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Survey of Observing Printing and Publishing Technologies Program Graduates at Vocational School of Higher Education in Turkey (State - Foundation University)

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Abstract

Tracking and observing graduates is a study field which has not been studied enough to meet the expectations in Turkey. Any type of data gathered are considered to be very significant in terms of both reorganization of educational content and providing solidarity between alumni. Tracking graduates is also thought to be useful in monitoring employment policies. The focus of this study is on the employment rates of graduates of Printing and Publishing Technologies program at two different universities, one of which is a state and the other is a foundation university. Evaluation has been made through Graduate Monitoring Surveys. Research techniques such as descriptive statistics, and the average percent has been used to analyze the data.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Vocational Schools in the Turkish educational system have been founded in order to provide communication between employees and management and to contribute to a continuous flow of the production cycle (Balci, 1996). Besides, the objective of existence of Vocational Schools has been divided into two main branches. The first is to provide employments of graduates in accordance with the demands of relevant sectors. The second is to

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prepare students to the license level of education after their graduation. These two axes has become important for the education system in vocational schools as well as employment.. Vocational schools conduct educational activities of the students while they track their graduates' employment rates. However it is an issue which has been neglected to a great extend in Turkey (Kavak,1992). Research on the subject is very few in Turkey. However there are some researches made by Arabacıoğlu and his colleagues in the field of Computer Programming. (Arabacıoğlu et al, 2011). A more extensive research on the graduate tracking is the Graduates Survey of Ankara University Faculty of Educational Sciences, which was conducted for three times (Taymaz, H. ve arkadaşları, 1995). Another graduate follow-up study was carried out by the Bakıoğlu and friends. The survey conducted by Bakıoğlu and his friends is about the experiences of the graduate tracking system. It also focuses on the attitudes towards career planning, volunteerism, communication, commitment to the school and the expectations of university graduates (Bakıoğlu, A. and Friends 2011).

Turkey Vocational Qualifications Authority (VQA), founded in 2006, sets the qualification needed within the framework of professional-level ranking of Level 5 which is briefly defined as the knowledge, skills and competence in a particular field's dimensions of expertise, being able to use their own initiative in case of unforeseen circumstances (www.myk.gov.tr). Printing and Publishing Technologies programs, which make up the main structure this research, have been founded to meet the needs in pre-press, printing, post-print production and management activities in the sector. (Karasar, 1981). The program was named "Printing Program" when first established in 1980. (Abike, 2003), which later took the name of "Printing and Publishing Technologies Program" with the Human Resources Development through Vocational Education Project (İKMEP).

2. Purpose

The aim of this study is to find answers to the following questions:

- What is the employment status of graduates of the program?
- Which the printing and publishing industries and jobs do the graduates work?
- What are the attitudes of graduates towards the training received in the program?
- What are the thoughts about the adequacy of training they have received?

3. Methodology

In this section includes research design, sampling, data collection, and resolution.

3.1. Research Methodology

The research has been carried out in a survey form. It was aimed to determine the employment status of Printing and Publishing Technologies Programme graduates. In this context, the researchers developed a questionnaire with 14 questions to get feedback from graduates.

3.2. Population and Sample

Participants of the survey are Printing and Publishing Technologies Programme graduates (2009-2012). In total there are 170 graduates, 40 of whom are from Yıldız Technical University and 130 of whom are from İstanbul Arel Üniversitesi. All graduates were reached via e-mail and social networking sites. Survey was conducted among the 85% of the İstanbul Arel University Graduates and 26% percent of the Yıldız Technical University graduates. Therefore 65% of the graduates took part in the survey with 111 questionnaire.

3.3. Data Collection and Analysis

The data used in the scope of research has been collected through questionnaires. The development of the survey has been carried out in two stages. The first stage includes the literature review and the review of the questionnaires used in such studies. The second stage includes preparation of a new questionnaire with the help of experts. Questionnaire includes three parts and fourteen questions regarding personal information, employment and opinions related to training received. The survey gathers data using statistical programs analyzed in the context of the frequency percentages.

