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## Teacher Training in Turkey and the Analysis of the Recent Status

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### Abstract

*The training of teachers comes ahead among the controversial issues in the world countries. Therefore every country has made some researches and applications in the continuum of their education policies. Turkey is also contemplating the researches of teacher education in the world at close range. The research gives place to the education policies in Turkey, explanations of the renewals and the problems has been faced while the continuum.*

**Keywords:** Teacher training, teacher training policies, teacher education

### 1. Introduction

Education is absolutely essential since the existence of human being. Every nation has a special education system. This system is constructed and developed according to the social, cultural, political and economical values. In other words: Every system is reflecting its national norms and is devoted to satisfy the educational needs of its nation. Education has three interactive components. These are "student", "teacher" and "schedule". The effectiveness and efficiency of a system depends on a harmonious interaction among the components towards an aim. Any change, weakness or false operation of one of the components leads the whole system to inefficiency. It is hard to say that one component is more important than the other one but the element "teacher" needs a special attention because the "Faculty of Education" which is responsible for educating teachers has no right for any inspection and the element "schedule" is determined by the "National Ministry for Education". The official examination of the teacher training period is the most important feature for an influential function of our educational system. The other two components are under the influence of the "teacher" element [1].

In teacher education, industrial countries are applying effective and sufficient applications which are continuously improving. Also in Turkey, there are several investigations to determine the sufficiency of teachers and the training of them towards this direction. Concerning this, the "National Ministry for Education" (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı), "Higher Education Committee" (Yüksek Öğretim Kurulu) and several universities have made a variety of researches. The strict exertion, without any preliminary study of the changes in the teacher education policies, has reduced the quality of the education.

In Turkey, the teacher training has started in a school for teachers "darülmüallim" which was opened on 18<sup>th</sup> March 1848 in Istanbul. So, since 1848 the training and education of teachers is always an important and active issue in Turkey. Especially after founding the republic, every government has focused on the training of teachers and has changed the education system in different dimensions. One of the most important changes is the "2547" coded article of "Higher Education Law" which has added "teacher schools" into the structure of universities in 1982. The training system of today is a result of this [2].

The training of teachers has been one of the biggest problems in the past and still this area is problematic today. They say the historical problems in the period are: (a) The policies which were followed did not regard the education quality. (b) The trained teachers were not appropriate and had no suitable personality to the nature of education. (c) The educated/trained teachers had no national awareness. (d) A mass of teachers were educated without any awareness of environmental values (eco-friendliness). (e) A huge part of the society has not supported the efforts of teachers. (f) The model of teachers training which is educating a big part of the society is not a financial problem it is one of the basic problems of the state which should be considered in a seriously way [3].

### 1.2 Applications of teacher training in Turkey



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It is possible to say that radical changes were made with the "2547" coded article of "Higher Education Law" in 1981 [4]. According to this, the "teacher schools", institutes, academies and faculties and other schools which were responsible for the training and education of teachers were under supervision of "Ministry of Education". With the publication of this law they have been collected under the name "Higher Education Committee" on 20<sup>th</sup> June 1982. Since 1989 -1990 the training period of teachers shifted to at least four years "licence/bachelor's degree" education.

The teacher training model which went into effect in 1997 has the purpose to rearrange the teacher profession under the term of "instruction/education technician". The core of this reconstruction is the education of technicians for a specific field.

The selections of students to the teacher training programs are made by tests consisting questions about basic knowledge, basic skills and academic knowledge. The selection is realized by "ÖSYM (Öğrenci Seçme ve Yerleştirme Merkezi)" a center for selecting and placing students. Also the selection of teachers is accomplished by a test called "KPSS ( Kamu Personeli Seçme Sınavı)" – test for selection civil servants (officials). These tests made of questions about basic knowledge, basic skills and the knowledge about education science. There are 15 specific field tests additionally to the "KPSS" since 2013. Today, the teacher's employment is made by the results of these tests. The appointments of teachers through tests are seriously legitimate in the society. The fact that there is no need for a minimal standard of scores means there is no minimum standard for the quality of teaching. In some fields, teachers can't be appointed even if they achieve high scores. As opposite, in other fields teachers get appointed with very low scores. Besides this, the continual change in the formation of applied science and literature faculties shows us that there is no minimum standard of quality about the profession of teaching [5].

## 2. Problems in application of teacher training in Turkey

Under consideration of faced difficulties and problems in the reconstruction period of the faculties of education until 1996, it has been expected that the problems will be solved. Mostly, the applications were unsuccessful. We can see that the result of the reconstruction period, that is to say, the teachers which were trained are still problematic nowadays.

One of the main problems is the insufficiency of lecturers. Compared to other faculties, the number of lecturers is like next to nothing. Also the number of students per lecturer is more than in other faculties. Because of such an insufficiency, the "practice oriented application" which is a part of the reconstruction period, could not be applied. It is known that most of the students, who have chosen the profession of teaching, belong to middle- class families. An extensive survey study on 18.226 students which are studying in faculties of education in 2007 has following results: 78,7 % of their mothers' education level and 53,4 % of their fathers' education level is up to "middle- school". In the same study it is determined that 82,4% of the mothers are housewives and 30,6 % of the fathers are retired. Again it was mentioned that 60 % of the students came from urban - and the remaining 40% from suburban places [6].

It is hard to say that teachers are vocational autonomous in Turkey. Not only the curriculum is set by the "MEB", also which textbook they have to use and even their education style. Seminars are providing pre-service training and in-service training in schedule development but there is no given chance for constructing their own schedules and using them. The subjects are provided in schedule-packs. This approach makes the profession "teacher" far from being autonomous and expertise , it reduces it to a simple practical technician [7].

## 3. Result and Suggestions

Today, there is a placement for students in bachelor's degree for every level of education in universities. Faculty of Education, Faculty of Education Units, Vocational Education Faculties, Technical Education Faculties and Higher Education Schools are academic teacher training units. This faculties and schools are applying a four- year bachelor degree in pre-school- , elementary- and secondary education [2].

In Turkey, the future of a child is determined by his/her elementary teacher instead of the parents. It is possible to say a child is lucky in his/her elementary period if the teacher has advanced skills, a good personality and if he/she is able to provide qualitative education. A good teacher builds up a good



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future. So, the teacher training applications should be arranged carefully and should be applied efficiently.

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