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The Evaluation of Ready Made Clothing Modular Education Programs Within the Modernization of Vocational and Technical Education Project

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ABSTRACT

The reconstruction studies of vocational and technical education are still carried on in Turkey which is in European Union Accession Process. In this regard, Modernization of Vocational and Technical Education Project (MVTE) that is one of the two biggest projects supported by EU, has been realized and completed. The objective of MTEM project was to develop a modern and effective teacher training system. Within the scope of the project, to train qualified teachers in different fields, modular education programs developed and implemented in teacher training faculties. But, sufficient numbers of studies have not been carried out until now for evaluating the efficiency of the programs that were implemented in 2004-2005 school year. In this research, the Ready Made Clothing Modules developed based on the project were evaluated on students' views on quality of definition, aims, content, teaching-learning process, assessment and evaluation dimensions of modules by general survey model and qualitative research method. And some reccommendations have been made based on the findings.

Keywords: Modular education, Program evaluation, Vocational education, MVTE Project, Teacher training.

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THE EVALUATION OF READY MADE CLOTHING MODULAR EDUCATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE MODERNIZATION OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROJECT

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The reconstruction studies of vocational and technical education are still carried on in Turkey which is in European Union Accession Process. In this regard, Modernization of Vocational and Technical Education Project (MVTE) that is one of the two biggest projects supported by EU, has been realized and completed. The objective of MTEM project was to develop a modern and effective teacher training system. Within the scope of the project, to train qualified teachers in different fields, modular education programs developed and implemented in teacher training faculties. But, sufficient numbers of studies have not been carried out until now for evaluating the efficiency of the programs that were implemented in 2004-2005 school year. In this research, the Ready Made Clothing Modules developed based on the project were evaluated on students' views on quality of definition, aims, content, teaching-learning process, assessment and evaluation dimensions of modules by general survey model and qualitative research method. And some reccommendations have been made based on the findings.

Keywords: Modular education, Program evaluation, Vocational education, MVTE project, Teacher training.

1. Introduction

Considering the fact that the best investment is the one made in training qualified person, the priority given to the human capital and quality for creating a society that can compete in the globalizing world is the essential for development. The globalization in economy brought new perspective and dimension to the vocational and technical education. The superiority in the knowledge based economy is determined by the quality of products and services. The vocational and technical education in the developing countries improves according to the training qualified personnel for the requirements of the industry and quality problems (Balci and Ari, 2003:48).

Erisen (2001) define the quality of education as; "succes level of realizing the aims and functions of the education". Many studies suggest that one of the main factors of education for realizing the aims and functions is choosing and using the right learning-teaching strategies. Some of the studies on this subject are Reece and Walker (1993); Varis (1996); Erturk (1998); Demirel (1999); Celikoz (2001); and Erisen (2001). The research conducted by YOK (The Council of Higher Education) suggests "learning-teaching approaches in the programs must be such as to bring teaching skills to teacher candidates" to be a standard indicator. Bringing these skills is directly related to using teaching-learning strategies effectively. However, the findings obtained show that the faculties responsible for training future teachers

does not sufficiently comply with implementation of the teaching-learning skills effectively. This situation is believed to affect the Turkey's competitive power in a negative way.

In Scheerens' (1989:4) effective school themed research, schools were liken to a biological system and it was emphasized that every instruments exist in this system are in interaction with each other. In the research, determining the philosophy and scopes of the programs aiming to provide the required behavior changes on the students clearly and generating the content according to this, are considered in the features of efficient schools. There are many studies concerning this extent of the training program. The studies conducted by Tyler (1993); Varis (1996); Erturk (1998); Demirel (1999); Sonmez (1999); Sisman (2000); Erisen (2001) are some examples.

Different approaches have been needed in order to train the labor force that will take part in production of goods and services that can comply with the conditions of international competition (Uzal *et al.* 2003:148). Within the frame of harmonization with EU legislation, (MVTE) Modernization of Vocational and Technical Education Project that has been started in order to solve the problems in Vocational and Technical Education, was terminated in 2006, however the applications of this project are still being implemented in the faculties. The scope of MVTE project is described as increasing the capacity aimed at configuration and development of a modern and efficient teacher training system.

Apparel/Ready-Wear Program which was supported as a part of MVTE Project, is one of the programs that are supported in Vocational Education Faculties in Gazi University (G.U) and Selcuk University (S.U). Modular programs were started to be implemented in 2004-2005 school year. Men's clothing making module which is the scope of this study is studied at the Clothing Industry Department during 6th semester in the 3rd year in both universities.

