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Professional Knowledge Courses in Teacher Education: Lecturer and Student Views (The Case of Gazi Education Faculty)

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Abstract

Professional knowledge courses (PKC) at education faculties are designed to educate high quality teachers. This study aims to examine the views of education faculty lecturers, graduates and senior year students about the place and implementation of PKC in teacher education. The study group of the qualitative study included lecturers (20), senior year (22) and graduate (12) students who agreed to take part in the study. Data were collected by using semi structured interview forms. Focus group interviews of 30-45 minutes were held with individual lecturers and graduates, and with groups of 3-5 senior year students. For data analysis, a list of codes was made. Relavant codes were brought together for thematic coding. Analyses of lecturer and student views on PKC revealed the following themes: General perceptions, content, implementation, quality of lecturers, measurement and evaluation in PKC, teaching practice, educational environments, educational system - policies, and recommendations. The study concludes with teacher education recommendations based on the findings.

Keywords: Teacher education, professional knowledge for teachers, lecturer views, teacher candidate views

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INTRODUCTION

According to teacher education research, the characteristics needed by high-quality teachers are as follows: The primary characteristics include coming to class prepared, having a positive worldview, being creative and innovative. Secondary characteristics are being fair, humorous and compassionate (Çelikten, Şanal and Yeni, 2005; Okçabol, 2004; Walker 2008). According to a different view, teachers are considered to be competent and effective in their fields if they can transform conceptual knowledge into appropriate action (McGinn and Schiefelbein 2010; Riedler & Eryaman, 2016). In other words, an effective teacher can guide students to turn abstract knowledge into concrete and to conceptualize new information by integrating it into their lives. Whenever teacher qualities are discussed, issues such as teacher education policies, models, strategies, programs and restructuring inevitably come up. Yıldırım (2011) mentions several conflict areas at play during teacher education. These are conflicts between subject area and professional knowledge of teaching, theory and practice, standardization and diversity, and the teacher as technician and expert. Yıldırım (2011) states that most studies seem to ignore these conflict areas. He attributes this to the narrow scope of recent teacher education studies.

This study aims to examine Professional Knowledge Courses (PKC) at education faculties. It discusses the role of PKC in teacher education by drawing on teacher and student views. Therefore, it relates directly to the conflict between subject area and professional knowledge of teaching. It is hoped that the study will contribute to broadening the scope of teacher education research.

Professional knowledge courses (PKC)

In 1982, a major change took place in the Turkish teacher education system with the Higher Education Reform through which all teacher education institutions under the Ministry of Education were transferred to the university system (Saban, 2003; Simsek and Yildirim, 2001; Tercanlioglu, 2004). With this higher education reform, all 3- and 4-year Teacher Education Institutes at university level for middle schools (lower secondary) and high schools (upper secondary) were transformed into 4-year departments in Faculties of Education (Simsek and Yildirim, 2001). The Higher Education Council (HEC) resolved in 1982 that Departments of Educational Sciences would be established to offer PKC (HEC, 2007a). In 1983, educational programs were developed for education faculties. These programs reconsidered PKC, as well. The programs stayed effective with minor changes until the end of the 1997-1998 academic year (ÖzTurk, 2005; HEC, 2007a). During the 1990s, teaching practice component became dysfunctional as education faculties were acting like faculties of science and letters; there was an imbalance between PKC and other courses in the program; and PKC were being neglected (Baskan, 2001; Özer, 1990; ÖzTurk, 2005; Yüksel, 2011). The HEC carried out two comprehensive studies in teacher education programs, the first of which took place in 1997 and the second in 2006 (as an update to the first one) (HEC, 2007a; HEC, 2007b). Standardizing PKC was a major goal of these studies. The criticism following the 1997 and 2006 efforts and voiced in several research results was about PKC (Çelik and Önal, 2005; Kumral and Saracaloğlu, 2011; Taşkın and Hacıömeroğlu, 2010; Üstüner, 2004; Yüksel, 2004). The criticism revolved around the need for programs offered at education faculties, particularly PKC, to be redesigned. Currently, the following PKC are offered at education faculties: Introduction to Educational Sciences, Educational Psychology, Instructional Principles and Methods, Instructional Technologies and Materials Design, Classroom Management, Special Instruction Methods, Measurement and Evaluation, Counselling, School Experience, Practice Teaching, Turkish Educational System and School Administration, Comparative Education, Program Development and Instruction, Developmental Psychology, Instructional Theories and Approaches, Sociology of Education, Philosophy of Education, and Turkish Educational History. The role and proportion of PKC in teacher education programs was loosened by the 2006 resolutions of the HEC, and left to the decision of faculty boards depending on each department's needs and conditions (HEC, 2007b).

