

Implementing Portfolios in Teacher Training: Why we use them and why we should use them

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Suggested Citation:

Aksit, F. (2016). Implementing portfolios in teacher training: Why we use them and why we should use them, *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 62, 97-114
<http://dx.doi.org/10.14689/ejer.2016.62.7>

Abstract

Problem statement: After the implementation of new curricula in 2005, portfolios have become commonplace in teacher training programs in Turkey. Even though the use of portfolios is quite popular, the studies have shown that portfolios are mostly used to assess student learning outcomes, while the effectiveness of the educators and teacher training programs is usually unnoticed. For this reason, this study will focus on the contributions of portfolio utilization to educators and training programs.

Purpose of Study: This study investigates the use of the portfolios in teacher training programs and analyses the contribution of portfolio utilization to educators, teacher training programs, and students.

Method: An action research design was adopted involving 25 third grade social studies student teachers, who were randomly chosen from a sample of 128 students by selecting every fifth student on the classroom list of a semester-long course (14 weeks) in the 2012-2013 academic years at a state university in Turkey. This is a qualitative research study based on four open-ended questions and semi-structured interviews that were conducted with eight educators.

Findings and Results: The findings indicated that portfolio utilization helps educators make modifications in their traditional roles and encourages them to adopt more student-centred approaches. In addition, portfolios assist in clarifying the program scope and goals and makes learning outcomes transparent. Furthermore, portfolios are a viable, effective, and

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appropriate tool in documenting student teachers' learning and professional development.

Conclusions and Recommendations: The results of the research show that educators should take the utilization of portfolio into account not just to increase students' learning and assessment but also because of its additional benefits to educators and programs through many factors, such as being informed about the qualities and effectiveness of the program and daily lectures, putting the constructivist philosophy of the program into practice, creating a more democratic environment, ensuring one-to-one interaction with the students, providing individualized learning, and using assessment as an integral part of learning and promoting dialogue with colleagues.

Keywords: Portfolio assessment, alternative assessment, teacher training, student-centred learning, learning to teach, active learning.

Introduction

Special buzzwords have been rampant in educational circles for the past few years. Terms such as "critical thinking," "authenticity," "hands-on," "student-centred," "reflection," and "qualitative assessment" have been right at the head of the list. But perhaps the most provocative among the buzzwords has been "portfolio." Ironically, a portfolio can easily cover the topics of all of these buzzwords and more (Wyatt and Looper, 2004). There is a broad trend that influences curriculum content and methodology focusing on learners: their characteristics, needs, interests, and learning styles and engaging them in active construction of their knowledge, reflecting constructivist thinking (Oskay, Schallies and Morgil, 2008).

In Turkey, after the establishment of the new curricula in 2005, portfolios became a popular assessment method in teacher training programs. Currently, many educators are using and studying with portfolios, but the majority of them describes how portfolios are used, why they are used, and how they are put together. Despite the current popularity of portfolios, there has been a lack of research on the contribution of portfolio utilization to educators and teacher training programs (Anderson and De Meulle, 1998; Author and Harting, 2013). It is interesting that they have not been mentioned in Turkish literature, either. The review of Turkish literature shows that the sole reason for portfolio utilization is the effect on students' learning outcomes, and the studies were focused entirely on the gains of the students (Korkmaz and Kaptan, 2003; Gulbahar and Kose, 2006; Bahceci and Kuru, 2006, 2008; Birgin 2011).

As Andersen and De Meulle (1998) mentioned, the time has come for us to shift our attention away from how to put a portfolio together and toward a systematic look at the implications of portfolio use in teacher education. Therefore, the current study is designed to answer the following questions:

- What have educators learned through the utilization of portfolios in their programs?
- How has the utilization of portfolios affected teacher training program?
- How has the utilization of portfolios affected students' perceptions?

Methods

Research Design

This study employed an action research design. One of the researchers planned and implemented the study during the spring semester of the 2012-2013 academic years.

Research Population and Sample

The population consists of 128 social studies students, who were taking the "Special Teaching Methods I" course, and participated in a semester-long (14 weeks) portfolio assessment application during the 2012-2013 academic year at a state university in Turkey. The sample group was selected according to a simple random sampling method in which each student in the research population had an equal and independent chance of taking part in the sample (Karasar, 2007). The sample consists of 25 students (11 females, 14 males) who were randomly selected by taking every fifth student from the list of 128 students. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight educators from the university faculty, who were using portfolios in their courses. Throughout the article, the word "student" refers to the pre-service teacher, whereas "educator" refers to the teacher educators. In addition, the statements of educators and students were coded as E and S and their numbers on the list were used to identify them. Moreover, in this study, the researcher played a dual role as researcher and educator.

