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The History of Turkish and Cyprus Turkish Education Teacher Training Policies Teacher Training in National Education Councils and Development Plans

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Abstract

In the paper prepared, the teacher training process in the History of Turkish and Cyprus Turkish Education has been studied and the topics regarding the teacher training policies developed in accordance with the requirements of the period and the teacher training in the national education councils and the development plans within this period have been scrutinized and the details are hereby presented.

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1. Introduction

It is known that, for centuries the teacher has been one of the most important elements for developing the education systems in accordance with the characteristics of the times. It has especially become more important to train qualified people in our age. Within the framework of these efforts, the most important task falls on the teacher again. It is a known fact that well-trained teachers play an important role in the success of the teaching-learning activities and in motivating students to learn.

In this connection, the aim of this study is to examine, from past to present, the teacher training process in the Turkish and Cyprus Turkish Education Systems, to enhance the quality of the teaching profession and teacher training in the National Education Councils and Development Plans that have taken place to date and also to provide a teacher profile which will be more beneficial to the future generations and finally to examine and assess the studies conducted in line with the problems, shortcomings and the requirements of today.

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2. The Teacher Training Policies in the Turkish Education History

The Turkish Education History encompasses a very wide area. It is known that this subject comprises both the periods before and after the Turks have become Muslims. During the Ottoman Period, significant developments have taken place with regard to the teaching profession. It is possible to study the teacher training and the style of education during this period in four chapters: These are; *Teacher Training and Teaching Profession Before the Tanzimat (Reorganizations/Reforms)*; *Teacher Training and Teaching Profession During The Tanzimat*; *Teacher Training Policies and Efforts During the Mutlakiyet (Autocracy)*; and *Teacher Training Policies and Efforts During the II. Meşrutiyet (Second Constitutionalist Period)* respectively. Five main teacher types are seen in the formal education of the Ottoman Period before Tanzimat. These are known as: *Sıbyan Mektebi Teachers (Ottoman Elementary-Primary School Teachers)*, *Medrese Teachers (Muslim Theological School Teachers)*, *Enderun Mektebi Teachers (Teachers of the Special Schools in the Ottoman Palace)*, *Military and Technical School Teachers*, and *School of Minorities and Foreigners Teachers*. The opening of a teacher training school with the name *Darümuallim (16 March 1848)* in İstanbul Fatih during the *Tanzimat Period (1839 -1876)* has an important place in the History of Turkish Education. The first teachers' high school was established with the name *Darülmualimim-i Aliye during the Mutlakiyet Period (1878-1908)*. Also during this period, a document entitled *Muallimlikte Meslek-i İhtisas Tesisine Dair Talimat*, which is an important directive regarding the professionalization of teaching, has been issued. The following items in this Document, namely, to have *good morals and conduct, not to engage in another duty or civil service post other than teaching duty, commitment to the course, and compliance to the expertise* have laid the foundations of the qualities to be possessed by a good teacher in today's educational sciences. With respect to the *İstibdat (Autocracy) Period (1908-1918)*, the notion of the training of a large number of qualified teachers gained importance and for this purpose, practices like training teachers in İstanbul, teacher training teachers in the provinces and training women teachers have been put into effect. The training of nursery teachers as well as women teachers for the first time during the period of 1913 to 1914 also has an important place in the education history.