PKC were designed in order to train high-quality teachers. There are numerous studies and debates on the role, effects and significance of PKC in teacher education. These studies have mostly considered individual PKC and focused mainly on the following courses: Practice Teaching (Cansaran, İdil and Kalkan, 2006; Çetintaş and Genç, 2005; Eraslan, 2009; Kılıç, 2004; Özkılıç, Bilgin and Kartal, 2008), School Experience I and II (Demircan, 2007; Kılınç and Altuk, 2010; Sarıtaş, 2007). They mostly investigated course implementation, effects on students, and overall problems. Studies on the Measurement and Evaluation and Instructional Planning and Evaluation courses (Anıl and Acar 2008; Birgin and Gürbüz, 2008; Çakan, 2004; Çelikkaya, Karakuş, & Demirbaş, 2010; Gelbal and Kelecioğlu, 2007; Şahin 2007) have usually questioned the competence of teachers and teacher candidates in measurement and evaluation. Other examples of course-based studies include the effects of the Instructional Technologies and Materials Design (Gündüz and Odabaşı, 2004; Güven, 2006) and Instructional Principles and Methods (ÖzTurk, 2004; Soylu, 2009) courses on teacher candidates. Studies that have evaluated PKC in general (Ekici, 2008; Taşkın and Hacıömeroğlu, 2010) have revealed the viewpoints and attitudes of teacher candidates towards the courses. It is worth noting that most of these studies focused solely on teacher candidates. The present study, however, also examines the viewpoints of lectures. High-quality teacher education has always been part of social development decisions (Çağlar and Acar, 2013; ERG, 2015; YPK, 2013). The present study offers a discussion of PKC, which is a critical variable in the process of high-quality teacher education, based on the views of education faculty lecturers and teacher candidates.

METHOD

Participants

This qualitative study aims to examine the views of education faculty lecturers, graduates and senior year students about the place and implementation of PKC in teacher education. The study group comprises lecturers teaching PKC at Gazi University's Gazi Education Faculty (20), senior students (22) and students who have graduated (12), all of whom agreed to take part in the study. A total of 54 interviews were conducted. Of the students, 26 were female and 9 were male. Their ages varied between 21 and 34. Of the lecturers, 10 were female and 7 were male. Five were full professors, 9 were associate professors and 3 were assistant professors. They had 15 to 43 years of professional experience. An effort was made to include lecturers and students from all departments and divisions of Gazi Education Faculty in the study group. The distribution of senior year students and graduates according to their specializations was as follows: Elementary Education 7, Art and Crafts Education 6, Mathematics Education 4, Preschool Education 3, Music Education 3, Turkish Language and Literature Education 2, Science Education 2, Geography Education 2, German Education 2, English Education 1, Physics Education 1, Social Studies Education 1. The distribution of lecturers according to their divisions was as follows: Curriculum and Instruction 5, Preschool Education 2, Music Education 2, Geography Education 2, Educational Administration, Supervision and Planning 1, Physics Education 1, Measurement and Evaluation 1, English Education 1, History Education 1, Elementary Education 1. The study group was established by using the purposive sampling method of criterion sampling. The criteria used in choosing the interview participants were as follows: 1. Lecturers should have at least 15 years of professional experience, 2. Lecturers from outside the Educational Sciences Department should have the experience of teaching the «Special Instruction Methods» and «Practice Teaching» courses, 3. Students and graduates should have attended PKC and also «Practice Teaching», and 4. Participants should agree to take part in the study.

