The Perceptions of Prospective Teachers about the Quality of Teaching and Learning Environment of Teacher Education Programs and Their Relationships with Some Variables

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Student learning and success can only occur when we continually focus on improving teaching and learning practices in classrooms. The quality of instruction and instructional environments are key factors affecting the student achievement. In this respect, developing deep learning oriented teaching and learning practices are expected to have positive effects on the success of any academic programs, but developing such practices depend on many factors including quality of teaching and learning activities, evaluation approaches and student workload. All these affect students' perceptions of a learning environment which are influential on their subsequent learning behaviors and the quality of the learning outcomes.

Within this general framework, the purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of prospective teachers about the quality of teaching and learning environments in the teacher training programs at Mugla Sitki Kocman University, Turkey and their relationships with some variables such as academic achievements (GPA scores), gender, class and cheating behaviors.

The population of this descriptive study consists of 380 prospective teachers (the first and final year students) attending nine teacher education programs in four departments of Faculty of Education, Mugla Sitki Kocman University, Turkey. The data of the study were gathered through the administration of the Inventory for Teaching and Learning Environment to the specified population in 2013-14 spring semester. This inventory consists of three sub-dimensions: teaching and learning activities, evaluation and student workload. The descriptive statistics are applied in data analysis.

The results of the study revealed that the prospective teachers see the learning activities and measurement and evaluation techniques as medium level deep learning oriented and they perceive their workload quite high. There are interrelationships between the sub-dimensions of learning environment and correlations between students' perceptions of learning environment and their academic achievement and cheating behaviors.

Keywords: Teaching and learning environment, prospective teachers, teacher education, academic achievement, cheating.