Portfolio implementation process

The implementation was made within the "Special Teaching Methods I" course that meets for four hours each week: two for theory and two for practice. The aim of the practice is allowing students to apply the knowledge they gained during the theory component. For this reason, portfolios were used during the course to assess students' performance in the process and to help them gain experience in portfolio implementation by being actively involved in both the learning and the evaluation processes.

In this study, students' portfolios include a varied collection of their work determined by the content and goals of the course. Therefore, portfolios in which students reflected the development and quality of their instruction and their identities as teachers will be referred to as "working portfolios". Although portfolios are often included as a part of the assessment and evaluation in teacher education programs, the primary function of the working portfolio is to be a tool for self-reflection on professional development. Before portfolio implementation, students

were informed about the weekly distribution of work to be inserted to the portfolio, how the portfolio work would be completed and used, as well as the available materials and sources. Students themselves decided which products and how many of them would be placed in the portfolio. In addition, students were told that the portfolios should "reflect them (self-reflection)" and they were also asked to reflect on how and how much they have learned about portfolios by explaining their reasoning for selecting a particular material to include and their selection criteria. While developing works to be included in the portfolios, students were unable to receive regular feedback from their educator due to the size of the class, but did provide and receive written feedback for and from their peers every three weeks. Students rearranged their works according to this feedback. In this way, students were encouraged to make self and peer assessments, increasing their awareness of their strengths and weaknesses.

In order to determine the evaluation criteria, articles related to rubric development were given to students. They were asked to form their own evaluation criteria accordingly, which would ensure that they judge the quality of the products in their portfolio. Then, they were asked to evaluate their own portfolios using the same rubric. Each student's self-evaluation was taken into consideration while giving the midterm grade.

Research Tool and Data Analysis

In this study, data were collected through four open-ended questions about students' views of their portfolios: "Have you prepared a portfolio before? How did you use it? How often?", "What was the most important/beneficial part of the portfolio preparation?", "What do you think about portfolio assessment?" and, "Do you think that the time and efforts spent on the portfolio preparation and assessment process is worth its contribution to education?"

The educators' semi-structured interviews were in fact an open discussion, which was aimed to cover the following themes: How has the utilization of portfolio affected themselves as a teacher educator, the teacher training program, and the students? Questions were prepared and sent to experts in the field, then revised according to their suggestions.

The data were analysed using content analysis. In the content analysis, the collected data were first conceptualized, then organized according to the defined concepts, and finally formed into appropriate themes and codes. After the analysis of open ended questions, coded data were examined and grouped to corroborate and elaborate the findings. Then thematic coding was made by combining interrelated codes. Interviews of the educators were also recorded and transcribed. The interview data were then analysed and categorized.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity and reliability of the study, the opinions of other researchers were also taken into account while coding the data and creating themes for open-ended questions and semi-structured interviews. In order to test the

reliability of the analyses, the agreement rate formula suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) was used. Another researcher was asked to code the interview records and the codes were compared. As a result of this comparison, the reliability of the data collection was calculated at 92% and 95%, respectively. Accordingly, it has been concluded that the analyses were conducted in a reliable way.

Findings

The Contribution of Portfolio Utilization to Educators

In this study, several pieces of evidence for the impacts of portfolio utilization on educators, teacher training programs, and students have been revealed through the interviews conducted with eight educators. All educators indicated that the use of a portfolio has changed their practice to be more student-centred, reflective, and democratic. Six main contribution categories were identified by educators; they are as follows (Table 1):

Table 1.
Contribution Categories of Portfolio Utilization from Educators' Perspectives

<i>Themes</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Rendering the courses to be more student-centered	8
Getting more detailed feedback about daily lectures	7
Encouraging individualized learning	5
Encouraging the emergence of a more democratic environment	4
Allowing one-to-one interaction with the students	3
Assessment becoming an integral part of learning	3
TOTAL (Statements)	30

Rendering the courses more student-centred. All educators (n=8) mentioned that the implementation of portfolios have rendered the courses more student-centred. Portfolios were also found to help educators who are committed to making changes in their practice to re-conceptualize their roles as instructors and foster their movement toward more student-centred instruction. For instance, one of the educators mentioned that:

"Portfolios created a more student-centered learning environment and improved student performance." (E 4)

Getting more detailed feedback about daily lectures. In the current study, most of the educators (n=7) mentioned that the implementation of portfolios provided them with feedback about their daily lectures. One of the educators stated that:

"Portfolio implementation allowed getting more detailed feedback about my daily lectures. I had the opportunity to recognize my own shortcomings as well as such as instructional methods, techniques, and classroom management." (E 2)

Also, one-fourth of the educators (n=2) stated that portfolios gave them a new education perspective and increased the awareness of the following issues: What kind of troubles do students have? Which activities are more effective or ineffective? What subjects are understood and not understood? How efficient is the teaching process? What kind of misunderstandings do students have? What is the best way to design the teaching-learning process for future lessons?