Procedure

A semi-structured interview form was used to help obtain more in-depth data from participants' own perspectives (Furlong and Edwards, 1993; Yıldırım and Şimşek 2006). The interviews were held between March-June 2015. Approximately 30-45 minute focus group interviews were held individually with lecturers and graduates, and with groups of 3-5 senior year students. Written notes were held during the interviews and audio recordings were made where interviewees

agreed to it. Interview forms were designed by surveying the literature and deciding on core and follow-up questions. These questions were then sent for expert view and necessary adjustments were made in line with the feedback. Following these, interviews were held with 2 lecturers and 2 students to test the intelligibility of the questions and their adequacy in data collection. In the final interview form, the following questions appeared: 1. Which PKC have you taught/taken? 2. Do PKC meet their aims in teacher education? 3. What are your views about the content of PKC? 4. What are your views about PKC's implementation and process? 5. What are your views about the qualities of lecturers who teach PKC? 6. What are student attitudes and participation like in PKC? 7. What are your views about the measurement and evaluation used in PKC? 8. What do you think PKC should be like? How should courses be planned, taught and evaluated?

Data analysis

In data analysis, notes from interviews with lecturers and students were examined line by line and a list of codes was drawn up after coding the data. Related codes in the list were brought together for thematic coding. Thematic coding took into account internal and external consistency with research questions. Later, participants views were grouped by considering the list of codes and themes. Themes and codes organized according to frequency of similar opinions were tabulated and sample quotations were included in interpretations. Instead of using real names, coding was done by using L1 and so on for lecturers and S1 and so on for students. For reliability, responses of lecturers and students to the interview questions were coded separately by two different researchers. The codes determined were examined by the researchers and codes with "agreement" and "disagreement" were spotted. In reliability measurements for the coding, Miles and Huberman's (1994) reliability formula was used. Reliability = Agreement / (Agreement + Disagreement). The calculations revealed a reliability rate of 87% and the research was considered reliable.

FINDINGS

In this section, interpretations about PKC are tabulated and sample quotations are included. Lecturer and student comments about professional knowledge courses are gathered under the following themes: General perceptions, content, implementation, quality of lecturers, measurement and evaluation in PKC, practice teaching, educational environments, educational system and policies, and recommendations.

Table 1 presents the list of themes and codes related to lecturer and student comments about PKC and the frequency of opinions.

Table 1.Lecturer and student comments on PKC

Themes	Codes	L(n=20)	S(n=34)
General Perceptions	necessary and important	16	23
	failing to meet goals	17	15
	boring courses	13	14
	enjoyable courses	-	5
	affect of lecturers	-	17
	theory-practice discord	-	17
Content	density of cognitive behavior	5	-
	micro teaching as a separate course	5	10
	overlapping	6	7
	reduction and deepening	3	5
	increasing the time in certain courses	-	7
	drama as a separate course	-	10

Implementation	insensitivity to student needs	6	-
	presentations by students	5	7
	lack of practical work	8	23
	mechanical and based on memorizing	3	13
	inefficient	-	10
	lecturing method and mostly slides	4	11
	students not participating actively	-	11
Lecturers	too much teaching load	4	-
	academic studies, promotion	5	-
	being equipped	10	13
	modeling	9	7
	communicating effectively	7	-
	poor teaching performance	13	-
	experience of elementary-middle-high school teaching	5	3
Measurement and evaluation	mostly cognitive measurement	9	-
	encouraging memorization	9	8
	not including alternative approaches	9	23
	not measuring upper level learning	10	8
	lenient marking	6	4
	inadequate evaluation	-	9
	not reading assignments	-	6
Practice Teaching	having the position of a key course	9	14
	lack of good planning and interest	10	13
	host teacher indifference	6	-
	lack of time	5	9
	lecturer indifference	-	10
Educational environments	poor physical conditions	13	
	negative atittudes of administrators	6	
	too many classes	7	
Educational system-Policies	focusing on exams and diplomas	4	
	faculties and big student numbers	4	
	memorization-based educational system	7	
	employment problems of teachers	6	
	publication support by the HEC	4	
	effects of politics on education	4	
Recommendations	academics working in groups	3	
	accreditation system	4	
	in-service training	3	
	presenting student work	4	
	activity pools	2	
	competence-based programs	8	
	autonomous, competitive education	4	
	getting rid of evening classes	3	
	lecturer cooperation	6	
	training field-based educational scientists	7	