3. Teacher Training Policies and National Education Councils in the Republic of Turkey

From the beginning of the Republic to date, two major attempts that dominated both the education and teacher training policies of Turkey can be mentioned. These are *National Education Councils and Development Plans*. The initial efforts with regard to the National Education Councils have appeared while the War of Independence was still continuing. In order to establish a perspective to the education of a new state, namely Turkey, an "*Education Congress*" was organised under the presidency of *Mustafa Kemal* on *16 July 1921* as a preliminary step for the councils which were held to make projections with regard to the National Education and to determine objectives and methods (MEB, 2012). Teacher training issue was given wide attention at the *I. National Education Council (17-29 July 1939)* and also the function of the *Teachers' High School* was emphasized. Besides the Council resolutions regarding the increase of the number of students to be enrolled to the teachers' high school and the enrolment of a large number of students to the faculties the graduates of which were being employed as teachers, at the *III. National Education Council (2-10 December 1946)*, within the context of the 8 years schooling notion, for the issue of training the required teachers for this type of schools, the conversion of the teacher training schools to 2 year training institutes has been recommended (Baskan, 2001). These are one of the most important agenda topics at the *IV. National Education Council (22-31 August 1949)* was the organisation of the training institutes and the teachers' high schools training teachers for secondary schools and high schools in accordance with the new needs. The issue of not being able to find "*Outstanding Teachers*" for secondary schools and high schools has been discussed at the Council and the need for training high-quality teachers in order to attain the quality desired at the secondary schools and high schools has been emphasized (Baskan, 2001). Although this issue has been explained in the main agenda of the *VII. National Education Council (5-15 February 1962)*, the need for teachers and the problems of the teacher training institutions have been emphasized and this issue has been added to the agenda under the title of "*Teacher Training and Making Teaching an Attractive Profession*" (Kavak, Aydın, Altun, 2007). The agenda of the *XI; National Education Council (8-11 June 1982)* has been "*the status and problems Teacher and Education Specialists*" (MEB, 1982; Baskan, 2001) Within the framework of this agenda, the development of teacher training, the problems of and the recommendations for the pre-service teacher training and

the training of the education specialists, and solution proposals have been discussed. At the end of the Council, the rendering of teaching attractive for the youth, the improvement of the pre-service and in-service teacher training, and the improvement of the living and working conditions of the teachers have been recommended (Baskan, 2001). On the agenda of the XII: *National Education Council (18-22 June 1988)* topics like, the extension of the period of study at the education colleges to four years, the completion of a part of the practical training of the students of education colleges at the village schools and the testing of the contractual method in the employment of the teachers have been considered. At the XIII: *National Education Council (15-19 January 1990)*, it is seen that, for the first time in the history of the Republic of Turkey, only in the area of informal education, the authorised representatives of the ministries, universities and other official, autonomous, private and voluntary institutions that carry out studies in this area have been gathered and in the Council, the formation of the teacher profile that will support the informal education has been emphasized. Also in the Council's agenda, concept, scope and tendencies, organisation and cooperation, investment and financing and also personnel aspects of informal education have been considered. In the agenda of the XV: *National Education Council (13-17 May 1996)*, the opening of the teacher training faculties to developed circles has been highlighted and the necessity of ending the pedagogic formation programmes organised for higher education graduates of various fields of study at the universities has been advocated. The agenda of the XVII: *National Education Council (13-17 November 2006)* comprised of the inter-level transitions in the Turkish National Education System, guidance and examination system, the Turkish Education System formed during the globalisation and EU membership process and the study of the problems created by the non-thesis master's degree programmes and making the necessary arrangements in this area, connecting teaching as a specialised profession to an education programme that will have a postgraduate level, approximation of the pre-service teaching profession training to real life and the enrichment of the process in this direction. The agenda of the XVIII: *Council (1-5 November 2010)* has been compiled under the title of "2023 Vision in Education" and in the agenda, topics like training, employment and professional development of the teacher, educational environment, institutional culture and school leadership, strengthening of primary and secondary education, provision of access to secondary education, sports, art, skill and values training, physiological guidance, counselling and orientation have been included.

4. Teacher Training Policies in the History of Cyprus Turkish Education

It is possible to study the Teacher Training Policies in the History of Cyprus Turkish Education in four chapters. These are known as, *Teacher Training and Teaching Profession in the Ottoman Period*, *Teacher Training and Teaching Profession in the English Period*, *Teacher Training and Teaching Profession in the Cyprus Republic Period* and *Teacher Training and Teaching Profession in the Post-1974 Period (The Turkish Federated State of Cyprus Period and The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus Period)* respectively.

