Evaluating Views of Teacher Trainees on Teacher Training Process in Turkey

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Abstract: The views of the teacher trainees who have recently started the teaching profession on teacher training process are of great value because they are new graduates and they are in their first year in the profession. Since the teachers in their first year in the profession do not have any experience, they have to pursue the educational tasks based on the knowledge and skills they acquired in their faculties. The main purpose of the study is to evaluate the views of the teacher trainees on the process of teacher training in Turkey.Being qualitative in nature, the current research was a descriptive study. The study group involved 58 newly-appointed teacher trainees from different branches who began their teaching profession in Kastamonu in 2010. An "Interview Form" was used for data collection. The data collected from the participants were analysed through Nvivo 9 software package. As a result of the study, the teacher trainees indicated that they felt insufficient especially related to curriculum and content knowledge and that teaching practice and school experience courses do not adequately contribute to their profession

Introduction

Teachers play a crucial role in shaping the societies in terms of education. There are two separate views regarding teachers' mission: natural and static social roles of training and innovative roles compatible with a democratic and global society. The first view emphasizes the learning activity and pursues scientific developments and the second points out the creation of opportunities to participate in social events besides instruction (Travers & Rebore, 2000). Such issues as the choice of prospective teachers, pre-service training, practice period and monitoring and evaluation during this period, and in-service training are completely a part of teacher training.

Teachers have a direct effect on educating the individuals in all the sectors and, so designing the societies. For this reason, teacher training process has been regarded as one of the most important issues of the education system. Because of the social, economic and political changes that have challenged the objectives of classical education, programs for teacher education have undergone major changes in recent years, which have caused redefining the term of "ideal teacher" by focusing on teacher preparation process (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2001). Different countries around the world are involved in a process of change corresponding to various views regarding the quality of teacher education (Calderhead, 2001).

In the first annual report on the status of teacher quality in the US, Rod Paige, the US stated that "…verbal ability and content knowledge are the most important attributes of highly qualified teachers." (Paige, 2002, pp. 19). Although the academic circles considering education and teaching have different attitudes and perceptions regarding the field, they have the same view related to the importance of teachers in the education system (Cochran-Smith, 2004). Even though the views about the quality of a teacher differ, it is accepted by almost everyone that a teacher's professional qualifications affect the quality of the education and teaching process directly (Ozoglu, 2010). However, Dogan (2005) presented the negative factors affecting teachers' interest in the profession and sense of belonging as the increase in the expectations of the teachers from their profession, not giving a sense of belonging to the profession and a gradual loss of appeal to the teaching profession. Although a lot of studies have been carried out related to the general qualifications of teaching profession, a specific study, Support to Basic Education Program, regarding the general qualifications of teaching profession was conducted by the Ministry of National Education (MONE) in 2006. In this project, organized by General Directorate of Teacher Training and Education, six core competencies, detailed by 39 sub-competencies and 244 performance, regarding the general qualifications of teaching profession have been specified. These are:

A. Personal and Professional Values – Career Development,
B. Recognizing the Student,
C. Learning and Teaching Process,
D. Monitoring and Evaluating Learning and Improvement,
E. School-Parent and Society Relations,
F. Knowledge of Curriculum and Content (MEB, 2006).

With regards to the teacher training, the most crucial problem has been the insufficiency of instructors since the foundation of the education faculties. According to the Student Selection and Placement Centre data belonging to 2008-2009 education year, although the number of students per-instructor is 20 in many faculties, this proportion is generally about 32 in the faculties of education. Besides, more than half of the instructors at the education faculties are lecturers. Therefore, when the number of students' per-professor is taken into account, it is observed that there is an important gap between the faculties of education and other faculties. In spite of the fact that the number is about 65 students in the faculties of education, in many other faculties, this number is not more than 40. Moreover, these proportions are valid for the faculties of education in general. Especially, this proportion is more than 100 students per-professor in some developing universities, which provide evening education, located in the country (Ozoglu, 2010; YOK, 2007).

Because of its importance, in the literature, there are many studies carried out regarding teacher training (Cetin, 2001; Derman & Basal, 2010; Mango, 2004; Tok, 2011). In addition to theoretical part of teacher training, the part of it related to practice is also of great importance. For this reason, it is observed that there are quite a few studies based on the School Experience and Teaching Practice courses which aimed at practice at the education faculties (Aydın, Selcuk & Yesilyurt, 2007; Aysegül & Konur, 2009; Cepni & Azar, 1999; Eraslan, 2008; Harmandar, Bayrakceken, Kıncal, Büyükkasap & Kızılkaya, 2000; bret & Alabas, 2007; Kızılcaoglu, 2005; Oral & Daglı, 1999).

In a study carried out by Kılıc and Acat (2007), the necessity of the courses taken by the prospective teachers was studied and the results indicated that the most necessary group of courses were professional practice courses and the second were the courses in educational sciences. According to the prospective teachers, the least necessary courses were major area courses and subject area courses. In another study, regarding the necessary qualifications an ideal teacher should have, it was implied that the first quality was being informative and the sixth quality was being knowledgeable. The prospective teachers think that they lack the quality of being informative. Moreover, there is a considerable difference between the ideal and the current situation of the prospective teachers with regard to the being knowledgeable

(Ozabacı & Acat, 2005). Furthermore, according to the results of an another study, it was observed that views of prospective teachers regarding the good teacher shifted from professional and affective to personal dimension (Sahin & Cokadar, 2009).

