



## The First Attempt to Establish an Accreditation System in Turkish Teacher Training History\*

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### ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to investigate the process of the establishment of the first accreditation system in teacher training in Turkish history. The study was designed with the phenomenology method, a qualitative research design. The study group was determined with criterion sampling, a purposive sampling method. The study data were analyzed with descriptive method. The study findings demonstrated that the participants stated that the project scope and structure were adequate based on the basic components since it was sufficient for the current conditions, it included adequate manuals based on the standards, pilot schemes were conducted, it was a systematic approach, it included reporting activities, trained evaluators, included instructions and rules, and stated that the project was inadequate due to the lack of legislation, human resources, material shortcomings, and since it contradicted the reality about the quality and quantity of the faculties of education in Turkey, it was not beneficial for the faculties of educational sciences, it becomes static due to the obligation of the compliance with curricula, the lack of sufficient number of program developers, the presence of field educators, and the inadequacy of the project workers. The study findings revealed the following on the contribution of the project to the development of Turkish quality assurance: Self-evaluation, setting an example for other accreditation organizations, development of an infrastructure, at least promotion of the name, external evaluation, outcomes assessment, system control, and the foundation of EPDAD.

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Accreditation, quality assurance, Turkey, teacher training

### 1. Introduction

Globalization led to movements of change and innovation in the field of education similar to several fields. Due these changes and transformations in the field of education, quality became an important requirement. Thus, nations prioritized quality in every field of education, especially accreditation research were conducted in education and accreditation systems were implemented in almost all countries in the world. The most important condition for development, progress and getting ahead of the developments in the present times is quality education. Thus, it is vital to train qualified teachers to provide a qualified education for the students. And qualified teachers are trained in a quality education process, especially during teacher training, which would significantly affect the qualification of the teachers. To assure quality, countries continue to implement quality assurance systems. According to Kis (2005), there are three main approaches (accreditation, evaluation and inspection) to establishing quality assurance. One of these approaches, accreditation, "is a method developed to assure the quality of programs and services offered in several countries and industries with a

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systematic approach. In higher education, accreditation is used (i) to improve the quality of education and instruction, and to continuously advance education with a systematic approach, (ii) to assure the quality of education and instruction, and (iii) to assure that the quality of education and instruction in higher education is consistent with certain standards" (EPDAD, 2016). Accreditation helps institutions and programs to determine whether an institution or program meets certain criteria, and whether the institution or program are acceptable (MACTE, 2016). Furthermore, accreditation entails the review of an educational program or institution that follows specific quality standards based on predetermined quality criteria (Gitta, 2014). Generally, accreditation is the assessment of an institution's capacity to be assigned as a program or a university (Murray, 2000).

Accreditation should generally be conducted to ensure transparency and accountability of various programs (Chaiyaphumthanachok, Tangdhanakanond & Sujiva, 2016). Accreditation is required to train qualified, attentive and competent teachers (Murray, 2000). Accreditation is a key mechanism to assure the quality of preparatory courses in any profession. The primary function of accreditation is to ensure that the graduates of a particular program are qualified and competent professionally. Thus, accreditation could help improve the quality of the profession and development of the quality in pre-service education. By improving the quality, accreditation could be a positive and powerful instrument to raise the status of a profession. Implementation of an accreditation process for teacher training has the potential to strengthen the profession by providing clear guidelines on improving student acceptance standards in teacher training, improving the quality of teachers and school leaders, on introduction to the profession, and progress and career development (Ingvarson, Elliot, Kleinhenz, & McKenzie, 2006). Accreditation could also be considered as a means of improvement. When the standards are high and adequate for the mission of the institution and the process provides peer feedback, it is important to go through accreditation. An accredited university or accredited programs demonstrate that the institution is better than others (Grossman, Sands & Brittingham, 2010). An institution or program seeking accreditation should go through several steps determined by an accreditation body. These steps include a combination of various tasks; preparation of the facts that evidence the success of the institution or program, examination of these evidences and site visit. Accreditation is a trust-based, standards-based, evidence-based, judgement-based, peer-based process (Eaton, 2015).