Encouraging individualized learning. Most of the educators (n=5) mentioned that the use of the portfolios makes the students much more free and gives them the chance to reflect on individual differences. One of the educators stated that:

"It changes the perspective of instructors during the assessment; it allows them to see the portion of the glass which is full." (E 8)

In other words, during this process, the educators focus on what students do rather than what students cannot do. Thus, the portfolio offers each student a fair chance to make their own mark in terms of individual differences such as learning style, needs, interests, and desires. Also, this freedom not only increases their motivation to learn, but also promotes their "intellectual autonomy and self-respect". Such individualized learning enhances students' self-esteem and appreciation of the breadth and depth of their educational experience.

Encouraging the emergence of a more democratic assessment environment. Half of the educators (n=4) mentioned that making the assessment together and the involvement of the students within this subject have led to the emergence of a more democratic environment. The assessment process of the educators, students, and peers in the class became an open process, allowing each student to learn how to give and receive feedback with their classmates. An educator stated that:

"Grading the examination paper was a hidden process in the traditional examination system; however, through portfolio assessment this process has become more democratic and open with the dialogue taking place between the student and the educator." (E 5)

In addition, the students' involvement in the development of the assessment criteria according to which they will be evaluated promotes a more democratic environment. The assessment is no longer a mysterious process conducted by some external agents for them. Also, the portfolio assessment process allows students to explain and self-grade the works that they have performed and become a part of the assessment process as well.

Allowing one-on-one interaction with the students. Almost one-third of the educators (n=3) mentioned that the feedback process allowed the establishment of dialogue between students and educator, which does not happen normally, destroyed social barriers between them, and provided the opportunity to become better acquainted with the students. Also, educators stated that the portfolio process offers the

opportunity to observe students in a more realistic and detailed way and to make more accurate decisions about them. During the portfolio process, one-on-one contact with the educator also becomes an important learning medium. For example, one of the educators stated that:

"Another benefit of the use of portfolios is that students and educator work collaboratively during the course. This collaboration reveals the expectations, objectives and goals about the course." (E 1)

Assessment becoming an integral part of learning. Approximately one-third of the educators (n=3) emphasized that traditional evaluation systems are summative, meaning that it is not possible to change what is written or marked in a student's paper. This emphasizes the significance of the product rather than the process. On the other hand, in the portfolio, the steps carrying students to the product are also important. Some statements from the educators are as follows:

"Portfolios encourage students to participate in the evaluation process, and thus, students have a greater stake in their own learning and take more responsibility." (E 2)

"The process of self-grading the portfolio encourages students to assess the amount of work that they put into the course as well as the amount of worth that they got from the course." (E 7)

Moreover, in traditional assessment methods, grades are the only feedback given to students and naturally this feedback is given at the end of the learning process. In alternative assessment methods, the teacher's views about the work constitute the feedback, which is given throughout the course of the learning process. Thus, through the use of portfolios, assessment may become an integral part of learning. On the other hand, in these methods, assessment is performed over a long period of time, allowing students to correct the errors in their work over time and improve their knowledge. Moreover, in alternative methods, assessment is intertwined with the learning process, so feedback reaches students very quickly. In the traditional system, the books are closed; students are expected to memorize the knowledge in the book and the feedback arrives as a grade after the exam, which makes it impossible to change or improve. On the other hand, the portfolio allows students to learn from their own mistakes and gives them a chance to improve their product and achieve better grades.

The Contribution of Portfolio Utilization to the Program

The portfolio, which provides feedback to the program, is an effective learning and assessment method for both students and teachers. It is a database used as a tool for the assessment and improvement of the program. The three main contribution categories were identified were by the educators, which are as follows:

Table 2.*Contribution Categories of Portfolio Utilization to the Program from Educators' Perspectives*

<i>Themes</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Carrying the philosophy of the program into practice	7
Making learning outcomes transparent	4
Promoting dialogue with colleagues	3
TOTAL (Statements)	14

Carrying the philosophy of the program into practice. Seven of the educators emphasised that portfolio usage gave them the opportunity to put the constructivist philosophy of the program into practice. Thus, portfolios assist educators who are committed to making changes in the applications, who are trying to reframe the concept of training, and who direct more student-centred applications. Therefore, portfolio usage can be seen as the key that facilitates the process for teacher training programs, which are subject to restructurisation (e.g. Andersen and De Meulle, 1998).