Historical view of teacher education in Turkey

Teacher education process in Turkey has gone through many changes and improvements since the establishment of Darülmuallimin, the first teacher education school, in Istanbul in 1848 (Saban, 2003). Therefore, it is asserted that since the establishment of the Republic, education, particularly teacher education, has been of great importance in Turkey (Dewey, 1983). Following the foundation of the Republic, Turkey aimed at being one of developed nations of the world. To reach this aim, educational reforms of the 1920s were the foremost agents. Because it was believed that increasing the level of education would act as an initiator in the accomplishment of secularism and modernism. To this end, Atatürk, founder of the Turkish Republic, considered teachers as the individuals who play a key role in the society and act as leaders (Cakıroglu & Cakıroglu, 2003).

Turkey's focus has been on education and reforms regarding education since 1982. This period can also be called as a transformation and the NEDP (The World Bank-funded national education development Project) is one of the most important factors. The project lasted for 7 years, between 1992 and 1999. Within the scope of the project, Turkish education was redefined and the process related to teacher training was developed and changed successfully (Grossman, Onkol & Sands, 2007). Education faculties have been reconstructed beginning from 1998-1999 academic years by Higher Education Council. Within the scope of these studies, undergraduate programs in the faculties of education in the field of teacher training were restructured, and regulations related to accreditation of teacher training education and improving the quality were made (YOK, 2007).

Both education and teacher training policies in Turkey are formed through national education councils and development plans. In the 2005 reports of World Bank, it is asserted that Turkey has achieved a great deal over the last three decades although the country suffered a lot from political instabilities.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of the study is to evaluate the views of the teacher trainees on the process of teacher training in Turkey. In line with this main purpose, the answers to the following questions were sought: (a) Do the teacher trainees find the faculties of education they graduated from sufficient in terms of preparing them for the profession? (b) What are the reasons for the teacher trainees to choose the teaching profession? (c) What qualifications do the teacher trainees think the teachers should have in the 21st century? (d) What do the teacher trainees think the faculties of education should be like in the 21st century? (e) What do the teacher trainees think about the main problems in the teacher training process in Turkey are?

Methodology

Being qualitative in nature, the current research was a descriptive study. Descriptive studies involves four basic steps (Yıldırım & Simsek, 1999, pp. 159): (1) forming a framework for the descriptive analysis, (2) processing the data in the thematic framework, (3) describing the findings, and (4) interpreting the findings. This study was defined as a descriptive due to the fact that the data were arranged and interpreted according to the pre-set themes.

Participants

The participants of the study involved 58 newly-appointed teachers from different branches who began their teaching profession in Kastamonu in 2010. The teachers participated in the study were the graduates of the faculties of education from 25 different universities in Turkey. Demographic information about the teacher trainees participating in the study are given in Table 1.

	FEATURES	f	%
Teachers' Gender	Female	42	72.41
	Male	16	27.59
Total		58	100
Teachers' Age	between 21 and 25	32	55.17
	26 and over	26	44.83
Total		58	100
Branch	Primary School Teaching	21	36.31
	Turkish Teaching	11	18.98
	Mathematics Teaching	6	10.41
	English Teaching	5	8.64
	Social Sciences Teaching	5	8.64
	Preschool Teaching	5	8.64
	Other	4	6.93
Total		58	100

Table 1: Demographic Features of the Teacher Trainees Participating in the Study

As seen in Table 1, Of the participants, 72.41% were female; 27.59% were female; 55.17% were between 21 and 25 years old, and 44.83% were 26 years old and over. When their branches are concerned, 36.31% were Primary school teachers, 18.98% were Turkish language teachers, 10.41% were teachers of mathematics, 8.64% were English language teachers, 8.64% were Social sciences teachers, 8.64% were preschool teachers and 6.93% were teachers of other subject areas.

Data collection and analysis

An "Interview Form" that was developed by the researchers and that involved the views of the teacher trainees on the process of teacher training was used for data collection. The "Interview Form" had 13 open-ended question items about the demographic information of the pre-school teachers and their views on the process of teacher training in Turkey. The "Interview Form" was developed by examining the related literature and receiving expert

views on the subject matter. The form consisted (a) the views of the teacher trainees on the faculties of education they graduated from, (b) the reasons why the teacher trainees had chosen the teaching profession, (c) the descriptions by the teacher trainees of the teachers of the 21st century, (d) the descriptions by the teacher trainees of the faculties of education in the 21st century, and (e) the views of the teacher trainees on the most important problems in the process of teacher training in Turkey. Data were analyzed using Nvivo 9 software package; and the themes were formed and encoded via this software.

Findings and Interpretation

13 open-ended question items were analyzed, and they were interpreted under five headings.

Teacher Training Process Today and Faculties of Education

Today, education faculties provide a four-year education to train teachers for primary schools. However, some experts in the field assert that this period is insufficient and therefore, the teaching period at the education faculties should be at least five years. Within this scope, the question of "Do you think that the four-year education provided by the faculties of education that train teachers for primary schools is enough?" was asked to the teacher trainees and the frequencies and percentages regarding the answers are presented in Table 2.

Question Statement		f	%
"Do you think that the four-year education provided by the	Yes	25	43.10
faculties of education that train teachers for primary schools	No	33	56.90
is enough?"	Total	58	100

Table 2: Teacher Trainees' Perspectives Regarding the Teaching Period at the Faculties of Education

When the Table 2 is examined, it is observed that 43.10% of the teacher trainees participating in the study indicated "Four-year education given by the education faculties to train teachers for primary school is enough,"; on the other hand, 56.90% of the participants stated that the period is not enough.

