



## Vanished Schools: Village Institutes

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### Abstract

In the Turkish Education system there have now and then been some changes and revolutions such as teaching by correspondence, village institutes, being teachers of university graduates with pedagogic formation etc.; during these changes and revolutions, various educational institutions have been involved in the Turkish Education System. These institutions are: First Teacher Schools, Education Institutes with an associate degree, Village Tutor Schools, Village Instructor Courses, Education Institutes, and Universities. All of these institutions have functioned like a follow-on of one another. Yet, of the teacher training systems, Village Institutes are the most remarkable ones and have left their mark in our history. The village institutes hold a significant place in the Turkish Education System, therefore they are elaborated in this research. The data related to village institutes is gathered by literature survey.

*Keywords:* Education, Preservice Teachers' Training, Village Institutes

### 1. Introduction

In modern sense, the first Teacher School was established as male teacher school by the name Darülmüallimin in March 16, 1848; then female teacher school was established by the name Darülmüallimat in Sultan Ahmet district of Istanbul, April 26, 1870 (Adem, 1997). Two types of teacher school were established with 22 March 1926 dated 789th law of Education Organization. These were classified as; (1) Teacher Schools, (2) Village Teacher Schools (Kavak, Aydın ve Altun, 2007 cited from Ataüinal, 1994). Between the years 1927-1928, Village Teacher Schools were established in two places (Denizli and Kayseri) with the same law. But after a few years, these schools were closed. The reason for the closure of these schools was that they did not serve the purpose of what they expected. Towards the end of the 1930s, it was deemed suitable to re-open these schools in two places (Izmir Kızılcıllu and Eskişehir Çifteler) (Başaran, 1996). These schools were closed in 1932-1933 and they gave their places to Village Educator Courses.

Towards the mid-1930s, Village Educator Courses, which Saffet Arıkan Minister of Ministry of National Education and Ismail Hakkı General Manager of Elementary laid the foundation, were established in the villages with over 400 populations. In July 1936, the first educator course was established in Mahmudiye village of Eskişehir (Akyüz, 2007). The ones who served in army as sergeant were assigned at village elementary schools in the title of "Educator". They served at the first three grades of elementary school. The students who completed this continued fourth grade in the nearby villages' elementary schools (Başaran, 1996). These educators were send to villages in order to equalize the balance between community and citizens and give practical information to the people of the village; provide education of the people of the village (Çetin ve Gülseren, 2003).

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## 2. General Situation Before the Establishment of Village Institutes

The population of the country before the establishment of the Village Institute (1935-1936) was 16.799.950 and 12.400.950 of this population was living in villages. 77% of the male population, 84% of the female population were illiterate. The number of the children in the age of literacy was 1.897; 1.457 thousand of them were living in villages; 440 thousand of them was living in cities and towns. In cities and towns, 338 thousand children were continuing to school; in villages, 347 thousand children were continuing to school. Considering the number of schools in the country, there were 6112 elementary schools. 1339 of these schools were in cities and towns and had 5 classes; 4773 of them were in villages and had 3 classes. Considering the numbers of teachers, 6800 of 13.750 elementary teachers were serving in cities and towns, 6950 of them were serving in village schools (Menekşe, 2005). As seen, this was the general situation of the country before the establishment of the Village Institutes. Literacy rates and rates of school-age children continuing to schools were very low. However, although the rates of children living in villages were higher than the rate of children living in cities-towns, the rate of schooling was lower. There was a need for an educational move in order to turn this case positive, meet the educational needs of village children, improve the development level of the country, eradicate illiteracy and increase the rate of literacy.

