

The Status Analysis of Accounting Courses in Turkish Universities

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Abstract—Initially, information related to the importance of accounting education, Bologna process and accounting system in Turkey were provided in this study. The primary purpose of this study is to determine the current condition and contemporary issues in accounting courses which are given at undergraduate level in Turkey. So as to achieve this purpose, public and private (or called foundation) universities in Turkey, which have business administration department in their faculties, are examined in detail, business administration departments curriculums are obtained from web addresses of those universities, and related accounting courses of business administration departments are determined. In this context, initially, the lists of accounting courses in business administration departments are arranged and Bologna Process is evaluated. According to the results, it is realized that there are considerable differences in accounting courses between public and private universities. Depending upon our analysis, it is concluded that university based accounting education is quite significant in Turkey as an IFAC member for professional accountants who meet the requirements of standards, improve the quality of accounting, and make courses internationally adopted.

Index Terms—Accounting education, accounting courses, Bologna, department of business administration, Turkish universities.

I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the borders between the countries have disappeared due to the rapid development of technology and different aspects of the education system. Notably, any education related studies have been provided through the online systems. Precisely, this system enables classes to be more international so that students from different countries can take the same course in the same class. A similar situation applies to international trade and markets. In this context, the important point is to make financial reports understandable and applicable to market participants who are concerned. Thus, accounting education and accounting system should be globally harmonized.

Accounting education is a discipline in which students are informed about how to inspect, collect, administer, audit and summarize valuable information for decision makers, and how to use and put this information in practice during the decision-making process while taking advantage of informative technologies [1].

It is considered that the vocational quality of accounting

can only be improved through increasing the quality in accounting education. Recent studies argue that improving quality in accounting education is necessary to regard argumentative learning instead of memorizing, developing an analytic and a creative mode of thinking, in which students gain important vision and communication skills [2]. Hence, it can be advocated that the quality of the accounting profession can be upgraded by improving the quality of accounting education.

Regarding the importance of accounting education, most of the studies focus on how to improve the required quality of accounting education. Additionally, it is expected that the quality in accounting profession can be only improved by increasing the quality of accounting education. Today, it has been dwelled upon in many studies that the importance of accounting education should be comprehended. Moreover, it should be based on understanding rather than memorizing, provide vision for the students, and improve the analytical thinking among individuals. [3].

According to The International Federation of Accountants (IFAC)'s educational standards, professionals working in accounting departments have to be trained in accordance with certain standards, as well as should have good knowledge of other fields, such as public finance, law, math, statistics, and information technologies and so on.

Accounting information system is a system that includes all the components forming information necessary for assets control and future planning [4]. In other words, it is the sum of resources like human, processes, and equipment designed to convert financial data into information that will be sent to stakeholders [5].

Technological improvements and globalization require unique accounting standards (convergence) and using mutual accounting language. For instance, profits in both Turkish and European firms should have similar sense and flexibility of their comparison. At that point, accounting education is influenced by many factors. These factors are economic and technological improvements, management, scholars, and students [6].

II. BOLOGNA PROCESS

One of the greatest acts in building a mutual system in higher education is Bologna Treatment. The basis of Bologna process was constructed by Sorbonne Statement of Education Ministries of France, Italy, Germany, and England revealed after a meeting in 1998, Sorbonne. The idea of mutual higher education platform in Europe emerged from this statement. The six of essential elements of Bologna Process were announced through this statement. These elements are as

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follows: Six of Bologna Process' essential goals were listed at this statement;

- To make understandable and comparable higher education diploma and degrees (improvement of diploma supplement).
- To set off two stage degree system of Bachelor's and Master's.
- To implement European Credit Transfer System(ECTS).
- To provide and disseminate scholar and student Exchange.
- To build and disseminate a network of quality confidence system in higher education.
- To improve Europeanization in higher education.

For instance, a student must successfully complete 240 ECTS credits (30 credits for each semester) in order to graduate with a bachelor's degree. Through Bologna Process, curriculum must include at least 25% elective courses.

One of the most important arrangements made in universities through Bologna Process is that learning objectives and their relation to class content are determined. Its most important aim is to eliminate affairs that do not contribute to education and students. In preparation of curriculum, there must be general education classes such as finance, law, public finance, business administration, literature, music, theater and ethics besides accounting [7]. Such courses will improve the skills of students who plan to have a career in accounting.

III. ACCOUNTING EDUCATION IN TURKEY

By 1989, it was not obligatory to receive accounting education degree to work as an accountant in Turkey. Basically, the accounting education based on master-apprentice relationship. Learning it from workplace was at work. Since 3568 numbered law was enforced on 13 June, 1989, accounting has become a professional vocation.