The first quality assurance organization in higher education was established in the USA (Özer, Gür & Küçükcan, 2010; Buyuran, 2019; Aktan & Gencil, 2010). Higher education accreditation procedures of educational institutions and programs emerged as a non-governmental, peer reviewed instrument to provide a basic level of quality in the USA (MACTE, 2016). The accreditation system implemented in several countries was also influenced by the American system (Chaiyaphumthanachok, Tangdhanakanond & Sujiva, 2016). Accreditation was adopted by international institutions (UNESCO, World Bank, OECD) over time (Campos, 2004). In teacher training, the accreditation system practices were based on National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) activities in 1954. All pioneering nations in accreditation were convinced about implementation between 1989 and 2004 (Wise, 2005). The accreditation process began in Turkey in 1998 with the research visit conducted by the Supreme Council of Higher Education (YOK) staff and academics to England and the United States (Grossman, Sands & Brittingham, 2010). In this process, standards were determined for the accreditation system. These standards included baseline, process and product standards. Then, evidences, indicators and rating scales were developed to measure and evaluate the developed standards (Kavak, 2007).

The initial efforts to develop the first accreditation system in Turkey were in teacher training. These efforts, which started in the 1990s, included the accreditation project for education faculties that was conducted in 1998 within the context of the YOK, World Bank and National Education Development pre-service teacher education project. The development of an accreditation system in education faculties, one of the most important studies conducted in the history of teacher training in Turkey, was started in 1998 and pilot schemes were conducted in various faculties but was not completed. However, despite the distance covered, it was not possible to maintain the initiative for many reasons. The views of the academicians who were involved in the project and witnessed the developments are important to determine the reasons. Thus, the aim of the present study was to determine the views of academicians, who were involved in the project and witnessed the developments closely and employed in different departments in various universities, on the accreditation

project. To conduct better accreditation implementations, the benefits that would be provided by past experiences would reduce the number of future mistakes in the process. Teacher training accreditation activities have been stagnant for a long period of time in Turkey. Thus, the studies conducted on this process could contribute significantly to current accreditation efforts and fill an important gap in the literature.

Literature review conducted on the accreditation studies in teacher training revealed that several studies were conducted on accreditation systems in various countries including Portugal (Campos, 2004), Thailand (Chaiyaphumthanachok, Tangdhanakanond, & Sujiv 2016), Turkey (Grossman, Sands & Brittingham, 2010), UK, USA, and Japan. Furthermore, different accreditation studies were conducted on accreditation reform in teacher training (Murray, 2000), accreditation policies (Ingvarson, Beavis & Kleinhenz, 2007), accreditation and accreditation experiences (Freeman, Simonsen, Briere, & Mac Suga-Gage, 2014; Vlasceanu, Grünberg & Parlea, 2007; Kavak, 1999; Uçar & Levent, 2017), scale development on perceptions towards accreditation (Semerci, 2017), the views of academicians on accreditation (Harvey, 2004), misunderstandings about accreditation (Murray, 2012), the review of national and international trends and applications in teacher training accreditation (Ingvarson, Elliott, Kleinhenz, & McKenzie, 2006; Yılmaz, 2016), and the benefits of accreditation and the problems experienced during the accreditation process (Türel & Altıntaş, 2018). However, there are no studies that aimed to determine the views of the participating academicians about the initial project conducted on teacher training accreditation in Turkish history. Thus, it was suggested that the present study would contribute to the literature.

The present study was conducted to investigate the first accreditation system development experience in the history of teacher training in Turkey. Based on this general aim, the following research problems were identified: Was the education faculties accreditation project developed by YOK, the World Bank and National Education Development Project; (i) Adequate? (ii) Adequate based on basic content and structure? (iii) What are the strengths of the project? (iii) What are the weaknesses of the project? (iv) Did the project experience contribute to the development of quality assurance in Turkey?