The teacher trainees participating in the study were asked to rank the six main qualifications, specified in the Support to Basic Education Project (TEDP) carried out by the Ministry of Education in 1996 regarding the general qualifications of teaching profession, starting from the one they feel inadequate about. The answers given to this question were calculated by reverse coding and the results are presented in Table 3.

General Teaching Profession Qualifications	Score	Rank
Knowledge of Curriculum and Content	269	1
Monitoring and Evaluating Learning-Progress	244	2
Learning-Teaching Process	216	3
Parent-Teacher and Social Relations	183	4
Recognizing Student	156	5
Personal and Professional Values-Professional Development	131	6

Table 3: Pre-Service Teachers' Ranking Regarding Their General Professional Qualifications

As seen in Table 3, with regards to the most insufficient professional qualification area, teacher trainees chose knowledge of curriculum and content. In addition, monitoring and evaluating learning-progress has a high score close to knowledge of curriculum and content indicating that the participants feel insufficient about the area. The teacher trainees also indicated that they feel entirely sufficient regarding learning-teaching process. On the other hand, teacher trainees expressed that they feel most sufficient about personal and professional values-professional development, recognizing student, and parent-teacher and social relations.

The teacher trainees were asked to state the name of the course in educational sciences given by the faculty of education with regard to its contribution to their profession. Because the teachers in the study group graduated in different years, the names of the courses varied although the course content of some courses in educational sciences are the same in the curriculum. For instance, the courses Development and Learning and Introduction to Teaching Profession in the former curriculum were considered as the equivalents of the courses Educational Sciences and Introduction to Educational Sciences respectively. The frequencies and percentages of the answers given by the teacher trainees are shown in Figure 1.
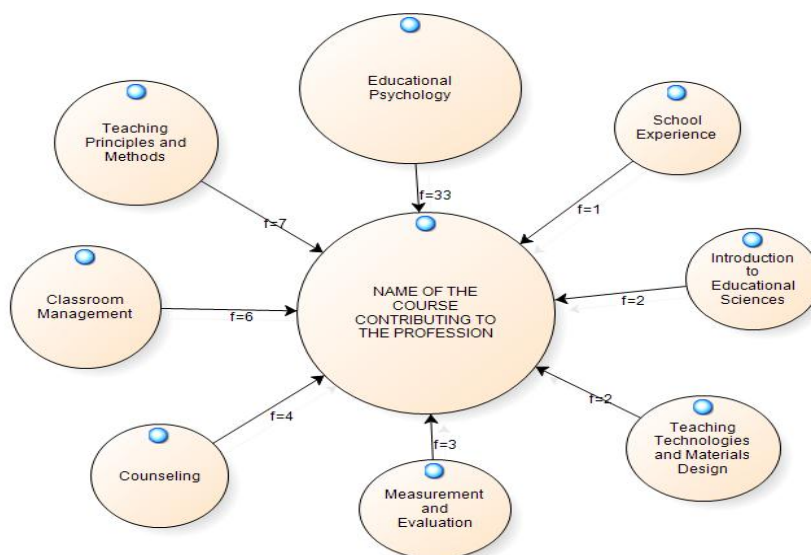

Figure 1: Teacher Trainees' Views Regarding the Name of the Course in Educational Sciences that Contributed Most to Their Profession

As seen in Figure 1, the teacher trainees stated that during their education period in the faculties of education, Educational Psychology course in educational sciences contributed most to their profession. It is remarkable that most of the teacher trainees chose Educational Psychology among other courses in educational sciences. In Table 3, teacher trainees also regarded the qualification "Recognizing Students" as the second important professional qualification which comprises the main content of educational psychology course. Therefore,

it is understood that educational psychology contributes a lot to the professional qualifications of the teacher trainees.

As seen in Figure 1, teacher trainees stated that "School Experience" was the course that contributed less to them professionally. In the interviews with the teachers, another question asked was "In what ways did the courses "School Experience and Teaching Practices" that you studied at the Education Faculty contribute to your profession?" Teacher trainees' answers to this question were classified in Figure 2.
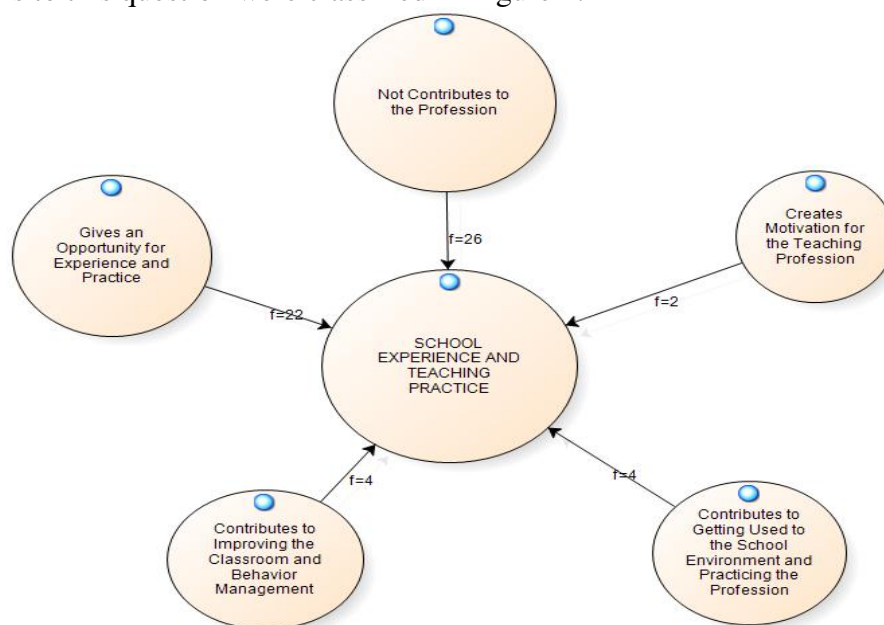
Figure 2: Teacher Trainees' Views on "School Experience and Teaching Practice" Courses

