

Preparing Teachers: Expectations and Existing Situation at Faculties of Education

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Abstract

In-depth interviews were conducted to research the expectations of teacher educators from the prospective teachers and their opinions on the existing facilities provided by the faculty of education. Content analysis, performed on the data collected from a sample of eight teacher educators from different departments in one of the faculties of education, suggested that the expectations from teacher candidates had seven dimensions: content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, country specific realities, communication skills, teacher characteristics, scientific knowledge and research skills, and professional development. Regarding the results, implications for teacher education programs were discussed, and suggestions for further research were made.

Keywords: *Teacher education; teacher education programs; prospective teachers*

Introduction

The issue of quality is always a significant theme, and will continue to be one of the predominate points of debate in teacher education. However, defining quality is not a simple task. Since it is a "concept," it is difficult to measure it with only one assessment criterion (Cheng & Tam, 1997, p.23). There have been important studies on framing the qualities of teacher education by development and implementation of coherent and comprehensive teacher education programs in the light of the life-long learning process (Ananiadou & Claro, 2009; Darling-Hammond, 2006; European Commission, 2010; Finsterwald et al., 2013). The present study discussed the knowledge and skills that are essential for teachers to survive in a 21st century world in terms of entering student teacher characteristics, the necessary knowledge and skills to be developed, and the teacher education programs.

Characteristics of Teachers

The argument of Clark (1988) is still crucial for policy makers: Entering student teachers come with their own personal teaching schema, or a personal value system about teaching and learning based on their past educational experiences. In other words, entering student teachers already have a belief system on teaching and learning (Clark & Peterson, 1986). In this sense, the characteristics that entering student teachers bring with them constitute an important base for the teacher education process. At this point, the quality and the appropriateness of this base are controversial. In an ideal

case, their beliefs and attitudes toward teaching and teaching philosophy should be formed by the teacher education programs so that they are in line with the requirements of the 21st century.

Before discussing on the effectiveness of faculties of education, knowing more about entering student characteristics are important. Recent nationwide studies conducted to answer the question "Who are becoming teachers?" indicated that most of the entering student teachers came from middle-lower socio-economic status families. More than half of the students' parents had only primary school certification (Saban, 2003). Moreover, 60% of the students graduated from regular public high schools, 27% graduated from Anatolian teacher-training high schools, and the remaining 13% from other types of high schools, including vocational and technical high schools, art high schools and comprehensive high schools (Aksu et al., 2010; Eret & Ok, 2012; Ok & Onkol, 2007). In addition, Eret (2013) found that more than half of student teachers did not choose teaching willingly. Why these students chose the teaching profession as a career was examined by researchers, and the reports are not satisfying for teacher educators: The main reason of ranking teacher education departments in their first five choices in the university entrance exam is job security of the teaching profession. Furthermore, additional score they got in university exam (if they are the graduates of Anatolian Teacher Training high schools) and the effect of the family or friends are among the other reasons of studying teaching.

Studies not only show the reasons of selecting teaching as a career but also explore their philosophical background. In their nationwide study, Aksu et al. (2010) revealed that teacher candidates in Turkey had more traditional values than secular-rational values and had not yet formed clear pedagogical beliefs. Moreover, most teacher candidates described their respective secondary schools as student-centered, which might form one of the bases for their entry beliefs and attitudes towards teaching and learning strategies (Saban, 2003). Considering all these characteristics, it is possible to make judgments about entering student teachers' personal characteristics in terms of their beliefs and attitudes towards the education and teaching profession. To reach the main goals of the education system, it is vital to make a paradigm shift in professional beliefs and attitudes on teaching of these students from a teacher-centered approach to a more democratic and student-centered one. At this point, the roles and behaviors of teacher educators and the processes and contents of teacher education programs should be on the agenda.

