

# Evaluation of the Turkish education system in the context of learning organisations according to the opinion of the candidate teachers

Reyhan Şekerci<sup>1</sup>, Tayfun Yörük<sup>2\*</sup> and Süleyman Karataş<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ministry of National Education, Antalya, Turkey.

<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Applied Sciences, Antalya, Turkey.

<sup>3</sup>Faculty of Education, Akdeniz University, Antalya, Turkey.

---

## ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to evaluate the Turkish education system in the context of learning organizations according to the opinions of prospective teachers. In this study, in which qualitative research methods and techniques were used, the 4th grade students of Akdeniz University Faculty of Education, Department of Preschool Teaching, who took the school management course in the Turkish Education system, were asked to present their opinions and suggestions. The data were collected using the documentation technique. As a result of the research, some suggestions were made regarding the decrease in quality and quantity problems by giving place to the opinions of the teacher candidates about the Turkish Education system.

**Keywords:** Learning organization, education system, prospective teachers' views.

---

\*Corresponding author. E-mail: tayfun@akdeniz.edu.tr. Tel: +90 507 927 65 23.

---

## INTRODUCTION

Many organizational theorists (Hodges, 2000; Leithwood et al., 1998; Mulford, 1998; Silins et al., 1999) have conducted various researches on which characteristics constitute organizational learning. The concept of learning organization is not a name or title given to an institution or an organization. A learning organization is a concept given to an organizational feature and used in separating the organizational feature from other features. As with the other characteristics of organizations, the learning organization feature does not come to the organization automatically. In order for organizations to have these features, they need a long process consisting of certain stages. These phases are virtually the prerequisites for each other for the continuity of organizational life. The organizational learning phase of the organization takes place at the last point to be reached, which is a hierarchical sequence. For this reason, in order for any organization to have the feature of a learning organization, the previous stages, which are its own preconditions, must emerge as a feature of the organization. The important thing is that each phase has

its own specific features. It is these features that concern organizations (Woolner, 1995).

The ability of organizations to adapt to the environment and to react to change stems from the learning organization feature. Members within learning organizations have learned to anticipate and accept change. In learning organizations, people are always looking for the systematic consequences of their actions. They are patient to understand more. As a result of these abilities, learning organizations are both more productive and more adaptive than traditional organizations (Bates and Khasawneh, 2005; Senge, 1992). All these questions involve a dual-circuit learning potential, because they are directed at questioning the status quo and taking on alternative modes of operation.

In dual-circuit learning, it has a dual function that enables people to question the basic operating principles and to verify again and again the values that will guide the action both in the process and in the end. In addition, it is open to innovations from all sides and enables "intelligence" to reach even higher levels. The cybernetic

approach to the problem suggests that while goals often reflect noble intentions, the understanding of the limits that must be placed on behavior must always be considered in achieving each goal. In other words, system evolution should be driven by "avoidance of harmful effects" as well as the pursuit of envisaged goals (Morgan, 1997).

The most successful institutions of the next centuries will be something called a learning organization. The ability to learn faster than your competitors may be the only viable competitive advantage. It is no longer possible for anyone to think down on him and that everyone else in the organization is following the orders of the great strategist. Organizations that will truly outpace others in the future will be those who discover how individuals can assess the obligation and capacity to learn at all levels of an organization. The main difference that separates learning organizations from traditional, authoritarian, "controlling" organizations will be the ability to master certain basic disciplines. This is what makes "the disciplines of the learning organization" vital (Senge, 1992)

On the other hand, learning always involves some kind of paradox. Because when we try to do something new, established behaviors are threatened. For example, if an organization attempts to renew itself and create a new understanding of business, it often faces the resistance of the old institution. If everything will be lost during the transition process, or if a traditional bureaucratic structure attempts to form "authorized teams", it often tries to undermine these teams, as the old hierarchy will try to retain control. The existing norms of the system say "oppose" and "change". In order to facilitate the dual-circuit "learning to learn" process, people must have acquired the ability to overcome such a paradox. Ways must be found to overcome the tensions created by the learning process. So that new operating norms can come into existence. Otherwise, the system will remain stuck to the old model (Senge, 2006).

