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Determining Validity and Reliability of Data Gathering Instruments Used By Program Evaluation Studies in Turkey

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to analyze the validity and reliability of inventories that were used in program evaluation studies realized in Turkey. In accordance with this purpose 12 articles and 38 theses have been analyzed within the scope of the research. According to the findings obtained in the research, it has been determined that regarding validity study in the inventories used in program evaluation studies in Turkey mostly content validity has been furnished; that regarding reliability study mostly the Cronbach Alpha coefficient has been calculated; and that in addition to them the inventories about which no validity and reliability study has been conducted are many in number, as well. Finally in the research a conclusion has been reached that validity and reliability studies of the inventories used in program evaluation researches in Turkey are not adequate.

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1. Introduction

The rapid changes in science and technology in the recent years have also affected the speed of information increase and facilitated formation of the knowledge society where new knowledge is generated every second. From these developments education programs have been affected as well and in the program development process particularly raising the individual type which 21st century needs has been intended for. Within this context, the

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effort to adapt to the 21st century has brought along continuous development and taking up in detail of the programs with it.

Program evaluation constitutes the last phase of program development studies. Evaluation is to render judgments about the value of whatever is being evaluated (Fitzpatrick, Sanders and Worthen, 2004). Program evaluation is a process of data gathering through various measurement instruments about program effectiveness, comparing the obtained data with the criteria which are the indicators of program's effectiveness and making comments and decision making regarding effectiveness of the program (Erden, 1998). Validity and reliability of the decisions to be taken at the end of this process is directly related to validity and reliability of program evaluation process, as well (Saglam and Yuksel, 2007).

Reliability means that scores from an instrument are stable and consistent. Validity, however, means that the individual's scores from an instrument make sense, are meaningful, and enable you, as the researcher, to draw good conclusions from the sample you are studying to the population (Cresswell, 2005). When one thinks that validity and reliability of measurements to be made in a scientific research form the basic characteristics of the data gathering instrument (Ural and Kilic, 2006), it becomes clear that validity and reliability studies conducted have significant importance.

In program evaluation process, scientific studies and standards should be used as base and base of evaluation process should be formed by scientific methods (Yasar and etc., 2005). If no valid and reliable criterion is used in this process, the comments derived from research results become subjective and suspicious, too (Turgut, 1983). This situation causes questioning of being scientific of the research conducted. Within this context, using data gathering instruments that have been proven to be valid and reliable in program evaluation studies is an important factor from the perspective of enhancing the quality of the research and facilitating being scientific. It is known that after putting into effect of new educational programs in 2005 in Turkey, program evaluation studies have increased in numbers. But whether these research are adequate from the point of quality or not is a matter of discussion. Based on this, the fact that researches conducted related to program evaluation are many in number has given birth to the need for determining whether or not they are qualified. Likewise, because determining validity and reliability studies conducted on data gathering instruments used in research realized would provide information about being scientific of the research in question, they are considered important. Moving from these requirements, in this study it has been aimed to analyze the data gathering instruments used in program evaluation studies conducted at the primary education level in Turkey from the perspective of validity and reliability studies.

In the research answers for the following questions have been sought:

- In regards to inventories used in the analyzed researches which validity studies have been made ?
- In regards to inventories used in the analyzed researches which reliability studies have been made ?
- In regards to inventories used in the analyzed researches what are the validity and reliability studies conducted together?

It is considered that research findings will draw the attentions to the importance of securing validity and reliability of measurement tools in the program evaluation studies, shed light on to the researchers who will conduct program evaluation studies and that validity and reliability studies to be conducted meticulously will enhance the quality of studies made.

2. Method

In the research conducted by document review, 12 articles and 38 master thesis and PhD dissertations that were conducted on program evaluation between 2007-2012 in Turkey have been analyzed. For article review, reachable editions of various journals with referees have been analyzed and in the search engines searches have been performed with the key words "program evaluation". For master thesis and PhD dissertations the thesis in the National Thesis Center of Higher Education Council have been analyzed. The data gathering instruments analyzed within the scope of the research are limited to pre-developed inventories or inventories developed by researchers.

In order to provide internal validity for the research, the research report has been presented a field specialist and a qualitative research specialist. In line with opinions and suggestions of the specialists necessary corrections have been made in the research report. In order to enhance reliability of the research, in the data analysis process, two researchers have analyzed the documents together about the research questions and have created Table 1.

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