Teacher Education

Teacher education programs have long been discussed by teacher educators and researchers in terms of their content and process, quality and quantity of courses, instructional methods of instructors, and physical environment of faculties. There is a variety of expectations from the *21st century teachers* and these include being a reflective person, a problem solver, a thoughtful decision-maker, and a life-long learner (Cruickshank et al., 2009; Finsterwald et al., 2013). And thus, teacher education programs are expected to equip themselves to raise teachers with these characteristics. However, literature implies that teacher education programs are often meager in preparing future teachers (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005). Studies showed that teacher education programs had been criticized in many aspects. To illustrate, teacher education programs are not coordinated with the primary and secondary school programs (Cakiroglu & Cakiroglu, 2003; Cruickshank, 1996). According to related literature, there should be a practical side in teacher education programs including connection and partnership with schools and teacher education institutions (Smedley, 2001; Sandholtz, 2001). Moreover, there is a lack of cooperation between schools and teacher education institutions (Coolahan, 2002; Eret, 2013); there is not a consistency between what is learned at college and the challenges of teaching in real classroom settings (Eret, 2013; Jarvis & Algozzine, 2006; Lindgren, 2005). Similarly, there is a gap between the goals and the perceived realities of teacher education programs (Russell, 2010). The lack of evaluation process of teacher education programs is another important problem of teacher education programs

(Cruikshank, 1996). Furthermore, in several OECD countries, teacher education curricula do not adequately prepare teachers for the task of promoting life-long learning competency (OECD, 2005).

Problems not only arise from teacher education programs but also the physical environment of teacher education institutions. Most of the time, schools' physical conditions are seen as being separate from what take place inside those schools (Eret, 2013; Lackney & Jacobs, 2002). However, school buildings and facilities are one of the most important, but at the same time the most problematic, part of education. The direct impact of school and classroom size, location, and study-halls on academic achievement was found significant in literature (Earthman, 2002; Eret, 2013; Moore & Lackney, 1993). It is also revealed in the literature that physical facilities and conditions affect not only student achievement but also job satisfaction of teacher educators (Locke, 1983), since every school setting or teacher education institution has some trouble with physical setting. One of the most cited deficits of the environment is overcrowded classrooms of teacher colleges (Leavy et al., 2007). Other important points of physical environment reported in literature are associated with the thermal environment, air conditioning, acoustic conditions, building age, and technological facilities of educational institutions (Bronzaft, 1981; Earthman & Lemaster, 1996; Lemasters, 1997; McGuffey, 1982).

Besides teacher education programs and the physical environment of educational institutions, another important factor is teacher educators (Eret, 2013; Wideen et al., 1998). Although, most of the time, teacher educators' role in teacher education is overlooked (Lunenberg et al., 2007), recent studies focusing on the quality of teacher education found a strong relationship between the methods and styles of teacher educators (Wilson, 2006). Smith (2005) clearly summarizes the roles of instructors in the teacher education process by stating "Teacher educators are responsible for providing teachers-to-be with strong foundations of professional knowledge and with tools for ongoing, independent professional development" (p.177). In this continuing process, the roles of teacher educators are that of facilitator, encourager, curriculum developer, researcher, gatekeeper, professional developer of in-service teachers, team member and collaborator (Koster et al., 1996). Even though it is widely accepted that a teacher educator should be a role model for future teachers, relatively little is known whether they achieve being role models for their students (Lunenberg et al., 2007).

Wideen et al. (1998) concluded that for future teachers who need to develop a new vision of teaching and learning, the process is more important than the knowledge acquired during teacher education. In this sense, two main problem statements of this study are which characteristics teacher educators expect from future teachers and how these characteristics have been processed. Consequently, the purpose is to explore the expectations with regard to determining future teachers' characteristics, knowledge and skills that need to be developed during the teacher education process. The study also aims to explore the congruency between the expectations and existing situation of teacher education. To reach this purpose four research questions guided the study:

- (1) What are the entry characteristics of teacher candidates?
- (2) What behaviors and characteristics are expected from future teachers by teacher educators?
- (3) What is the existing situation in the faculties of education in terms of teacher education programs and physical facilities?
- (4) To what extent are these expectations met by students and teacher education programs?

Method

Design

To explore the expected characteristics and the existing contents and processes of teacher education programs from the teacher educators' point of view, a qualitative, interpretive research method was

utilized. Using case study methodology, this study aims to explicit "the meaning of the lived experiences for several individuals about a concept or the phenomenon" (Creswell, 1998, p. 51). In order to obtain the instructors' thoughts and observations on teacher education programs, semi-structured in-depth interviewing was used, since interviews are considered as the primary data gathering technique in qualitative studies (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Data were collected through semi-structured interviews.