As revealed in Figure 2, most of the teacher trainees (f:26) stated that "School Experience and Teaching Practices" courses had no contributions to their professions. 22 of the teacher trainees expressed that "School Experience and Teaching Practices" courses provided them with the opportunity for experiencing and practicing. One of the teacher trainees who held the view that "School Experience and Teaching Practices" courses didn't contribute to him/her professionally stated:

> School Experience and Teaching Practices courses did no contribution to me professionally. Because the teachers prevented us from gaining teaching experiences when we were at their classes to make observations saying that the students lost their concentration on the class-work, and that s/he felt as if s/he had been inspected, thus feeling uncomfortable.

Another teacher trainee also said:

> School Experience and Teaching Practices courses had no contributions at all. Because the school where I completed my practice training was a good one in the city centre. But, just when I was appointed to a school with a multi-grade class in the village, I could not decide where and how to start the courses for the following two weeks.

A teacher who was in the view that School Experience and Teaching Practices courses provided him/her with the opportunity for experiencing and practicing, on the contrary, said:

> The courses helped me have experiences in teaching through the observing the real classroom environment. The courses, moreover, helped me gain insights about classroom management, teaching methods and student characteristics. I had the opportunity to gain experience and to practice before being appointed as a teacher. The courses enabled me to figure out to what extent the theoretical knowledge could be put into practice and whether or not the theoretical knowledge was functional.

The answers to the question "Are there any courses or teaching activities that are not found in the curriculum of the educational faculties, but that you think they should be?" are given in Figure 3.
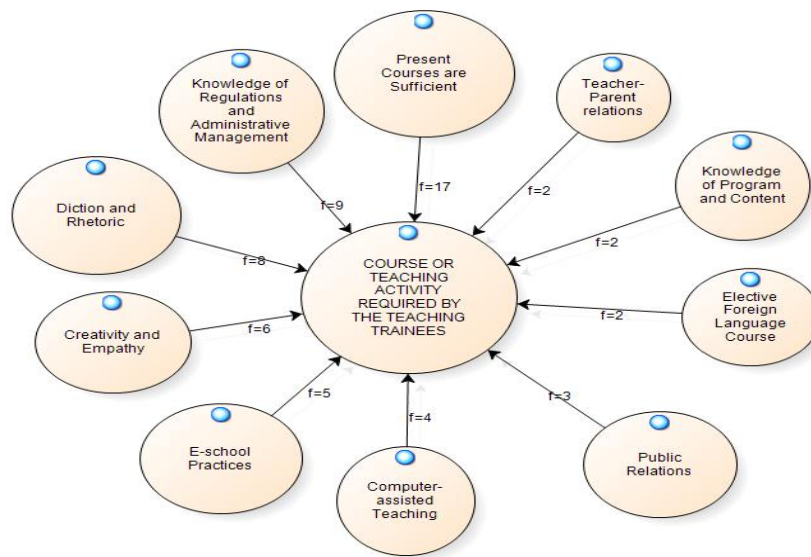
Figure 3: Teacher Trainees' Suggestions for the Courses or Teaching Activities

Figure 3 reveals that 17 of the teacher trainees were of the view that the courses in the present curriculum of the education faculties were sufficient. 9 of the teacher trainees, however, suggested that the courses and related teaching activities on Knowledge of Regulations and Administrative management, Diction and Rhetoric, Creativity and Empathy be taken into the curriculum of the faculties of education.

The question "what is the most significant feature that distinguishes the faculty from which you graduated from the other faculties?" was asked to the teacher trainees; and the answers to the question were given in Figure 4.
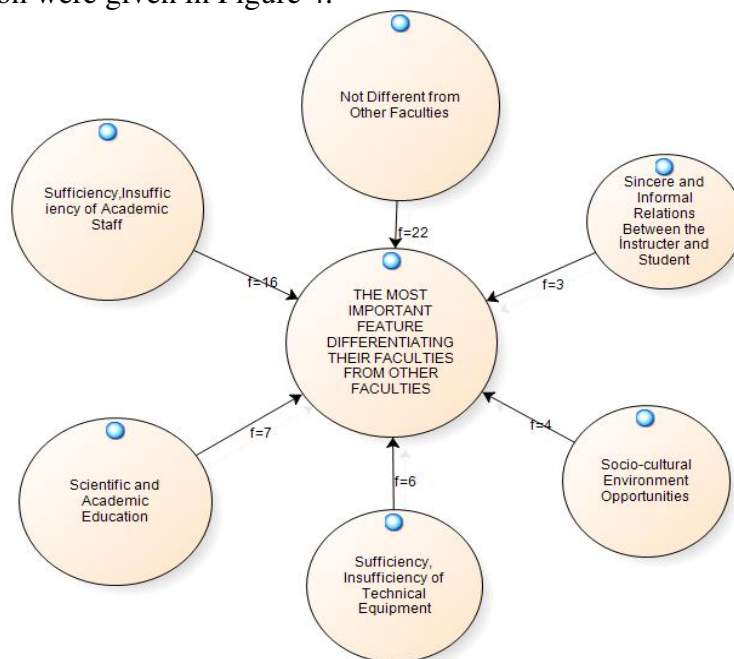
Figure 4: Teacher Trainees' Views on the Faculties of Education They Graduated From

As seen in Figure 4, most of the teacher trainees (f:22) stated that the faculties they graduated from had no significant features to distinguish them from the other faculties. 16 of the teacher trainees expressed their views on the issue of the sufficiency/insufficiency of the academic staff. To illustrate, one of the teacher trainees stated:

The instructors at the faculty were well-qualified in their fields of study. Most of the courses were based on practice. We had the opportunity to participate in many projects, especially the ones related to constructivist approach. Despite the tight curriculum, the courses were quite productive.