### **Purpose of the research**

In this study, it is aimed to evaluate the Turkish education system according to the opinions of prospective teachers in the context of learning organizations. What would you change? Why? What kind of applications would you do? And what do you think might be the problems you may encounter and how can you change and transform them? The questions were asked in the context of learning organizations.

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

#### **Research model**

In this study, case study methods and techniques

included in the qualitative research approach were used (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011; Silverman, 1998).

### **Collection of data**

The documentation technique included in the document and record review method was used as a data collection tool (Ekiz, 2003). This method, also known as document analysis, is one of the basic data collection tools of historical and biographical research, and written documents, sound recordings, photographs, electronic files and videos are used as data sources. Lincoln and Guba (1985) cited written materials such as diaries, letters, memories, travel notes, and life stories, which were generally prepared for personal purposes (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Apart from these, field notes, official records, policies, student compositions, homework, technical documents, meeting minutes, plans, brochures, announcements, annuals and newspapers are among the data sources used in the documentation technique (Cohen et al., 2007). While these documents can be used as stand-alone data sources, they can also be used to provide additional information to other qualitative methods (interview, observation, etc.) and increase reliability. Since the documents are rich and contain large amounts of data, they are very effective in describing the phenomenon under study in a versatile way. In addition, documents are useful in identifying personal views and feelings (confessions, etc.) that cannot be obtained through other means and in examining how situations develop over time in long-term studies (Cohen et al., 2007). Participants consisted of 13 volunteer students who took the School Management course in the Turkish Education System, studying in the 4th grade of Akdeniz University Faculty of Education and the Department of English Language Teaching in the Spring Semester of the 2019-2020 Academic Year, and were selected from purposeful sampling methods using the easily accessible situation sampling method.

### **RESULTS**

#### **Evaluation of the Turkish education system in the context of learning organizations according to prospective teachers' views**

*"When I become a Minister of Education, there are so many problems in the education system that I will have to think too much about what to fix first that I may be indecisive about which one to rank first. But it should also be known that in our country, the Minister of National Education does not stop talking. It is necessary to consider this system as a whole. Being the Minister of Education does not mean that you have all the powers. When economic conditions permit, I think it is necessary*

to abolish paid teaching and consolidated classrooms and close all the gaps by looking at teacher needs by merit. After this process, by taking as many individuals as needed within the structure of National Education to prevent too much input into the system... The aim of this is to provide education by considering competency rather than the concern of recruiting as many students as needed and assigning them to the university. In addition, it is necessary to increase the quality of university education. " PT 1

"If we take it as the management of basic education, I would try to make the general method of education "game-based life knowledge ". By this I mean that individuals should first be taught the options to deal with the problems they frequently encounter in life; while doing this, I think it should be put into practice based on pedagogical principles. If I will set a principle for all educational levels of the country, I can say that this may be the principle of teaching learning. In other words, education should not dictate pure theoretical knowledge to individuals in rows in a row where group interactions are very limited as it is now; Instead, educational environments in which the individual can make meaningful discoveries and provide permanent learning should be offered. To achieve this, the education minister must first be trained to be an educator; then, the directors and R&D staff of the ministry of education should be composed of people deemed to be authorities. Necessary investments should be made to research and implement quality education. I think that a qualified human staff supported by investments will take the necessary implementation steps. I find it appropriate to conduct all these researches under the light of the scientific principle. " PT 2

"I would start by organizing the education system in the pre-school period, which is the first entry to school life. Starting from this period, I aimed to prepare a plan according to the abilities and interests of the children and to establish institutions that would specialize in different fields such as art, mathematics, science, sports and only in this field. I would have planned that only teachers who are experts in that field would provide training in these institutions. What I wanted to change would be the exam system. I would create a system where students could master, learn by doing and living, without being under stress and without measuring their success with just a written document. These changes would be my first goal since I think that the success of the student may be related not only to the pace of study but also to different factors and that the learning that he / she does not learn by doing and living will not be permanent. " PT 3