To ensure the face and content validity of the instrument, expert opinions were taken. A semi-structured interview focused on teacher educators' expectations from prospective teachers and their opinions on the existing situations of education faculties. The interview protocol had eight questions starting with warm-up issues, and getting information about teacher educators' descriptive features. Additionally, some of the questions related with the focus of the study were "As a teacher educator, which skills do you expect from a teacher candidate to develop before his/her graduation?" "How do faculties of education contribute to the development of those skills?", and "To what extent are teacher candidates eager to improve their knowledge and skills?"

Sample

The sample size for the in-depth interviews was not predetermined but resolved by the completeness of received data. However, by the time the 8th interview was undertaken, the researcher had determined that necessary information was obtained, since the data were saturated. The eight teacher educators constituted the sample of the study. Interviews, which lasted approximately 70 minutes, were carried out in instructors' offices and audio-taped. The interviewees were four female, and four male teacher educators from the departments of Curriculum and Instruction, Educational Administration and Planning, Elementary Science and Math Education, and Psychological Counselling and Guidance.

Context

The data were collected in a high-ranking university in Turkey. Middle East Technical University is a state university founded in 1956. METU is one of Turkey's most competitive universities. Faculty of Education offers six departments with eight undergraduate, 26 graduate programs. The medium of instruction in all departments is English.

Data Analysis

The data were subjected to content analysis techniques (Miles & Huberman, 1994). First of all, each interview was transcribed from the tapes word by word. Secondly, the transcribed data were organized and simplified by labelling the data with descriptive codes. The patterns arising by the codes constituted the broader themes. Considering the importance of validity and reliability issues, the following measures were taken by the researcher to enhance the trustworthiness of the study; prolonged engagement, peer review, debriefing, and external audit. The inter-coder reliability/agreement is one of the most important measures of trustworthiness (Kurasaki, 2000). The transcripts were given to another researcher. After inter-coder determined the codes and themes, they were compared to check their consistency. It was observed that the codes and themes indicated high parallelism and similarity across the coders.

Results

The findings of the present study are organized in three sections namely entry characteristics of teacher candidates, expectations from the graduates of faculty of education, and the existing situation in faculties of education. In each part, interview results are given in terms of general patterns emergent among the interviewees. Finally, all the codes and themes of this study were presented in a scheme.

Entry Characteristics of Teacher Candidates

The interview results showed that coming students can be classified into two groups with respect to their willingness/motivation to be a teacher as their future profession. The first group of students has some significant characteristics. They are highly motivated to learn, they put forth a lot of effort and participate in creative drama and theatre courses. When compared with the other group of students, they are eager to research, to ask, to learn, and to harmonize what they learn with the teaching profession:

"They participate in activities and in class-thinking about how they can make use of it when they become teachers. I observe such efforts, but in general that is not the case. I mean when I compare them with the first teachers of the republic, they are not that venturesome."

Teacher educators concluded that the other group of students has a tendency to sustain their lyceum habits, has low motivation towards teaching and learning, does not participate in class discussions, or ask questions. They are satisfied with making the minimum effort for what is to be done. All they want is to finish their lessons and go home. Some of the opinions are:

"You can understand why the computer science students are like this, but math and science students do not want to be teachers either."

"They never put pressure on me or demand anything from me. There has never been a case when I was amazed at what they said or when they came up with something I had never thought about. Just the opposite. I think I am working harder than these students."

"I find an interesting article which makes me excited, I put it on-line, and I tell them to read it so that we can discuss it in class, but they are unwilling. Surely, it affects my motivation negatively."

Expectations from the Graduates of Faculty of Education

Participants were asked which skills they expected from a teacher candidate to develop through the pre-service teacher education process. Based on the interview results, teacher educators' expectations were discussed under seven dimensions: Content area knowledge, personal characteristics, pedagogical content knowledge, communication skills, country specific realities, scientific knowledge and research, and professional development.

