

Analysis of the Problems of the Turkish Education System in Terms of the Elements of Educational Programs

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Abstract: The aim of the study is to examine the problems of the Turkish education system in terms of the elements of the education programs. This research was carried out according to the case study model, which is one of the qualitative research methods. The data of the study were collected through face-to-face interviews conducted through a semi-structured interview form with 50 teachers who work in various branches in public schools in the city center of Erzurum in the spring semester of the 2021-2022 academic year and who voluntarily supported the research. The data obtained in the study were interpreted by conducting content analysis. According to these results obtained from the research, it is possible to say that the problems experienced by the teachers in the context of reaching the goals of the Turkish education system are due to the exam-oriented education approach, the fact that the goals are not compatible with daily life, the lack of application direction, consisting mostly of theory-based information, and the low motivation of the students in the lessons. The results obtained from the research, it is seen that the problems experienced by the teachers in order to realize the content of the education in the Turkish education system arise from the inconsistency of course hours and the intensity of the subjects, the transition gaps between the subjects and the disconnections between the subjects and the applied activities. Other results obtained from the research, they stated that the problems experienced by the teachers in terms of the educational situations of the Turkish education system stemmed from the fact that the students did not participate in the lesson actively, and therefore, the teachers could not get enough feedback from the students in the educational environment.

Keywords: Turkish education system, Elements of educational curriculum, Problems

Introduction

The most basic expectation of education for the phenomenon; is to raise individuals who respond to the needs of today's life, question, think, criticize, research, struggle, produce, wonder, have an entrepreneurial spirit, can follow the developments in the world, contribute to social life and respect universal values (Hareket, Erdoğan ve Dündar, 2016; Anıl, 2009). Although there are many studies in the relevant literature that examine the problems of the Turkish education system from past to present from various angles and offer solutions, it seems that the expectations cannot be fully met. In addition, when the relevant literature was examined, no other study was found

that examined the problems of the Turkish education system in terms of the elements of educational programs in accordance with the views of teachers. It is thought that this study will be an important source for the relevant literature in order to describe the situation of the Turkish education system in terms of the goals, content, educational situations and measurement and evaluation elements of educational programs, if any, and to identify its current problems. The aim of the study is to examine the problems of the Turkish education system in terms of the elements of the education programs. For this purpose, the answers to the following questions were sought.

1. What are the problems you face in terms of achieving the goals of the education?
2. What are the problems you face in terms of implementing educational content (topics, scope, curriculum, content, units, themes)?
3. What are the problems you encounter in terms of educational situations (How will we teach-strategy, methods and techniques, reinforcement, participation, feedback - correction, approach)?
4. What are the problems you face in terms of assessment and evaluation (How much do we teach)?

Method

The Model of the Study

This research was carried out according to the case study model, which is one of the qualitative research methods. Case study is a research method used in cases where there is more than one evidence or data source that examines a investigated phenomenon within its own framework, where the boundaries between the phenomenon and the content in which it is located are not decisively defined (Yin, 1984). Qualitative research can be defined as a research in which qualitative data collection methods such as observation, interview and document analysis are used, and a qualitative process is followed to reveal perceptions and events in a realistic and holistic way in a natural environment (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011). In this study, face-to-face interviews were conducted with the participants who voluntarily supported the research. According to Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun (2012), the purpose of interviewing the participants is to reveal what they have in mind and what they feel about the subjects on the studied subjects.

Study Group

The study group of this study consists of a total of 50 teachers who work in official public schools in the city center of Erzurum in the spring semester of the 2021-2022 academic year and who voluntarily support the study. In this study, since it was thought that it would be more practical to work with a familiar group because it would be quicker and cost-effective to reach the participants, the study group of the research was determined by easily accessible case sampling, one of the purposive sampling methods (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). Purposive sampling allows for in-depth research by selecting information-rich situations in accordance with the purpose of the study. It is preferred when it is desired to work in one or more special cases that meet certain criteria or have certain characteristics (Büyüköztürk et al., 2013).