General perceptions on PKC

Lecturers, students and graduates had the following general perceptions about PKC: Despite finding PKC important and necessary, they believe it does not meet its goals. Some lecturers said the following about why PKC are necessary and why they do not meet their goals:

Until the 40s, the view that «the one with knowledge teaches» was common. The development of pedagogy as a science shifted the focus to how knowledge should be taught. Someone who does not know the students or cannot carry out measurement and evaluation should not become a teacher (L1)

Overall, I do not believe they meet their goals. Our education system is exam-based. These courses are seen as a tool through which cognitive behaviors can be memorized to get a good score from the Public Personnel Selection Exam (PPSE) (L 9)

The physics course is taught very differently by a teacher who has taken PKC. A physics expert fills the blackboard and leaves. A teacher focuses on how to explain the topics, how to teach them (L8)

Lecturers think that field knowledge is not enough to teach. For instance, a chemist's chemistry knowledge is not enough to work as chemistry teacher; this knowledge needs to be complemented with a concern for "How do I teach this?", which requires training in the teaching profession. On the other hand, they also stated that the PKC currently offered at education faculties are cognitively oriented, owing to the PPSE. Teacher candidates emphasized that graduating from an education faculty is not enough to become teachers; they also need to pass the PPSE, and they therefore find it important to be able to answer PKC-related questions in the exam. Therefore, putting knowledge into practice is only a secondary issue.

According to the students and graduates, PKC are mostly enjoyable courses where student interest depends on the lecturer. However, there are opposing views that practice and theory in these courses do not overlap; student motivation is low; and the courses are boring and based on memorization.

I think PKC are useful, but my friends claim that they'd be good teachers without them too… We need to be free in PKC. I mean, we shouldn't be contained in the classroom. Education lecturers always say that we need round tables, we should teach outdoors in the schoolyard, schools should have practical courses. However, they don't practice what they preach (S2)

PPSE is a source of motivation for these courses (S8)

For us, PKC are only useful for getting passing grades. In fact, the teacher is an important factor; there are field courses as well where we get bored (S9)

I certainly can't claim to use what I learned in PKC in my teaching practice (S16)

In theory it's all great, just like politics, but in practice there are many problems. When I saw the unwillingness of students to learn during my internship, I thought that I should have been prepared for this much earlier (S23)

Student and graduates' perceptions of PKC were not different from those of lecturers. The views revealed that students experience a dilemma. Despite finding PKC important, they also stated that these courses do not equip them with teaching experience and have several deficiencies. They added that certain lecturers' classes are really effective, and that their interest in these courses depend on the lecturer. Similar to lecturers, students also referred to PPSE. Unfortunately, PPSE seems to be a source of motivation for students in PKC.

Content of PKC

Regarding the content of PKC, lecturers emphasized the predominance of cognitive behaviors, the overlap between course content, the need for content reduction and deeening, and the need for micro teaching to be a separate course.

Micro teaching, until before 98, was a separate course in the program of my faculty and it was both effective and enjoyable; it really prepared students for practice teaching (L16)

Micro teaching is an important practice that prepares teacher candidates to the teaching profession by repeatedly implementing fragmented instructional skills in the classroom. Before 1998, when educational sciences departments in Turkish education faculties prepared their own programs independently, some faculties offered micro teaching as a seperate semester-long course to prepare students for practice teaching. When the HEC standardized PKC across all faculties after 1998, this course was integrated as a method into practicum courses such as Special Instruction Methods and School Experience (Alpan and Erdamar, 2011).