5. National Education Councils in Northern Cyprus

Four national education councils have been held in Northern Cyprus to date. Within the context of the I. *National Education Council* held between the dates 20-25 October 1975, the endeavours of the community struggling for existence in establishing a framework for the education system without delay are observed. In the agenda of the *Cyprus Turkish II; National Education Council (17-21 June 1991)*, topics like training teachers for pre-school education, teachers to be subjected to in-service training, and the extensive employment of the branch teachers at schools have been considered. At the III; *National Education Council (19-30 June 1995)*, the issue of teacher training, especially the practical training of the students of the Teacher's Training College topic has been emphasized. As for the agenda of the *Cyprus Turkish IV; National Education Council (24-26 March 2005)*, it is observed that, in relation to teacher training, topics with regard to pre-school teacher training, the in-service training of the pre-school teachers, the in-service training of the secondary school teachers, the training of the teachers to be employed in the vocational/technical schools and the in-service training of the existing teachers have been taken into the agenda.

6. Teacher Training Policies in the Development Plans of the Republic of Turkey

It is seen that, from past to present, teacher training policies and objectives have been widely included in the development plans of the Republic of Turkey. It is observed that the issue of the equal distribution of teachers to various regions has especially taken place in almost all the development plans. In the *First Five Year Development Plan (FYDP)* comprising the years 1963-1967, the issue of the number of excess students per teacher has been drawn attention to and it has been established that this matter led to a fall in efficiency. In this connection, topics like giving priority to teacher training schools, making teaching an attractive profession and exploring the possibility of using temporary teacher deputies beginning from the first years of the profession have been referred to (Kavak, Aydın, Altun, 2007). In the *Second FYDP (1968-1972)*, the decisions made regarding teacher training are as follows: the improvement of the quality of building, equipment and teaching staff of the teacher training institutions to the desired levels will have priority, a policy that will prevent teachers from moving to other areas of employment, balance regional distribution and also make use of existing teachers at a maximum level will be implemented. Besides these, special programmes will be implemented to train teachers and other teaching staff in the fields where there is a great shortage in manpower but a low demand (Kavak, Aydın, Altun, 2007). Among the long-term development principles of the *New Strategy and the Third Five Year Development Plan (1973-1977)*, the training of adequate number of teachers to meet the modern standards of student/teacher ratio and making the necessary investments for this purpose are emphasized (Kavak, Aydın, Altun, 2007). The training of all the teachers at the higher education institutions has been the essence of the *Fourth Five Year Development Plan (1979-1983)*. However, the main source of teacher training high schools will be the teacher's training schools. Those graduating from the teacher high schools will receive education for a further 2 years and will become elementary school teachers. By taking into account the capacity created at the education institutes, a flexible teacher training system will be developed to meet the teacher requirements of different education levels and the use of excess capacity for the other appropriate other educational needs will be ensured (Kavak, Aydın, Altun, 2007). At the *Fifth Five Year Development Plan (1985-1989)*, foreign language education will be electively and progressively given weight to and the necessary measures for the preparation of the required programmes for this purpose and the meeting of the teacher requirement at every level of formal education will be taken. The due importance will be given to special education for the children who are mentally retarded, those with superior intelligence, impaired hearing, visually impaired and orthopedically handicapped, misfits and those who are permanently ill. For this purpose, necessary precautions will be taken to ensure the training of teachers and personnel in the area of special education (Kavak, Aydın, Altun, 2007). At the education section of the *Sixth Five Year Development Plan (1990-1994)*, the principle concerning the development of the teacher high schools in accordance with their purpose has been included. Among the educational reforms of the *Seventh Five Year Development Plan (1996-2000)* is the extension of the compulsory education span to eight years (Kavak, Aydın, Altun, 2007). At the *Eighth Five Year Development Plan (2001-2005)*, the rendering of the teaching profession attractive and the training of qualified teachers and the distribution of these across the country evenly has been emphasized and also the employment of contracted education personnel has been projected (Kavak, Aydın, Altun, 2007). At the *Ninth Five Year Development Plan (2007-2013)*, the following decisions have been made: The university quotas for the fields at which there are teacher vacancies will be increased and an even distribution of teachers to the regions and residential areas will be ensured. Also, through taking into account the changes in the syllabus and educational methods, the teacher proficiencies will steadily be improved and effective methods in pre-service and in-service education will be applied in order to develop the needed competence (Kavak, Aydın, Altun, 2007). *The Strategic Plan of the Ministry of National Education (2010-2014)* in connection with the transfer of the teacher training responsibility to the universities, the relations of the Ministry of National Education (MNE) and the Higher Education Council (HEC) and the relations between the MNE and the faculties of education, it is seen that, the relations based on joint responsibility have not reached the intended level. A structuring has taken place at the teacher training higher education institutions during the period 1998-1999. In this context, it has been stated that teacher training according to the new policy and strategies, especially in the new fields and modules opening in the areas of vocational and technical training and in the areas of special training and pre-school education, a need for restructuring with the cooperation of the HEC is maintaining its importance as a current issue. The employment of contracted teachers and rendering the supply of education flexible by the MNE have been projected as a solution to meeting the demand for teachers at the areas with insufficient number of