Furthermore, the basic approach of the Turkish 2005 Education Program is individualized education, where accepting each student as a unique individual has been emphasized (MEB, 2005). Therefore, the assessment of all students under the same conditions creates a conflict with the basic approach of the program. The portfolio has individual content selection and reflection of individual style and shows the individual progress of the student. With this approach, the utilization of portfolios allows for the development of each student in terms of his/her potential and characteristics, instead of comparing or competing the students with each other, providing opportunity to reveal individual differences.

Making the learning outcomes transparent. Half of the educators (n=4) stated that portfolios made the learning outcomes transparent and clarified the program's scope and goals. The general objective of the portfolio is to show and demonstrate that the student has reached defined learning goals. The portfolio brings several advantages, such as providing an overview of competencies expected to be acquired by students and making specific objectives transparent. Also, it provides concrete samples (learning outcomes) about the development and learning of the students. These concrete samples provide feedback to the program: whether the reform was successfully implemented and whether the goals of the program are reachable. Therefore, it is a database used as a tool for the assessment and improvement of the program.

Promoting dialogue with colleagues. Almost one-third of the educators (n=3) mentioned that this process provides co-operation and new attitudes towards educators. They have a chance of meeting and discussing the obstacles of portfolios from both the students' and the educators' perspectives. Therefore, portfolios should

be shared with colleagues, because colleagues are an important source of creative input and because such sharing promotes collaboration.

The Contribution of Portfolio Utilization to Students

In this study, all students (n=25) stated that they haven't made portfolio assessment before, and most of them stated that they heard of portfolios for the first time in this course. Even though this was their first portfolio preparation experience, the majority of the students expressed positive opinions about portfolios. Qualitative data revealed seven important categories (Table 3).

Table 3.

Contribution Categories of Portfolio Utilization from Students' Perspectives

Themes	Frequency
Being an active learner	24
Monitoring the students' own professional development	20
Regulating the habit of studying	17
Taking responsibility of the students' own learning	16
Eliminating testing anxiety	11
Demonstrating individual differences	8
Providing information about high-level skills	5
TOTAL (Statements)	101

Being an active learner. Almost all students (n=24) emphasized that portfolios enabled them to be more active, reflective, and autonomous in their learning. According to students' answers, it can be argued that portfolios have positive effects on students' views by providing them the opportunity to adapt their works according to their interests; engaging and involving them in the learning process in order to find creative ways of thinking; allowing them to take control of their learning; and interacting curiously with the curriculum. This in turn leads to higher self-esteem for all students, creating the pleasure of being successful and improving students' attitudes and motivation towards the course. One of the students reported the following comments about active participation:

"I must say that it added up a lot, in terms of professional development. First of all, I became more active in the classroom since I was consistently thinking about how to reflect what I have learned to the portfolio. Also, it improved the ability of interpretation and let me retain the course." (S 14)

Monitoring the students' own professional development. Most of the students (n=20) stated that one of the benefits of portfolios was allowing students to document their growth or author their own learning and professional development. To demonstrate their learning they may select artifacts, such as lesson plans, assessment of student work, and evaluations of classroom, which are closely tied to actual teaching. Therefore, it is an ideal way of "learning by doing". A student made the following comments about their gain from the portfolio:

"What impressed me most in this process was monitoring the course, my professional development by taking an active role in the learning process. In addition, the on-going creation process was one of the steps that I have enjoyed." (S 3)

Incorporating portfolios into teacher training programs is essential for the students' professional development. In other words, developing portfolios provide the opportunity for students to reflect on their own learning and communicate who they are as teachers. Since students learned about the portfolio by working through it in person, they had the opportunity to see its limitations and advantages and the management of the process, which they may encounter in the future.

