



STUDENTS' REASONS FOR ATTENDING PRIVATE COURSES AND THEIR VIEWS ON THEM: THE CASE OF TURKEY

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Abstract

Private courses, which were initially founded as a means of providing science, language, and art education and which were regarded as “private schools,” turned into refresher courses. Programs applied in private courses are prepared in parallel to regular school curriculums and run by the approval of the Ministry of Education. With the centralized exams becoming widespread, these courses have evolved, and their number has increased nationwide. The competitive atmosphere of the preparations for university entrance exam results in parents’ using every means available to support their children’s education by means of private courses and tutoring. Private courses and the education they provide have frequently found place in Turkey’s agenda, and been a constant source of debate. This study investigated the views of 7711 students enrolled in 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades at various schools in Ankara regarding their reasons for attending private courses and their views on them. As a result of this study, it was determined that students mostly got supplementary education to their school courses and that they preferred private courses due to the fact that these courses provide placement tests on a regular basis. Students think that centralized exams make private courses a necessity, that they are complementary where regular schools fall short, and that they have become a part of their education. Moreover, students also indicate that private courses should not be closed down.

Key Words: Private courses, secondary school students, education system.