Data Collection

The data of the study were collected through face-to-face interviews conducted through a semi-structured interview form with 50 teachers who work in various branches in public schools in the city center of Erzurum in the spring semester of the 2021-2022 academic year and who voluntarily supported the research. Face-to-face interviews lasting approximately 10 minutes were conducted with each of the participants who voluntarily supported the research. The data obtained from the participants were coded as T.1 and T.50 in terms of coding convenience and confidentiality of personal data.

Data Analysis

The data obtained in the study were interpreted by conducting content analysis. The goal of content analysis is to reduce the words in a research text to a smaller number of content categories (Creswell, 2013). Analysis studies were carried out on the obtained text. The analyses performed were evaluated by two expert researchers and the validity and reliability of the analyses were tried to be increased.

Results

Under this heading, the responses of the teachers in the study group to the research questions related to the problems of the Turkish education system in terms of the elements of educational programs are presented and interpreted in the form of tables.

Distribution of the opinions of the academicians on the question Q.1) “What are the problems you face in terms of realizing the educational goals?”

According to Table 1, teachers expressed their opinion about the problems they face in terms of achieving the goals of education in the form of the most exam-oriented study approach (f:17). Then, the teachers, respectively, stated that the goals are not compatible with real life (f:11), the understanding of education based on theory rather than practice (f:8), the low level of preparation of the students (f:7), the excessive period of compulsory education (f:6) and the negative effects of technology on children. In addition, teachers expressed an opinion that students not focusing on any goals (f:5), neglectful parents (f:4), the understanding of essentialist educational philosophy in education has not been abandoned (f:3), and classrooms are overcrowded (f:2) regarding the problems they face in terms of achieving educational goals. According to these results obtained from the research, it is possible to say that the problems experienced by the teachers in the context of reaching the goals of the Turkish education system are due to the exam-oriented education approach, the fact that the goals are not compatible with daily life, the lack of application direction, consisting mostly of theory-based information, and the low motivation of the students in the lessons.

Table 1. Distribution of the Answers given by the Teachers to the Question about the Problems they face in terms of realizing the Educational Goals

	f
Exam-oriented study approach	17
Goals not being compatible with real life	11
An understanding of education based on theory rather than practice	8
Students have a low level of preparation for classes	7
Excessive period of compulsory education	6
Negative effects of technology on children	6
Students not focusing on any purpose	5
Neglect of the parents	4
The fact that we have not given up on the essentialist philosophy of education in education	3
Overcrowded classrooms	2
Total	70

Distribution of the opinions of the academicians on the question Q.2) “What are the problems you encounter in terms of realizing the educational content (topics, scope, curriculum, content, units, themes)?”

According to Table 2, the teachers stated that the intensity of the subjects and the lesson hours were mostly inconsistent (f:26) regarding the problems they encounter most in terms of realizing the content of the education. Then, respectively, the teachers stated that there were transitional gaps between the subjects (f:14), there were gaps between the subjects and the applied activities (f:12), that the subjects were more advanced than the grade level (f:5) and that the subjects were taught superficially (f:4) regarding the problems they encountered in terms of realizing the content of the education. According to these results obtained from the research, it is seen that the problems experienced by the teachers in order to realize the content of the education in the Turkish education system arise from the inconsistency of course hours and the intensity of the subjects, the transition gaps between the subjects and the disconnections between the subjects and the applied activities.

Table 2. Distribution of Teachers' Responses to the Question about the Problems they face in terms of realizing the Content of Education

	f
Inconsistency of subject intensity with class hours	26
Transition gaps between subjects	14
Disconnection between the subjects and the applied activities	12
Subjects being more advanced than the grade level	5
Teaching the subjects superficially	4
Total	61

Distribution of the opinions of the academicians on the question Q.3) “What are the problems you encounter in terms of educational situations (How will we teach-strategy, methods and techniques, reinforcement, participation, feedback – correction, approach)?”