Regulating the habit of studying. The majority of the students (n=17) expressed that portfolio preparation helped them to be well organized and orderly. The knowledge became more permanent if the work was done every week. On a daily basis, portfolios regulated the students' studying system: they started to take more notes in class and learned not to leave a task until the last minute. For example, one of the students made the following statements:

"I had never had the habit of repeating. During the course, at least I took note of the issues covered each day. I better understood the techniques by reading. It led me to work regularly because I did not want to leave my homework to the last minute; I prepared my file at regular intervals to complete without accumulating." (S 11)

The majority of the students also expressed that the portfolio process has increased their attendance in the course. For instance, one of the students stated that:

"It ensured that we attend classes; also it aided us to come to class in a more concentrated and motivated mood to record the day-to-day activities." (S 5)

Taking responsibility of the students' own learning. Most of the students (n=16) stated that portfolios allowed them to be more active participants rather than being objects of the learning and assessment process and fostered them in making decisions about their learning. For instance, one of the students pointed out that:

"It allowed us to decide what and how to learn, and why. We undertake the responsibility of teachers." (S 21)

According to students' answers it can be concluded that the portfolio process encourages students to develop the abilities needed to become independent, self-directed learners. It encourages students to make decisions about how they learn best and how to use a series of cognitive strategies (repetition, elaboration, and organization) that help them to transform, organize, elaborate, and recover

knowledge, and to plan, control, and direct their mental process toward the achievement of their goals. Also, requiring students to create their own portfolios and to select the most important samples allows them to take control of their learning.

Eliminating testing anxiety. Students stated that they had not prepared portfolios before taking this course. Nevertheless, most of the students (n=11) mentioned that preparing a portfolio is more desirable than taking an exam because it eliminates testing anxiety and related problems, such as forgetting and confusing information. One of the students made the following statements:

"In traditional evaluation methods, the chance to demonstrate our knowledge on a specific topic is only given once, for a specific time period (just in 40-60 minutes), and there is no way to rectify our mistakes. And the next day after the exam, we forget everything." (S 10)

On the other hand, a few of them (n=2) have reported opposite opinions. For instance, a student said that the portfolio was:

"Very tedious and challenging process, it bored me. Since we're coming from a system of memorizing, such things seems to be challenging for us. For me it is easier to study hard the day prior to the exam, take it, and type what I know in half an hour and exit." (S 15)

Demonstrating individual differences. Several students (n=8) who participated in the study stated that the most pleasant part of the portfolio preparation process was selecting what to do. The students were enthusiastic about having the opportunity to make their own choices in the development of their portfolios. One of the statements about individuality is as follows:

"...It is a very original work, which should be produced by the students completely, leading to the creativity of the student." (S 8)

Indeed, the portfolio is a learning and assessment tool unique to the individual, like a fingerprint. In other words, it provides students the opportunity to exhibit individual differences. Perhaps the most important characteristic of a portfolio is creativity, which reflects the individuality and uniqueness with which the portfolio has been compiled.

Providing information about high-level skills. One-fifth of the students (n=5) stated that portfolios have the potential to offer richer content to educators and students compared to the results of written or multiple choice exams. If properly prepared, it can provide clues about the students' thinking, problem solving, strategy development, process skills, and knowledge structuring. One of the students made the following statements:

"The main purpose of the portfolio is to measure and enhance our creativity. It is one of the special skill assessment tools that cannot be provided by many of the other measuring tools." (S 2)

In addition, the portfolio also provides information about students' perseverance, effort, willingness, observation of their own learning skills, and ability to express

themselves. This is because most of the time students have to work independently, take responsibility, and own the work done in order to complete the tasks required for their portfolios and to compile their best works.

In this research, students were also asked, "Do you think that the time and efforts spent on the portfolio preparation and assessment process worth its contribution to your education?". Most of the student teachers (n=23) answered positively, and in their replies they focused on the advantages of using portfolios. As a general evaluation, most of the students stated that portfolios encourage their ownership, individual expression, and professional development.

Discussion and Suggestions for Practice

This study indicates that the use of portfolios profoundly impacts educators, teacher training programs, and students. Similarly, Andersen and De Meulle (1998), Klenowski (2000), Zeichner and Wray (2001), Imhof and Picard (2009), and Chetcuti, Murphy and Grima (2006) pointed out the gains of the educators who embed the portfolio process into their courses. Changes in their teaching styles were noted through the integration of reflective practice and connecting it with their own philosophy of teaching. As Andersen and De Meulle (1998) mentioned, if a program is grounded in, or moving toward, a constructivist paradigm, portfolios could be a valuable tool for helping faculty to construct knowledge about teaching and learning.

Another finding is that educators had a unique opportunity to make an assessment reform by exemplifying portfolio assessment models in teacher education programs. More importantly, educators emphasised that portfolios provided more detailed and in-depth information towards assessment compared to that provided by more traditional forms of assessment. In this study, it is also found that the portfolio provides more detailed feedback about educators' daily lectures. This finding supports the findings of Mullin, (1998) who pointed out that portfolios provide professors with a window on instruction that is not offered by other assessment methods.