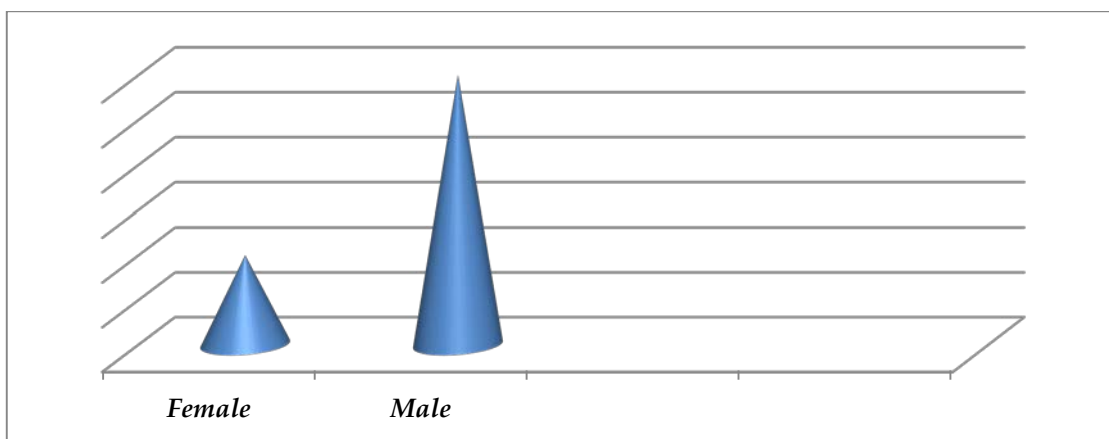
## 2. Method

### 2.1. Research Design

The present study is a qualitative research. The process of establishing the first teacher training accreditation system in Turkish history was investigated with the phenomenology method, a qualitative research design, to investigate the topic in depth.

### 2.2. The Study Group

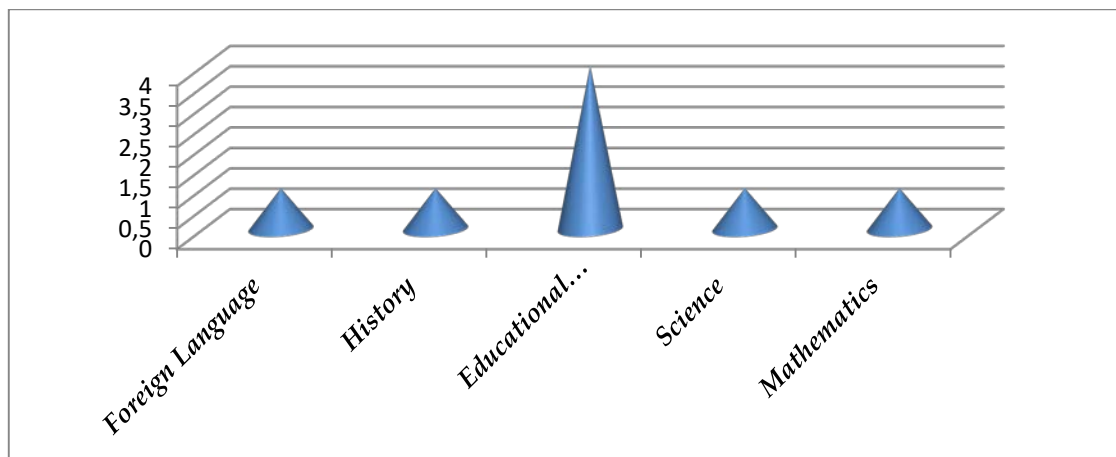
In the study, the participants were determined with the criterion sampling method, a purposive sampling method. Thus, the study participants included 8 individuals, 7 of which were involved in the accreditation project. All participants were academicians employed in different departments of education faculties in different universities. Descriptive data on the study participants are as follows:



**Figure 1.** Distribution of the participants by gender

Figure 1 As seen in the figure above, the study group included 2 female, 6 male, a total of 8 participants.