Students and graduates stated that PKC content is repetitive; the content of Introduction to Educational Sciences, Measurement and Evaluation, Turkish Educational System and School Administration courses should be reduced; and the duration of Measurement and Evaluation, Psychology of Education, Developmental Psychology, Educational Technology and Materials Design courses should be lengthened. They generally demanded that the micro teaching and drama practices used in "Special Instruction Methods" courses become independent courses in their own right.

Field courses should be stopped or reduced. PKC may be better during years 3 and 4. I don't remember the courses I received during my first year. Our difference from Faculties of Science and Letters should be better revealed (S3)

There are unlimited methods in the Instructional Principles and Methods course. What is important is for us to choose and teach methods in line with the field, students, learning styles and developmental characteristics (S12)

Measurement and evaluation was very difficult, it was a very boring class at graduate level. The topics were abstract, and we followed a book without any practice(S17)

Students and graduates demanded that the duration and content of PKC be aligned. They also asked for content that is congruent with their own fields. They complained that some course content is cognitively dense and tedious.

Implementation of PKC

Lecturer and student views about the implementation of PKC were as follows: The courses are taught ineffectively in a teacher-centered way. Student needs are not considered. Classes generally require students to divide the topics amongst themselves and present them through slide shows. Classes are based on theory with very rare occasions of practice. Mostly, there is a single coursebook to be followed. Below is a different view from one of the lecturers:

Educational sciences lecturers claim that they can teach any course. However, not everybody can teach the Instructional Technologies and Materials Design course. They must know the field of the student (L14)

Currently, both field and educational sciences department lecturers teach the Instructional Technologies and Materials Design course mentioned by the lecturer. In certain departments, there is

an ongoing debate about who should teach this course. There are recommendations that this course needs to be taught jointly by two lecturers.

The Instructional Technologies and Materials Design course can of course be given jointly by a field lecturer and an educational scientist (L16)

A student from the Preschool Education Department stated that the Instructional Technologies and Materials Design course should be offered by educational scientists:

A field lecturer taught us Instructional Technologies and Materials Design. It had no difference from the Creative Activties for Children course. We sewed up lots of toys, made eucational toys. An educational sciences lecturer would've been more effective (S10)

Student views about the implementation of other courses show that they stress the inadequacy of practical work in classes:

Instructional Principles and Methods, Materials Design were very good and student-centered. I have no idea why the Measurement and Evaluation course has to be so difficult…We can see sample questions in this course, we can prepare exams. Instead, we studied statistics and the lecturer made it unnecessarily hard. I wonder how much of that information we will actually use when we start teaching (S1)

Introduction to Educational Sciences, Instructional Principles and Methods, Turkish Educational System and School Administration courses were taught by the same lecturer, who made us examine articles in the classroom. What did they teach me… nothing more than a casual chat with a friend, they weren't effective, practical work would have been more permanent (S20)

Education courses are taught very theoretically; there is no practice. I went for practice teaching in a 6th grade class. I taught them as if they were university students (S12)

In assignments and courses where I'm not active, I can't learn (S34)

Qualities of Lecturers

Lecturers made self-criticism about their own teaching qualities: They stated that their course load is too heavy; their academic studies and academic promotion criteria overshadow their instructional concerns, thus harming their teaching performance. Lecturers do not believe in the importance of the course and do not strive to improve educational problems. They can not reflect their scientific studies in their classrooms and cannot improve themselves as teachers. However, lecturers should in fact be able to win students' trust, act as role models, and communicate with them effectively. Below are some quotations about lecturers' teaching qualities:

I believe that instructional performance at universities is low. There are various reasons for this. the lecturer can't be the only one to blame. HEC supports publications. A good lecturer cannot be distingusihed from others (L10)

There are lecturers who don't go to class, and then there are others who take their class really seriously. One lecturer built her class on practicum. The students were scared to start with, but they say they learned a lot (L7)

A lecturer from the Science Faculty sees herself as a scientist. There are lecturers with engineering backgrounds, and they don't accept teaching. They say «We are engineers» (L8)

While students and graduates stated that PKC lecturers should be experts in their fields, well-equipped and role models, they also emphasized the need for teaching experience in all stages of education and effective speaking details such as adjusting tone of voice.