In the beginning, Turkish accounting system was influenced by France and Germany, and recently by the USA. Especially, as in France, Uniform Accounting System was executed in 1994, Turkey. [8]

In Turkey, the accounting education at the undergraduate level has always been consistent with economic developments. After the Turkish Revolution in 1923, accounting education, in general, was divided into the following periods [9];

Pre-1926 period: Accounting education was provided by School of Government (Mülkiye), School of Trade in İstanbul (Ticaret Mektebi Alisi), School of Darüşşafaka, and Rüştiye Military School at a period when French education system was influential in Turkey.

- Period between 1926 and 1960: Education took place mostly on a theoretical basis influenced by French system in the earlier period. Period between 1926 and 1960, through the contributions of accounting scholars who moved from Germany to Turkey, the scope and quality of accounting education at the undergraduate level developed.
- Post-1960s Period: Public and private sector management, developments in taxation, and the need for information produced by accounting contributed to

accounting education in universities and other organizations in terms of its scope, presentation and format.

- Uniform Chart of Accounts for Public Enterprises 1971, Cart of Standard Accounts of Capital Markets 1983, Uniform Chart of Accounts for the Banking Sector 1986, law of 3568 for independent accountants, certified public accountant and chartered accountant 1989, and Turkish Uniform Accounting System 1994 have had a significant impact on the Turkish accounting education.

One of the most important developments coming through globalization in accounting field is International Accounting and International Financial Reporting Standards.

Since 2005, both International Accounting Standards (IAS) and Uniform Accounting System have been used as an accounting system in Turkey. This also affected accounting education. As a result of this effect, the issue of which system should be taken into consideration in accounting education has been widely discussed since then discussed. The lack of timeline for the implementation of IAS mandated for all companies is the reason of such debates. The number of companies using IAS is too few (3500 companies) to give accounting education in accordance with the uniform accounting system at most universities. Nevertheless, accounting courses based on IAS are given as elective courses, since 2013, all capital corporate must keep their records and reports in accordance with Turkish Accounting standards which are also compatible with IAS. This will trigger significant changes in the content of accounting classes. Also, accounting textbooks will be compatible with these standards. In this manner, lecturers have important responsibilities in teaching such standards in the courses [10].

IV. THE ANALYSIS OF ACCOUNTING EDUCATION IN TURKISH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

A. The Purpose of the Research and Its Significance

The aim of this study is to determine the current status of accounting courses at undergraduate level in Turkish universities. For this purpose, which faculties have a business administration department with accounting courses is and whether these courses are compulsory or elective are determined in the current study.

B. Population

Accounting courses at the undergraduate level are mainly given in business administration departments in Turkish universities. Therefore, the population of our research consists of business administration departments at Faculties of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Management, and Economics in public and private universities. The research population includes 180 public and private universities in Turkey in total (those of Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus were excluded).

C. The Research Model

In this research the descriptive model was used. Descriptive study aims to identify and define observed features rather than causal relationships.

D. The Research Model

The list of public universities and private universities was taken from Turkish Council of Higher Education' web address. After that, a data set of curriculum was taken from business administration departments of the faculties. From this data set, accounting courses of the business administration departments were specified, and compared with each other according to public and private universities' conditions. Also, to analyze the data, Microsoft Office Excel 2007 version was used.

E. The Research Findings

1) The Number of Universities whose Business Administration Department Curriculum was Reached

There are 108 public universities and 72 private universities in Turkey. In Table II, it is seen that 80 out of 108 public universities' curriculum of business administration department were obtained. So, approximately 74% of the curriculums of the business administration department in public universities were gathered. In addition to this, 52 curriculums out of 72 private universities, which make up 72% of the total, were evaluated.

TABLE I: NUMBER OF UNIVERSITIES IN WHICH CURRICULUM OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT IS REACHED

Universities	Total	Reached	%
Public Universities	108	80	74,07
Private Universities	72	52	72,22
Total	180	132	73,33

2) Distribution of Business Administration Departments throughout the Faculties

Public and private universities in Turkey were examined, and distribution of the faculties with a business administration department is shown on Table II.

TABLE II: DISTRIBUTION OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENTS THROUGHOUT THE FACULTIES

Faculties	Public Universities	Private Universities	Total
Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences	71	37	108
Faculty of Management	7	5	12
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities	1	-	1
Faculty of Political Science	1	-	1
Faculty of Management and Administrative Sciences	-	3	3
Faculty of Economics Administrative and Social Sciences	-	7	7
Total	80	52	132

At first glance, it is seen in Table II that most of the business administration departments are established in Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences (FEAS). This situation is the same for public and private universities. Department of Business Administration takes part in 71 out of 80 public universities' FEAS. Meanwhile, this proportion is 37 out of 50 for private universities.

