

AN ANALYSIS OF OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS IN TURKEY: TRENDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to identify open and distance learning programs offered by the higher education institutions in Turkey quantitatively in terms of the level of study and subject area, identify the trends within the context of the identified numerical data, and make recommendations for the improvement of these programs. In the data collection process of the study, literature was reviewed at first and then the data were accessed by the correspondence communication with the Education Department of Higher Education Council. In addition, in order to provide validity and reliability of the data, websites of the 184 existing universities in Turkey by January, 2015 were searched. The data were tabulated and interpreted by content analysis method. As a result, it was founded that 68 higher education institutions offered 505 programs via open and distance learning in associate, bachelor's completion, bachelor's and master's levels in Turkey. Based on the findings of the study, three categories of trends were identified: (1) Trends regarding the level of the programs, (2) Trends regarding the subject of the programs and (3) Trends regarding the other issues. In this context, the study is intended to guide institutions, researchers and practitioners and provide a perspective on the programs, involving current quantitative data on the programs and presenting recommendations for the improvement of these programs.

Key Words: Open and distance learning programs, distance education.