The Introduction to Educational Sciences course was a total mess and the lecturer was not effective at all. It was as if he'd been forced into teaching the course. He kept coming late and fiddling with his phone during class time (S1)

Fifty percent of lecturers have good academic careers and field expertise, they are successful, but experience is also important. You see the difference between a lecturer with high or middle school experience and those without it. I don't agree that a lecturer with only university experience will be effective. This is just like «Getting someone to draw an apple by describing it while you have never seen one yourself (S7)

Our lecturers say «You art and music people are always the same, you never study or listen to us». Sitting down for three hours to listen to a lecture is indeed dfficult for us (S16)

Many education lecturers have problems involving students in the course (S11)

Education courses are boring, deadly boring, and I'm not happy with the lecturers in general. One lecturer had a very annoying, screeching voice. And annoying behaviors as well (S14)

Measurement and Evaluation in PKC

Lecturer views about measurement and evaluation in PKC were as follows: They stated that mostly cognitive behaviors are measured, information-loaded questions encourage students to memorize, alternative measurement and evaluation approaches are not covered, upper level learning can not be measured or evaluated, and some lecturers resort to giving high grades.

Most educational sciences lecturers use tests. Do tests trigger thinking? They keep students and lecturers happy, but require little effort as a technique. Lecturers advocate thinking but the technique decreases thinking (L10)

Lecturers who do not teach well give high grades. They try to avoid problems in this way. This may be due to the lecturer's character (L11)

There are some lecturers that enjoy abusing the students. They brag saying, «All that class got big fat zeros» (L15)

Students exemplifed how measurement and evaluation takes place in PKC through the measurement and evaluation used by the lecturers of the Measurement and Evaluation course:

I like the question types of the Measurement and evaluation lecturer. There were 10 multiple choice items and 10 open-ended questions. Tests make us unable to comment on things (S12)

Measurement and evaluation lecturer asked long questions with short, memorization-based answers in the exam(S1)

Students also emphasized that there are courses where only test-based measurement and evaluation are used:

In courses such as Instructional Principles and Methods or Classroom Management, exams are tests-based and the questions require memorization (S13)

Practice Teaching

Practice teaching is greatly valued by lecturers and students. Their views were as follows: Practice teaching is a key course in the curriculum, but it is not taught effectively. Practice teachers are not interested in this. Practice teaching should be alloted more time.

The senior year, especially its second term, is a dead time for students when they aren't interested in the courses. Perhaps it would be better for graduates to take the PPSE. Students' interest in practicum courses decline… And practice teachers assign the same grade to all teacher candidates. A few colleages and I teach practice teaching but we aren't considered good teachers as we watch the students carefully. … The teacher candidate took mud to te classroom, instead of dough, as natural material. The practice teacher didn't accept it for cleanliness reasons(L12)

Most teachers in practice schools are older teachers who do not make lesson plans. They tell teacher candidates «There's no need to plan your classes. You're going to stop doing that in two years' time anyway». Staffrooms are full of such fed-up, worn-out teachers. How can they act as role models for teacher candidates?(L 15)

In addition, students and graduates touched upon the difficulty of teaching practice in mixed and difficult classes. They stated their wish for lecturers to observe and feed back to them.

Practice teaching does not meet any of its aims. I went to Belgium on an Erasmus grant. They spend 1,5 months solely on this. Each week, they go to a different school to get experience. Schools from different socio economic levels, and schools with disabled and gifted children are all selected. The teacher candidate collects points from each experience. If the total score is low, no diploma is granted to that candidate. In Turkey, practice teaching is there just for appearances. It's not done well. Based on what I hear from my friends studying at other institutions, I gather Gazi University is still one of the better ones(S1)

The lecturer observed our last class and gave us feedback, but only negative feedback. And the class teacher who found out that I was already teaching at a private tutorial center left the classroom to me and went off (S20).