"First of all, I would start to examine the education system to the finest detail and make permanent and radical arrangements by establishing an independent committee

with a healthy personality and character, with individuals who are experts in their field, and away from political and personal interests. I would remove exams that wear off children both cognitively, physically and psychologically. And instead of exams, I would create a system where children could choose fields according to their abilities. I would try to present the priority in every field to people with professional competence. I would design the training programs to be flexible in line with the interests and needs of the children, and I would organize seminar trainings that would be effective for the teachers who were in charge. In addition to these, I would ensure that all parents who would raise an individual were given compulsory education at least twice a year. And I would create a more effective system to provide equal conditions for every child across the country. " PT 4

"The managers who want to solve their problems in the education system should first turn to the education institutions and the education system and solve the problems in this area. The structure and problems of the education system should be well analyzed. Equipped and competent persons should be determined as the brain of the system and analyzes should be studied. It should be ensured that sufficient share from the state budget is allocated for education. It should not be forgotten that this investment in people is made in the future of the country. Since education systems are a dynamic and open system in close interaction with their environment, measures should be taken in accordance with universal and national ethics and principles. " PT 5

"I wouldn't change anything right away. First, I would have done a detailed study of the problems, errors and deficiencies in our education system and why they were caused. Then I would correct these errors and complete the shortcomings. Because everything done from research ends up in disappointment. Constant changes were made, the changes were not understood. I think it will take a long time to fix this confusion. Our education system is based on exams and grade anxiety. I would do my best to change this and try to change our education system in a way that allows children to develop in practice. And I would open laboratories that would work for every school, enough for school capacity. " PT 6

"If I were the minister of national education, I would first take more solution-oriented measures for the staff coming from below, not the existing ones, knowing that the staff of the years, education is a very complex thing, and make the right directions. Also, instead of making small changes to the curriculum, I would go for a complete change. In addition, teachers who have made a very solid career in education and training for teachers constantly issue bulletins through a staff of academicians, provided that they are in the center, gives direct application training in the form of case studies on content

method and techniques, instead of the trainings that we live in the summer and have little realism. I make it done ...” PT 7

“Change must have a purpose and philosophy. It should be able to see what will be better as a result of the change. The education reform studies observed in the world, the demographic and geographical structure of our country, forces educational organizations to constantly renew and learn many things. Observed in our country; With the urbanization, the increase in schooling rates at all levels, the crowding of the schools in the city centers, and the busied education opportunity that emerges in parallel with the shortage of students observed in the rural areas, it seems to disrupt the equality of opportunity and opportunity in education. Depending on the problems I mentioned; If I were the minister of national education, the first I would change would be the exam system. I see it as a big deficiency that no physical and personal characteristics are taken into consideration and that only the exam scores of the candidates are measured. Because I do not find the decisions and judgments made on the exam correct. In many types of exams applied until today in the acquisition of the examination system for teacher recruitment, only professional field knowledge and general cultural knowledge of teacher candidates were measured at the theoretical level; his personal characteristics were never taken into account. Teacher candidates are evaluated in terms of their professional competencies and their ability to apply them. After their appointment to the profession, they are subjected to in-service training to correct their deficiencies. I see the Teaching Field Knowledge Test (ÖABT), which has been applied since 2013 for the selection of candidates in teacher appointments, as an important step in the selection of pre-service teachers according to their field knowledge. First of all, not everyone should be subjected to the same exam. Apart from the general exam, I would also have a talent exam. Thus, the talented ones of our children would have been added to the society that was not spent. I used to make applications that would combine modern education with modern education. Thus, instead of putting them into a system they are unfamiliar with, we would have built a system that they used to get used to. It is not good that it constantly changes, but updates can be made. A systematic and continuous assessment study is required. A more valid policy should be implemented and education should be carried forward. Because it is for our benefit to raise qualified people.” PT 8