Descriptive data on the departments of the participants are presented below:



**Figure 2.** Distribution of the participants according to their departments

The review of the figure above demonstrated that 1 participant was employed in foreign language instruction department, 1 participant was employed in history instruction department, 4 participants were employed in educational sciences department, 1 participant was employed in science instruction department, and 1 participant was employed in mathematics instruction department.

### 3.3. Data Collection and Analysis

The study data were collected with the interview method. Before the interviews, the authors developed the interview questions independently. The authors then combined and discussed about the questions they developed, and the interview form was finalized. The opinions of 3 experts, including 2 educational science professors and 1 field educator, were obtained to determine whether the final interview questions were suitable for the scope of the study and the final version of the interview form was determined based on the expert opinion.

The interviews were recorded after informed consent of the participants was obtained. Interviews lasted for an average of 15 - 20 minutes. Later, the interviews were transcribed.

The study data obtained were analyzed with descriptive analysis techniques. The analysis process included the following steps:

**1st Step: Data Coding:** In this stage, the data collected from the study participants were reviewed and codes were created for each sub-problem. Also, in this stage, the direct quote examples were selected during the classification of the data.

**2nd Step: Development of themes and categories:** The study data were analyzed with the descriptive analysis technique. The coded data were categorized under themes. Furthermore, direct quote examples were selected during this stage.

**3rd Step: Description and interpretation of the findings:** In this stage, the code frequencies were determined based on the theme populations. Then, the concepts listed under the themes and frequencies of which were determined were defined and inferences were obtained with interpretations.

## 4. Findings

Based on the views of the participants regarding the question of whether the education faculties accreditation project developed by YOK / the World Bank / National Education Development Project was adequate, the following findings were obtained: Based on the views of the participants, 7 participants stated that the accreditation project was an adequate project, and 1 participant stated that the accreditation project was not an adequate project. The reasons stated by the participants who argued that the accreditation project was an adequate project are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** The reasons why the accreditation project was a timely project

<i>Reason</i>	<i>f</i>
The project should have been conducted before	2
It aimed to improve quality	2
Renovation of the curricula	2
The fact that compulsory education was extended to 8 years	1
Teacher training became a part of the YOK agenda	1
It was conducted to solve problems in teacher training	1
It expanded higher education	1
It was supported by MNE	1
The fact that YOK took incentive for quality	1

As seen in Table 1, the participants stated the reasons for the timeliness of the accreditation project as follows: The project should have been conducted before (f2), it aimed to improve quality (f2), renovation of the curricula (f2), the fact that compulsory education was extended to 8 years (f1) teacher training became a part of the YOK agenda (f1), it was conducted to solve problems in teacher training (f1), it expanded higher education (f1) and it was supported by MNE (f1).

Direct quotes from the participant interview are presented below:

*"In 1998, a breakthrough was experienced in Turkish education. Compulsory education was extended to eight years. Education faculties and quality became a topic of discussion in higher education. Thus, in the first stage, a project was developed by YOK on the accreditation of education faculties. In other words, does education faculties train good teachers, what should be done for education faculties to train good teachers? In fact, the project was a very good project, a project that should have started earlier.(Participant 2)*

**Table 2.** The reasons why the accreditation project was not a timely project

<i>Reasons</i>	<i>f</i>
Nothing has been done since then	1
The education faculties were not mentally ready	1
The infrastructures of the education faculties were not ready	1

As seen in Table 2, one participant stated the following among as the reasons why the accreditation project was not an adequate project time wise: Nothing has been done since then (f1), the education faculties were not mentally ready (f1), the infrastructures of the education faculties were not ready (f1).