Educational environments of PKC

Lecturer views about the educational environments of PKC were not positive. They agreed that the physical conditions of the faculty are inadequate. There are too many classes. Occasionally, administrators display negative attitudes. Practicum conditions are insufficient.

Student observations in my practice teaching clashed with other courses in my schedule. The dean said «You don't have to go to the schools to observe students»(L5)

Education System and Policies

Lecturers shared their views by pointing out that views about the educational system and policies cannot be separate from PKC: The educational system is based on memorization, exams and diploma. The number and size of education faculties are too big. Teachers have employment and assignment problems. The HEC supports not successful lecturers, but publications. Administrators' educational philosophies and attitudes are wrong. Politics has too much influence on education.

People with no interest with educational sciences say «if there's a course book, I'll teach it». Administrators sometimes allow this (L1)

Politics has a lot of influence on education, this should be stopped. Politics also influences program development, which is not a scientific approach (L11)

Recommendations

The final theme for lecturer views was recommendations. The following were recommended: Academics should work in groups. Academics at education faculties should have elementary, middle and high school teaching experience. An accreditation system should be introduced. Lecturers should be given in-service training. Students' individual and group work, course outcomes should be displayed. Curricula should include activity pools in addition to course content. Courses should be designed according to the competence based program approach. Education should be autonomous and competitive. "Evening classes" taught after 17:00 pm should be cancelled. Lecturers from educational sciences and those teaching field courses should collaborate. Field-based educational scientists should be trained.

I don't see students use what they learn in PKC in the special instruction methods and practice teaching courses. I think it would be better if these courses are taught by people who are doing their graduate degrees in educational sciences (L3)

At times, we contradict with education lecturers. And sometimes students come and consult us. Education lecturers sometimes ask students to engage in an activity that we tell them "won't work in class (L13)

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

When PKC-related student and lecturer comments are examined, three views seem to stand out. First, PKC are necessary and important for high quality teacher education. There are many studies supporting this proposition (Cansaran, İdil and Kalkan, 2006; Çakan, 2004; Çetintaş and Genç, 2005; Demircan, 2007; Eraslan, 2009; Gündüz and Odabaşı, 2004; Kılıç, 2004; Kılınç and Altuk, 2010; Özkılıç, Bilgin and Kartal, 2008; Sarıtaş, 2007; Şahin, 2007; Yüksel, 2011). Second, PKC implementation does not involve practice. PKC are generally theory-based, teacher-centered, far from constructivism, and they follow a traditional approach, mostly based on one single resource. Students in these courses give Powerpoint presentations. Alpan (2013), Demir (2012), Kahramanoğlu (2010), Yanpar-Yelken, Çelikkaleli and Çapri's (2007) results corroborate these findings. Teacher candidates should be able to integrate theoretical information obtained from PKC, which tells them how to use and teach the information from field courses, with practicum (Küçükahmet, 2003; Şirin and Cesur, 2008; Taşkın and Hacıömeroğlu, 2010). Third, the measurement and evaluation in PKC do not include alternative approaches and are mostly traditional. Measurement largely takes place at lower levels with memorized knowledge and cognitive behaviors (Demir, 2012). Studies on teachers' and teacher candidates' measurement and evaluation competence (Anıl and Acar 2008; Çelikkaya, Karakuş and Demirbaş, 2010; Gelbal and Kelecioğlu, 2007) have shown taht they are not knowledgeable enough in alternative methods. Demirbaş and Yağbasan (2004) also found that alternative methods were not used when evaluating affective behaviors. These results not only question the quality of the Measurement and Evaluation course offered as a PKC in teacher education faculties, but also suggest that lecturers teaching other PKC courses do not form role models regarding this issue either. The views below are elaborations on the three mentioned above.

