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A survey on coordinator instructors involved in industrial practices of students in vocational training high schools offering clothing education in Turkey

Meral Akkaya^{a*}, Nurgül Kılınc^b

^{a*}*Marmara Üniversitesi, Teknik Eğitim Fakültesi., Tekstil Eğitimi Bölümü, İstanbul, Türkiye*

^b*Selçuk Üniversitesi, Mesleki Eğitim Fakültesi, Giyim Endüstrisi Eğitimi Bölümü, Konya, Türkiye*

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Abstract

As is known the collaboration between schools and industry has stemmed from the need to create human labor which new jobs require. The very first need to create qualified workers is to professionally train individuals in suitable conditions. In Turkey, in the process of vocational schooling, coordinator instructors in co-operational educational programs are given the duty of bridging between schools which they represent and corporations where students have vocational training programs. For this reason, coordinator instructors are the most important chains in programming and administrating coordinator instructor programs. Namely, the success of the program depends largely upon the coordinator instructors.

The aim of this study is to determine, in the way of students, corporations, and coordinator instructors, the required capabilities of coordinator instructors involved in the industrial vocational practices of students at vocational high schools giving clothing education in Turkey. For this purpose, data were collected by survey method from 233 students being educated on clothing in 14 vocational high schools which send their senior students for training to corporations in cities like Adana, Ankara, Aydın, Balıkesir, İstanbul, İzmir, Sakarya and Tekirdağ, 46 coordinator instructors in these high schools, and 58 corporations which students in these schools were sent to. Collected data were statistically analyzed, and research results were reached.

According to the survey results, it was observed that coordinator instructors visited the corporations once a week, that most of them considered students' demand and complaints all the time, and that they negotiated with department instructors while determining about training programs.

Keywords: Schools-industry cooperation; coordinator instructors; training; capability.

* Meral Akkaya; Tel.: +9 02163365770-679; fax: +9 02163496111.

E-mail address: meral83akkaya@hotmail.com

1. Introduction

The educational institutions containing high schools except general high schools in secondary education, both bringing up qualified labor force for occupational and vocational fields and preparing the students for higher education are vocational and technical high schools (Günceoğlu, 2003: 42).

It has, through some application, been determined that, education in vocational-technical high schools should be supported with real working conditions in order to get more significant results in accordance with their goals through direct collaborations between vocational-technical high schools and rapidly developing industry. Thus, it is seen crucial for qualified labor force that students in these institutions who have developed their major skills in the school plants should perform their laboratory applications in industrial corporations providing real production conditions (Kazu, 2003:443).

General aim of educational institutions is to help healthy adjustment of individuals to individual development and social values and to the way of living. In order to create such an adjustment in vocational training, collaboration with the industry and the efforts in this regard must be supported. At whatever level and qualification a training program is applied, the schools must establish a regular relation with the industry. Sound relations that educational institutions will establish with the industry will both secure their existence and help their programs gain more functional characteristics (Gürol, 1997: 21).

In secondary school teaching, establishing school-industry collaboration and conducting it in a sound way is significant for the continuity of this collaboration. There are directly and indirectly concerned parties to provide this collaboration (Doğan at al, 1980: 55).

