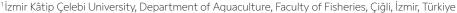# Designing a Questionnaire Model Related to the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council (THEQC) Criteria for the Student Satisfaction at the Faculty of Fisheries, İzmir Kâtip Çelebi University

İzmir Kâtip Çelebi Üniversitesi Su Ürünleri Fakültesi Öğrencilerinin Memnuniyetini Değerlendirmek için Yükseköğretim Kalite Kurulu (YÖKAK) Kriterleri ile İlişkili bir Anket Modeli Tasarlanması

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Abstract: Higher education empowers individuals by expanding knowledge and skills, driving social development, and contributing to societal capital. However, robust quality assurance systems are vital to ensure their impact. The Turkish Higher Education Quality Council (THEQC) focuses on aligning Turkish higher education with international standards and fostering a quality culture by promoting the collection and analysis of student feedback. Gathering feedback from students through methods like surveys can identify areas for improvement and enhance the overall quality of education. This study aimed to develop a comprehensive questionnaire model aligned with THEQC criteria to assess student satisfaction at the Faculty of Fisheries, İzmir Kâtip Çelebi University. Therefore, a survey matching 18 sub-criteria under the Learning and Teaching heading of THEQC was created in order to determine the satisfaction levels of the students of the faculty. A five-point Likert scale (1-Strongly disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Undecided, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly agree) was used for the responses to the propositions. The survey was applied face-to-face to 55 students (63.64% were male and 36.36% were female) enrolled in the Fisheries Engineering Program. Based on the research findings, students expressed the highest satisfaction with the accessibility of faculty and academic consultants outside of class hours and their overall satisfaction with the Fisheries Engineering program. On the other hand, the inadequacy of the courses in terms of practical application and the insufficient and unbalanced extracurricular activities (homework, presentations, etc.) have been recorded as topics with low satisfaction levels. The average satisfaction levels by THEQC's learning and training criteria were recorded as 3.58 points for Program Design, Evaluate and Update, 3.67 points for Implementation of Programs, 3.68 points for Learning Resources and Academic Support Services, and 3.95 for Teaching Staff.

Keywords: Student survey, Learning and teaching, Fisheries engineering, Accreditation

Özet: Yükseköğretim, bilgi ve becerileri genişleterek, sosyal gelişimi yönlendirerek ve toplumsal sermayeye katkıda bulunarak bireyleri güçlendirir. Ancak, etkili bir altyapı oluşturmak için sağlam bir kalite güvencesi sistemi hayati önem taşır. Yükseköğretim Kalite Kurulu (YÖKAK), Türk yükseköğretimini uluslararası standartlarla uyumlu hale getirmeye ve öğrenci geri bildirimlerini teşvik ederek bir kalite kültürü geliştirmeye odaklanır. Anket gibi yöntemlerle öğrencilerden geri bildirim toplamak, iyileştirme alanlarını belirlemeye ve eğitimin genel kalitesini artırmaya yardımcı olabilir. Bu çalışma, İzmir Kâtip Çelebi Üniversitesi Su Ürünleri Fakültesi'nde öğrenci memnuniyetini değerlendirmek için YÖKAK kriterleri ile uyumlu bir anket modeli geliştirmeyi amaçlamıştır. Bu nedenle, YÖKAK'ın Eğitim ve Öğretim başlığı altında yer alan 18 alt kriterle eşleşen bir anket oluşturulmuştur. Önermelere verilen yanıtlar için beşli Likert ölçeği (1-Kesinlikle katılmıyorum, 2-Katılmıyorum, 3-Kararsızım, 4-Katılıyorum, 5-Kesinlikle katılıyorum) kullanılmıştır. Anket, Su Ürünleri Mühendisliği Programı'na kayıtlı 55 öğrenciye (%63,64 erkek ve %36,36 kadın) yüz yüze uygulanmıştır. Araştırma bulgularına göre öğrencilerin en çok memnun oldukları konular; ders dışı zamanlarda öğretim elemanlarına ve akademik danışmanlara rahatlıkla ulaşılabilmesi ve Su Ürünleri Mühendisliği Programını okumaktan duyulan memnuniyet olarak sıralanabilir. Öğretim planında yer alan derslerin uygulama açısından yeterli olmaması ve ders dışı faaliyetlerin (ödev, sunum vb.) yeterli ve dengeli olmaması ise memnuniyet düzeyinin düşük olduğu başlıklar olarak kaydedilmiştir. YÖKAK'ın Eğitim ve Öğretim ölçütleri bağlamında memnuniyet düzeyleri; Program Tasarımı, Değerlendirmesi ve Güncellenmesi için 3,58 puan, Programların Yürütülmesi için 3,67 puan, Öğrenme Kaynakları ve Akademik Destek Hizmetleri için 3,68 puan ve Öğretim Kadrosu için