4. Findings

This section includes the results obtained through questionnaires. Genders of the respondents were also determined in Table 1.

Table 1. Genders of the Respondents

		Gender		Total
		Female	Male	
University	Foundational	45	40	85
	State	21	5	26
	Total	66	45	111

85 out of 111 respondents are the graduates of a foundation university while 26 of them are from a state university. 66 of the respondents are female and 45 of them are male graduates of the related programme. Therefore it is possible to say that the survey has been preferred more by the female graduates.

4.1. Employment Findings

The participants are asked the question “Do you work in any field now?” The was asked “Yes” and “no” and all the participant graduates gave their answers. The data collected through the question is indicated in Table 2.

Table 2. The state of the graduates' employment in any area

University			Yes	No	Total	
Foundational	Gender	Female	Count	33	12	45
		%		73,3%	26,7%	100,0%
	Male	Count	29	11	40	
		%		72,5%	27,5%	100,0%
	Total	Count	62	23	85	
		%		72,9%	27,1%	100,0%
State	Gender	Female	Count	16	5	21
		%		76,2%	23,8%	100,0%
	Male	Count	5	0	5	
		%		100,0%	,0%	100,0%
	Total	Count	21	5	26	
		%		80,8%	19,2%	100,0%

76, 85% of the repondents stated that there were employed in an area while 23,15% are unemployed. 74,75% of those employed graduates are females and 86,25% is males.73,3% of employed foundation university graduates are females and 72,5 is males. 76,2 of the repondents who are employed graduates of state university are composed of females.All of the male graduates of state universities participating the survey are unemployed. The rate of the graduates of foundation universities who answered “No” is 27,2% while this rate is 19,2% in state universities. The graduates who answered “No” are asked fort he reasons why they do not work in any field. The data collected is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. The Reason Why the Graduates do not Work in Any Field.

University			Unemployed	Studies	Health	Military Service	Giving Birth	Total	
Foundational	Gender	Female	Sayı	3	6	1	0	1	11
		%		27,3%	54,5%	9,1%	,0%	9,1%	100,0%
		Male	Sayı	2	7	0	1	0	10
	%		20,0%	70,0%	,0%	10,0%	,0%	100,0%	
	Total	Sayı	5	13	1	1	1	21	
	%		23,8%	61,9%	4,8%	4,8%	4,8%	100,0%	
State	Gender	Female	Sayı	2	1		2	5	
		%		40,0%	20,0%		40,0%	100,0%	
		Total	Sayı	2	1		2	5	
%		40,0%	20,0%		40,0%	100,0%			

31.9% of those who answered ‘no’ are unemployed, 40,95% is maintaining their studies, 22,4% is not working giving, 4,8% because of health and 4,8% is working because of their military service issues. When the difference between Foundational and State Universities are surveyed, it is indicated that 61.9% Foundational University graduates maintain their studies , 23.8% are unemployed, and 4.8% of them are not employed in an area because of their military service, health and giving birth issues. Whereas 40% State University graduates are unemployed, 20% maintain their studies, and 40% of them are not employed in an area because of giving birth. When the survey is analysed depending on gender, %33.65 of females are unemployed, %37,25 maintain their studies and %24,55 are not employed because of giving birth.

The graduate participants of the survey are asked the question “Are you working in an area dealing with your university studies?” The answers of the question are in “Yes” and “No” type, and they are indicated in Table 4.

Table 4. Graduates’ state of working in an area dealing with their university studies

University			Yes	No	Total	
Foundational	Gender	Female	Count	16	29	45
		%		35,6%	64,4%	100,0%
		Male	Count	15	25	40
	%		37,5%	62,5%	100,0%	
	Total	Count	31	54	85	
	%		36,5%	63,5%	100,0%	
State	Gender	Female	Count	13	8	21
		%		61,9%	38,1%	100,0%
		Male	Count	3	2	5
	%		60,0%	40,0%	100,0%	
	Total	Count	16	10	26	
%		61,5%	38,5%	100,0%		

When the graduates’ state of working in an area deling with their university studies is analysed; it is observed that 51% of graduates are not employed in their studied areas in total. The rate of those employed in their studied area is 49% in total. 51,30% of those are not employed in their studied areas are females and 48,70% are composed of males. When their employment states are observed under school basis, 63,5% of Foundational University graduates work in their related areas while 36,5% of them do not. 61,5% of State University graduates work in their related areas while 38,5% of them do not.