Direct quotes from the participant interview are presented below:

*"Time showed if it was early or late. Because the fact that nothing has been done since then has actually shown that education faculties were not ready for the process at that time both mentally and due to their infrastructures. Thus, the study was very consistent, and the teacher training programs were revised, and it was attempted to implement a different perspective. Furthermore, the project intended to include both the internal and external supervision under control, and to include them in education faculties within a different process where the applications could assure quality. It was logical, but early."* (Participant 3)

**Table 3.** The reasons for the adequacy of the scope and structural components of the accreditation project

<i>The reasons for the adequacy of basic components</i>	<i>f</i>
It was adequate for the standards of the day	2
It included a standards handbook	2
Pilot schemes	2
Systematic structure	1
Reporting activities	1
Evaluator training	1
The presence of instructions	1
The presence of rules	1

As seen in Table 3, the following findings were obtained based on the views of the participants about the reasons why the scope and structure of the accreditation project was adequate: It was adequate for the standards of the day (f2), it included a standards handbook (f2), it included pilot schemes (f2), it has a systematic structure (f1), it included reporting activities (f1), it included evaluator training (f1), it included instructions (f1) and rules (f1).

Direct quotes from the participant interview are presented below:

*“The review of the content of the current program based on the conditions of the day would show that these standards were adequate. But they are not adequate for today. They have already been revised at Anadolu University in Eskişehir. Thus, they were reviewed. But I think those standards should be revised and updated every year. Based on the conditions of the day, they were adequate. In other words, what we call a standard is based on the current conditions and should be revised when the conditions change.” (Participant 1)*

**Table 4.** The reasons for the inadequacy of the scope and structural components of the accreditation project

<i>The reasons for the inadequacy of basic components</i>	<i>f</i>
Lack of adequate legislation	1
Lack of adequate human resources	1
Lack of material resources	1
Inconsistency with the quality and quantity of the Turkish faculties of education	1
It was detrimental for faculties of educational sciences	1
It becomes static due to the obligation to follow the master curricula	1
The lack of program developers	1
The presence of field educators	1
Inadequacy of project participants	1

As seen in the Table 4, the findings obtained based on the views of the participants about the reasons why the scope and structure of the accreditation project was in adequate were as follows: Lack of adequate legislation (f1), lack of adequate human resources (f1), lack of material resources (f1), inconsistency with the quality and quantity of the Turkish faculties of education (f1), it was detrimental for faculties of educational sciences (f1), it becomes static due to the obligation to follow the master curricula (f1), lack of program developers (f1), presence of field educators (f1), and inadequacy of project participants (f1).

Direct quotes from the participant interview are presented below:

*“... the scoring system based on the evaluations had no sanction. In other words, YOK did not disaccredit a program as a result of these evaluations. Or did not reward a program. Because, there was no such legislation. When you establish an accreditation system, you need legislation, there was a lack of legislation on deciding whether to enroll students in those programs and to apply those sanctions. Plus, there was a lack of resources. There was a lack of both human and material resources. The only reason for the discontinuation of the work, that was, because we had a certain number of human resources, but it did not continue since there were no financial resources.” (Participant 1)*

**Table 5.** The strengths of the accreditation project

<i>The strengths of the project:</i>	<i>f</i>
Availability of training abroad	2
Novelty of the concept	1
Improvements in other physical conditions	1
Systematization	1
Better screening	1
Quality assurance	1
The aim includes sustenance and permanence of that culture	1
The excellence of the possible technical document and reference set	1
The fact that it was a non-hasty teamwork	1
The presence of evaluation tables and rubrics	1
Its contribution to teacher training	1
Self-evaluation by the faculties	1
Program assessment	
Instructional collaboration between faculty members who were trained abroad	1
Instructions by an expert	1

Based on the Table 5, the findings obtained about the strengths of the accreditation project according to the participant views were as follows: Availability of training abroad (f2), novelty of the concept (f1), improvements in other physical conditions (f1), systematization (f1), better screening (f1), quality assurance (f1), the aim includes sustenance and permanence of that culture (f1), the excellence of the possible technical document and reference set (f1), the fact that it was a non-hasty teamwork (f1), the presence of evaluation

tables and rubrics (f1), its contribution to teacher training(f1 ) stated that the project is a strong project due to the faculties' self-evaluation (f1), program assessment (f1), instructional collaboration between faculty members who were trained abroad (f1), and instructions by an expert (f1).