Moreover, the results of the current study suggest that educators should use the portfolio to inform themselves about the qualities and effectiveness of the teacher education program and its impact on the learning of students (Adams, 1995). The current study found that portfolios carry the philosophy of the teacher training program into practice, make the learning outcomes transparent, clarify the program's scope and goals, and promote dialogue with colleagues. These findings are also consistent with the findings of Andersen and De Meulle, 1998; Stolle, Goerss and Watkins, 2005; Newby 2012; Aksit and Harting, 2013.

This study also found that educators find portfolios to be a viable, effective, and appropriate tool in documenting students' growth; an opportunity to demonstrate who they are as teachers; a way of developing and promoting reflective, thoughtful practices; and a facilitator of permanent learning, which is in line with the results of numerous studies (e.g., Stolle, Goerss and Watkins, 2005; Klenowski, Askew and

Carnell, 2006; Gulbahar and Kose, 2006; Bahceci and Kuru, 2008; Birgin 2011; Newby 2012). Most of the students also stated that portfolio assessment contributed to their individual and professional development. These findings are in line with the results of studies conducted by Cook-Benjamin (2001), Klenowski et al. (2006), Wray (2007), Birgin (2008, 2011), Gulbahar and Kose (2006), and Ntuli, Keengwe and Blankson (2009). It has been argued that the use of teaching portfolios creates a situation where students become more self-confident about their practice (e.g., Anderson and DeMeulle, 1998; Darling Hammond and Snyder, 2000; Kilbane and Milman, 2003). The present study revealed that portfolio assessment helped students to increase reflection upon subject matter content and expanded their awareness of the theories and assumptions that guided their practice (e.g., Klenowski, 2000; Zeichner and Wray, 2001; Chetcuti, Murphy and Grima 2006; Denney, Grier and Buchanan, 2012). Portfolios were also found to contribute to the development of skills related to lesson planning, organization, and time management (e.g., Reis and Villaume, 2002). Lastly, portfolios were found to be more successful than traditional assessment methods in increasing students' capacity for autonomous learning (e.g., Zeichner and Wray, 2001; Gulbahar and Kose, 2006; Meeus, Petegem and Meijer, 2008; Newby; 2012).

In this study, all students in their third year of university stated that they hadn't applied portfolio assessment before. Moreover, most of them stated that they heard the word portfolio for the first time in this course. From this finding, the lack of knowledge about the use of portfolios in teacher education courses is evident. Some recent research demonstrated that Turkish pre-service teachers do not possess the necessary knowledge and experience about alternative assessment methods required by the new curricula, specifically portfolios (e.g., Gelbal and Kelecioğlu, 2007; Birgin and Gurbuz 2008; Birgin, 2011; Yaman and Karamustafaoglu, 2011, Gencil and Ozbasi 2013). Thus, there is a clear need to improve the competencies of pre-service teachers in alternative assessment techniques. Increasing the knowledge of the faculty members on the measurement and evaluation issues and developing a positive attitude towards alternative measurement and evaluation methods is gaining importance. Moreover, during teacher education, alternative assessment methods should be presented theoretically and practically so that students can be prepared for the profession. Most importantly, the end goal is to enable students to understand that assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning.

Conclusion

The results of the research show that educators should take the utilization of portfolios into account, not only to increase students' learning and assessment, but also due to its additional benefits to educators and programs, such as getting informed about the qualities and effectiveness of the program and daily lectures, putting constructivist philosophy of the program into practice, creating a more democratic environment, enabling one-on-one interaction with the students, facilitating individualized learning, presenting assessment as an integral part of learning, and promoting dialogue with colleagues. Portfolios are representative of

the larger shift toward constructivism in education and provide a systematic method for the ongoing improvement of the teacher education program.

Acknowledgements

This research was supported by a grant from the TUBITAK International Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Program 2219 - Project Number: 1059B191301291.