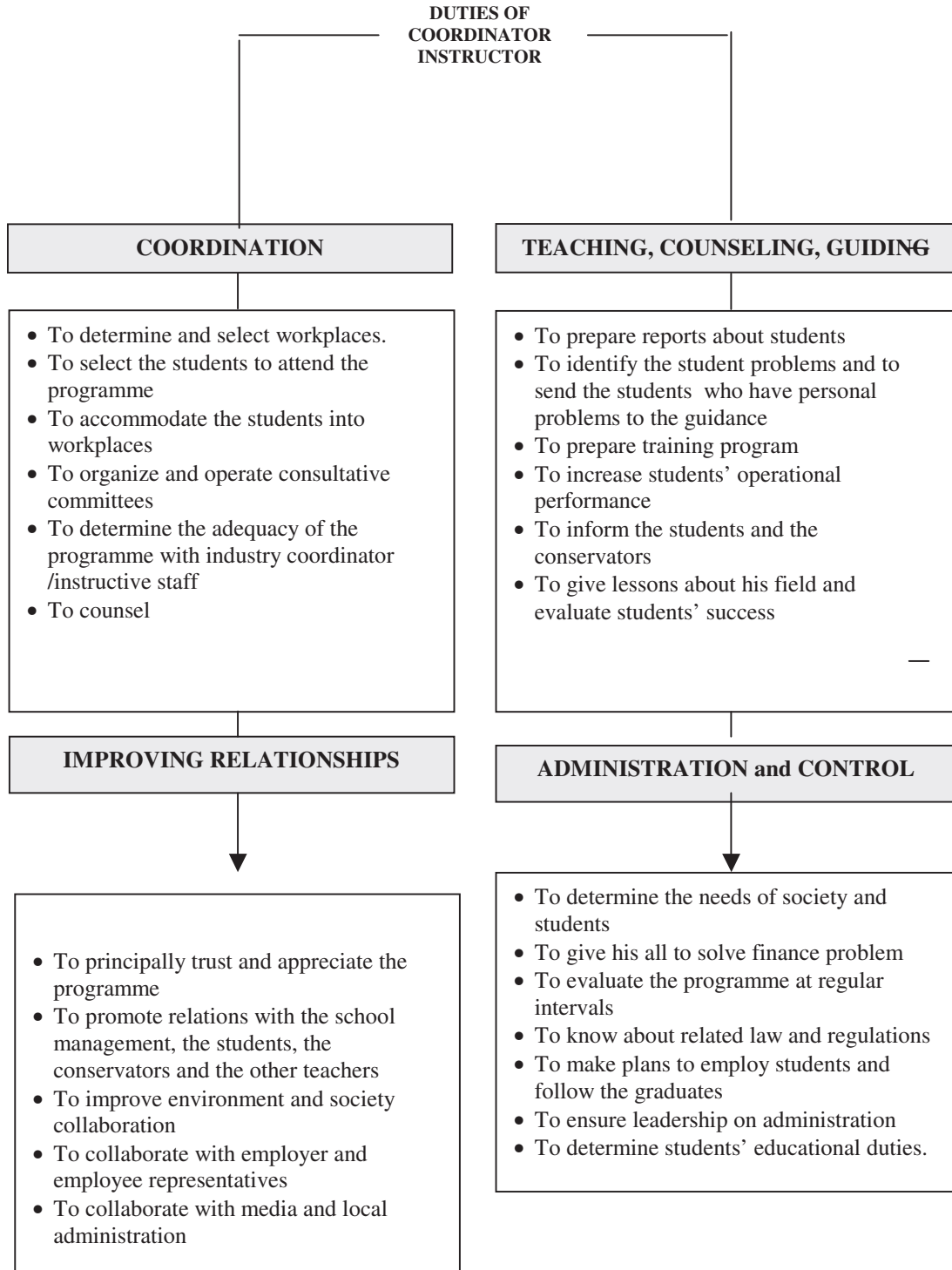
The Indirectly Concerned Parties; governmental facilities, Instructors, industrialists, labour unions, trade associations and mass communication branches

The Directly Concerned Parties; Counseling committees, ministry of education-centre, school administration, coordinator instructors, instructive staff, corporations, students and conservators

The people who are permanently in dialog with the students and the corporations about providing school-industry collaboration are the coordinator instructors. It is necessary for school administration to choose coordinator instructors according to specific standards and be sensible in choosing them, who are of significant roles in maintaining a sound collaboration

There are a number of views about the duties and the responsibilities of coordinator instructors. These can be summarized in the following titles (Külahçı, 1983:3).

Figure 1. Duties of coordinator instructor (Külahçı, 1983:3).