Direct quotes from the participant interview are presented below:

*"It is possible to say the following about the project's strengths; Barbara Brittingham, who was invited to Turkey for the project, has important work on the accreditation system in the United States and, until recently, she participated actively in active work conducted by the boards of management of the largest accreditation bodies in the United States. The project had found an individual who was an expert and brought to Turkey. Therefore, under her guidance, we conducted our work with her, and in fact, we prepared for it as a team of about 20 people then. I think the most important strength of the project was therefore finding someone exactly a specialist to respond to the needs of Turkey." (Participant 8)*

**Table 6.** The weaknesses of the accreditation project

The weaknesses of the project	f
Lack of an impartial independent evaluator	3
Lack of sustainability	3
Non-readiness of the faculties	2
Lack of supporting resources	2
Inconsistency with Turkish reality	1
Lack of infrastructure	1
Unfamiliarity of the concept in Turkey	1
Poor enforcement	1
Accreditation acceptance standards are determined by another organization	1
Low motivation in faculties of education	1
Insufficient promotion	1
Indecisiveness at YOK about accreditation	1
The fact that the team was not accredited	1
Inconsistent criteria in faculty selection	1
Inadequate knowledge among field professors	1
Lack of programmers	1
Lack of knowledge about the significance of teaching profession	1
Awareness of quality	1
The presence of pedagogical formation	1
Incomprehensibility of the concepts in the project	1

Based on the Table 6, on the weaknesses of the accreditation project, the following findings were obtained: Lack of an impartial independent evaluator (f3), lack of sustainability (f3), non-readiness of the faculties (f2), lack of supporting resources (f2), inconsistency with Turkish reality (f1), lack of infrastructure (f1), unfamiliarity of the concept in Turkey (f1), poor enforcement (f1), accreditation acceptance standards are determined by another organization (f1), low motivation in faculties of education (f1), insufficient promotion (f1), indecisiveness at YOK about accreditation (f1), the fact that the team was not accredited (f1), inconsistent criteria in faculty selection (f1), inadequate knowledge among field professors (f1), lack of programmers (f1), lack of knowledge about the significance of teaching profession (f1), awareness of quality (f1), presence of pedagogical formation (f1), and incomprehensibility of the concepts in the project (f1).

Direct quotes from the participant interview are presented below:

**Participant 1:** *"... if you cannot achieve sustainability, you will not comply with the accreditation philosophy, that is, its unsustainability was its weakness. There were no supportive resources. But can the system be established, it could be established and improved, but it would not work only with the association or the devotion of certain people. Support from the state Higher Education Council, universities or independent units is required. These things would not work as an association or by the efforts of a few people."*

**Table 7.** The contributions of the accreditation project experience to the development of quality assurance in Turkey

Its contributions to the development of quality assurance	f
Self-evaluation	2
Providing an example for other accreditation bodies	2
Creating an infrastructure	2
Promotion of the concept of accreditation at the least	2
External evaluation	1
Providing a roadmap for the development process	1
Analysis of the outputs	1
System control	1
The fact that accredited programs will be mentioned in OSYM guidebook	1
Foundation of EPDAD	1

Based on the Table 7, the following findings were obtained on the contribution of the accreditation project experience to the development of quality assurance in Turkey based on the views of the participants: Self-evaluation (f2), Providing an example for other accreditation bodies (f2), creating an infrastructure (f2), Promotion of the concept of accreditation at the least (f2), external evaluation (f1), providing a roadmap for the development process (f1), analysis of the outputs (f1) system control (f1), the fact that accredited programs will be mentioned in OSYM guidebook (f1), and foundation of EPDAD (f1).