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Öğretmen Eğitiminde Portfolyo Uygulaması: Onları Neden Kullanıyoruz ve Neden Kullanmalıyız

Atf:

- Aksit, F. (2016). Implementing portfolios in teacher training: Why we use them and why we should use them, *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 62, 97-114 <http://dx.doi.org/10.14689/ejer.2016.62.7>

Özet

Problem Durumu: Günümüzde öğretmen eğitiminde portfolyo kullanımına yönelik çok sayıda çalışma olmasına rağmen bu çalışmaların çoğunda portfolyoların nasıl kullanıldığı, neden kullanıldığı, nasıl oluşturulduğu açıklanmakta ve portfolyo kullanımının sadece öğretmen adaylarının öğrenme çıktıları üzerindeki etkisine odaklanıldığı görülmektedir. Ancak, artık portfolyonun öğretmen eğitiminde uygulanmasına sistematik olarak bakılması ve ilginin portfolyonun nasıl bir araya getirildiğinden ziyade portfolyo uygulamasından “öğretmen eğitimcisinin ne öğrendiğine” ve uygulamanın “programa katkısının ne olduğuna” doğru kaydırılması gerekmektedir. Bu çalışma öncelikle bu iki soruyu yanıtlamak için tasarlanmıştır.

Ayrıca, Türkiye’de birkaç yıllık geçmişi olan yapılandırmacı anlayış paralelinde yapılan araştırmalar, hem öğretim elemanları hem de öğretmen adayları tarafından

alternatif değerlendirme yaklaşımlarından biri olan portfolyonun, geleneksel değerlendirme yaklaşımlarından daha etkili olduğunun düşünülmesine rağmen bunun pratikte uygulamaya geçirilemediğini ortaya koymaktadır. Bu nedenle çalışmada, öğretmen adaylarının bir yapılandırmacı öğrenme ortamını bizzat deneyimlemeleri ve süreç içinde gelişimlerini gözlemleyebilmeleri amacıyla portfolyo değerlendirme yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Böylece öğretmen adaylarında, portfolyo oluşturma deneyimi ile portfolyo değerlendirmenin temel ilkeleri hakkında anlayış geliştirmek ve onları bu uygulamanın bir parçası olarak öğretmenliğe hazırlamak hedeflenmiştir. Bu bağlamda, çalışmada portfolyonun öğretmen eğitimcileri ve programa katkılarının yanı sıra öğretmen adaylarının bu deneyim hakkındaki algılarına da odaklanılmıştır.

Araştırmanın Amacı: Literatür taramasında, öğretmen eğitiminde portfolyo kullanımı konusunda daha çok öğretmen adayının öğrenmesi ve değerlendirilmesine odaklanıldığı, portfolyo kullanımının öğretmen eğitimcilerine ve programa katkısına değinmediği gözlenmiştir. Bu nedenle, bu çalışmada portfolyo kullanımının öğretmen eğitimcilerinin uygulamalarına, öğretmen eğitimi programlarına ve öğretmen adaylarının algılarına etkisi araştırılmıştır.

Araştırmanın Yöntemi: Nitel araştırma metodolojisinin desenlerinden biri olan eylem araştırması yöntemiyle 14 hafta sürecinde gerçekleştirilen araştırmanın çalışma grubunu, bir devlet üniversitesinde 2012-2013 eğitim-öğretim yılı içinde "Özel Öğretim Yöntemleri I" dersini almakta olan 128 sosyal bilgiler öğretmen adayından rastgele örneklem yoluyla seçilen 25 sosyal bilgiler öğretmen adayı oluşturmuştur. Çalışmanın örneklemini, sınıf listesinden her beşinci öğretmen adayının seçilmesiyle belirlenmiştir. Portfolyo uygulaması sonunda öğretmen adaylarının portfolyo uygulama sürecine yönelik görüşlerini belirlemek amacıyla araştırmacı tarafından geliştirilen 4 açık uçlu soru ve 8 öğretim üyesiyle yapılan yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmelerden faydalanılmıştır.

Açık uçlu sorular literatür taraması ve uzman görüşleri doğrultusunda elde edilen teorik bilgilere dayandırılmıştır. Veriler içerik analizi yöntemi kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. İçerik analizi aşamasında toplanan veriler tanımlanmış kavramlar ve uygun temalara göre kodlanmıştır. Bu kodlar 25 öğretmen adayının yazılı yanıtları üzerinde doğrudan ve elde edilebilir anlamlarından yola çıkılarak tespit edilip, metin içinde işaretlenmiştir. Kodlanmış veriler benzerlikleri ve farklılıklarına göre incelenmiş ve gruplandırılmıştır. Daha sonrada benzer kodlar birbiriyle birleştirilerek tematik kodlama yapılmıştır.

Ayrıca, aynı eğitim fakültesinde portfolyo değerlendirme yöntemini kullanan 8 öğretmen eğitimcisiyle, portfolyo sürecine ilişkin görüşlerini belirlemek için yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmelerden faydalanılmıştır. Öğretmen eğitimcileri ile yapılan görüşmeler word dosyası haline getirilip analiz edilerek kategoriler oluşturulmuştur.