1. Introduction

By expanding knowledge, skills, and critical thinking, higher education empowers individuals to drive social development and contribute to the accumulation of socio-economic, scientific, and cultural capital (Akbulut Yıldırmış & Seggie, 2018; Özcan et al., 2022). However, to ensure the quality of higher education and maximize its impact on society, robust quality assurance mechanisms are necessary. The quality assurance system in Turkish higher education, initiated in the 2000s, has been strengthened since 2015 through institutional evaluation processes carried out by the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council (THEQC). THEQC is a crucial institution dedicated to enhancing the quality and reputation of the Turkish higher education system. Functioning as a public body affiliated with the Council of Higher Education (CoHE), THEQC is responsible for evaluating and accrediting the educational activities of all higher education institutions in Türkiye (THEQC, 2025). THEQC's primary objective is to ensure that Turkish higher education transforms into an educational system that adheres to international standards, delivers high quality, and promotes sustainability.

THEQC evaluates the educational activities, research and development, infrastructure and human resources, and service to society of programs, to ensure that the programs and institutions meet international standards and establish comprehensive and up-to-date quality standards that encompass all components of the Turkish higher education system. In addition, THEQC collaborates with international organizations such as the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), The European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), and the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE). Through these collaborations, the Turkish higher education system is further aligned with international standards and gains recognition and prestige both nationally and internationally through accredited programs (Hou, 2011; Salto, 2021) (Vural Yılmaz, 2019). THEQC conducts awareness-raising activities on quality for higher education institutions, students, academics, and other stakeholders. These activities aim to substitute a quality culture and encourage all parties to contribute to quality enhancement.

The education sector, which is a part of the service sector, is a very important element in the production of knowledge and the creation of a qualified workforce that countries need (Telli, 2023). To further enhance the quality of higher education, it is crucial to gather feedback from students, faculty, and other stakeholders. Especially students are essential partners in the higher education quality assurance process. Ensuring that students achieve the targeted competencies is a crucial dimension of this system (Uludağ et al., 2021; Korkmaz et al., 2023). In this context, satisfaction analysis can be a valuable tool for identifying areas of strength and weakness and informing future improvements (El-Mowafy et al., 2013; Şimşek et al., 2019). These scales are the type of research that aims to determine how satisfied individuals are with the products or services provided by an organization or service provider. These analyses can be conducted using a variety of methods, such as surveys, interviews, focus groups, and customer feedback. Surveys are one of the most common and effective methods of satisfaction analysis and they also ensure that the requirements of the customer satisfaction criterion are quickly met within the scope of the ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System standards (Sfreddo et al., 2021). In establishing a quality assurance system within the learning and teaching, the satisfaction levels of students, who are the most important stakeholder group in universities regarding this matter, are among the significant quality indicators. Simultaneously, the data obtained from satisfaction measurement at the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycle is of great importance as feedback. These become even more critical, particularly in the "check" phase of the cycle, which involves monitoring processes and services in line with objectives and conditions, as well as reporting the results. This allows an identification of the strengths and weaknesses of the organization or service provider.