Direct quotes from the participant interview are presented below:

*"As I said before, this was a first for Turkey, and then after the engineering faculties founded MUDEK, when I was there, the accreditation members of MUDEK were at the university where I worked and when (s) he asked me how did you do this work, I explained and have him (her) a copy of the book. It is not possible for me to know how much they benefitted from it, but ultimately, they found that such a thing existed while doing research on the internet and they came and asked us. How did you do it? So, it more or less was the first spark in Turkey or was exemplary for others, today almost all faculties in Turkey are in an effort to establish the accreditation system."* (Participant 8)

#### 4. Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings obtained in the present study conducted to investigate the system construction experience process in the first accreditation study in teacher training in Turkey included the following: On the timeliness of the accreditation project, 7 participants stated that it was timely and 1 participant stated that it was not. The participants mentioned the following as the reasons for the timeliness of the accreditation project: The project should have been conducted before, it aimed to improve quality, renovation of the curricula, the fact that compulsory education was extended to 8 years, teacher training became a part of the YOK agenda, it was conducted to solve problems in teacher training, it expanded higher education, and it was supported by MNE. According to YOK (2007), the increase in the number of students in higher education institutions during recent years and certain developments experienced in this process introduced the problem of "quality assurance" in all countries. As a result, accreditation systems have been established in several regions in the world. Thus, the most important reason behind the current global accreditation movements was the necessity of this application. For this reason, accreditation activities have become popular.

Only one participant stated that the accreditation project was not timely due to the fact that nothing has been done since then, the education faculties were not mentally ready, and the infrastructures of the education faculties were not adequate. According to Özer, Gür and Küçükcan (2010), any breakthrough in establishing a quality assurance system would add to the bureaucratic burden in higher education institutions when it is conducted without determining the status of the global education systems. If quality assurance is not internalized in the society, any steps taken to implement quality assurance would fail. According to Şişman (2009), like several countries, changes in education are developed by the administration. However, if the beneficiaries of the change are not included in the process and when the process does not produce solutions to their problems, it is not possible to get results from such an initiative. In this process, according to Yiğit (2017), academic and administrative staff in universities developed resistance due to the increasing bureaucratic burden in higher education institutions, leading to several problems. Thus, the analysis of the



accreditation practices conducted in this process would demonstrate that the faculties were not mentally ready. The fact that the application was an unknown concept since it was implemented for the first time in Turkey and the lack of accreditation infrastructure in the country led to a long stagnation in accreditation work.

The participants stated the following on the adequacy of the project based on the basic components of scope and structure: It was adequate for the standards of the day, it included a standards handbook, it included pilot schemes, it has a systematic structure, it included reporting activities, it included evaluator training, it included instructions and rules. Accreditation basically consists of standards. Standards determine the elements that the programs should possess for accreditation in any higher education program. Reporting activities and training evaluators are also important elements in the accreditation process. The review of the first accreditation system attempts in Turkey based on the scope and structure would demonstrate that significant phases of the system such as establishing standards, reporting activities, evaluator training, and pilot schemes have been completed.

Based on the study findings, the participants stated the following on the inadequacy of the project based on the basic components of scope and structure: Lack of adequate legislation, lack of adequate human resources, lack of material resources, inconsistency with the quality and quantity of the Turkish faculties of education, it was detrimental for faculties of educational sciences, it becomes static due to the obligation to follow the master curricula, lack of program developers, presence of field educators, and inadequacy of project participants. According to Harvey (2004), accreditation is usually a political process. It is mainly associated with the change in authority. According to Doğan (1999), these practices are basically voluntary. However, the first application in Turkish teacher training accreditation became a bureaucratic structure, losing the principle of volunteerism. Also, the first accreditation attempt in Turkish educational history included certain philosophical and educational mistakes. The reason for this was that the countries that the application was modeled after were not fully understood. To state it more clearly, there were problems that arose from the fact that the global changes were not grasped adequately. Thus, the analysis of the project based on the basic components of scope and structure demonstrated that the lack of adequate number of project staff, financial problems, and the fact that the country was not ready for accreditation both mentally and financially were the major obstacles.