No study has been conducted yet for evaluating the efficiency of these modules which were developed in order to train more qualified teachers to the Vocational Technical Education. However, evaluation of the efficiency level is very important in order to improve the programs. In this study, "Men's Clothing Making" module, that is one of education programs of Vocational Education Faculties in Turkey and one of the modular lecture programs implemented within the frame of MVTE project, is evaluated according to the students' views and some proposal have been made as a result.

2. Method

2.1. Research Model

General survey model was used in conducting this qualitative research. "Men's Clothing Making" module that is implemented in the Vocational Education Faculties in Turkey is evaluated with this research.

2.2. Working Group

46 volunteer students from the total of 190 students in the related departments in both Gazi and Selcuk Universities have participated in this research.

2.3. Data Collection Techniques

In this study, semi-structured interview technique was used as the data collection method. According to the semi-structured interview technique, the questions related to the description, aims, content, teaching – learning process and evaluation of "Men's Clothing Making Module Program" were asked to the students who take this program with the help of forms developed.

The interview forms prepared within the frame of the study was conducted on the students in means of meetings. The meetings were recorded by a camera and then resolved. The information obtained from the interviews was revealed as so and interpreted.

3. Findings

The basic findings obtained from the questions asked to students within the frame of the research are as follows;

3.1. What Are the Students' Views on the Quality of the Description Dimension of "Men's Clothing Making Module"?

While %63 of the students participated in the research found the description of the program suitable and sufficient, %37 of the students found the description insufficient. The views of the students who find the description sufficient are briefly as; "The description is sufficient in a way that it summarizes the necessary qualifications to be gained when the lecture is completed; it is encapsulated, seems sufficient; the description is defined well".

The students who find the description insufficient suggested that following statements should also be mentioned in the description; "It is not clear which type of men's clothing making, this should be clarified; the packaging process mentioned in the description can be removed because we are not doing it"; "Does market research, search for the latest designs, controls the model and pattern".

3.2. What Are the Students' Views on the Quality of the Aims Dimension of " Men's Clothing Making Module"?

While %50 of the students participated to the research found the aims of the program suitable and sufficient, %50 of the students found the aims insufficient. The views of the students who found aims sufficient are as "aims were written briefly; there is no tautology so it is sufficient in this matter; we can't see any other matter to be mentioned, so it is sufficient in this matter."

The students who found the aims insufficient suggested that a statement such as; "It is not clear which type of men's clothing making"; it is mentioned in the scoped that "Can perform quality control of men's clothing making", this is an indistinct statement since we perform the quality control of the product we sew in the atelier but we don't perform quality control like the one in the enterprises; there is noaim related to the cooperation with enterprises, however it is more useful if some subjects are thought in the enterprises; "the subjects can be discussed with the cooperation of school and industry" can be added to the aims; and also they mentioned that "ateliers are insufficient in order to realize these aims".

3.3. What Are the Students' Views on the Quality of Content Dimension of "Men's Clothing Making Module"?

While %50 of the students participated to the research found the content of the program suitable and sufficient, %50 of the students found the scope insufficient. The views of the students who found scopes sufficient are as "The subjects were summarized in the content; all subjects related to ready-made manufacturing seem to be mentioned, so it is sufficient in this matter; the content is sufficient for men's clothing making".

The students who found the content insufficient suggest that "The sorting as men jacket, pants and shirt is wrong and the sorting should be just the reverse as shirt, pants and men jacket which seems more

suitable; the subject of preparation of men jacket and shirt for transportation can't be realized, this subject can be shown with camera shootings in the enterprises; qualifying the subjects classically limit us; the sewing techniques performed on classic pants and classic shirts can also be learned while producing fashion and men's clothing making".

3.4. What Are the Students' Views on Quality of Teaching-Learning Dimension of "Men's Clothing Making Module"?

All of the students participated in the survey mentioned that the explanations regarding the teaching-learning process of module program were expressed well, however in realty they aren't realized. The student's views on the problems in practice are; "the atelier and hardware proposed in the content is not sufficient; the weekly and whole lecture times for the semester is not enough for the content given in the modular program; there are some cases that some of the instructors are not sufficient, so sometimes a professional staff comes from an enterprise and show the process stages practically; men's clothing making course should be increased as two semesters and subjects should have more varieties and become more enjoyable".