The supreme institution that determines the quality standards in higher education institutions in Türkiye is the THEQC. For this reason, it is very important to design the quality activities planned to be implemented in all units of higher education institutions according to the THEQC criteria in order to meet the standards. The present study aimed to develop a comprehensive questionnaire model aligned with THEQC criteria to accurately assess student satisfaction at the Faculty of Fisheries, İzmir Kâtip Çelebi University to provide valuable insights and recommendations to the faculty administration for enhancing student satisfaction and overall quality of education. This study is among the first to

contribute to the literature on learning and teaching satisfaction in fisheries education in Türkiye.

2. Method

2.1. Survey Designing

There are a total of 18 sub-criteria under the title of Learning and Teaching (▶Table 1) in the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report Writing Guide Version 3.2 published by THEQC. Therefore, it is possible to say that the basic quality criteria in the field of education of the Turkish higher education are carried out through these 18 sub-criteria and that these sub-criteria should be taken as a basis in the plans to be made throughout the program.

Table 1. THEQC's Learning and Teaching criteria and sub-criteria (THEQC, 2024)

	Program Design, Evaluation and Update
1	Design and approval of programs
2	Course distribution balance of the program
3	The alignment of course objectives with program outcomes
4	Student workload-based course design
5	Follow-up and updating of programs
6	Management of learning and teaching processes
	Implementation of Programs
7	Teaching methods and techniques
8	Measurement and evaluation
9	Student admission and the recognition and crediting of prior learning
10	The certification of qualifications and the diploma
	Learning Resources and Academic Support Services
11	The learning environment and resources
12	Academic support services
13	Facilities and infrastructure
14	Disadvantaged groups
15	Social, cultural and sporting activities
	Teaching Staff
16	Recruitment, promotion and appointment criteria
17	Teaching competencies and development
18	Incentives and rewards for educational activities

For this purpose, a scale matching 18 sub-criteria under the Learning and Teaching heading of THEQC was created in order to determine the satisfaction levels of the students of İzmir Kâtip Çelebi University Faculty of Fisheries (▶Table 2). The survey scale contains a total of 30 questions and 29 of these are matched with the THEQC's Learning and Teaching heading. Although there is another question on the faculty's internation-

alization opportunities in the survey scale (Table 2), its data is not presented because it is not related to the Learning and Teaching sub-criteria. THEQC's Learning and Teaching heading includes 4 main criteria, and 11 of the survey questions cover the Program Design, Evaluation and Update, 7 cover the Implementation of Programs, 8 cover the Learning Resources and Academic Support Services, and 3 cover the Teaching Staff.

2.2. Ethics Statement

Permission was obtained for the implementation of the survey by the decision of the İzmir Kâtip Çelebi University Social Research Ethics Committee dated 24.07.2024 and numbered 2024/14-01.

2.3. Data Collection

The data of the research was collected by survey technique. A five-point Likert scale (1-Strongly disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Undecided, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly agree) was used for the responses to the propositions. The survey consists of two parts. The first part includes the gender and the grade information of the students. The second part consists of a total of 30 propositions in the context of the design, evaluation and updating of the programs, the execution of the programs, learning resources and academic support services and the main criteria of the teaching staff. The survey was applied face-to-face to 55 students enrolled in the Fisheries Engineering Program. There are a total of 107 students enrolled in the Fisheries Engineering Program, and the survey participation rate was calculated as 51.4%. According to Nulty (2008), this rate is considered appropriate for sample adequacy. The internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach's alpha value) for the propositions in the questionnaire form was found to be 0.981, and since it is greater than 0.8, the scale used has high statistical reliability. In the analysis and evaluation of the data, firstly basic statistical measures (frequencies, percentages and standard deviations) were used. In addition, the averages of the responses given to each proposition were calculated according to the five-point Likert scale.

Some characteristics of the students who participated in the survey are shown in ▶Table 3. Almost equal participation was obtained from first, second and third classes (30.91, 32.73, and 29.09%), with the lowest participation being from third class (7.27%) students. The main reason for the low participation from the third class is that there are limited students enrolled in that class. The 63.64% of the students who participated in the survey were male and the 36.36% were female.

