Establishing New Foundation Universities and Suggesting Academic Programs to be Focused

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Introduction

The purpose of this study is to suggest new advantageous locations and academic programs for the Turkish foundation universities for their future development plans. The study also examines the work skills of the future considering the academic programs suggested for the foundation universities. The total number of Turkish universities is 164 and 61 of the Turkish universities are foundation universities according to Higher Education Counsel of Turkey as of February 2012. 43 universities are located in Istanbul and 35 of them are foundation universities. Ankara hosts a total of 15 university while 11 of them are foundation universities. İzmir currently has 9 universities and 6 of them are foundation universities.

The Turkish foundation universities seem to be concentrated in the largest three cities of Turkey. These three cities currently host a total of 67 universities. It certainly creates synergetic effects for universities located in the same cities. The synergies that universities create may be observed by the number of seminars, panel discussions, congresses, academic publications and academic staff. The synergies created may also be defined for an increase in economic activities, exhibits, art performances, etc. sharing the economic values with the companies offering goods and services for these cities. The current Turkish laws do not allow the foundation universities to locate new education facilities in other cities. It is expected that the current law is changed in the near future and the foundation universities will be allowed to locate new facilities in the other cities and offer academic programs.

Methodology and Findings

In this study it is stated that which provinces of Turkey should be considered and why those provinces are defined to be advantageous in the context of growth strategies of Turkish foundation universities clustered mostly in Istanbul and Ankara. Those provinces can be taught as the strategic provinces for the location selection of the foundation universities planning to expand in the future. By analyzing the population,
education structure, social, cultural and economic development level of Turkish provinces; Bursa, Kocaeli, Yalova, Antalya and Adana are considered to be the most advantageous provinces offering good locations for the foundation universities. Also, Bodrum, Marmaris, Fethiye and Kemer are suggested as good alternatives. Afterwards, by considering economic developments, cultural structures and occupations of the provinces which are expected to become prominent in the future, it is explored whether a foundation university may be established at one of the suggested provinces. Lastly, some strategic steps are suggested to become a competitive university integrating with the world universities.

**Conclusion**

Each university must organize itself to be a competitive university. Each university nowadays compete with not only regional and national universities but also all other universities in the world. A competitive university needs to offer a good quality of education, attract best students and academicians, produce high quality researches and integrate to the demands of society. The fundamental problems meeting these qualifications for becoming a world-wide competitive university may be stated as having inadequate quality and quantity of academics and administrative staff, insufficient financial resources and inefficient management model. The university students do currently not expect to get an education which is based upon solely transfer of information in a convenient way. Instead, the students like to be equipped with problem-solving skills that could be useful in their later occupations and helpful to get employed. Then, some critical suggestions may be underlined for becoming a competitive Turkish foundation university. A competitive foundation university should consistently update all its academic curricula; increase cooperations with sectoral companies; include more research methods, communications techniques, application and design, a second foreign language besides English in each curriculum; get its students contact to changes in real life and improve awareness of all local and global problems and able to suggest solutions to these problems; posses high quality PhD programs; offer new academic programs for recently developed interdisciplinary areas; get its students involve more in sports and social activities; and finally organize ways of long-term financing for higher education. Importantly, each university is able to document all of its activities and achievements.