2. Method of the study

The goal of this study is to introduce the attitudes of the coordinator instructors in vocational high schools giving clothing education in Turkey, the evaluation of the students' demands and complaints, the frequency of the coordinator instructors' visit to the establishments, and adequacies that coordinator instructors must have. The study data have been obtained via a survey on 233 students who are being educated on clothing in 14 vocational high schools in 8 different cities, 46 coordinator instructors of these students, who take an interest in students' training period, and 58 establishments that the students go for training. As a result of the survey, the findings that were obtained from the students, coordinator instructors and establishments have been shown through tables.

3. The Findings Related to the Coordinator Instructors Interested in Students' Industrial Practice in Vocational High Schools That Give Clothing Education in Turkey;

This section includes the attitudes of the coordinator instructors about evaluating the students' demands and complaints, the attitudes of the administrators about opinion polls on training, the frequency of coordinator instructors' visit to establishments, the reasons required for the coordinator instructors to visit establishments and the findings pertaining to adequacies that coordinator instructors must have.

4. The Attitudes of the Coordinator Instructors about Evaluating the students' demands and complaints on every issue on training;

The findings about the dispersion of the attitudes of the coordinator instructors about evaluating the students' demands and complaints on every issue on training, according to the students included in this study, have been shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The dispersion of the attitudes of the coordinator instructors about evaluating the students' demands and complaints on every issue on training according to the students

The attitudes of the coordinator instructors about evaluating the students' demands and complaints	Student	
	f	%
Yes, Always	135	58,0
Usually	56	24,0
Sometimes	29	12,4
Never	13	5,6
TOTAL	233	100,0

n: 233

When Table 1 is examined, while 58% of the students included in this study state that the coordinator instructors always, 24% usually, 12% sometimes evaluate the students' demands, 6 % of the students state that coordinator instructors never evaluate the students' demands and complaints. This can suggest that the students are pleased with the coordinator instructors who are curious about them during training period.

5. The dispersion of the attitudes of the coordinator instructors about opinion polls on training;

The findings about the dispersion of the attitudes of the coordinator instructors included in the study about opinion polls on training have shown in Table 2.

Table 2. The dispersion of the attitudes of the coordinator instructors about opinion polls on training

The attitudes about opinion polls on training	Coordinator Instructor	
	f	%
I decide myself	1	1,1
I negotiate with the department instructors	31	34,9
I have an interview with the headmaster and the administrators.	24	26,9
I have an interview with the administrators of the establishment	19	21,4
I take students' demands into consideration	12	13,5
Other	2	2,2
TOTAL	89	100,0

n: 46

In Table 2, 35% of the coordinator instructors state they have an interview with the department students when they make a decision about training, and 27% state they have an interview with the headmaster and the other coordinator instructors. Judging from the table 2, we see that, in making up their mind, coordinator instructors are incorporated with administrative units.

6. The frequency of the coordinator instructors' visit to establishments;

The findings about the dispersion of the frequency of the coordinator instructors' visit to establishments according to the students, establishments and the coordinator instructors included in this study have been shown in Table 3.

Table 3. The dispersion of the frequency of the coordinator instructors' visit to establishments according to the students, establishments and the coordinator instructors

The frequency of coordinator instructors' visit to establishments	Student		Establishment		Coordinator Instructor	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Every day	14	6,0	1	1,7	1	2,2
Once in two days	4	1,7	1	1,7	1	2,2
Once a week	142	60,9	31	53,4	40	87,0
Once a month	42	18,0	15	25,9	4	8,6
Only when it is required	25	10,7	9	15,5	-	-
At the end of the year	2	1,0	-	-	-	-
Not pursuing	4	1,7	1	1,7	-	-
TOTAL	233	100,0	58	100,0	46	100,0

In Table 3, 61% of the students, 53% of the establishments, 87% of the coordinator instructors state that the coordinator instructors have visited the establishments once a week.

7. The reasons that require coordinator instructors to visit training corporations

The findings regarding the distributions of reasons that require coordinator instructors to visit the places of training are given in Table 4.