## 3. Establishment and Aims of the Village Institutes

Atatürk expressed in his speech which was made while the opening of the third association of the Council in March 1, 1922 that villagers of this country were left uneducated, for this reason, the education policy was going to be in the direction of eliminating this ignorance (Kurtuluş, 2001 cited from Tonguç, 1998). As seen, Atatürk noticed the lack of education of population living in villages even years before the proclamation of the republic and tried to fill the deficiency. However, Atatürk did not witness the opening of the Village Institutes which were going to establish for the education of villagers who he gave so much importance. Village Institutes were established by law no. 3803 dated April 17, 1940. Village Institutes were established in villages which had extensive suitable lands for agricultural works or close to them (Akyüz, 2007; Oğuzkan, 2007). In 1940, when the Law of Village Institutes was accepted, 25% of approximately 13 million people residing in the villages were literate and 75% of them were illiterate (Tekişik, 2006). As seen, one fourth of villagers were literate. In fact, it is impossible to reach the level of modern civilization with such population. It had to be reversed in a short time. Therefore, one of the reasons for the establishment of the Village Institutes was to increase the number of literate population. The then Minister of Ministry of National Education Hasan Ali Yücel and the then General Director of Elementary İsmail Hakkı Tonguç endeavored to establish Village Institutes (Akyüz, 2007). The primary purpose of the Village Institutes was to; after fully educating the talented children from the villages sending them back to their villages to teach the remaining villagers, increasing the literacy rate of the country; develop the villages. It is aimed to educate villagers and making villagers producers (Ortaş, 2005). More specifically, it is possible to collect the aims of the Village Institutes in four points. These can be grouped as; (1) Developing new social values, (2) Ensuring development and creation of national culture, (3) Specialization of economic life, (4) Increasing production and productivity (Kartal, 2008 cited from Önen, 1993). In that case, the students grown in the Village Institutes were going to provide for the region; (1) social, (2) cultural and (3) economic development. Thus development could go up to the remotest corners of the country, so the country could develop as a result of regional development. Thus, the establishment of the Village Institutes was a huge move for the development of the country. The consideration "Education is in production" dominated in the Village Institutes. The reason of this was to produce to improve the country together and look at the life together (Ortaş, 2005). When considered from this point of view, it can be said that; the Village Institutes aimed to contribute to national economy besides ensuring national unity and solidarity.

## 4. Student Selection to Village Institutes

There were a number of conditions to be a student in the Village Institutes. Every child in school age could not be a student in the Village Institutes. There were some circumstance to be selected to the Village Institutes such as; (1) being a villager child, (2) to be healthy and strong, (3) being intelligent and hardworking, (4) having higher rates of knowledge and success according to their peers. In order to select students with desired qualifications, introductory

cards were prepared. Supervisors and mobile head teachers visited the villages, filled the cards for ones who were appropriate in terms of qualifications like physical condition, knowledge and intelligence and send them to the Directorate of Ministry of National Education and Institutions. Introductory cards that arrived to the Institutions were examined by the commissions; a list of those accepted were sent to Directorate of Ministry of National Education, also health conditions of teacher candidates were reported by the institute doctors (Şeren, 2008). Male and female village children's who won the institute entrance exam were trained mixed at first. But after 1950, the mixed education has ended when all the female students were sent to the Kızılcıllu and Beşikdüzü Village Institutes (Yavuz, 2006).

## 5. The Locations of the Village Institutes

Number of the Village Institutes initially was 14; then the number reached to 21 in eight years (Özel, 2000). These are the Village Institutes which were established between 1937-1949: İzmir Kızılcıllu and Eskişehir Çifteler (1937-38), Lüleburgaz Kepirtepe (1938-39), Kastamonu Gököy (1939-40), Antalya Aksu- Samsun Ladik- Trabzon Beşikdüz- Adapazarı Arifiye- Kars Cılavuz- Adana Düziçi- Isparta Gönen- Balıkesir Savaştepe- Kayseri Pazarören- Malatya Akçadağ (1940-41), Ankara Hasanoğlan- Konya İvriz- Erzurum Pulur (1941-42), Sivas Yıldızeli (1942-43), Diyarbakır Dicle- Aydın Ortaklar (1944-45), Van Erçiş (1948-49) (Menekşe, 2005; Akyüz, 2007). In Table 1, the numbers of teacher, student and Village Institutes in the period of opening of the Village Institutes to 1946 are given (Keseroğlu, 2005 cited from Gedikoğlu, 1971).

**Table 1. Numbers of teachers, students and the Village Institutes from 1937-1938 academic years to 1945-1946 academic years**

Academic Year	Number of female teachers	Number of male teachers	Number of total teachers	Number of total students	Number of the Village Institutes
1937-1938	5	21	26	286	2
1938-1939	7	34	41	796	3
1939-1940	10	50	60	1567	4
1940-1941	46	189	235	5665	14
1941-1942	80	214	294	8052	17
1942-1943	101	259	360	10161	18
1943-1944	128	298	426	14166	18
1944-1945	145	360	505	15561	20
1945-1946	119	403	522	15529	21

When the Table 1 analyzed, number of teachers which was 26 in 1937-38 academic years increased to 522 in 1945-46 academic years; number of students which was 286 increased to 15529; number of the Village Institutes which was 2 increased to 21. Over time, it was seemed that number of teachers and students increased in conjunction with the rates of the Village Institutes. When the teachers of the Village Institutes were analyzed in terms of gender, it is seemed that number of male teachers is 4 times more than female teachers. This situation can be explained by the low rate of literate female population in those years.