3.5. What Are the Students' Views on the Quality of Evaluation Dimension of "Men's Clothing Making Module"?

While approximately %33 of the students participated to the research found the evaluation explanations of the module suitable and sufficient, the remaining students found the scope insufficient. The views of the students who found scopes sufficient are as; "We don't know the scales mentioned in the evaluation section clearly but the process seem to be evaluated completely, so it is sufficient; it is sufficient if all of these scales can be implemented".

The students who found the evaluation level of the module insufficient suggest that; "Most of the evaluation scales mentioned in the program are not being implemented, even if they are implemented we are not aware of it; we don't find the evaluation system as valid and reliable most of the time; our teachers don't give us detailed information regarding the evaluation; we are not informed about the measurement criteria and tools applied; transportation and packaging are not performed so the evaluation can't be performed. They mention the problems and deficiencies which instructors face during the process; when they make an incorrect or false study, time and atelier can't be found in order to repeat the processes".

3.6. What Is the Realization Level of the Aims of "Men's Clothing Making Module" by Students?

All of the students participated in this survey mentioned that they had faced so many problems while realizing the aims of the module, so they declared that they couldn't realize the aims fully. The students' views on this subject are summarized as follows;

- Students stated that although they have been trained to be a ready-made clothing teacher, they are not being trained appropriately in the faculties for ready-made manufacturing processes.
- Students in Gazi University stated that their ateliers and current hardware are not sufficient in order to realize the aims of module.
- The processes mentioned in the aims such as "Can prepare the men's clothing for shipment", "Can perform quality control of men's clothing" are not performed as the same way in the enterprises so the training of these subjects should be done in the enterprises instead of classes.

- Students stated that classic jacket, classic pants and shirt are out of fashion and they want to manufacture more fashion classic jackets, classic pants and shirts which will be more suitable for their needs.
- Students stated that the number of instructors per student, weekly and semester lecture hours are not sufficient because of the intensive content.
- Some students who participated in the research from Gazi University stated that they faced some situations that some of the instructors had insufficient knowledge about some subjects so, sometimes a professional staff came from an enterprise and showed the process stages practically.
- When the students were asked if they were informed about how to determine and evaluate their deficiencies, they stated that their teachers would show them their mistakes in the products they sew and they fix these mistakes according to their guidance. They mentioned that they were not informed about evaluation by their instructors and they were unaware of the measurement tools and criteria applied.
- Also, students stated that they can't find any atelier except the lecture hours when they need to practice in order to fix their mistakes so they don't have any opportunity to repeat the processes when they make mistakes.

3.7. What Difficulties Do the Students Face While Realizing the Aims of "Men's Clothing Making Module?

The students' views on the difficulties they face while realizing the aims of the module are summarized as follows;

- When the students were asked if there was a "feedback mechanism for both students and teachers in realizing the aims of the module", they mentioned that they were unaware of such mechanism.
- When all the students participated in the research were asked that "Are there any guides for teachers and students for performing the program effectively?" they mentioned that there were no such guides.
- Students who participated in the research from Gazi University stated that their current ateliers are small, insufficient in terms of physical structure and do not have sufficient machines and equipments for manufacturing ready-made materials for men's clothing, so it is not possible to mention an effective and sufficient ready-made manufacturing in these circumstances.
- Students who participated in the research from Selcuk University stated that the atelier for ready-made clothing is sufficient in terms of machine and equipments in order to learn this module but since a number of 70 – 80 students have to take the class at the same time, this brings some chaos in practice and because of this high number of students, the number of instructors in the class becomes insufficient and also, since there are only one piece from each special machines, the lines occur for using them.
- When the students from Gazi University were asked "Are there any factors preventing the program to perform effectively? If so, what are they?" (financing, management, school environment, communication, motivation, crowded classrooms etc.), they stated that the physical structures of the faculties are not appropriate for the image of a university, since the buildings are very old they are far from fulfilling their educational needs, they don't feel themselves as in a university because of the old buildings, Vocational education is of secondary importance and seemed invaluable because of that students who will take this education should be motivated and the purpose of this education should be presented efficiently and starting this presentation from high schools would be the best decision and political tendency for vocational educational should be revised. They also mentioned that all these issues decrease their motivations.

4. Discussion

Considering what is necessary in describing a module program, a short job definition according to the international terminology should be done. This includes some sentences describing the knowledge and skilled to be earned when the module is performed. It is preferable to mention why the skills earned are important. Also, the relationship of the module with other modules should be mentioned.