The most commonly stated themes on expectation are content area knowledge, and personal characteristics. Teacher educators ($n=4$) expected teacher candidates to have strong knowledge and skills in their subject area. According to the interviewees, there should be a difference in the teacher candidates' subject area knowledge after being involved in the teacher education process.

Interviewees ($n=7$) argued that there were some certain characteristics of teacher candidates to be developed; flexibility, open mindedness, self-confidence, creativity, being energetic, productivity, being pioneering, having a positive attitude toward teaching, believing s/he can be a teacher, being concerned with social/national events, possessing problem solving skills, and having a developed sense of ethics, love of mankind and children. One of the participants mentioned:

"Be them physics, chemistry or classroom teachers, I do not think teachers who do not follow world events or share them for 5 or ten minutes with her students are sufficiently eligible to be teachers."

According to participants, some skills were more important than content and pedagogical knowledge:

"In my opinion, it is possible to reach information from everywhere. That's why I don't think students should be choked with information. They should be taught the skills to cope with problems, to reach information, to solve problems and to make decisions for they will, forever, have to make decisions and solve problems when they practice their profession. Considering the structure of education, society, and culture in our country, such issues as sending girls to school and not being able to extend education equally due to the gap between social classes require being a very good problem solver."

"Their responsibility continues outside class. Therefore, students' (prospective teachers') social awareness should be highly developed. Apart from being a teacher, s/he will have to work both as a counsellor and as an activist."

"In our country, nobody will say anything if you formally fulfil the requirements of your profession, but not really perform well. For this reason, many things are up to your conscience."

Two teacher educators argued another side of the teaching profession:

"For one thing, a teacher should not find it irksome or repulsive to touch a child, to bend over or to wipe children's noses. This is not a "you go to class, teach what you have to and that's it" type of a profession."

"A teacher candidate has to be knowledgeable in many things from checking the fever of a sick student to first-aid."

According to participants ($n=4$), besides personal characteristics, developing communication skills was another important characteristic expected from teacher candidates.

"The aim is to raise people capable of recognizing that the student/child/adolescent is an individual who possesses feelings and ideas."

The results also showed that half of the participants discussed the importance of the scientific knowledge and research skills of teachers. Some of their opinions are:

"In a certain situation, the reaction of a teacher should be different from that of anybody on the street in that instead of traditional reactions, her reactions should be based on what the science of education tells her for she should be thus equipped."

Another important theme discussed by teacher educators ($n=3$) is pedagogical content knowledge. They reported that their expectations were teachers, who were pedagogically equipped and instructed in drama, who were able to transfer their store of knowledge to their current place, who were knowledgeable in class management and student psychology, and who had a good experience in their internship. Other expectations were change of paradigm, developing professionalism, acquiring the identity of a teacher, and professional awareness. One of the participants reported on the general culture of the teaching profession:

"Essentially, the teaching profession is show business. For example prospective teachers should receive a thorough instruction in drama because your mission is to carry the student from one point to another in 40 to 50 minutes. This is an aspect related with general culture. We need to integrate this into class management."

Teacher educators ($n=3$) suggested that teacher education programs should emphasize the realities of Turkish schools and students. Most of the novice teachers experienced burn-out after they faced the reality shock of the Turkish education system. They suggested educating prospective teachers in a more realistic way. One of the participants mentioned:

"They (teacher candidates) need to be prepared beforehand. If they want a lot of money, or if they want a career, they should know they will have to work like a dog and earn little money, and many people will be unaware of what they will be struggling with in their job."

Finally, there were a few teachers who discussed professional development issues ($n=2$). Teacher educators mentioned that teacher candidates should be enthusiastic to develop their knowledge and skills, and follow publications related with the teaching profession.

Existing Situation in the Faculties of Education

The existing conditions in the education faculties were discussed by instructors as well. The main themes derived from interviews showed that a faculty of education is composed of three main components which are teacher education programs, instructors, and physical environment.