In the survey, graduates were asked the question “What is your reason to work in an area that you did not study at university?” The question has four optional answers; “I searched for a position in my sector but could not find it”, “I realized that the sector I studied doe not fit me”, “I am maintaining my studies” and “Other”. The answers given by the graduates are indicated in Table 5.

Table 5. The Reason Why Graduates Work in A Different Area Rather Than Working in the Sector They Studied at University

University			I searched for a position in my sector but could not find it	I realisted that the sector I studed does not fit me	I am maintaining my studies	Other	Total	
Foundational	Gender	Female	Count	15	7	6	2	30
		%		50,00%	23,00%	20,00%	7,00%	100,00%
	Male	Count	11	5	7	1	24	
		%		46,00%	21,00%	29,00%	4,00%	100,00%
	Total	Count	26	12	13	3	54	
		%		48,00%	22,00%	24,50%	5,50%	100,00%
State	Gender	Female	Count	5	1	1	2	9
		%		56,00%	11,00%	11,00%	22,00%	100,00%
	Male	Count	0	2	0	0	2	
		%		0,00%	100,00%	0,00%	0,00%	100,00%
	Total	Count	5	3	1	2	11	
		%		46,00%	27,00%	9,00%	18,00%	100,00%

When the table is analysed 47% of the participants stated that they searched for a position in their related sector but could not find one. The general avarge rate of those stated that their related sector did not fit them is 25,5%. The rate of those who maintain their further education but do not work is 16,75% in avarge. When the rates are analysed depending on Foundational Universities, 48% of foundational university graduates stated that they could not fit into a position in their related sector. 22% of foundational university graduate participants stated that the sector they studied does not fit them, 24,5% stated that they are still maintaining their studies in a furher education foundation. When the survey is analysed in gender depending on their state of not working in their related sector 53% of women stated that they searched for a position in their related sector but could not find it. While 17% of females stated that the related sector is inappropriate for them, 15,5% stated that they are maintaining their studies in a further education foundation. 23% of males stated that they searched for a position in their related area but could not find it whereas 0,1% stated that their related sector is inappropriate for them. The rate of the male graduates who are maintaining their studies in a further education foundation is 14,5%. The graduates in the “Other” segment stated that they are not employed because of giving birth.

Under this survey, it is aimed to determine the sector branches where the graduates are occupied. In this content graduates are asked in what branches they are occupied by giving them an alternative list of 20 business branches. In the process, assuming that some may work in more than one area, graduates are asked to mark more than one option. Depending on the graduates’ answers, the evaluation is done over 11 options by elemimating 9. The business branches and their ranges in the sector are indicated in Table 6.

Table 6. Business Branches Where Graduates are Occupied in the Sector

Fields	Count	University		%
		State	Foundational	
Graphic Design	62	19	43	30
Planing	24	12	12	11
Postpress (Folding, Cutting, Saddlestitching, Binding)	23	4	19	11
Sales/Marketing	17	6	11	8
Customer Representative	16	5	11	8
Assembly+Plate	16	8	8	8
Film-CTP	12	8	4	5
Sheetfed Offset	11	4	7	5
Costing	8	5	3	4
Quality Control	8	3	5	4
Other (Web, Flexo, Photogravure, Silk-Screened Printig, Product management)	13	5	8	6
			Total	100

When business branches of the sector where graduates are occupied are analysed, it is seen that Graphic Design is the most occupied business branch with a 30% rate. Planning and Prostpress have 11%, Sales and Marketing has 8%, Customer Representative and Assembly anda plate are listed in a row. Business branches with 5% share are Film-CTP and Sheetfed Offset fields. The rate of graduates working in Costing, Quality Control branches is 4%. Under “Other” option, it is seen that the graduates are occupied in Web Offset Printing, Flexo Printing, Photogravure Printing, Silk-Screened Printing and Product Management branches.