3) Accounting Courses

TABLE III: LIST OF ACCOUNTING COURSES

	Accounting Courses	Public Universities		Private Universities	
		Compulsory	Elective	Compulsory	Elective
1	General Accounting 1	78	-	43	-
2	General Accounting 2	70	-	29	3
3	Cost Accounting 1	68	4	20	8
4	Managerial Accounting	38	23	22	11
5	Auditing	35	26	9	12
6	Financial Statement Analysis	42	15	9	7
7	Inventory and Balance Sheet	49	7	2	4
8	Computerized Accounting	17	33	-	11
9	Corporate Accounting	35	16	-	9
10	Accounting Standards	6	29	-	14
11	Cost Accounting 2	32	6	-	-
12	Bank Accounting	-	22	-	2
13	Tax Accounting	-	16	-	4
14	Accounting for Foreign Trade	-	14	-	2
15	Accounting Organization	-	13	-	-
16	Information System of Accounting	-	12	-	-
17	Cost Management	-	10	-	2
18	Specialized Accounting	-	11	-	-
19	Advanced Accounting	-	9	-	2
20	Accounting and Law Relationship	-	9	-	-
21	Business Budgeting	-	9	-	-
22	Selected Topic in Accounting	-	5	-	2
23	Inflation Accounting	-	5	-	-
24	Insurance Accounting	-	5	-	-
25	International Accounting	-	3	-	2
26	Accounting for Case Analysis	-	4	-	-
27	Construction Accounting	-	4	-	-
28	Environmental Accounting	-	4	-	-
29	Tourism Management Accounting	-	3	-	-
30	Governmental Accounting	-	3	-	-
31	Accounting Software	-	3	-	-
32	Current Topics in Managerial Accounting	-	2	-	-
33	Auditing Practices	-	2	-	-
34	Accounting Practices	-	2	-	-
35	Accounting Research	-	2	-	-
36	Quality Cost Accounting	-	2	-	-
37	Auditing Research	-	2	-	-
38	Corporate Governance Principles in Accounting	-	1	-	1
39	Internal Audit	-	1	-	1
41	Derivatives Accounting	-	1	-	-
42	International Audit	-	1	-	-
43	Judicial Accounting	-	1	-	-
44	Accounting Principles	-	1	-	-
45	Accounting and Finance System Design	-	1	-	-
46	Accounting and Finance Seminar	-	1	-	-
47	Cost and Managerial Accounting Practices	-	1	-	-
48	Operational Audit	-	1	-	-
49	Agricultural Accounting	-	1	-	-
50	Accounting for Health Industry	-	1	-	-
51	Advanced Topic in Accounting and Finance	-	-	-	1
52	Uniform Accounting System	-	1	-	-
53	Cooperative Accounting	-	1	-	-

As seen in Table III, accounting courses in 80 public and 52 private universities' curriculum of business administration departments are listed. Also, compulsory and elective course status is shown separately. The names of some accounting

courses vary among universities. However, the most commonly used name of courses with the same content is indicated in Table III.

At the undergraduate in Turkey, there are 53 different accounting courses as seen in Table III. Besides, the courses of General Accounting 1, General Accounting 2, Inventory and Balance Sheet, Corporate Accounting, Cost Accounting 1, Cost Accounting 2, Auditing, Financial Statement Analysis, Managerial Accounting, Computerized Accounting, and Accounting Standards are the most preferred in the curriculums of the business administration departments. On the other hand, other accounting courses are taught as elective courses in the curriculum of a small number of business administration departments.

V. RESULT

As a result, it is determined that accounting courses mostly take place in business administration departments of public universities. In other words, business administration departments of private universities are not interested in accounting courses as much as public universities do. Furthermore, it is found out that General Accounting 1, General Accounting 2, Inventory and Balance Sheet, Corporate Accounting, Cost Accounting 1, Cost Accounting 2, Auditing, Financial Statement Analysis, Managerial Accounting courses are usually taught in the curriculums as compulsory. Elective accounting courses, which are overwhelmingly taught in public universities, are namely Computerized Accounting, Accounting Standards, and Bank Accounting. The compulsory courses which are generally placed in the curriculum of business administration department in private universities are General Accounting 1, General Accounting 2, Cost Accounting, Financial Statement Analysis, and Managerial Accounting. Those mostly taught as elective in the curriculums are Corporate Accounting, Auditing, Computerized Accounting, Accounting Standards, and Managerial Accounting.

According to our findings, it can be said that accounting education is given less importance in private universities than in public universities. Also, it is observed that the courses related to international accounting standards and ethics whose importance has increased in recent years are not taught adequately.

In summary, it can be concluded that university-based accounting education is quite significant in Turkey as an IFAC member in which professional accountants meet the requirements of standards, the quality of accounting is improved, and the courses are internationally adopted. In compliance with the Bologna process, taking into consideration all these situations during the provision of curriculums in universities will help us improve the quality of accounting education. This study will contribute to the literature and help scholars to do comparative studies as it demonstrates the profile of accounting courses in business administration departments of Turkish universities.

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