

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

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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 1907-1908 was a successful period for Varna Secondary School.

Keywords - Second Constitutional Period, Ottoman Empire, exam grades.

I. INTRODUCTION

The opening of secondary schools is an important step in the modernization process in the Ottoman Empire. The first examples of these school date back to 1838-1839. These schools were opened to train civil servants needed by the state (Ozturk, 2008). With the Maarif-i Umumiye Regulation of 1869, it was planned to open a secondary school in places with a population of more than five hundred households (Mahmud Cevad, H. 1338, p. 473). Thus, the necessary legislative arrangement for the spread of secondary school has been realized.

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 Varna Secondary School, which was opened in 1862 (Altınova, 2010). In the 1907-1908 academic year, which is the subject of this study, there are 51 students in total (BOA. MF. IBT. 211/58).

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.

II. 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 Varna secondary school between the years 1907-1908.

III. RESULTS

The following findings were obtained about the courses and the grade means. The summary statistics are presented in Table 1.

Table I. Exam grade means

	1. grade	2. grade	3. grade	4. grade
Quran	6,8	7,7	9,4	10,0
Religious Sciences	6,3	7,1	7,6	8,3
Arabic	5,4	5,8	6,7	8,0
Persian	5,4	5,6	6,3	7,6
Ottoman Turkish	5,5	5,4	5,8	5,1
Recitation	3,9	5,9	-	-
Spelling	5,3	5,9	8,1	-
Arithmetic	5,3	5,0	6,9	7,3
Geography	4,0	5,6	6,8	7,3
History	4,2	5,1	5,8	7,2
Geometry	-	-	-	7,9
Chemical	-	5,2	7,1	6,7
French	-	5,7	6,0	5,7
Bulgarian	-	5,2	6,2	6,7
Calligraphy	7,6	5,6	7,4	6,0
Painting	-	-	5,9	6,4
Morals	5,1	8,1	8,9	9,4
Gymnastics	6,6	7,2	7,7	7,8
n (Course)	13	16	16	16

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Mean	5,5	6,0	7,0	7,3
n (student)	18	18	9	5

Also, counts of School drop-outs, grade retentions, course achievement awards and conduct mark awards are presented in Table 2.

Table II. School drop-outs, grade retentions, course achievement awards and conduct mark awards

	1. grade	2. grade	3. grade	4. grade
n (student)	18	18	9	5
School drop-out	2	-	1	-
Grade retention	8	6	3	1
Course achievement award	2	3	1	1
Conduct mark award	1	1	2	2



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IV. CONCLUSION

According to the Varna Secondary School exam grades of the 1907-1908 academic years, the first grade students were most successful in Calligraphy, and the lowest success was in Recitation. In the second year, Morals, and Quran courses were the courses with the highest grades. The courses with the lowest success in the second year were Arithmetic, and History. The courses with the highest grade in the third year were Quran, and Morals. In the third year, the courses with the lowest success were History, and Ottoman Turkish. While the most successful courses in the last year were Qur'an, and Morals, the least successful course was Ottoman Turkish.

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 1907-1908 was a successful period for Varna 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.

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