3. Results

Average student satisfaction levels for the Program Design, Evaluate and Update main criterion were determined as 3.58 points (▶**Table 4**). The statement with the highest satisfaction rate was "Academic instructors use class hours effectively" (3.98±0.84 points) and the state-ment with the lowest satisfaction level was "The courses in the curriculum are sufficient in practice" (2.87±1.22 points).

Average student satisfaction levels for the Implementation of Programs main criterion were presented as 3.67 points (▶**Table 5**). The statement with the highest satisfaction rate was "I am pleased to study the Fish-

Table 2. Designed questions based on THEQC's learning and teaching sub-criteria

	THEQC's Sub-criteria in Learning and Teaching	Questions
1	Design and approval of programs	Q1: The objectives of the Fisheries Engineering Program curriculum are clear.
2	Course distribution balance of the program	Q2: The courses in the curriculum are sufficient in theory. Q3: The courses in the curriculum are sufficient in practice.
3	The alignment of course objectives with program outcomes	Q4: I think the program courses contributed to my personal development. Q5: I think the program courses contributed to my professional development.
4	Student workload-based course design	Q6: Academic instructors use class hours effectively. Q7: Extracurricular activities (homework, presentations, etc.) are sufficient and balanced.
5	Follow-up and updating of programs	Q8: I think that the education and training activities in our faculty are sufficient. Q9: I think that the Fisheries Engineering curriculum is up to date.
6	Management of learning and teaching processes	Q10: Courses are delivered in accordance with the predetermined plan.. Q11: Planning and announcements regarding learning and teaching processes are made on time.
7	Teaching methods and techniques	Q12: Students are encouraged to participate in class. Q13: Methods and techniques that enable active participation of students are used in classes.
8	Measurement and evaluation	Q14: Academic instructors are objective in measurement and evaluation. Q15: Exams are conducted in accordance with the content of the course.
9	Student admission and the recognition and crediting of prior learning	Q16: I am pleased to study in our faculty and I feel valuable. Q17: I am pleased to study the Fisheries Engineering Program.
10	The certification of qualifications and the diploma	Q18: Graduation requirements and graduation decision processes of the program are defined.
11	The learning environment and resources	Q19: Main and auxiliary resources related to the course are recommended at the beginning of the semester.
12	Academic support services	Q20: I can easily reach my consultant whenever I want. Q21: The attitude and approach of the faculty administrative staff towards students is positive.
13	Facilities and infrastructure	Q22: Instructional technology (projection, smart board, etc.) is used effectively in lessons. Q23: The physical conditions of the classrooms (heating, cooling, lighting) are sufficient and the classrooms are clean.
14	Disadvantaged groups	Q24: Instruction is diversified to accommodate individual differences. Q25: Feedback is given regarding learning deficiencies.
15	Social, cultural and sporting activities	Q26: I am satisfied with the social and technical visit activities of our faculty.
16	Recruitment, promotion and appointment criteria	Q27: In general, I find the faculty members' transfer of knowledge and skills sufficient. Q28: The general attitude of the faculty members towards students is satisfactory. Q29: Academic instructors can be reached outside of class.
17	Teaching competencies and development	
18	Incentives and rewards for educational activities	
	Additional item: Internationalization aspect	Q30: I think the faculty's international opportunities (Erasmus etc.) are sufficient.

Table 3. Some characteristics of the students who participated in the survey

		Number	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	20	36.36
	Male	35	63.64
Class	First	17	30.91
	Second	18	32.73
	Third	4	7.27
	Fourth	16	29.09

eries Engineering Program" (4.02±1.04 points) and the statement with the lowest satisfaction level was "Methods and techniques that enable active participation of students are used in classes" (3.35±1.21 points).