With regards to the most important features that distinguish their faculties from other faculties, seven of the teacher trainees indicated their faculty is sufficient in terms of scientific and academic aspects, six of them implied sufficiency-insufficiency of technical equipment, four of them pointed out socio-cultural environment opportunities and three of them stated there is sincere and informal relations between the instructors and students. One of the teacher trainees expressed his view by stating:

I am an open education faculty graduate (English Teaching). The most important feature that distinguishes my faculty is that we, ourselves, form the behaviors regarding the teaching profession since the university provides distance education and we do not attend courses. The education we receive is based on "Read, comprehend and pass the exam successfully." I would like to attend and take courses from experienced academicians and then became a teacher. In this respect, I find the extent being a graduate of the open education prepares for the teaching profession questionable.

The teacher trainees were asked "In broad terms, what is your view regarding the pedagogical qualification of the instructors in your faculty?" The values related to the answers are presented in Table 4.

Teacher Trainees' Views	f	%
Sufficient	33	56.90
Partially Sufficient	16	27.59
Insufficient	9	15.51
Total	58	100

Table 4: Teacher Trainees' Views Regarding the Pedagogical Qualification of the Instructors in Their Faculties

As is seen in Table 4, 56.90% of the teacher trainees view the pedagogical qualification of the instructors in their faculties as sufficient, 27.59% stated partially sufficient, and 15.51% of the teachers asserted that the instructors' pedagogical qualification, in general terms, is insufficient. One of the teacher trainees pointed out that:

> *Although the instructors were sufficient in terms of pedagogical knowledge, they did not give weigh to the courses because they were also trying to have an academic career." On the other hand, another teacher trainee stated that; "although the instructors were not qualified in terms of academic title, their pedagogical knowledge was quite good.*

The pre-service teachers were also asked "Do you think Public Personnel Selection Examination affect the education process in the faculties of education?" and the answers are shown in Table 5.

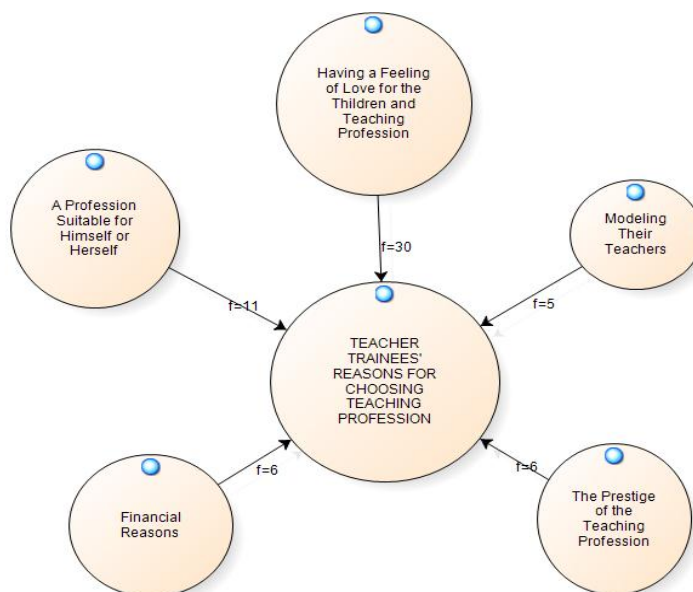| Teacher Trainees' Views	f	%
Affects in a negative way	33	56.90
Affects in a positive way	14	24.14
Has no affect	11	18.96
Total	58	100

Table 5: Teacher Trainees' Views Regarding the Effect of Personnel Selection Examination on Education

As is presented in Table 5, 56.90% of the teacher trainees indicated that Public Personnel Selection Examination had a negative effect on education at the education faculties, 24.14% of them stated that the effect was positive and   18.96% of the participants pointed out that the exam had no effect on education. With regards to this question, one of the teacher trainees asserted that:

> *I certainly think that it has a negative effect on education. The topics you are tested and the knowledge you need to have to graduate from the university are the same as Public Personnel Selection Examination. This exam takes away my teaching enthusiasm and excitement. For this reason, I cannot say that Public Personnel Selection Examination has a positive effect on education process." However, another participant indicated that "My interest in education increased with the help of this examination. But, this condition was solely based on the exam. On the other hand, it has a positive effect on us, since it functioned as a support for the content of the courses in educational sciences.*

The Reasons for Choosing Teaching Profession

Teaching profession, with its distinctive features, is different from other professions. For this reason, the individuals choosing teaching as a profession should specify different reasons for their choice than the individuals choosing other professions. To this end, the teacher trainees were asked "What are your reasons for choosing teaching as a profession?" and the answers with related values are presented in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Teacher Trainees' Reasons for Choosing Teaching Profession

As is seen in Figure 5, most of the teacher trainees (f:30) stated their reason for choosing teaching profession as having a feeling of love for the children and teaching profession. Eleven of the teacher trainees indicated that they chose teaching since it was the most suitable profession, six of them stated the prestige of teaching profession and financial factors as reasons, and five of the teacher trainees identified the reason as modeling their teachers. One of the teacher trainees stated that:

> *It was the profession I wanted since my childhood. I always dreamt of it. Most of the time, I put my babies in an order as students and I gave lessons to them. I chose teaching because I wanted and I love this profession. I love children and my profession.*

According to the results of a study carried out by Aksu et al., among the reasons for choosing teaching profession attachment to the pedagogical and socio-cultural values and carrier are effective agents, and there is a consistency between the objectives of the curricula regarding teacher education worldwide (NCATE, 2002) and the curricula applied in Turkey (Aksu, Demir, Daloglu, Yıldırım, & Kiraz, 2010).