4.2. Viewpoints About the Education Taken

On the scope of the research graduates are asked the question “Is the education taken in Vocational School of Higher Education adequate for you in your work life?” As answers, “Inadequate”, “Partly adequate” and “Adequate” are given. The result data of the question is indicated in Table 7.

Table 7. The Level of Adequateness of the Graduates’ Education Taken in Vocational School of Higher Education in Work life

University			Inadequate	Partly adequate	Adequate	Total	
Foundational	Gender	Female	Count	5	8	4	17
		%	30,0%	45,0%	25,0%	100,0%	
	Male	Count	3	5	6	14	
		%	23,5%	35,3%	41,2%	100,0%	
	Total	Count	8	13	10	31	
		%	27,0%	40,5%	32,4%	100,0%	
State	Gender	Female	Count	2	10	1	13
		%	14,3%	78,6%	7,1%	100,0%	
	Male	Count	0	3	0	3	
		%	,0%	100,0%	,0%	100,0%	
	Total	Count	2	14	1	16	
		%	11,8%	82,4%	5,9%	100,0%	

On the scope of the research when the answers the graduates gave are analysed, 19,4% stated that the education taken in the Vocational School of Higher Education is inadequate in work life. Depending on the table, 61,45% of the graduates stated “partly adequate” while 19,5% stated “adequate”. When the difference between the adequateness level of education in work life between Foundational and State Universities is analysed, 27% of foundational university graduates stated “inadequate”, 40% of them stated “partly adequate”, 32,4% stated that it is “adequate”. 11,8% of State University graduates stated that it is “inadequate”, 82,4% stated “partly adequate”, 5,9% stated that it is “adequate”. These results indicate that graduates of Foundational Universities state that education is adequate more than those in State Universities. When the answers are analysed in terms of gender, 22,15% females state that it is “adequate”, 61,8% state “partly adequate”, and 16,05% state “adequate” while 11,75% of males state that it is “inadequate”, 67,65% state that it is “partly adequate” and 20,06% state “adequate”. Depending on the data, a great range of graduates express their opinions as the education taken in Vocational Schools of Higher Education is adequate in their work life.

5. Conclusion and Proposals

As a result of the research the following findings were determined.

Graduates take part in work life regardless of their educational backgrounds. The data collected indicates that graduates do not face any problems in finding jobs whether they are graduated from Foundational or State Universities. It is observed that the graduates who are not employed in an area are mainly maintaining their studies in further education foundations such as bachelor’s degree.

When the employment of the graduates in their related sectors are analysed, it is clearly seen that the rates had a sharp decrease. Depending on the topic, graduates indicated that the most important reason why they do not work in their related areas is that they cannot find any positions. With reference to the findings of this research it is considered that it is a need to meet the participation of all sides at once and analyse the reasons of unemployment together and create an action plan depending on the results. In this way the effort and time spent may be used in a more appropriate way and more beneficial results may be acquired. Another result of the finding emerged in this research is that the rate of the graduates thinking their related sector is inappropriate for them are high. Thence, the necessity and obligation of a research on the reasons why their related sector is inappropriate for them has emerged. The reasons must be analysed apartly and be presented.

The findings indicate that graduates are mostly employed in Graphic Design field. Other fields are planning, marketing, customer service, and after printing. The education given and the content of the courses must be reorganised with reference to their efficiency and productivity in their fields.

It is seen that the adequateness level of education taken in Vocational School of Higher Education is under the level expected. It is proposed that professionals from both public institutions and education area must come together and revise course programs and analyse the course programs at the end of each year.

The research done is aimed to present the general frame of the graduates of Publishing and Printing Technologies Program of Vocational School of Higher Education. For this reason, it is concluded as a scientific study must be carried out on every single finding emerged on the scope of this research.

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