Average student satisfaction levels for the Learning Resources and Academic Support Services main criterion were recorded as 3.68 points (▶Table 6). The statement with the highest satisfaction rate was "I can easily reach my consultant whenever I want" (4.00±0.99 points) and the statement with the lowest satisfaction level was "I am satisfied with the social and technical visit activities

of our faculty" (3.31±1.28 points).

Average student satisfaction levels for the Teaching Staff main criterion was found to be 3.95 points (▶Table 7). The statement with the highest satisfaction rate was "Academic instructors can be reached outside of class" (4.11±0.93 points) and the statement with the lowest satisfaction level was "In general, I find the faculty members' transfer of knowledge and skills sufficient" (3.84±0.93 points).

Table 4. Average student satisfaction levels for the Program Design, Evaluate and Update main criterion

Question	1		2		3		4		5		Mean±SD
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
The objectives of the Fisheries Engineering Program curriculum are clear.	1	1.82	8	14.55	4	7.27	27	49.09	15	27.27	3.85±1.03
The courses in the curriculum are sufficient in theory.	2	3.64	11	20.00	7	12.73	20	36.36	15	27.27	3.64±1.18
The courses in the curriculum are sufficient in practice.	6	10.91	21	38.18	8	14.55	14	25.45	6	10.91	2.87±1.22
I think the program courses contributed to my personal development.	1	1.82	11	20.00	3	5.45	28	50.91	12	21.82	3.71±1.07
I think the program courses contributed to my professional development.	0	0.00	9	16.36	5	9.09	28	50.91	13	23.64	3.82±0.97
Academic instructors use class hours effectively.	1	1.82	3	5.45	5	9.09	33	60.00	13	23.64	3.98±0.84
Extracurricular activities (homework, presentations, etc.) are sufficient and balanced.	13	23.64	10	18.18	6	10.91	20	36.36	6	10.91	2.92±1.39
I think that the education and training activities in our faculty are sufficient.	2	3.64	12	21.82	8	14.55	25	45.45	8	14.55	3.45±1.09
I think that the Fisheries Engineering curriculum is up to date.	4	7.27	4	7.27	13	23.64	25	45.45	9	16.36	3.56±1.07
Courses are delivered in accordance with the predetermined plan..	1	1.82	4	7.27	6	10.91	33	60.00	11	20.00	3.89±0.87
Planning and announcements regarding learning and teaching processes are made on time.	4	7.27	5	9.09	8	14.55	23	41.82	15	27.27	3.73±1.17
Mean of the main criteria											3.58

Table 5. Average student satisfaction levels for the Implementation of Programs main criterion

Question	1		2		3		4		5		Mean±SD
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Students are encouraged to participate in class.	5	9.09	7	12.73	11	20.00	19	34.55	13	23.64	3.51±1.23
Methods and techniques that enable active participation of students are used in classes.	4	7.27	13	23.64	7	12.73	22	40.00	9	16.36	3.35±1.21
Academic instructors are objective in measurement and evaluation.	2	3.64	8	14.55	8	14.55	22	40.00	15	27.27	3.73±1.12
Exams are conducted in accordance with the content of the course.	2	3.64	4	7.27	7	12.73	25	45.45	17	30.91	3.93±1.02
I am pleased to study in our faculty and I feel valuable.	1	1.82	10	18.18	11	20.00	21	38.18	12	21.82	3.60±1.07
I am pleased to study the Fisheries Engineering Program.	1	1.82	6	10.91	5	9.09	22	40.00	21	38.18	4.02±1.04
Graduation requirements and graduation decision processes of the program are defined.	3	5.45	9	16.36	10	18.18	21	38.18	12	21.82	3.54±1.16
Mean of the main criteria											3.67

4. Discussion

Survey studies in satisfaction analysis are a valuable tool that can help organizations or service providers better understand their customers and provide them with better service. In higher education area, by involving students as valued, equal partners who share responsibility, we can significantly enhance their learning, motivation, and sense of belonging, while fostering a climate of trust (Isaeva et al., 2020). Another important point here is that the survey questions should be prepared in accordance with a specific basis (Rea and Parker, 2014). THEQC is the most authorized institution in Turkish higher education that determines quality standards and develops methods for their implementation. According to the THEQC, as well as significant decision-makers in the European higher education quality field such as ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education), improving education and training processes through student feedback is highly important. Therefore, in this study, a fundamental quality infra-

structure has been established and disseminated by basing the propositions prepared to determine education and training satisfaction on the THEQC's criteria.