Teaching Profession in the 21st Century

In the 21st century, identified with easy and fast access to information and efficient use of technology, there has also been changes regarding the learning and teaching process. Therefore, it is also expected that there would be changes in the tasks and responsibilities of the teachers who organize this process.

The question "Can you identify the teacher of the 21st century and specify the qualities a teacher should have?" was asked to the teacher trainees and the answers with related values are presented in Figure 6.
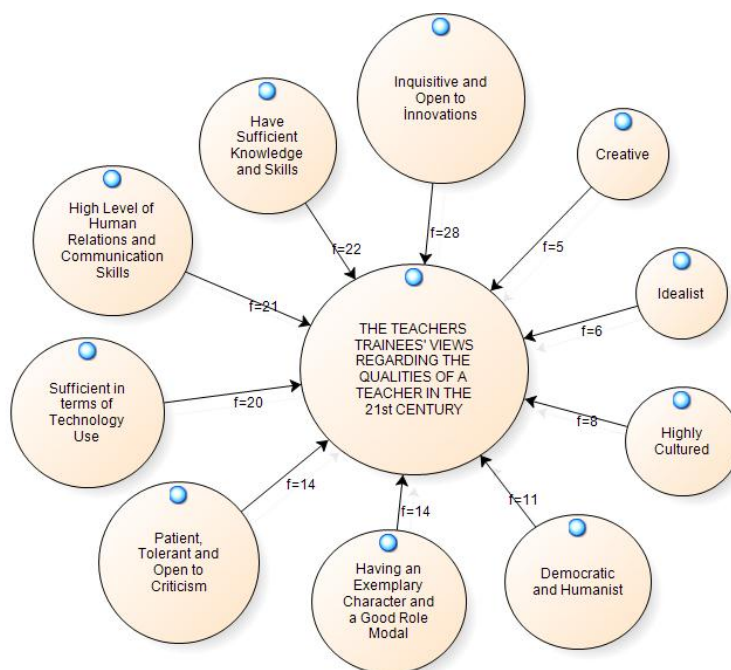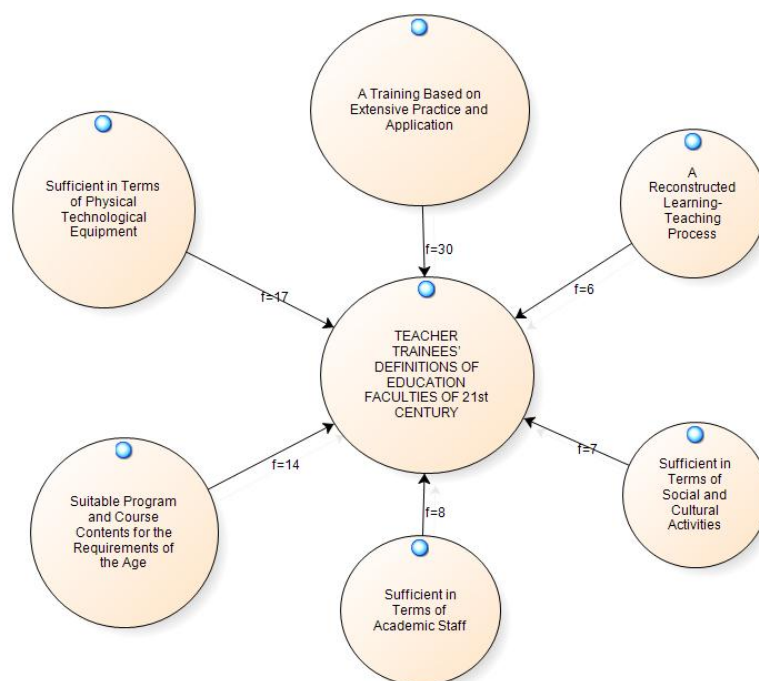
Figure 6: Teacher Trainees' Definitions Regarding Teaching Profession in the 21ˢᵗ Century

When Figure 6 is examined, it is observed that teacher trainees specified 4 different qualities regarding the qualities they want from the teacher in the 21ˢᵗ century. While defining the teacher of 21ˢᵗ century, 28 of the teacher trainees stated inquisitive and innovative, 22 of them indicated having sufficient knowledge and skills, 21 implied having high level of human relations and communication skills and, 20 of the teacher trainees pointed out being sufficient in terms of technology use as the qualities of the teacher in the 21ˢᵗ century.

Faculties of Education in the 21ˢᵗ Century

Since it is expected from the teachers in the 21ˢᵗ century to change in a positive way and to undertake different roles and responsibilities, there also is a need for a change in the roles of education faculties, which are the institutions educating these teachers.

Within this scope, the question "What do you think about the faculties of education that educate the teacher of 21ˢᵗ century?" was asked to the teacher trainees and the answers are presented in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Teacher Trainees' Definitions of Education Faculties in the 21st century.