When examining the definition of men's clothing manufacturing module within the frame of this information and applicants' views, the following statements can't be seen in the definition of a module which aims to train teachers to ready-made clothing sector; "Suitable for ready-made manufacturing", "Suitable to enterprises, can perform serial production"; and statements such as "men shirt, pants and jacket", "perform the control of model and mould and design research" and "manufacture men's clothing according to the standards mentioned" which are mentioned in the content but not in the definition. Also, precondition module which is one of the specifications of modular programming should be mentioned on the entrance page of the module and students who can't complete the modules mentioned in the preconditions successfully should not be allowed to take men's clothing making module. "Materials Science, Machinery Science, Basic Sewing Techniques" module programs should be given as preconditions and should be linked to "Textile Science, Production Pattern, Fashion History, Work Safety and First Aid, Cost Analysis, Quality Management, Job Analysis" module programs.

When the aims of men's clothing makingmodule are examined according to the above mentioned information and the views of applicants, it can be seen that general aims can't be seen but only behavioral objectives are mentioned. It is observed that the aims are stated as performance criteria but outputs are not even mentioned. Standards and conditions (specified) which should be mentioned in the aims regarding sufficiency are absent as well as a aims related to attitude and behavior.

In order to achieve the determined aims in the content of program, the questions like "What should be thought in order to realize the aims?" and "What kind of information do the individuals need to be qualified?" should be answered. The subjects in the content should be generated with the necessary standards gathered from national and international vocational standards, the contents should be up-to-date, clear and based and should consist of valid, reliable, logical and scientific evaluation. Also, time should be considered when the content is prepared. The content of program should be arranged flexible to different situations and requirements of the individuals. The content should be addressed with a systematic way suitable to the learning principles.

When the content of men's clothing makingmodule is evaluated in terms of literature and applicants' views, the subject sequence in the module is as classic jacket, classic pants and classic shirt, respectively. It can be seen that the sequence of subjects in the content does not match with the principles of starting from simple to complex, from known to unknown and from easy to difficult, however if the sequence were from classic shirt to classic pants and to classic jacket, this would help the subjects to be understood more easily. The students who participated in the research mentioned that they study the subjects in the sequence of classic shirt, classic pants and classic jacket which is just the opposite written in the module. Also, it can be said that the term "classic" is not suitable for self-access of the students, allowing students to sew the models they want would affect their motivations positively since this will cause them to sew the fashion and up-to-date garments and encourage them to make a market research on this subject which will change the content to be up-to-date, important and devoted to the requirements.

Information and skills which will generate precondition in the modular program are seen not to be underlined. Also, applicants stated some deficiencies they noticed in the content of the module such as men's clothing making has different sewing techniques than ladies and children clothing making, the subject of interfacing the lining should be given in more details, men vest and tie should also be mentioned in the content and by adding these subjects into the content total education period should be 2 semesters, the subject of preparation of men clothing to transportation should be removed from the content since this can be performed during the practices in the enterprises.

Modular programming essentials and some various elements should be considered in the establishment of an effective educational environment. The process should give place to group activities

as it allows self-access and indicate a characteristic that meets different requests. In order to conduct the program effectively teacher and students guides should be prepared. However, there are no such teacher and students guides for men's clothing making module.

In regard to men's clothing making module, applicants stated that module processing (comments related to teaching-learning process) suggestions are sufficient however these processing suggestions can't be performed in the current conditions. Especially, applicants from Gazi University stated that education environment and equipments recommended for process are highly insufficient, especially the lack of fillet machine, sleeve setting machine, pressing ironer and ironing robot extend the lecture time and this causes the total lecture hours in a semester to be insufficient for the module.

Teacher and student are the main elements of the learning period for conducting the program effectively. The primary mission of the teacher is to provide a suitable teaching environment suitable to the students' interests, requirements and expectations. Teachers take an important part during applications. However, it seems that there not enough skilled instructors in the faculties conducting this program. When the number of students per teacher in Gazi University is 22-29 students, this number is between 30-37 students per teacher in Selcuk University. Since the atelier for ready-made clothing is large in Selcuk University, 70-80 students take the class at the same time which affects the teaching-learning process negatively. Also, there isn't any feedback mechanism for students and teachers about the problems faced with in order to succeed the scopes of program. However, the feedback mechanism in the program is important in terms of performing an objective evaluation of the program, eliminating the problems occurred in process, presenting a healthier program into the future related to these problems and improving this program. The applicants from both Selcuk and Gazi Universities mentioned that since the ateliers are always busy, they can't find any opportunity to repeat the process in order to decrease their mistakes. However, according to the modular education approach, the atelier filled with necessary machinery and equipments should be prepared in order to allow the students repeat the process they want anytime.