According to Table 3, teachers stated the most that students did not participate in the lessons effectively (f:16) in relation to the problems they faced in terms of the state of education. Then, respectively, the teachers stated that they could not get enough feedback from the students regarding the problems they faced in terms of educational status (f:12), that the students did not fulfill their responsibilities (f:10), that they did not have time to apply methods and techniques in a way that would take into account the individual differences of the students (f:12). 5) that there are deficiencies in the student discipline regulations (f:5) and there are deficiencies in the educational materials (f:4).

Table 3. Distribution of the Answers given by the Teachers to the Question about the Problems they face in terms of the Educational Situations

	f
Students not attending classes actively	16
Not getting enough feedback from students	12
Failure of students to fulfill their assigned responsibilities	10
Lack of time to apply methods and techniques to take into account individual differences	5
Deficiencies in the student discipline regulation	5
Deficiencies in the required educational materials	4
Total	52

According to the results obtained from the research, they stated that the problems experienced by the teachers in terms of the educational situations of the Turkish education system stemmed from the fact that the students did not participate in the lesson actively, and therefore, the teachers could not get enough feedback from the students in the educational environment. In addition, regarding the problems they experience in terms of their educational status; it is possible to say that they are caused by the students not fulfilling the responsibilities given to them, not being able to implement teaching methods and techniques that will highlight the individual differences of the students to the classroom environment in a way that will provide richness due to lack of time, deficiencies in the student discipline regulations and deficiencies in the educational materials.

Distribution of opinions of academicians on the question "Q.4) “What are the problems you face in terms of measurement and evaluation (How much do we teach)?”

According to Table 4, teachers stated using result-oriented assessments and evaluations (f: 19) the most regarding the problems they encounter in terms of assessment and evaluation. Later, the teachers, respectively, stated their

opinions related to the problems they encountered in terms of assessment and evaluation as; the pandemic negatively affected the assessment and evaluation process (f: 15), that the common exam practice in schools affected the assessment and evaluation process negatively (f: 10), and that due to time problems, appropriate exams could not be made for students' individual characteristics(f:6). In addition, regarding the problems they encounter in terms of assessment and evaluation, the teachers stated that there is no exam week practice in formal education institutions (f: 2), no exams to measure students' high-level thinking skills (f: 1), and the social development of students is not fully evaluated (f1).

Table 4. Distribution of the Answers given by the Teachers to the Question about the Problems they face in terms of Assessment and Evaluation

	f
Implementation of result-oriented assessment and evaluation understanding	19
The negative effects of the pandemic process on the assessment and evaluation process in educational settings	15
Negative effects of joint exam practice on the process	10
Due to the time problem, it is not possible to make exams suitable for the individual characteristics of the students	6
Not including the implementation of exam week in formal education levels	2
Being unable to take exams to measure students' high-level thinking skills	1
Failure to fully assess students' social development	1
Total	54

According to these results obtained from the research, they stated that the problems experienced by the teachers in terms of assessment and evaluation of the Turkish education system stemmed from the fact that they mostly included result-oriented measurement and evaluation practices by themselves, rather than the input, process and result-oriented evaluation approach. In addition, the teachers stated that the problems experienced by the Turkish education system in terms of assessment and evaluation are caused by the measurement and evaluation approaches in educational settings implemented under the influence of the pandemic and the risks posed by the application of the joint exam. In accordance with these results, the following study-related recommendations can be made.

- It may be useful to review the Turkish education system in such a way as to increase the compatibility of educational goals with real life by moving away from an exam-oriented educational approach.
- A reassessment of the intensity of subject areas in accordance with the scope of the class hours may benefit the process.
- Scientific events can be organized for teachers, students and families on how to ensure the active participation of students in classes.
- Studies that will increase the use of input-, process- and result-oriented system evaluation approaches that are necessary for a constructivist understanding of education by teachers in educational settings may be included.

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