When the information presented in Figure 7 is examined, teacher trainees' expectations regarding the qualities of education faculties in the 21st century are listed as; an education based on extensive practice and application (f:30), sufficient in terms of physical and technological equipment (f:16), suitable program and course contents regarding the requirements of the age (f:14), sufficient in terms of academic staff (f:8), sufficient in terms of social and cultural activities (f:7) and having a reconstructed learning-teaching process (f:6).

The teacher trainees were asked "What is the most important problem of education faculties?" and the answers are shown in Figure 8.
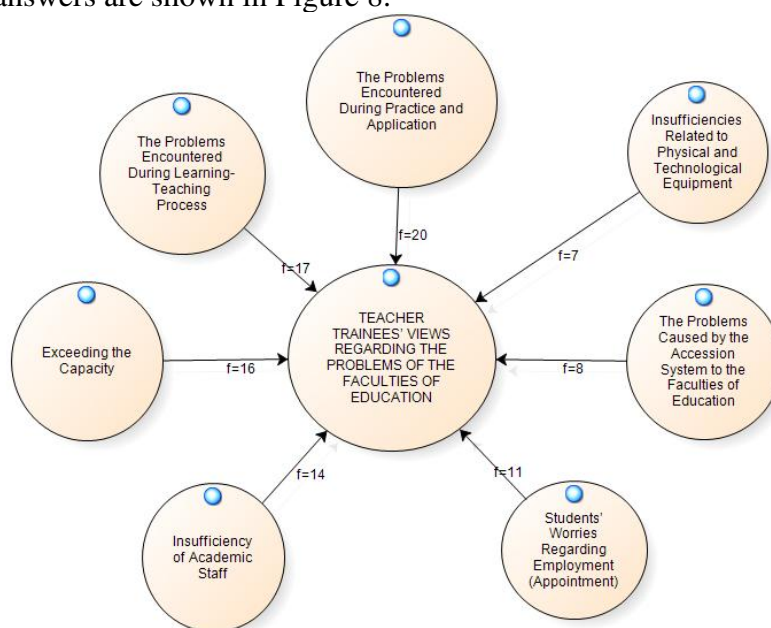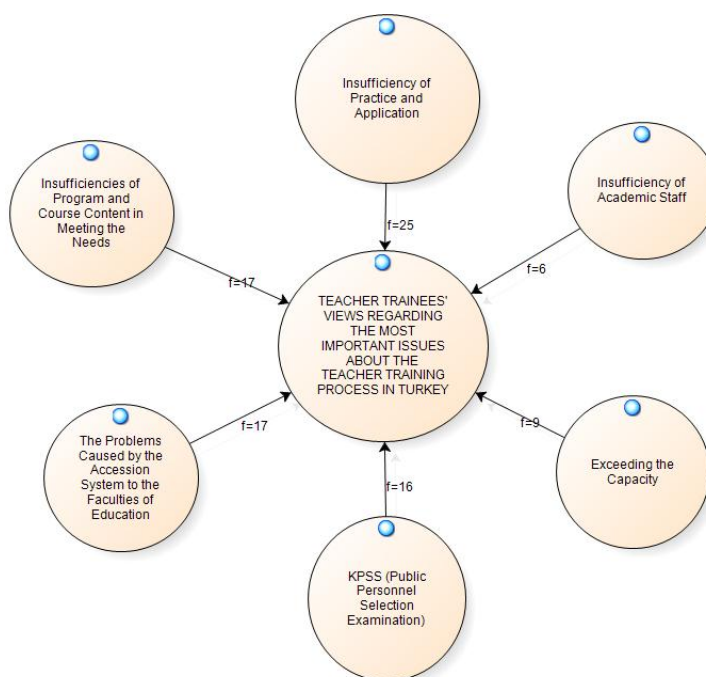

Figure 8: Teacher Trainees' Views regarding the Problems of the Faculties of Education

Upon analyzing Figure 8, it is observed that the teacher trainees stated the problems encountered during practice and application (f: 20), the problems encountered during learning and teaching process (f: 17), exceeding the capacity (f: 16), insufficiency of academic staff (f:14) and students' worries regarding employment (appointment) (f: 11) as the problems of today's education faculties.

The Problems of Teacher Training in Turkey

Provided that teacher training is accepted as a 150-year process, it can be seen that the problems regarding the issue have changed every decade, and while in some periods the problem of quantity has come to the fore, in other periods, most of the time, the qualities of a teacher have been discussed.

The teacher trainees were asked "What do you think is the most important problem of teacher training process in Turkey?" and the answer are presented in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Teacher trainees' views regarding the most important issues about the teacher training process

When the figure is examined, teacher trainees, with regard to the most important problems of teacher training process in Turkey, stated that insufficiency of practice and application (f:25), insufficiencies of the program and course content in meeting the needs (f:17), the problems caused by the accession system to the faculties of education (f:17), KPSS (Public Personnel Selection Examination) (f:16), exceeding the capacity (f:9), insufficiency of academic staff (f:6) and insufficiencies regarding physical and technological equipment (f:5).

In this respect, one of the teacher trainees expressed his\her view as;
The most important qualities required from a person willing to be a teacher should be skill and enthusiasm. These individuals should be monitored in every phase of his\her education by guiding them to the profession in the direction of their abilities starting from the primary school. The methods and techniques (i.e. portfolio) used for teaching to the students should have been used years ago. There should be practice-based education in the education faculties, selecting the prospective teachers should not be

left to the university exams and no one in the education faculties should have an employment problem.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, the process of teacher training in Turkey was investigated by evaluating the views of the teacher trainees. The study group involved 58 newly-appointed teacher trainees from different branches who began their teaching profession at educational institutions in Kastamonu in 2010. An "Interview Form" that was formed by the researchers and that was consisted of the views of the teacher trainees on the process of teacher training was used for data collection, and the data obtained were analyzed with Nvivo 9 software package.