“As a teacher candidate, if I were the Minister of National Education, I would make the following change: During the process of gaining experience in the practice school, pre-service teachers' initial thoughts about the teaching profession may change and their perceptions may differ. If pre-service teachers' perceptions and beliefs about the

teaching profession differ after they go to practice schools, I take into account the suggestions of the educators to determine the reasons for this and provide a new perspective. I include practices on how educators can bridge the gap between theory and practice. In addition, there is an opportunity to revise the teaching practice and school experience courses offered at universities. For example, I would change the start of classes in the morning, remove unnecessary information in textbooks and add information to prepare them for life, extend the hours of the lessons by extending the recess hours, establishing e-sports rooms in schools, organizing more sports competitions in schools, giving coding training to children in schools. In this way, I think we can reach the level of advanced civilizations that we want to reach by increasing children's interest in school. Civilized society, civilized civilization can only pass through a good education.”PT9

“I would allow students to shape their own educational programs in line with their interests and desires, and I would try to prepare a lesson program in a way that would not bore the students. In this way, students do not hate school, teachers can participate in different activities where they can improve themselves for the rest of the day. I would try to shape the grading system not with the exam, not with rote-based homework but with the projects prepared by the children depending on the course content. I would concentrate on art and sports lessons that would make students realize their own talents.” PT 10

“I would remove or replace many exam systems and I would do this by taking into account the positive and negative consequences experienced in previous systems. I would try to provide a fair interview system where the examination system is replaced by interests, abilities and skills. I would support many professions that are unknown or not supported in our country. I would establish a developing technology follow-up unit outside our country and mostly support the growth of this sector. I would provide opportunities for young people to participate in cultural events such as one-year cinema and theater and to buy books. I would ensure that students graduating from each school are successful in at least one sports branch.” PT 11

“If I were the Minister of Education, I would have convened a research board to make an accurate analysis of the shortcomings in education. I would try to identify the deficiencies correctly with a very good analysis. After the correct determination of the deficiencies in the education system, I would lead in-depth research to find the most accurate solution method. As the Minister of National Education, I would increase the supervision of the schools in order to determine whether the modern education system is implemented correctly. I would also

authorize this audit of experts who have done research on this field in universities. "PT12

"I would switch to mixed management in the fully centralized education system. Because I think mixed management can give more successful results. I would make arrangements where equality of opportunity in education is at the highest level. I would organize various campaigns to increase the budget for education and organize activities to encourage the families of children from all over the country to education. I would gradually lose all private schools in the country or have them tied to national education, I would initiate a social education and training campaign throughout the country. Because there is little to do individually unless they are socially educated. " PT 13

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Even if the organizational activities show a static picture, the same organizational activities will have different results as the environment and conditions go through a rapid change process. Until recently, educational organizations, which could not go beyond the traditional education understanding, started to change the understanding of education today with the development of the age and technology. As a result, distance education etc. different perceptions and applications have been developed. The "organization-environment" relationship, which classical organizational theorists did not give due importance, has found its place in the open system theory. According to this theory, the open system lives by exchanging matter with the environment, and as a result of this interaction, the parts of the system constantly change. The survival or success of organizations depends on the ability to follow the changes in the environment and to adapt to these changes (Bursalıoğlu, 2000).

Despite the view that the source of the problems that modern organizations have to deal with is the changes in the environment, which Bursalıoğlu (2000) also mentioned, Maturana and Varela (1980) opposed this basic idea with a new approach they developed. This theory offers new perspectives in understanding the processes that cause living systems to change by opposing the distinction between a system and its environment. According to these theorists, all living systems are organizationally closed and autonomous interaction systems that consider themselves only a reference. Maturana and Varela (1980), on the other hand, explain the ability of organizations to produce themselves through this closed system of relations. Systems are systems that produce or reproduce their own elements with the help of the elements that compose them (Brans and Rossbach, 1997). Maturana and Varela (1980) argued that systems can produce

themselves independent of the environment (Erçetin, 2001). Maturana and Varela (1980) state that the autonomy, circularity and self-referral features, which they see as the distinguishing features of living systems, allow systems to create and renew themselves. Maturana and Varela (1980) state that living systems are closed and autonomous, and that the system is not disconnected from the environment. This closeness and autonomy is at the organizational level and they are closed on their own to maintain stable relationship patterns, and they enter the process of self-referral with this distinctive closeness feature (Morgan, 1998). Erçetin (2001) states that systems define themselves according to their own goals, with meaningful organizational behaviors and regulate their relations with the environment according to these goals. Also, Maturana and Varela (1980) acknowledge that systems can be seen as a whole structure as well.