Within the frame of the applicants' views, in the evaluation dimension of the men's clothing makingmodule, students who express negative opinions about the evaluation dimension stated that they didn't consider the evaluation system as valid and reliable, the instructors did not inform them about evaluation criteria and they mainly carried out product evaluation. Concerning how the students' deficiencies were determined and evaluated, they stated that instructors told them their mistakes during process, apart from that they evaluated the finished products and also students from Selcuk University mentioned that they were unable to find time and atelier for repeating the process which they had done wrong or defective items before.

All the students participated in this research were asked if there were any teacher or student guides for conducting the program effectively, they replied that there were no such guides and also there weren't any teacher and student guides for other modular programs as well. However, in order to declare a modular program, teacher and student guides should be prepared for each courses and accordingly self-access of the students and group activities should be enabled.

Students who participated in the interview from Gazi University stated that the current ateliers are too small, physical structure is insufficient, there aren't sufficient machinery and equipments in their ateliers suitable for ready-made men's clothing making and it is not possible to mention an efficient and effective ready-made manufacturing in these circumstances. Applicants from Selcuk University stated that the machinery and equipments in their atelier is sufficient for teaching this module but since there are 70 to 80 students taking the class at the same time and there are only 2 teachers, one of whom has to deal with 35 students at a time, it is difficult to control the students and if the process are done sequentially and because of the lack of sleeve setting machine, fillet machine etc and having only 1 piece of special machines cause the lines in front of these machines which result in time wasting.

The students from Gazi University were asked that "Are there any factors preventing the program to perform effectively? If so, what are they?" (financing, management, school environment, communication, motivation, crowded classrooms etc.), they stated that the physical structures of the faculties are not appropriate for a university image, since the buildings are very old they are far from fulfilling their

educational needs, they don't feel themselves as in a university because of the old buildings, Vocational education is of secondary importance and seemed invaluable because of that students who will take this education should be motivated and the purpose of this education should be presented efficiently and starting this presentation from high schools would be the best decision and political tendency for vocational educational should be revised. They also mentioned that all these issues decrease their motivations.

As Gurkan (1993:7) mentioned, "teachers' fulfilling their liabilities and roles which diversify gradually, is in a close relationship with their pres-service education". However, the findings obtained indicate that education program which is one of the main elements in providing the pre-service education, has some serious problems in its all dimensions.

4. Results and Recommendations

4.1. Results

In this study, applicants' suggestions, positive and negative opinions about the definition, aims, content, teachin-learning process and evaluation dimendions of "Men's Clothing Making Module Lecture Program Group" are indicated. Students' evaluations regarding the realization level of the aims of the module program and difficulties in realizing the aims included.

These evaluations showed that there are some points which all the students find sufficient and also insufficient in conducting this module. The findings obtained show that students face many problems while conducting the modules. Because of these reasons, Men's Clothing Making Module should be reevaluated with all aspects. Module should be reevaluated by educational sciences specialists, program development specialists, branch teachers who conduct this program, specialists from ready-made enterprises and students' views and also the importance of cooperation with the sector should be revealed.

Within the frame of these evaluations, the reccommendations related to "Men's Clothing Making Lecture Module" which is one of the Apparel/Ready-Made Programs supported as a part of MVTE Project, are as follows.

4.2. Recommendations

Reccommendations based on the findings in the research are;

1. The definition and aims of the Men's Clothing Making Module should be reevaluated.
2. Indistinct statements in the content should be clearer and the subjects which can't be conducted should be removed from the content.
3. The number of students should be decreased so that the module group can reach the aims.
4. Students should be informed about modular education.
5. Teacher and student guides should be prepared for module program.
6. The feedback mechanism should be generated for teachers and students about the problems faced in succeeding the aims of module program.
7. Instructors should have opportunity to improve themselves in this module group by establishing cooperation with the enterprises dealing with ready-made men's clothing making.
8. Technical visits to the enterprises dealing with ready-made men's clothing making should be organized so the students can see the applications on site.
9. The atelier should be equipped with the machines and equipments recommended in the men's clothing making module group.
10. The education period should be increased to 2 semesters since the content of the module program is very intensive. Reccommendations for the future researches;

11. In order to get healthier results on the similar studies in this sector, in addition to the views of teachers and student, the views of company representatives and the graduates who work in a manufacturing enterprise in the relevant subject should also be included.
12. Other modules which are prepared within the frame of MVTE Project should also be evaluated with a research.

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