Tarama sonucunda portfolyo kullanımının öğretmen eğitimcilerine, programa ve öğretmen adaylarına etkisi olmak üzere üç kategori belirlenmiştir. Her bir kategorinin altında bulunan temalar gruplandırılarak alt kategoriler oluşturulmuştur.

Araştırmanın Bulguları: Çalışmaya katılan öğretmen eğitimcileri portfolyo kullanımının; geleneksel rollerini değiştirerek, onları daha öğrenci merkezli uygulamalara teşvik ettiğini, günlük dersleri hakkında daha detaylı geri bildirim elde ettiklerini, sınıflarında daha demokratik bir atmosfer yarattığını, geleneksel ölçme araçlarına göre öğrenciyi daha gerçekçi ve ayrıntılı olarak izleme ve öğrenci hakkında daha isabetli kararlar verme fırsatı sunduğunu, değerlendirmeyi öğrenmenin bir parçası haline getirdiğini ve bireyselleşmiş öğrenmeye fırsat sunduğunu ifade etmişlerdir. Ayrıca programa geribildirim sağladığı, programın amaç ve vizyonunu somutlaştırdığı ve fakülteadaki akademisyenler arasında işbirliğinin artmasını sağladığı için yeniden yapılandırılması düşünülen öğretmen eğitimi programlarında, süreci kolaylaştırmak için portfolyo kullanımının faydalı olacağı sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

Bu çalışmaya katılan öğretmen adayları ise portfolyo değerlendirmenin; bireysel farklılıklarını ortaya koymalarına fırsat verdiğini, kendilerini derslerde daha aktif hale getirdiğini, sınıfta öğrendikleri bilgileri tekrar ederek daha kalıcı hale getirdiğini, düzenli çalışma davranışını disipline ettiğini, öz-yeterlik duygusunu geliştirdiğini, derse devamı teşvik ettiğini, öğrencinin kendi gelişimine şahit olmasına bağlı olarak dersin gerekliliğine olan inancı arttırdığını, kendi öğrenmelerinin sorumluluğunu aldıklarını, üst düzey öğrenme becerilerini geliştirdiğini ve sınav kaygısını azalttığını ifade etmişlerdir.

Araştırmanın Sonuçları ve Önerileri: Bu çalışma, öğretmen eğitimcilerinin portfolyo kullanımını sadece öğretmen adaylarının öğrenme ve değerlendirilmesini sağlamak amacıyla değil, öğretmen eğitimcilerinin geleneksel rollerini değiştirerek, onları daha öğrenci merkezli uygulamalara teşvik ettiği, günlük dersleri hakkında daha detaylı geri bildirim sağladığı, değerlendirmeyi öğrenmenin bir parçası haline getirdiği, programın felsefesini uygulamaya geçirdiği, programın vizyonunu somutlaştırdığı gibi ekstra faydalarına da odaklanmaları gerektiğini ortaya koymuştur.

Ayrıca bu çalışma yanıtlanması gereken en önemli sorunun portfolyo değerlendirme sonuçlarının eğitim öğretimi geliştirmek için nasıl kullanılacağı olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Portfolyo değerlendirme süreci öğretmen adayına, değerlendirmeden aldığı notun ötesinde faydalar sağlamalıdır. Öğretmen adayları portfolyo değerlendirme sonuçlarını, hizmet öncesi eğitim programı ve gelecekteki sınıf deneyimleri ışığında görmek için teşvik edilmelidir. Portfolyo değerlendirme, öğretmen adayının bir öğretmen olarak kendi potansiyeli açısından güçlü ve zayıf yönlerini görmesini sağlamalıdır. Ayrıca, öğretmen yetiştiren kurumlarda bu amaçla okutulan derslerin içeriği alternatif değerlendirme yöntemlerini daha kapsamlı biçimde ele alacak şekilde genişletilerek, öğretmen adaylarının konuyla ilgili bilgi ve beceri düzeyleri geliştirilmelidir. Bunun yanı sıra öğretim üyelerinin de ölçme ve değerlendirme konularındaki bilgilerinin artırılması ve alternatif ölçme ve değerlendirme yöntemlerine karşı olumlu tutum geliştirmeleri önem kazanmaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Portfolyo değerlendirme, alternatif değerlendirme, öğretmen eğitimi, öğrenci merkezli öğrenme, öğretmeyi öğrenme, aktif öğrenme