Everything that systems use as a whole - its elements, processes, structures, and the system itself - is fully produced by all of these wholes within the system. (Brans and Rossbach, 1997). The goal of learning systems is to produce themselves, and the products of this production are the organization itself and its identity (Morgan, 1998). Hatch and Schultz (1997) state that organizational identity is about "what individuals perceive, feel and think about their organizations". Organizational identity is a metaphor for discussing and analyzing how members of the organization perceive their organization, how they feel and think about their organization. According to Hatch and Schultz (2002) and Morgan (1998), some egocentric organizations are organizations that try to survive by focusing on narrowly defined identities. The problem may be that it is quite difficult to give up the identity that created them and represents the achievements in their history. However, even though an identity is the driving force of organizational development for a certain period of time, these identities may create obstacles for transformation after a while. For this reason, organizations can make great strides by reshaping their traditional identities and creating a new understanding of identity regarding itself and the system as a whole.

## REFERENCES

- Bates, R., and Khasawneh, S. (2005). Organizational learning culture, learning transfer climate and perceived innovation in Jordanian organizations. *International Journal of Training and Development*, 9(2): 1360-3736.
- Brans, M., and Rossbach, S. (1997). The autopoiesis of administrative systems: Niklas Luhmann on public administration and public policy. *Public Administration*, 55: 417-439.
- Bursalıoğlu Z. (2000). *Understanding Management in Education, Analyzing the System*. Ankara: Pegem Yayinevi.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., and Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education*. New York: Routledge Publication.
- Ekiz, D. (2003). *Introduction to Research Methods and Methods in Education: Qualitative, Quantitative and Critical Theory Methodologies*. Ankara: Anı Publishing.
- Erçetin Ş. S. (2001). *New Approaches in Management*. Ankara: Nobel

Publishing.

**Hatch, M. J., and Schultz M. (2002).** The dynamics of organizational identity. *Human Relations*, 55(8): 989-1018

**Hatch, M. J., and Schultz, M. (1997).** Relations between organizational culture, identity and image. *European Journal of Marketing*, 31: 356-365.

**Hodges, A. (2000).** April. Web of support for a personalized, academic foundation Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association New Orleans, LA.

**Leithwood, K., Leonard, L., and Sharattat L. (1998).** Conditions fostering organizational learning in schools. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 34(2): 243-276.

**Lincoln, Y. S., and Guba, E. G. (1985).** *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

**Maturana, H. R., and Varela, F. J. (1980).** *Autopoiesis and Cognition: The Realization of the Living*. Dordrecht: Reidel.

**Morgan G. (1998).** *Metaphor in Management and Organization Theories* (Trans .G. Bulut), Istanbul: MESS Publications)

**Morgan, G. (1997).** *Imaginization: Seeing the new mindset for organizing and managing*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

**Senge, P. M. (1992).** Building learning organizations. *Journal for Quality and Participation*, 15(2): 30-38.

**Senge, P. M. (2006).** *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*. NY, USA: Doubleday.

**Silins, H., Mulford, W., and Zarins, S. (1999).** Leadership for organizational learning and student outcomes: The LOLSO Project. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Montreal, Canada.

**Silverman, D. (1998).** *Qualitative research: Theory, method and practice*. London: Sage Publications.

**Woolner, P. (1995).** *A Development Model of the Learning Organization*. Toronto: Woolner, Lowy.

**Yıldırım, A., and Şimşek, H. (2011).** *Qualitative research methods in social sciences* (8th ed.). Ankara: Seçkin Publishing.

---

**Citation:** Şekerci, R., Yörük, T., and Karataş, S. (2020). Evaluation of the Turkish education system in the context of learning organisations according to the opinion of the candidate teachers. *African Educational Research Journal*, 8(2): S360-S365.

---