The findings obtained with the views of the participants on the strengths of the accreditation project are as follows: Availability of training abroad, novelty of the concept, improvements in other physical conditions, systematization, better screening, quality assurance, the aim includes sustenance and permanence of that culture, the excellence of the possible technical document and reference set, the fact that it was a non-hasty teamwork, the presence of evaluation tables and rubrics, its contribution to teacher training, the project is a strong project due to the faculties' self-evaluation, program assessment, instructional collaboration between faculty members who were trained abroad, and instructions by an expert. According to Türel and Altuntaş (2018), most faculties and universities in the world considered accreditation is important to improve the "brand value;" and thus, certain departments were more attractive to students. They also believed that it facilitated the employment opportunities for the graduates. The accreditation of the programs in universities reflects that the quality of these programs is assured and facilitates promotion of these programs. According to Grossman, Sands & Brittingham (2010), the initiative on accreditation in Turkish education faculties in 1998-2000 was a very important start. It is still important in establishing the national quality standards. Thus, in the first accreditation attempt in the history of Turkish education, the facts that training abroad was available, the project introduced several improvements in the country in several fields, ensured quality and standards, teamwork, training from experts, evaluation of the faculties and programs, and establishment of that culture were the strengths of the project.

The findings obtained about the weaknesses of the project were as follows: Lack of an impartial independent evaluator, lack of sustainability, non-readiness of the faculties, lack of supporting resources, inconsistency with Turkish reality, lack of infrastructure, unfamiliarity of the concept in Turkey, poor enforcement, accreditation acceptance standards are determined by another organization, low motivation in faculties of education, insufficient promotion, indecisiveness at YOK about accreditation, the fact that the team was not accredited, inconsistent criteria in faculty selection, inadequate knowledge among field professors, lack of programmers, lack of knowledge about the significance of teaching profession, awareness of quality, presence

of pedagogical formation, and incomprehensibility of the concepts in the project. The study findings demonstrated that the project had several weaknesses. According to Gür (2012), the review of the applications in other countries demonstrated that certain experiments were conducted initially to test the targeted changes. But the changes made in Turkey were transferred from Europe and directly implemented most of the time. The problem is the lack of preliminary analysis of the changes made in Turkey. In particular, there was a significant lack of analysis as to whether the quality assurance implementations conducted in other nations would be suitable for Turkey at that time. Thus, it could be concluded that this initiative was not adequate for the conditions of that period in Turkey. Furthermore, based on the present study findings, for successful implementation of accreditation in any country, individuals should first believe in the necessity of a quality culture. According to Gitta (2014), internal quality represents the essence of academic quality. Therefore, it is important for individuals to have a quality culture.

Based on the study findings, the following were determined about the contribution of the project to the development of Turkish quality assurance: Self-evaluation, providing an example for other accreditation bodies, creating an infrastructure, promotion of the concept of accreditation at the least, external evaluation, providing a roadmap for the development process, analysis of the outputs, system control, the fact that accredited programs will be mentioned in OSYM guidebook, and foundation of EPDAD. Accreditation has several benefits in education. These include transcription of all institutional procedures, setting standards, and updating programs. Only then, can any educational institution be administered based on the predetermined mission and vision (Türel & Altıntaş, 2018). Thus, accreditation contributes significantly to the development of quality assurance. Therefore, accreditation is a very important requirement for all higher education institutions.

The following could be recommended based on the study findings:

In the present study, the views of academicians involved in the accreditation process on the first accreditation attempts in teacher training in the history of Turkey were investigated. In future studies, current accreditation efforts could be investigated. For accreditation to develop as a culture in Turkey, perceptions of academicians towards the topic could be researched.

The study findings demonstrated that the faculties were not mentally ready for accreditation in those years. Further explanatory conferences and panels could be organized on accreditation in education faculties.

The present study findings could assist current accreditation bodies in the determination of past mistakes and solve associated problems in the current organizations. Thus, the efficiency of the current accreditation organizations may be improved further.

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