Table 4. The distributions of reasons that require coordinator instructors to visit training corporations

The reasons that require coordinator instructors to visit training corporations	Student		Facility		Coordinator instructor	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
To help better understand the practices, principles and purposes regarding school-facility cooperative training of students by the staff of the facility	150	12,9	43	14,7	33	14,4
To help the employers fulfill the legal liabilities of the workplace	76	6,4	17	5,9	6	2,6
To develop a work plan for each student through talks with the master instructor	83	7,1	26	9,0	22	9,6
To develop the instructional abilities of the master instructor	74	6,4	10	3,5	8	3,4
To gather the information that will contribute to the evaluation of the students	125	10,8	37	12,8	29	12,6
To determine the additional knowledge to be given to the students	136	11,6	29	10,0	22	9,6
To specify what sort of additional measures should be taken in the education conducted at school	64	5,5	26	9,0	27	11,8
To determine whether there is a change in the productivity plan of the student	83	7,1	22	7,6	13	5,6
To evaluate the efficiency of the plan	89	7,7	40	13,7	22	9,6
To observe whether legal liabilities such as safety and health are met	136	11,6	22	7,6	24	10,4
To make interviews in an effort to solve the problems arising with the master instructors	132	11,4	18	6,2	24	10,4
Others	17	1,5	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	1165	100,0	290	100,0	230	100,0

When asked about the most important five reasons that require coordinator instructors to visit training corporations, 13 percent of the students, 15 percent of the corporations and 14 percent of the students stated that for the staff of the facility to help them to better understand the purpose, principles and practices related to cooperative training comes at the first rank. 12 percent of the students stated that observing whether safety, health and legal liabilities are met and specifying additional knowledge to be given comes at the second rank, while 14 percent of the corporations put, at the this rank, the evaluation of efficiency of the schedule, and 13 percent of the coordinator instructors put the collection of information that will contribute to the evaluation of the students at this rank. At the third rank, 11 percent of the students put the interviews with the master instructors; 13 percent of the corporations put, at this rank, the collection of information to contribute to the evaluation of the students, and 12 percent of the coordinator instructors put what sort of additional measures should be taken in the education conducted at school at the third rank. 11 percent of the students view the collection of information to contribute to the evaluation of the students at the fourth rank, whereas 10 percent of the corporations see, at this rank, specifying the additional knowledge to be given to the students, and 10 percent of the master instructors view interviews to solve the problems arising with the master instructors at this same rank. 8 percent of the students put evaluation of the efficiency of the schedule at the fifth rank, 9 percent of the corporations put, at this rank, the development of an instructional plan for each student in cooperation with master instructors and determining what sort of additional measures to be taken in the education conducted at school, and 10 percent of the coordinator instructors put interviews to solve the problems arising with the master instructors at this same rank.

It can be concluded that the most important reason for the coordinator instructors to visit the training corporations is to help the supervising staff of the training corporations to better understand the purposes, principles and practices of the school-facility cooperative training.

8. The five most important capabilities required in a coordinator instructor

According to the students, corporations, and coordinator instructors included in the survey, the distribution of the findings regarding the five most important capabilities required in a coordinator instructor is given in Table 5.

Table 5. The distribution of the five most important capabilities required in a coordinator instructors

Capabilities required in a coordinator instructor	Student		Facility		Coordinator Instructor	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
The ability to make right decisions	130	11,2	29	10,0	27	11,8
To make schedules for conducting the training	105	9,0	34	11,7	29	12,7
The ability of true organization	55	4,7	11	3,8	5	2,2
The ability to make organizational decisions	21	1,8	11	3,8	2	0,8
To be a good guide to students	203	17,5	41	14,1	34	14,8
To establish discipline	86	7,4	27	9,3	14	6,1
To maintain good school-environment relations	53	4,6	13	4,5	12	5,2
To communicate well with students and facility managers	164	14,0	34	11,7	33	14,4
Adherence to the limits of his/her authority and responsibilities	94	8,1	16	5,5	12	5,2
Manners of leadership	58	5,0	6	2,1	6	2,5
Interest in instructive club activities	15	1,2	6	2,1	2	0,8
Coordination between the school and the facility	96	8,3	36	12,4	37	16,1
Not to exceed the authority in supervision and inspection	36	3,0	11	3,8	2	0,8
Research-Development- Innovation	49	4,2	15	5,2	15	6,6
Others	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	1165	100,0	290	100,0	230	100,0

In Table 5, 17 percent of the students put a good guidance at the first rank; 14 percent of them put good communication with students and corporations at the second rank; 11 percent put the ability to make right decisions at the third rank; 9 percent put the ability to make correct plans for conducting the training at the fourth rank; and 8 percent put the coordination between the school and the facility at the fifth rank.