teachers (MEB, 2012). One of the most important problems of the Turkish Education System is the difficulty encountered in sending experienced teachers to regions, which are socio-economically underdeveloped. The aforementioned regions are places that are not preferred by most of the prospective teachers. This situation not only creates a disadvantage from the point of the students in the sense that it deprives them from experienced teachers and also in a sense it is regarded as a negativeness from the point of the teacher candidates. The NEM, by also using the technology, is striving to prepare new programmes for the teachers serving at the education institutes of every level and type and is extending the in-service training through the trained formatters (MEB, 2012).

7. The Teaching Profession and The Development Plans Aimed at Teacher Training in North Cyprus

Three five year development plans have been prepared in North Cyprus until now: During the *First Five Year Development Plan* which encapsulated the period 1978-1982, an attempt has been made to introduce the aims and objectives that can be attained by using short and medium term policy measures. At the FFYDP, the aims, principles and objectives directed at training the required manpower/teachers in education have been identified as below: The introduction of the regulations necessary for the purpose of training high-level practising manpower required for social and economic development and training of inquiring, didactic administrators for the process of production and serving in the areas of scientific research and the establishment of higher education institutions; the informal education that cannot train manpower in a short time that is urgently needed by the economic development to be integrated with the formal education and to overemphasize the issue of integrating those left outside the formal education; The education system will be structured so as to enable all the individuals, beginning from the lowest levels, to attain the skills required by the objectives of the Plan and to integrate them into the working life; training inquiring personnel that can implement technology required by the production system at all levels and adapting technology to suit the conditions of the country by establishing a perfect relationship between education and production. The continuous improvement of teaching programmes and methods at all education levels in a way that will reflect the innovations; the supply of educational tools in accordance with the international standards both in terms of quantity and quality; the training of adequate number of teachers and the materialization of the required physical investment in order to enhance student/teacher and student/classroom ratios to contemporary levels (Çelebi, 2008). The manpower/teacher training objective, principle and policies of the *Third Five Year Development Plan (1993-1997)* are identified below: to enable the existing trained workforce to be more efficient and to follow the contemporary developments and to generalize the in-service training means for this purpose; improving the teaching services and emphasizing the in service training of the teachers in order to adapt to the developing education technologies by taking into account the importance of education in the development of the country; to implement the necessary moral and material measures to ensure the continuity of the teaching profession as a respectable profession (Çelebi, 2008).

Conclusions and Suggestions

At the national education councils, strict attention should be paid in establishing a teacher training policy that will not be changed according to the view, opinion and attitudes of the political powers, and be open to improvement. Also attention should be paid to effective collaboration between the Ministry of National Education, faculties of education and schools at which practical training is given for the purpose of contributing to the education and social life, in order to improve the teacher training quality both in Turkey and North Cyprus. It is suggested that in order to remove the imbalances with respect to teacher distribution especially in Turkey, encouraging action has to be taken urgently. It is also suggested that in the Cyprus Turkish Education System, especially at the national education councils, a more extensive teacher training and in-service training system for the secondary school teachers should be emphasized as is the case with the training of the pre-school teachers and the in-service training of the teachers. It is thought that the Cyprus Turkish teacher training issue can be solved to a large extent with the contribution of the classroom teacher departments of the faculties of education of the existing universities as well as the Teacher's College and a cooperation with the MNE in this respect will be beneficial. At the national education councils and the development plans of the coming years, efforts should be focused on establishing supply-demand equilibrium in various branches, and surplus teachers should be guided in accordance with the needs.

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