Teacher Education Programs: The results showed that all teacher educators focused on the shortcomings of the teacher education programs. Seven instructors did not think that the programs were qualified enough to reach the expectations mentioned above. On the other hand, one of the instructors argued that the courses were sufficient but the social side of the program was not sufficient. Furthermore, participants stated some problems: programs' being centralized (the same teacher education program for every region and city), too theoretical (lack of enough practice), lack of quality and quantity of school experience courses, the medium of instruction being English, lack of a course for creative drama, educational philosophy, and sociology, lack of guidance to show the realities of Turkish schools, students and families. Some of the arguments are:

"There are two reasons why we do not go beyond theory. We use textbooks which are prepared in the United States, so they are not suitable for our society. I mean the activities and the examples in those books hinder us. We cannot show students what to do with this."

"What these children will face when they become teachers and how they will retain their self-confidence and enthusiasm is another issue. We cannot show them how to cope with such things."

"That the educational systems should be democratic is written on paper, but how are we going to teach democracy to our students? This is a topic of debate since Dewey. Dewey's basic philosophy says, by example, you will live democratically in class, but then when you present a way of life to society, there will be occasions when you should employ democracy. Otherwise, democracy remains on paper. You see, there is a difference between theory and practice."

While most of the instructors argued that the programs were too theoretical, others mentioned that the courses were based on more practical issues than theory:

"In any case, there is more practice than theory. At least that is the case in the courses we teach. We try to emphasize cases and activities (more than we do practice). What we can achieve is, naturally, to a certain extent. The rest is up to the student."

One of the problems which arise from the medium of instruction in some universities are:

"In reality, the English we speak is the language of more modern worlds. That's why, apart from the fact that we are speaking a foreign language, everything we say to students is, naturally, different from the daily lives of ordinary Turkish people. "

The importance of the social side of the programs is also stated by instructors. One of them shared his experience as:

"For example, I took them to the theatre three or four times. Some of them had never been to a theatre although they were sophomores. They will be teachers, not engineers. They will educate. They have to know every aspect of Man, be it biological or social. Our work left much to be desired at this point. What did we do? We went in the classroom, lectured, and then left. The student saw us at long intervals outside the classroom, and when s/he did, s/he felt hesitant or held back to have a friendly chat. The student should be able to observe what s/he will do in the future. Should s/he take her students to the theatre in the future, it means I will have reached my aim."

The problem with the centralized teacher education program is also another issue of the Turkish Education System. Whether teacher education programs changed with respect to the region where teachers work is one of the complicated issues in teacher education:

"There are local problems and characteristics in each locale. You raise the same teacher both for Istanbul and Tunceli. How much does the teacher you send there (the place) know or do (what needs to be done)? How reasonable is it to have a central curriculum? Not very reasonable. On the other hand, to what extent can you localize education when you consider the political, social and cultural milieu? Yet there is another point of discussion. Aren't there any universal criteria? Where should the line be drawn? Who is to draw this line? How easy is it to draw this line?"

Instructors: The participants discussed some important points in relation to instructors' behaviors and attitudes toward students, their methods of instruction, and their knowledge about realities of the Turkish schools, and teacher candidates' lives. While some of the instructors thought that they had strong relationships between prospective teachers, some of them did not think the same:

"Many teachers, I mean those of my friends do not shut the door easily when students come to ask for something."

"Our students are standoffish or our teachers are a little standoffish."

The participants also mentioned some points in relation to their instruction style, and did self-critique of their techniques:

"I cannot help thinking that if we demand more (from students) than we give them. "

"We expect students to employ different instructional techniques, but do we do that in class? We want them to be active in interpersonal relationships, but when I look at the relations between students and instructors, I see that the students aren't very happy about it and that the latter are too authoritarian and that they do not value the students."

"I wonder what I can do so as not to be stuck with theory, and all I can come up with is examples from daily life."

"I think we are to be blamed. As academicians we need to ask ourselves where we are making mistakes. We shouldn't live solely for doing academic research. We are raising people, which is a great responsibility. It's a matter of loving your job."

"A point where I should criticize myself is I have no idea where my students go after class, what they do or what they are interested in. For example I've never been to their dormitories. What are their studying conditions? I have no idea. That's why one should give Caesar his due. We may be faultier than the students."

Despite these self-critiques, half of the instructors mentioned the positive sides of their methods and the structure of faculties:

"We do not teach. We try to help you bring forth what's in you. I believe this. Whatever subject you teach, you can never give everything or give enough."