Of the corporations, 14 percent put guidance at the first rank, while 16 percent of the coordinator instructors put coordination between the school and the facility at this rank. At the second rank came coordination between the

school and the facility according to 13 percent of the corporations, and guidance came at this rank according to 15 percent of the coordinator instructors.

Similarities are observed at the third, fourth and fifth ranks in terms of corporations and coordinator instructors. 12 percent of the corporations put good communication with the students and corporations and the ability to make plans for conducting training at the third rank. Of the corporations, 10 percent put, at the fourth rank, the ability to make correct decisions, whereas 10 percent of them put establishing discipline at the fifth rank.

14 percent of the coordinator instructors put good communication with students and corporations at the third rank. 13 percent of them put the ability to make plans for conducting training at the fourth rank, while 12 percent of them put the ability to make correct decisions at the fifth rank.

When assessed from another perspective, it is seen that although all the three groups chose the same 5 of the 14 options, coordinator instructors spared a 70-percent-share to these five in all the options, and the other two groups remained at around 60 percent.

3. Conclusion and Recommendations

- It was concluded that the coordinator instructors usually consult the instructors of the department while making decisions regarding the training.
- According to the great majority of the students, corporations and coordinator instructors involved in the survey, it was concluded that the coordinator instructors paid their visits to corporations weekly.
- According to the students, the five most important reason the require the coordinator instructors to visit the training corporations are, in order, to help the staff of the supervising corporation to better understand the practices, purposes and principles of school-corporation collective training, to determine the additional knowledge to be given to the students, to observe whether safety, health and legal liabilities are met, to make interviews with master instructors to solve the arising problems, and to collect the information that will contribute to the evaluation of the students.
- According to the corporations, the order of reasons is to help the staff of the supervising corporation to better understand the practices, purposes and principles of school-corporation collective training, to evaluate the efficiency of the schedule, to determine the additional knowledge to be given to the students, and to develop an instructional plan in cooperation with the master instructors.
- According to the coordinator instructors, the order of the reasons for the coordinator instructors to visit training corporations is to help the staff of the supervising corporation to better understand the practices, purposes and principles of school-corporation collective training, to collect the information that will contribute to the evaluation of the students, to determine what sort of additional measures to be taken in the education conducted at school, to observe whether safety, health and legal liabilities are met, and to make interviews with master instructors to solve the arising problems.
- According to the students included in the survey, the five most important capabilities required in an instructor are, in order, to be a good guide, to communicate properly with students and corporations, to be able to make right decisions, to be able to make plans for conducting the training and to maintain the coordination between the school and the corporation.
- According to the corporations, these capabilities are to be a good guide to the students, to maintain the coordination between the school and the corporation, to communicate properly with students and corporations, to be able to make plans for conducting the training and to be able to make right decisions.
- According to the coordinator instructors, the five most important capabilities required in an instructor are, in order, to maintain the coordination between the school and the corporation, to be a good guide to the students, to communicate properly with students and corporations, to be able to make plans for conducting the training and to be able to make right decisions.

It was identified from the findings obtained from the survey that the great majority of the coordinator instructors always took the demands and complaints of the students into consideration.

Recommendations:

It is the coordinator instructors that always keep in touch with the students and corporations, and thus maintain the school-industry cooperation properly. For this reason, coordinator instructors must be chosen

f45rom among those with an ability of good communication and with a strong sense of guidance. Also, those who have been chosen must be made to visit the corporations at least once a week and to deal with the demands and complaints of the students in a shorter time.

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