

An Investigation on the Courses and Exam Grades of Secondary School Students in the Second Constitutional Period: Bitola Peklin Secondary School

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Abstract: *The aim of this study, based on archive documents, is to reveal the situation regarding the courses, exam grades, awards taken by secondary school students during the Second Constitutional Period in Ottoman Empire. This is a descriptive study and the quantitative research approach was used in the research. In this study, the exam grades of a secondary school in a small region of the Ottoman Empire were examined. In the light of this examination, it can be said that the academic year of 1908-1909 was a successful period for Bitola Peklin Secondary School.*

Keywords: *Second Constitutional Period, Ottoman Empire, exam grades*

1. Introduction

One of the important steps taken in the modernization process of education in the Ottoman Empire was the opening of secondary schools, the first examples of which date back to 1838-1839. These schools, which were opened to train the civil servants needed by the state, were based on a legal basis with the Maarif-i Umumiye Regulation dated 1869 and it was deemed appropriate to open them in places with a population of more than five hundred (Ozturk, 2008; Mahmud Cevad, H. 1338, p. 473). Thus, the necessary legal arrangements have been made for the dissemination of secondary education.

Before 1876, there were approximately 423 secondary schools in the Ottoman Empire and the number of students studying in these secondary schools was around 20,000 (Kodaman, 1991, pp. 95-105). One of these schools is Bitola Peklin Secondary School, which was opened after 1853 (Altinova, 2010, p.125). There are 18 students in total in the 1908-1909 academic year, which is the subject of this study (BOA. MF. IBT. 209/98).

The aim of this study is, II. The aim of this study is to reveal the situation of secondary school students regarding the courses they took and their exam grades during the Constitutional Monarchy period, based on archive documents.

2. Method

This is a descriptive study and the quantitative research approach was used in the research. The research was conducted based on archive documents obtained from Presidency of the Republic of Turkey Directorate of State Archives. The data belongs to Bitola Peklin secondary school between the years 1908-1909.

3. Results

The following findings were obtained about the courses and the grade means. The summary statistics are presented in Table I.

TABLE I: Exam grade means

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
Morals	9,7	8	6,5
Arabic	9,7	8	5,5
Geography	9,7	7,8	6,5
Persian	10	7	-
Geometry	9	-	-
Arithmetic	9,5	8	6,5
Psychohygiene	9,7	-	-
Good Behavior	10	-	-
Calligraphy	8,7	6,8	5
Spelling and Rules	-	7,6	5,5
Spelling and Reading	9,7	-	-
History of Islam	-	7,3	-
Quran	9,5	7,1	7
Information of Agriculture	9,2	7,9	-
Painting	10	7,8	-
Turkish Grammar I	9,7	-	-
Turkish Grammar II	-	7,3	5
History of Ottoman	10	-	-
Religious Sciences	10	7,4	7,5
n (Course)	16	13	9
Mean	9,6	7,5	6,1
n (student)	5	10	3

In addition, the numbers of grade retention and students who didn't take the exam are presented in Table II.

TABLE II: grade repetition and students who didn't take the exam

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
n (student)	5	10	3
Grade retention	-	2	1
Didn't take the exam	1	-	1

4. Conclusion

According to the Bitola Peklin Secondary School exam grades of the 1908-1909 academic years, the first grade students were most successful in Persian, Good Behavior, Painting, History of Ottoman and Religious Sciences, and the lowest success was in Calligraphy. In the second year, Morals, Arabic and Arithmetic courses were the courses with the highest grades. The courses with the lowest success in the second year were Persian. The courses with the highest grade in the third year were Religious Sciences. In the third year, the courses with the lowest success were Calligraphy and Turkish Grammar II.

In this study, the exam grades of a secondary school in a small region of the Ottoman Empire were examined. In the light of this examination, it can be said that the academic year of 1908-1909 was a successful period for Bitola Peklin Secondary School. Education is an important area of centralization policies in the Ottoman Empire. In this context, comparing the exam scores of schools in different regions will enable to reach important determinations in terms of the quality of education.

5. References

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