"While lecturing we find ourselves in a situation whereby we have to relate the topic to politics, sociology and especially to psychology. Otherwise you lose the interest of the students. I mean you have to convince them that what you are telling them is a fact in their lives, in their profession."

"(For my own faculty) we are well up to date as regards to resources. We are doing fine when it comes to helping students make use of current resources and adopt a scientific attitude."

"Any other university may provide students a better physical environment or better hardware, but the atmosphere we provide for them is that of a radically different culture. I believe no other university or less than 80 %-90% of the faculties of education in Turkey do that. We offer them an atmosphere where they can express themselves."

Physical Environment: The results also indicated that one of the most important problems that prevent teacher education to reach its aims is the physical environment of the faculties. All the instructors criticized the insufficient physical conditions of faculties, classrooms, and canteens. Teacher educators argued that there is not a place to make students feel they are in an atmosphere befitting future teachers, that there is no place for some sports activities, no room for reading or studying. There isn't enough elbowroom. Some of their statements are:

"I wonder how good we are when it comes to making the students feel at ease. I really do wonder."

"Especially when I'm teaching in ground floor classrooms, I find others talking and smoking outside of the window when I open the window, and if I close the window, it's too hot inside."

"To them (the students) the faculty is only a place where classes are held. There is no place to sit apart from the canteen."

Furthermore, half of the interviewees used the simile of hospital while describing their faculties. Another simile of teacher educators was a lycee building. Some of the teacher educators' statements are:

"This is just an ordinary, unattractive building, not well-planned; and when you go in the white walls give the feeling of a hospital."

"In my opinion, this is not a university building but a high school building."

Finally, teacher educators also made suggestions to improve the quality of education at faculties of education. First, they stated the importance of developing a teacher education policy for each faculty of education. According to participants, the aims and the philosophical bases of the programs should be determined. Then some of the courses should be determined with respect to the philosophical bases of the program. Some of the opinions are:

"Institutions that aim to raise teachers should consider raising teachers a mission. They need to develop a certain perspective for this. They should have an aim, or a mission, in the popular sense, to raise teachers. Only then can we have good results. Otherwise the picture is incomplete. There is nothing to lead you to your aim. Only the separate parts move. Say, the car has two tyres, each going in a different direction. There has to be a philosophical base. What kind of skills should the teachers I want to raise be equipped with? Which theories? Forget theory, there has to be a teacher education framework. After that come the instructors, equipment, etc."

"We have to call to question raising teachers. Generally, replication is what we do. That's how it is done in the States, in England. This is the trend. There are successful teacher training programs in the history of Turkey. Our starting point should be those. We should develop such models."

In addition, introducing teacher candidates with more real cases before their graduation is vital:

"There should be special schools that serve as laboratories. Students can work there for half a day. Thus the teachers there will have a helping hand."

"It may be a good idea to involve students more in this profession. How can this be done? Maybe with practical training courses. Maybe with other things. Obviously we need to dwell on this. We should examine other examples. I don't know if anybody is working on it. We don't have many clear data on past practices. We could make a comparison with such data."

Therefore, to make teacher candidates feel themselves at the kitchen of the profession, the physical environment of faculties should be similar with the real classrooms and schools where teacher candidates will work:

"From its architecture to its design, a building should be suitable for the teaching profession."

"Classroom in faculties of education should be modelled after the classrooms in schools."

In this way, programs may help candidates become aware of the realities of the Turkish schools. According to interviewees, course contents should be also congruent with the real examples of the system:

"Many graduates do not have a problem with the theory. What is the problem? When they begin work, get married and have children, difficulties begin. Students should be told clearly and beforehand that they will be there for such and such a job, they have to do this and that, if they do not want to do this, they should give up now; but if they really want this profession, they should do what is expected of them for this will go on."

"In my opinion the teaching profession should be a little transformed and made more realistic and closer to practice."

"Students need to learn the relationship of the Turkish society with education."

"We have to show these students where and how they will be working and that they should try to realize their ideals even under such conditions. In my opinion this is where we lack. What we tell them is too theoretical."

"We have to teach them not to give up in the face of the difficulties they encounter in real life."

Teacher education contents, processes, instructors and physical environment also have a critical effect on developing the professional skills of teaching. All these results are summarized in Figure 1.