Other than the Village Institutes above, High-Village Institutes was opened in 1942 within Hasanoğlan Village Institute in order to train teacher and inspectors, to guide, to be center of village examinations. Study period of this school was 3 years (Akyüz, 2007). The basic mission of these schools can be explained as making vocational training suitable for necessities of life and needs of society.

## 6. Curriculum and Comparison of the Village Institutes

There was no curriculum when the Village Institutes were opened. However, the General Directorate of Elementary stated at July 1, 1940 dated and 435 numbered circular that what kind of education activities Institutes should make. According to the Circular, it is also mentioned that opportunities should be given to students to arrange trips to; afforest land of institute, dry swamp places, road construction, making raw lands productive, undertake public housing, teach students to protect themselves from animals, plants, kinds of diseases that harms them, use of bicycles and motorcycles; swim, ride a horse, climb a mountain, use boat and motor boats; play musical instruments such as mandolin, harmonica, flute; play starting from local games to national games; listen radio and gramophone and music, examine their villages and surrounding villages (Oğuzkan, 2007).

The first official curriculum of the Village Institutes was made in 1943. Study period was determined as 5 years. The lessons were divided into three groups; (1) culture lessons, (2) agriculture lessons and activities and (3) technical lessons and activities. Culture lessons were determined as 22 hours for each class and 114 weeks for study period Culture lessons; Turkish, History, Geography, Civics, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Natural and School Health, Foreign Language, Handwriting, Painting and handcraft, Physical Education and National Games, Music, Military, Housekeeping and Child Care, Teaching Knowledge (Sociology, Occupational Education, Pedagogical and Occupational Psychology and etc.), Economy of Agricultural Activities. Agriculture lessons and activities determined as 58 weeks and 11 hours for each class and included; field agriculture, garden agriculture (nursery, fruit growing and etc.), industrial crops agriculture, zoo technics, poultry knowledge, apiculture and sericulture, fisheries and aquaculture, agriculture arts lessons. Technical lessons and activities were determined as 58 weeks and 11 hours for each class and included; blacksmithing (farriery, craft), village carpentry, village maker (brick and bricklaying, quarrying etc.), village and crafts (sewing, cutting, embroidery and etc.) (Akyüz, 2007). In the first curriculum made in 1943, daily work plan was included. In this daily plan, before and after noon, there were 45 minutes of 4 hours lessons or work hours, 2 hours study time and 45 minutes free reading time, 8 or 8.5 hours sleeping time, 30 minutes of inspection, music, local and national game or sports time (Ülkü, 2008). When this plan was examined, it is seen that pre-service teachers who would be trained were tried to get trained within strict discipline, planned and properly. The idea of continuing this order and discipline in their lives and getting them used can be shown as the reason for this.

Secondary education curriculum of the Village Institutes was 1947 curriculum. This curriculum had been implemented in times of Minister of Ministry of National Education Reşat Şemsettin. In this curriculum, a number of changes had been made in vocational training lessons. Under the title of Teaching Knowledge; Psychology, Psychology of Childhood and Youth, Pedagogy, Sociology, History and Organization of Pedagogy, General Teaching Method, Special Teaching Method and Applications lessons were given; History of Occupational Education, Occupational Pedagogy, Occupational Psychology lessons were removed and lessons aimed to give academic information were given. Some features of this curriculum were; a clear language which was purified from old words and terms was used. It is seen that the freedom and flexibility which were in titled to teachers about selection of topics and methods in the old curriculum were removed. Teachers' freedom of choice about regional and institutional facilities in agriculture lessons was restricted. New arrangements were provided at art classes and workshops on the grounds that the Village Institutes were not a art school that train "makers, blacksmiths and carpenters"; this led students to increase their institutional knowledge rather than their practical skills. In fact, although some changes were tried to make it can be said that this curriculum was an extension of the 1943 curriculum (Oğuzkan, 2007).