PKC are unable to meet their goals, and lecturers teaching these courses ultimately shape student perceptions of them. Taşkın and Hacıömeroğlu (2010) found similar results in their study. They examined the views of 72 teacher candidates about PKC. While 58 said that PKC positively affected their viewpoints about the teaching profession, others stated that they did not find the courses adequate and they did not alter their perspectives of the profession in any way. Lecturer quality is important for positive perceptions of PKC. According to the results of the study, lecturers should be better equipped, value their courses, communicate effectively with their students, and keep them active. Many researchers concede that knowing a subject well is not enough by itself for successful

teaching (Erden, 1999; Yüksel, 2009). Kavcar (2002) stresses the significance of teacher education in her article. She states that the "teacher educating teacher type" is somewhat neglected in Turkey. This comment corroborates the lecturer quality aspect of the present study. Ekici (2008) emphasizes in her study the importance for PKC lecturers to consider individual differences between teacher candidates while establishing the instructional environment. Şen and Erişen (2002) studied the characteristics of effective teaching among education faculty lecturers and concluded that while lecturers generally rate themselves as sufficient in effective teaching characteristics, teacher candidates think them less effective. In addition, teacher candidates do not think lecturers communicate with students effectively, either. These findings are parallel to the results of the present study.

Overall, the PKC content determined by the HEC has brought along standardization, but research has revealed repetitive course content, little practical work and activities, and overambitious content in some courses. The participants advocate micro teaching and drama not merely as a method, but as separate semester-long courses. Peker (2009) also states in his study that teacher candidates benefit greatly from micro teaching and proposes that it take place throughout the semester. Başcı and Gündoğdu (2011) studied the attitudes and views of teacher candidates towards the drama course and found that the course has positive effects on them.

Practice teaching has a critical place in PKC. The results suggest that faculties and practice schools do not emphasize practice teaching sufficiently. Practice teaching is a great opportunity for teacher candidates to practice what they have learned but their PPSE preparation concerns overshadow practice teaching preparations. Research shows that practice teaching affects teacher candidates positively and helps them grow, but the interaction and cooperation level between faculties and practice teaching schools must be improved (Hasher, Cocard and Moser, 2004; Dallmer, 2004; Çetintaş and Genç, 2005; Altıntaş and Görgen, 2014; Kılıç, 2004). Some studies also point to the importance of practice teaching lecturers and teachers jointly guiding teacher candidates, evaluating their experiences and sharing their views (Eraslan, 2009; Özkılıç, Bilgin and Kartal, 2008;). Parallel to the results of this study, certain previous studies have concluded that having teacher candidates go through practice teaching at the same time period as PPSE preparation affects the process negatively (Eraslan, 2009; Gökçe and Demirhan 2005; Altıntaş and Görgen, 2014; Yılmaz and Kab 2013).

Other views mentioned by lecturers in the study have been given under the heading "educational environment, educational system and recommendations". Overall, these views state that education faculties do not have the necessary environment for PKC. Okçabol (2004) studied the phenomenon of teacher education through student, teacher, lecturer and teacher candidate views, and spotted education faculties as the prime holder of responsibility. According to her study, education faculties seem to be not sufficient in making students embrace the teaching profession, turning them into free individuals, boosting their self-esteem, strengthening their interpersonal relationships, enriching them socially and culturally, improving their cognition and intellect, and giving them a scientific viewpoint. The exam and diploma-based, politically influenced educational system lies at the heart of these problems. The huge number of teacher candidates at education faculties not only increase lecturers' course load, but also affect other environmental conditions adversely. At the same time, the system evaluates lecturers not by their instructional performance but by their academic publications and project performance. Previous studies are laden with similar discussions (Özyürek 2008; Saylan, 2014; Şişman, 2009; Yüksel, 2011).

Based on these findings, the following recommendations may be made: The relationship between the quality of teacher education and PKC should be considered carefully. Field experts and stakeholders should plan and conduct studies in program development and evaluation in order to train better qualified teachers. PKC should be redesigned through a participative, scientific, competence-based program development model.

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