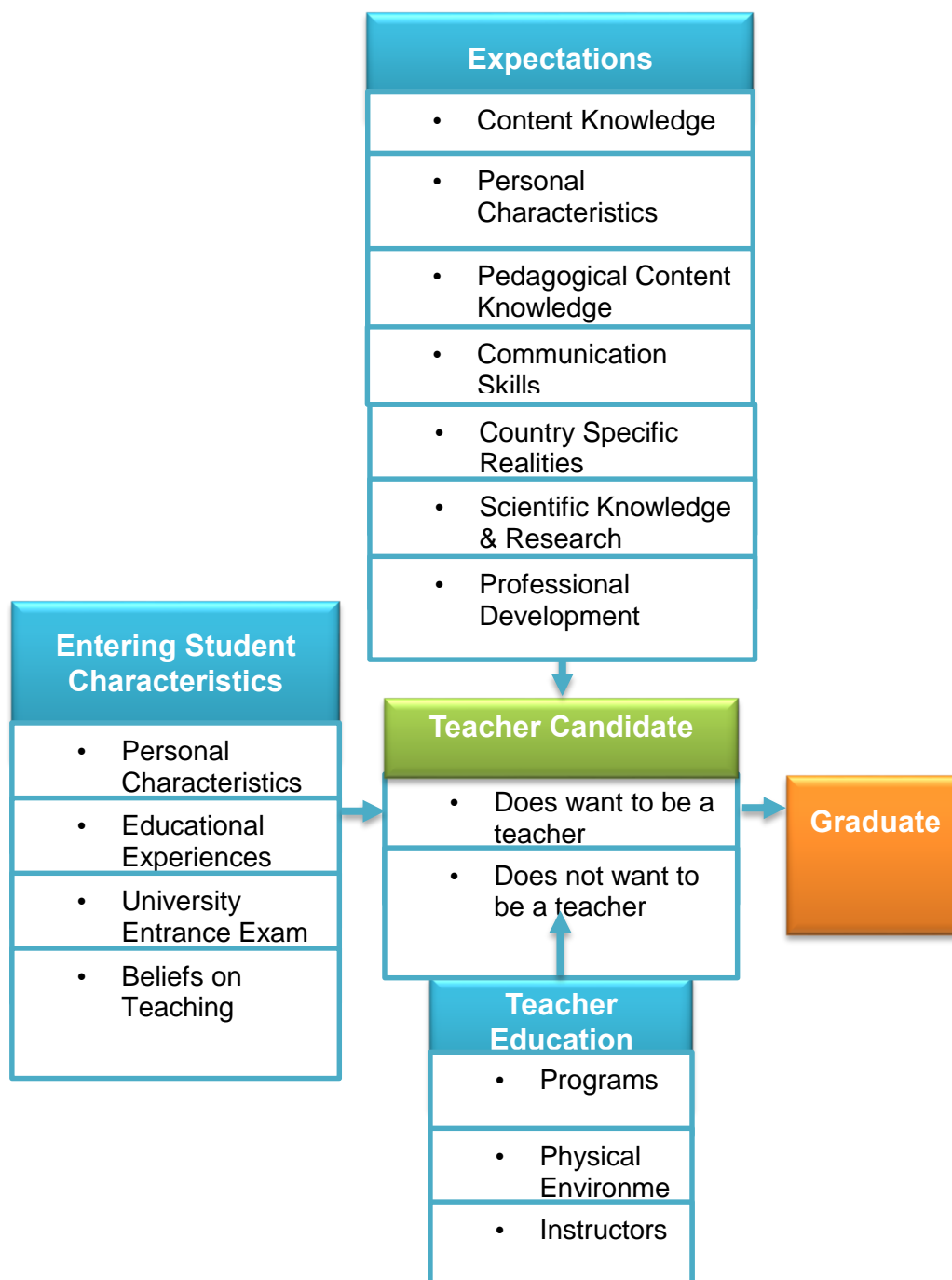


Figure 1. The factors Forming the Future Teachers' Professional Skills and Attitudes Discussion and Implications

There are many significant teacher education models in the literature. What is important is finding the best representative model for your culture and school system. We, as researchers, are generally prone to ignoring the results of previous studies and tend to rediscover the wheel. Thus, this study does not recommend developing a new model for teacher education but has some important implications and suggestions to improve the Turkish teacher education programs.