The average scores for all propositions in the 29-item survey ranged from 2.87 to 4.11. Questions with an average score above 4 include: "Academic instructors can be reached outside of class" (4.11 points), "I am pleased to study the Fisheries Engineering Program" (4.02 points), and "I can easily reach my consultant whenever I want" (4.00 points). Yeşilbaş Özenç (2024) revealed the quality indicators for students can be listed as student satisfaction, academic success, quality of graduates, and staff-student relations. It is a positive result that students are satisfied with the academic staff, who are the only people they interact with throughout their higher education. On the other hand, the lowest-scoring questions, with an average below 3, were: "The courses in the curriculum are sufficient in practice" (2.87 points) and "Extracurricular activities (homework, presentations, etc.) are sufficient and balanced" (2.92 points). These propositions point to the

Table 6. Average student satisfaction levels for the Learning Resources and Academic Support Services main criterion

Question	1		2		3		4		5		Mean±SD
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Main and auxiliary resources related to the course are recommended at the beginning of the semester.	2	3.64	6	10.91	7	12.73	28	50.91	12	21.82	3.76±1.03
I can easily reach my consultant whenever I want.	1	1.82	5	9.09	6	10.91	24	43.64	19	34.55	4.00±0.99
The attitude and approach of the faculty administrative staff towards students is positive.	2	3.64	9	16.36	11	20.00	19	34.55	14	25.45	3.62±1.14
Instructional technology (projection, smart board, etc.) is used effectively in lessons.	5	9.09	6	10.91	4	7.27	19	34.55	21	38.18	3.82±1.29
The physical conditions of the classrooms (heating, cooling, lighting) are sufficient and the classrooms are clean.	3	5.45	5	9.09	3	5.45	26	47.27	18	32.73	3.93±1.11
Instruction is diversified to accommodate individual differences.	5	9.09	9	16.36	9	16.36	22	40.00	10	18.18	3.42±1.22
Feedback is given regarding learning deficiencies.	4	7.27	6	10.91	12	21.82	23	41.82	10	18.18	3.54±1.13
I am satisfied with the social and technical visit activities of our faculty.	6	10.91	10	18.18	11	20.00	17	30.91	11	20.00	3.31±1.28
Mean of the main criteria											3.68

Table 7. Average student satisfaction level for the Teaching Staff main criterion

Question	1		2		3		4		5		Mean±SD
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
In general, I find the faculty members' transfer of knowledge and skills sufficient.	0	0.00	8	14.55	5	9.09	30	54.55	12	21.82	3.84±0.93
The general attitude of the faculty members towards students is satisfactory.	2	3.64	4	7.27	7	12.73	27	49.09	15	27.27	3.89±1.00
Academic instructors can be reached outside of class.	2	3.64	2	3.64	3	5.45	29	52.73	19	34.55	4.11±0.93
Mean of the main criteria											3.95

