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Nikos P. Terzis (ed.)

European unification and educational challenges in the Balkans

Education and Pedagogy in Balkan Countries
8

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54006 Thessaloniki / GREECE
Aristotle Univesrity of Thessaloniki
Faculty of Philosophy and Education
Department of Education
tel. & fax +30.2310.997348
e-mail: terzis@ccf.auth.gr

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Chapter 4

Innovation in Higher Education and Vocational Education

Determination of the Quality Assurance Standards, in Terms of Eu Priorities, for Teacher Training Programs in Turkey

Yavuz Erisen

This paper aims to determine the quality assurance standards for the teacher training programs in Turkey and to evaluate them in terms of validity and significance. The research has been carried out by using survey method, at the teacher training faculties that are training teachers for vocational and technical education in Turkey. The research is based on the ideas obtained from 285 lecturers and 318 prospective teachers at Technical Educational Faculties, and 212 teachers employed at Technical and Industrial High schools. The standards determined for teacher training by ECIS, EU and USA have been considered as the base of this study. For 15 dimensions and 135 articles, the views of all related groups have been taken into consideration for effectiveness and significance level. Finally, it has been seen that all the standards are "valid" and "significant" and they have been categorised as the standards related to (a) student admission, (b) the philosophy, objective and content of the teaching program, (c) teaching-learning strategies, (d) equality and diversity of the program, (e) coordination of the program, (f) safety and health care service, (g) special educational needs, (h) counselling and psychological support service, (ı) human resources, (j) library and technology centre, (k) facilities and equipment, (l) financing, (m) curriculum assessment and development, (n) faculty administration, and (o) "effective teaching

competence" that the lecturers should bear and transfer to the prospective teachers.

Keywords: Quality Assurance, Standards, Training Standards, Training Programs

1. Introduction

There have been great advances in science and technology and the competition between countries to be a knowledge society is speeding up. Furthermore, the level of education and training has been regarded as the main indicator of being a developed country, and especially the developing countries are reconstructing their educational and training systems to keep up with this competition. The new world order, globalisation, opening to the world, reconstruction and integration with EU are forcing the Turkish education system to undergo inevitable changes. The need for qualified human resource is to be met my vocational and technical training organisations.

1.1. The aim of the study

The overall objective of this study is to determine the quality assurance standards of the teacher training programs for the vocational and technical training. In this context, the questions below have been raised and their answers have been given:

1. Based the views of the lecturers, the prospective teachers at the faculties, and the teachers of workshops and vocational lessons at the technical and industrial/vocational high schools, the eligibility of the standards in fifteen dimensions were analysed.
2. The classification and grading of the determined standards in terms of their importance based on the views of the lecturers and of the teachers of workshops and vocational lessons at the technical and industrial/vocational high schools.

3. Whether there is significant difference between the views of the lecturers, the prospective teachers and the teachers of workshops and vocational lessons at the technical and industrial/vocational high schools.

2. Material and Method

2.1. The design of the study

In this study, general survey model was used. The data required for this model were obtained from the subjects in the population of the study using different tools.

2.2. The population of the study

The research is based on the ideas obtained from 285 lecturers and 318 prospective teachers at the Technical Educational Faculties, and 212 teachers employed at the Technical and Industrial High schools.

2.3. Development of the data collection tools

First of all, the present quality standards related to teacher training programs were determined based on the national and international literature. As a result of this research, we had contact, to get more information, with many private and state organisations related to this field mainly in UK and USA. The standards formed from the data found in the national and international literature were grouped according to the dimensions mentioned above, and the standards of the same or similar traits were combined. Then, three types of questionnaires (Lickert-type survey questionnaire with five grades) to collect the data were formed. They were the questionnaire for the lecturers, the questionnaire for the prospective teachers; and the questionnaire for the teachers. The questionnaires with 16 dimensions and 168 items of standardisation were reduced to the questionnaires with 15 dimensions

and 135 items of standardisation as the non-functioning or incomprehensible items were excluded.

3. Data Analysis

SPSS was used to analyse the data obtained from all these scales. The frequency and percentage of the participants were used and the ones who gave no idea were ignored; mathematical means and standard deviations were used to determine the grading of the determined standards, and variance analysis and the Scheffe Test were used to find whether there is significant difference between the views of the lecturers, the prospective teachers and the teachers of workshops and vocational lessons.

4. Findings

The data obtained from this study helped us to form the standards. Although 15 dimensions and 135 standards were determined, only the first standards for each dimension are given, considering the limitations.

4.1. Standards for student admission to the faculty:

- ✓ The society needs should be a base for the student admission.

4.2. Standards for the philosophy, objective and content of the training program:

- ✓ The training program should be designed according to the context of the faculty in the whole educational system.

4.3. Standards for teaching-learning strategies:

- ✓ The program should provide all the students with learning strategies consistent with the goals determined.

4.4. Standards for equality and diversity in the program:

- ✓ The training program should ensure equality in educational practice, use of training materials, counselling and psychological support service, and other beneficial services.

4.5. Standards for the coordination of the training program:

- ✓ The persons responsible for planning, application and assessment should effectively coordinate the training program.

4.6. Standards for safety and health care service:

- ✓ Essential safety and health care service should be provided in the learning environments during learning process.

4.7. Standards for special educational needs:

- ✓ There should be effective processes to determine the students who need special educational needs.

4.8. Standards for counselling and psychological support service:

- ✓ Academic, individual and professional counselling and psychological support service should be rendered in such a way as to inform the students about training programs, grants, practice chances, job opportunities and problems

4.9. Standards for human resources:

- ✓ There should be staff to apply the service and activities affectively, and they should have required skills and quality

4.10.Standards for library and technology centre:

- ✓ There should be a library and technology centre in order for the students and other staff to meet their needs.

4.11. Standards for facilities and equipment:

- ✓ The physical and technical facilities of the faculty should be efficient enough to apply the training program.

4.12. Standards for financing:

- ✓ The financial sources and the direction of these sources should have enough quality and quantity to enable the faculty to carry out its philosophy and goals.

4.13.Standards for faculty administration:

- ✓ The faculty administration should develop high-level goals towards high-ranking achievements and social satisfaction in addition to general acceptance and being for today and tomorrow.

4.14.Standards for effective teaching competence:

- ✓ The teachers should have extensive knowledge and skills in the teaching field and reflect this to their practice.

4.15.Standards for curriculum assessment and development:

- ✓ There should be a comprehensive, effective, valid, reliable and sustainable quality assurance system to assess and develop the factors affecting the training program.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

According to the results drawn from this study, 9/10 of the subjects involved in the study regarded the standard statements as "appropriate". Grading of the standards is generally "very important" or "fairly appropriate". There is not a significant difference between the views of the subjects.

For this, the determination of quality assurance standards in Turkey should be carried out considering the EU priorities by a board comprising the representatives from the universities that have teacher training programs, employment providers and employees; the features of the scopes should be considered, and they should be formed in such a way as to provide "flexibility" and "information and direction" in terms of statement level; and the standards should updated if necessary.

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Note: The references consist of only a few of the ones used by the author.

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