The third curriculum of the Village Institutes was prepared in 1953; name of this curriculum was "Curriculum of Teacher Schools and the Village Institutes". In this curriculum, aims and principles of the both institutes, the lessons and subjects taught in the last three grades were discussed. The principles to be applied in both curriculums were collected in 20 items. These principles included such issues as teachers' being the most important trainer in teacher schools, providing a system that reflects true life of society in these schools, making students love the teaching professions, emphasizing on equipping students with practical and operative knowledge, teaching pre-service

teachers methodical and efficient ways of working and getting them adopt the habit of using leisure times efficiently. Lessons which were taught were occupational lessons (Introduction to Psychology, Educational Psychology, Teaching Methods and Applications etc.), Turkish Language and Literature, Social Studies (History, Geography etc.), Natural and Science ( Natural and Science, Physics, Chemistry etc.), Mathematics, National Defense, Religious Education, Physical Education, Music, Painting and Writing (Housekeeping for girls), Agriculture lessons. In this curriculum, Turkish lesson was replaced by the name Turkish Language and Literature; History, Geography and Civics lessons were replaced by the name Social Studies. In this curriculum, Children Literature which was not included in the previous curriculum was included; Biology, Health Science, Religious Education lessons were included to compulsory lessons. Painting lesson which was in the previous curriculum was named Painting and Writing. Art classes and workshops were removed in this curriculum. In this curriculum, foreign language teaching was also ended. With this program, it can be said that teacher schools and the Village Institutes were not different institutes, it had the characteristics of a document that shows the Village Institutes were actually combined a year before 27 January 1954 (Oğuzkan, 2007; Ülkü, 2008).

In the light of the information described above comparison of 1943, 1947, and 1953 curriculums can be made in Table 2. When the Table 2 is examined, it can be seen that there are some differences in 1943, 1947 and 1953 curriculums. For example, in the 1943 curriculum the lesson was named Nature and School Program, in the 1947 curriculum it was named Natural Science and in the 1953 curriculum it was named Nature and Science. The lesson which was named Painting-Business in 1943 curriculum was named Painting in 1947 curriculum and named Painting-Writing in 1953 curriculum. The lesson which was named Physical Education and National Games in the 1943 curriculum was changed to Physical Education in the 1953 curriculum. It is seen that study periods were 5 years in the 1943 and 1947 curriculums, and it increased to 6 years in the 1953 curriculum. In addition, it is seen that a number of changes were made in weekly lessons hours. It is seen that there were 22 hours per week in the 1943 curriculum; 33hours in 1st grade, 34 hours in 2nd grade, 35 hours in 3rd - 4th grade and 37 hours in 5th and 6th grades in the 1953 curriculum (see Table 2 for the other changes).

According to 4274 numbered and 1942 dated law, Teachers who graduated from the Village Institutes had tasks about; (1) School and course related tasks, (2) Educating the people of the villages related tasks. These tasks can be explained briefly as follows: Teacher will work in construction of the village school, train students and adults with lessons and courses, teach masonry, blacksmithing, farming, canning, winemaking, gardening and so on, in the village. In addition, teachers who graduated from the Village Institutes will make obligatory service for 20 years in villages, will make 20 Liras per month and 60 Liras for three months. Seeds, tools to be used and land will be given to them, and the income they make will belong to them (Akyüz, 2007).

**Table 2. Comparison of 1943, 1947 and 1953 Curriculums**

Description	1943 curriculum	1947 curriculum	1953 curriculum
History	X	X	
Geography	X	X	
Civics	X	X	X
Mathematics	X	X	
Physics	X	X	
Chemistry	X	X	
Natural and School Knowledge	X	X (Natural Knowledge)	X (Natural and Science Knowledge.)
Foreign Language	X		
Handwriting	X	X	
Painting-Work	X	X (Painting)	X (Painting and Writing)
Physical Education and National Games	X	X	X (Physical Educations)
Music	X	X	X
Military	X	X	
Housekeeping and Child Care	X	X	

Teaching Knowledge	X		
Agricultural Business Economics	X		
Turkish	X	X	X (Turkish language and literature)
General Spirit Science		X	
Child and Youth Spirit Science		X	
Pedagogy		X	
General Teaching Methods		X	
Teaching Methods and Applications		X	
Social Science		X	
Education History and Organization		X	
School Health Knowledge		X	
Work		X	X
Cooperatives and Cooperative Accounting		X	
Agriculture Lessons and Applications		X	X (Agriculture)
Art Lessons and Workshops		X	
Courses			X
Social Studies			X
National Defence			X
Religious Knowledge			X
Free Works			X
1. grade	22 hours	44 hours	33 hours
2. grade	22 hours	44 hours	34 hours
3. grade	22 hours	44 hours	35 hours
4. grade	22 hours	44 hours	36 hours
5. grade	22 hours	44 hours	37 hours
6. grade	-	-	37 hours