THEQC's "Course distribution balance of the program" and "Student workload-based course design" sub-criteria. In this way, the faculty identifies which criteria need improvement and creates an opportunity for these areas. However, previous studies carried in the Forestry Faculties indicated that it has been reported that students are generally satisfied with the education they receive (Sevim Korkut et al., 2011; Korkmaz et al., 2023). However, the research conducted with the students of Faculty of Forestry recorded lower student satisfaction regarding the inadequacy of practical applications (Akyüz et al., 2013; Korkmaz et al., 2023), which aligns with the findings of our current study. Similar results have emerged in a study conducted with students of Tennessee Technological University's Master of Science Program in Fisheries Management (Kranz et al., 2004). The students recommended the inclusion of more practical field experience in the curriculum. Given that both laboratory and field studies are highly important for gaining professional experience in natural sciences, it has been revealed that even though numerous practical activities are carried out in forestry or fisheries disciplines, they do not sufficiently satisfy students. On the other hand, previous studies conducted in different profile of student groups in faculties and vocational schools, including tourism, social sciences, nursing, the level of satisfaction with faculty staff and academic consulting services was recorded above average (Eren et al., 2013; Ukav, 2017; Gökulu, 2020; Pakiş Çetin and Çevik Kaya, 2024). Hunter and White (2004) stated that the academic advising system enables students to shape meaningful learning experiences, thereby promoting success and assisting with educational, career, and life goals. Similar results were recorded in our current study conducted with the students of İzmir Kâtip Çelebi University Faculty of Fisheries.

The average satisfaction levels by THEQC's learning and training criteria were recorded as 3.58 points for Program Design, Evaluate and Update, 3.67 points for Implementation of Programs, 3.68 points for Learning Resources and Academic Support Services, and 3.95 points for Teaching Staff. It has been determined that the satisfaction levels of İzmir Kâtip Çelebi University Faculty of Fisheries students, based on the survey scale developed according to THEQC's learning and teaching criteria, are above average (>3.50 points). Pelin et al. (2022) summarized the details of the THEQC's learning and teaching quality assurance system, which holds all higher education institutions in Türkiye accountable. In this system, it is necessary for higher education institutions to have determined and publicly shared the alignment of the objectives and learning outcomes of their programs with the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in Turkey (NQF-HETR). Issues such as whether

there are defined processes for program design and approval, course information packages and their alignment with national core programs, and how the achievement of program outcomes is evaluated should be explained. Furthermore, evidence regarding the balance of course distribution and the principles and rules related to this balance, as well as the defined and monitored ratios of compulsory/elective courses, is expected to be presented within this scope. The learning outcomes of the course should be matched with the program outcomes. The processes regarding how the learning outcomes of the course are achieved should be defined. It should be explained whether student participation is ensured in determining the workload. Other expected topics to be explained include how student admission is conducted and what the defined processes are for the recognition of prior learning. The processes regarding the recognition and certification of diplomas, degrees, and other qualifications must be clearly, understandably, comprehensively, and consistently defined, and these should be shared with the public. It should be presented whether student-centered learning, teaching, and assessment criteria are met. The relationship between measurement and evaluation practices and the learning outcomes of the course and program outcomes is among the topics expected to be explained within this criterion. The existence of an advisor who supports students in their academic and career paths, and the transparent and student-centered structuring of advisor selection and change processes are important. Hence, based on the results of the questionnaire prepared by grounding it in the criteria that encompass all these conditions of the THEQC, it is possible to say that the quality of education at İzmir Kâtip Çelebi University Faculty of Fisheries is above average.

Consequently, an analysis of student satisfaction at İzmir Kâtip Çelebi University's Faculty of Fisheries, utilizing a survey aligned with THEQC criteria, reveals an overall satisfaction level above average. Students expressed high satisfaction with the accessibility of academic staff, their pleasure in the program, and the ease of reaching their advisors. To enhance the program, it is recommended to increase practical field studies and ensure a better balance and sufficiency of extracurricular activities. While academic advising and faculty accessibility are strengths to maintain, a review of the curriculum's practical components is crucial. Aligning course content more closely with real-world applications and providing more hands-on experience would likely boost student satisfaction and better prepare them for their future careers. Continuous monitoring of student feedback and a focus on these areas will further strengthen the program's quality, in line with THEQC's emphasis on student input for educational improvement.

Research Ethics

Permission was obtained for the implementation of the survey by the decision of the İzmir Kâtip Çelebi University Social Research Ethics Committee dated 24.07.2024 and numbered 2024/14-01.

Author Contributions

The author solely conducted all stages of this research.

Competing Interests

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

Data Availability

The raw data can be obtained on request from the author.

Peer-review

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Orcid

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