Pedagogical Formation Certificate Programmes should be ended for the solution; teacher training should be only in education faculties.
- Besides, in order to increase teachers' qualifications, before entering faculties, it is necessary to evaluate the students' competency by an exam that has been prepared studiously. The institutes in some countries like Belgium, England, Poland and France which have teacher training departments try to determine the competency of a student not only by a written exam but also by an interview. (Şahin,2006). In Finland, in which the students' success is at a very high level, the students who want to enter teacher training institutions first go for an interview, and then make a sample lesson presentation so as to test his/her speech, presentation and management ability. (Eraslan,2009). Therefore, it is necessary for Turkey to reconsider evaluation systems and to give importance to teacher candidates' qualification like in other countries.

- Also profession courses are only limited to 30% which prevents teacher candidates to be trained shipshapely. For this reason, another required reconstruction is to increase the formation courses of profession education course hours.
- Moreover, it is necessary to increase the practical hours in course programmes. The success of candidate teachers is connected with the experience, which will be gained in classes by teaching. However, there are big concerns about this. ‘University at School’, which has been applied in only one university, is the most important step has been taken In Turkey. At this new application, candidate teachers learn the teaching proficiency in real classes in interaction with their lecturers and practical teachers. Education faculties carried the education of teacher candidates to schools that are the real environments. Therefore candidates learn actively in class environment in schools in or out of the country and reinforce their knowledge by learning theoretically from their lecturers. (Bahçeşehir Üniversitesi,2012). It is disappointing that this new important reconstruction in Turkey is only applied in one university. It is necessary that similar applications, which will be a solution to the problem, should be applied in other universities as soon as possible.

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