## 7. Closure of the Village Institutes

Propagandas and criticisms about the Village Institutes began to emerge in the 2nd National Education Council in 1943. Some of them are: Including only village children to the institutes and graduated pre-service teachers' being appointed in villages was creating class differences in the community as peasant-urban. This is contrary to the principle of Populism in the Constitution. Extreme leftist, even a communist training was provided in the institutes. Students' working in school constructions, agricultural and technical applications, cleaning and maintenance jobs was resembling the Soviet Union. This type of training is contrary to principle of Nationalism. The co-education in the boarding institutes (girls and boys mixed) is not suitable for Turkish family and morality (Aysal, 2005 cited from Turan, 1999). During the times Tevfik İleri was Minister of National Education, there were a number of changes made in the curriculum of Education and Morality Department of the Village Institutes in 1952 and it was put into practice since 1952-1953. The Village Institutes was directed to general knowledge lessons with the changes; combination of it with teacher schools was provided with 6234 numbered law published in 1954 (Akyüz, 2007).

## 8. The Results the Village Institutes Provided

There are a number of results the Village Institutes provided. These are: (1) Thanks to the Village Institutes, equality of opportunity was provided to village children; the cost of education was reduced. (2) The leaders who grew up and trained in villages, returned to villages and know villages the best way were trained. (3) Conscious young were trained with the purpose of developing villages. (4) Information about villages were advanced thanks to the environment and village researches, the Village Institutes had become the centers of village researches. (5) The Village Institutes provided great benefits to emerge national culture and folklore. (6) The writers and poets who graduated from the institutes played an important role in the creation of village literature. (7) Intellectuals who know villages, love villages, grown in villages were trained. (8) The Institutes affected the economic and cultural life of

the area, became the development centers of the region. (9) Economic initiatives which could be an example to the region were carried out in the Village Institutes (Geray, 1987). As it is seen, the most significant contribution of village institutes for educational system was enabling principles and methods which existed in literature so far in the system to combine them with the life in nature. Thousands of pre-service teachers who were trained in the Village Institutes learned these by experience and they carried this education to the schools they served. In this case, they provided the regional development

## **9. Conclusion**

With the establishment of the republic, people who just emerged from a war entered a period of recovery. The government attempted to renew all the worn institutes. Education institutes were the main of the renewed institutes. Ensuring unity in teaching; the adoption of the new Turkish alphabet; restructuring elementary, middle, high schools within the framework of specific characteristics with the Law related to Education Organization; establishment of Turkish Historical Society and the Turkish Language Society are on of these reforms. The aim was levelling the country to contemporary civilizations, increasing the literacy rate. Because Atatürk always expressed that the future of the country was in education. In fact, education is the mandatory requirement after bread and water. The country needed education and more importantly educators. Because in 1936s, one-third of the 17 million populations was living in cities, and the remaining two-third (12.5 million) was living in villages. The population living in the village's being much shows that the children living in villages were more than the children living in cities. Literacy rate of these children was very low. Hasan Ali Yücel and his squad who were aware of this situation prepared a project to increase literacy rate and training people to go back their villages to teach their villagers, and develop villages culturally, economically and socially. They named it as the Village Institutes to be taken seriously. Teachers who trained in the Village Institutes were trained as helpful young who help themselves and their environment in all aspects. Because young people studied in the institutes knew how to play an instrument, theater, read world classics, play folklore, trained in such fields like road construction, build construction, cutting-sewing, agriculture and animal husbandry. That led them to play a major role in the development of villages they went. Because these young people trained by practicing the theoretical knowledge they learned.

Student training in the Village Institutes lasted until 1954; they were abolished after merging with teacher schools. The closure of the Village Institutes which aimed to train competent teachers in many areas in a short time is a sign of declining. Closure of this educational movement which never reduced to villages with various excuses prevented children who would be trained in villages. A long time after the closure of the Village Institutes, there was no such useful projects established for the village children. This delayed the development of village and village people.

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