This study investigated the opinions and expectations of eight teacher educators. In consideration of 'expectations,' it was observed that seven major themes emerged from the data, which are consistent with the existing literature; student teachers are expected to have strong content area and pedagogical

content knowledge, to develop some personal characteristics like flexibility, open mindedness, self-confidence, creativity, to be energetic, productive, and pioneering, to have a positive attitude toward teaching, to believe s/he can be a teacher, to be concerned with social/national events, to possess problem-solving skills, and to have a developed sense of ethics, love of mankind and children (Cruickshank et al., 2009; Finsterwald, et al., 2013). As in the literature, according to teacher educators, teacher education programs have some problems. First, they lack in providing very basic knowledge of Turkish school realities, and the structure of the Turkish education system. These findings are parallel with the results of studies carried out to evaluate the qualities of teacher education curricula (Cakiroglu & Cakiroglu, 2003; Eret, 2013). To make sense for future teachers, integrating real cases to the learning process is imperative. Beside the course named Turkish Education System, Turkish cases might be included in other course plans like classroom management course.

The programs also lack in supporting student teachers in establishing a teaching philosophy and sociological values and beliefs. Teacher educators reported the importance of offering such kind of courses by experts. While students are developing these characteristics, the learning process is important for knowledge acquisition (Wideen et al., 1998). If future teachers is expected to adopt current theories which hold that students should have an opportunity to actively construct their own knowledge (McLaughlin, 1997), serving as opportunities for student teachers to learn by constructing their own knowledge, these practices should be compulsory as part of the policy for teacher education programs. Findings revealed that in developing these characteristics, not only contents and processes have a vital role but also the physical environment and teacher educators' behaviors and beliefs have significant effects on the professional development of a future teacher. At this point, participants strongly criticized the physical conditions of faculties of education. Consistent with the literature, overcrowded classrooms, locations, lightening and heating, lack of study-halls are some of the problems reported in this study (Bronzaft, 1981; Eret, 2013; Lemasters, 1997; McGuffey, 1982). It is implied in the literature that these problems have negative effects on both students' academic knowledge and teachers' work quality (Locke, 1983). Thus, it is strongly recommended that quality of physical conditions should be accepted as a part of an effective teacher education process, and the existing conditions and facilities should be analyzed and improved immediately in relation to the research findings.

Teacher education cannot be considered without considering teacher educators. Related literature indicates that there are a huge amount of studies conducted to determine the characteristics and effectiveness of teacher educators. One uncontested feature of teacher educator is being a role model for future teachers (Lunenbergh, et al., 2007). The participants of the study reported that teacher educators are insufficient in being role models for student teachers. They expect students to develop certain skills and adopt certain teaching methods. However, they fail to do the same thing. These findings are consistent with the report of Eret (2013) in which student teachers criticize teacher educators' use of ineffective and traditional methods of teaching. As Zeichner (2005) points the role of teacher educator is not just passing knowledge to teacher candidate but advocating their ability to exercise their judgment of use and adapt this knowledge into suitable practices. In general, the roles of teacher educators can be described as being a model for effective teaching, bridging theory and practice, encourage teacher candidates to develop their critical thinking skills, and carrying out research at the same time (Beck & Kosnik, 2001; Ducharme, 1993; Zeichner & Gore, 1990). However, teacher educators are provided with little professional training (Gallagher et al., 2011). In other words, although teacher educators are one of the most important keys for the qualified teachers, little attention has been devoted on teacher educators in all over the world (O'Sullivan, 2010). This understanding strongly points to the need for further research in Turkey to examine the attitudes and methods of teacher educators in relation to teaching and learning.

This study outlines the existing conditions and expectations in teacher education process. As in many countries, student teachers have very low desire to become a teacher in Turkey (Akyeampong & Stephens, 2002). They have some beliefs and varied images of teachers and teaching. At this point, considering these entry characteristics and background of student teachers, providing the high quality of teacher education and the varied facilities by education faculties is imperative to raise high quality teachers.

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