Among the results of the study was that most of the teacher trainees who participated in the study stated that the four-year education provided by the faculties of education were insufficient. Study also prevailed that teacher trainees felt themselves least competent in the curriculum and content knowledge, among the professional competency areas. Teachers need to possess a body of knowledge and be able to apply that knowledge to a variety of situations within their professional setting (Pantic, & Wubbels, 2010). This body of knowledge involves knowledge of content knowledge in one hand, and pedagogical knowledge on the other. More importantly, having a skill of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) is of great importance (Shulman, 1987). Pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) includes knowing what teaching approaches best fit the content, and also, knowing how elements of the content can be arranged for better teaching.

Another result of the study was that the teacher trainees felt themselves least competent in monitoring and evaluating learning-development. The areas that the teacher trainees felt themselves most competent were personal and professional values-professional development, student recognition, and school-parent-family and society relations, respectively. Although the attributes of teacher trainees may be resulted from the quality of their college (or before college) education, it may be resulted from their competencies for teacher education. In a study with teachers and teacher educators (Pantic, & Wubbels, 2010), the components underling teachers' perceptions of competencies were defined as 1) values and child-rearing; 2) understanding of the education system and contribution to its development; 3) subject knowledge, pedagogy and curriculum; and 4) self-evaluation and professional development. Together with first and fourth components, understanding of the education system and contribution to its development was perceived as very important by teachers and teacher educators.

Teacher trainees stated that, of the educational sciences courses taken at the faculties of education, "Educational Psychology" course contributed most to their profession while "School Experience course" and "Teaching Practice" courses had no contributions**.** This result might be caused by the weakness in the partnership between the university and schools. The same problem brought forward by some other researchers, mostly whom state that today's university-based teacher-education programs have lost touch with practice (schools) (Levine, 2011; Reid, 2011).

Teacher trainees suggested that the courses and related teaching activities on Knowledge of Regulations and Administrative management, Diction and Rhetoric, Creativity and Empathy be taken into the curriculum of the faculties of education in order for the teacher trainees to be more qualified in terms of professional readiness. Most of the teacher trainees stated that the faculties they graduated from were nearly the same as the other faculties of education in many respects. However, they stated that the faculties they graduated from differed from the other faculties of education in terms of scientific and academic

studies, sufficiency/insufficiency of technical equipment, socio-cultural environment opportunities, warm and informal relations between the teaching staff and the students.

Teacher trainees found the pedagogical formation of the teaching staff at their faculties sufficient in general. A great majority of the teacher trainees stated their reasons for choosing teaching profession as their love for children and teaching profession. Moreover, they expressed that they regard teaching profession as the most suitable occupation and pointed out that the prestige of teaching profession, economic reasons and the effect of former teachers were among the reasons for their choice.

Teacher trainees, while defining the teacher of the 21st century, implied such features as inquisitive and open-minded, equipped with adequate knowledge and skills, have good human relations and communication skills and competent in terms of technology use. Teacher trainees, regarding the faculties of education in the 21st century, defined these institutions as providing an education based on practice and application, being sufficient in terms of physical and technological equipment, having a curriculum and syllabi designed according to the requirements of the age, being sufficient in terms of academic staff, being on an adequate level with regards to social and cultural activities and reconstructed in the sense of learning-teaching process.

Teacher trainees, with regards to the problems faced by today's faculties of education, indicated that the problems are related to practice and application, learning-teaching process, over-capacity, lack of academic staff and students' worries regarding employment. Teacher trainees asserted that inadequacy regarding practice and application, the problems brought about by the entrance system to the education faculties, curriculum and syllabi's failure in meeting the needs, public personnel selection examination (KPSS), over-capacity, lack of academic staff and lack of physical and technological equipment were among the most crucial problems in teacher training process in Turkey.

Within the framework of the results of the study, it can be stated that there is a need to address the four-year period in the faculties of education in terms of quality, not quantity. In this regard, updating the syllabi of the faculties and designing them according to the needs of the age is considered as an important need. It is observed that the teacher trainees do not have sufficient knowledge regarding the curriculum they are going to implement in the classroom. The faculties of education should study in cooperation with the Ministry of Education regarding the curriculum and its application. The teacher trainees should be given feedback within the scope of above mentioned studies.

As also stated in many other research studies, one of the main results of this study was that school practice and teaching practice courses, which are courses in the curriculum of faculties of education; do not contribute much to the teachers. These courses should be reconstructed and restructured by discussing on such alternatives as allocating the final year only to these courses, allocating the second term of the final year to practice, trips to multigrade classes and so on.

Such courses and teaching activities as "Knowledge of Regulations and Administrative Management, Diction and Rhetoric, Creativity and Empathy" can be included in the curricula of the faculties of education. The courses and subjects in the pedagogical formation can be given to the instructors in the education faculties or the instructors in the whole university in the form of a seminar according to a pre-determined plan.

Teaching as a profession requires face-to-face interaction and practice. The fact that the places where teachers are educated show variety in Turkey causes problems in terms of teaching. Especially, training teacher distance or open education faculties because of lack of teachers in some certain fields causes a variety of problems in terms of some fundamental features of teaching profession. Because of this, it is suggested that the faculties of education should give education build on a practice-based model.

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