

## Cultural Dimensions of Academic Organizations: A Pilot Research on Faculties of Economics and Administrative Sciences

Ferda Erdem\*  
Fulya Erendag Sumer\*\*  
Aylin Aktas Alan\*\*\*  
Gozde Gul Baser\*\*\*\*

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### Abstract

*Problem Statement:* Academic institutions have been feeling greater pressure of acting in conformity with universal values and education standards every passing day. However, the first step of an academic organization developing a vision and strategy to this end is its thorough understanding of present cultural properties. Hence, examining cultural properties of academic organizations by considering the perceptions of their faculty members as a dominant group must be given priority for the development of the research and student-training processes.

*Purpose of Study:* The purpose of this paper is to determine cultural dimensions of academic organizations based on perceptions of the faculty members. The basic research question regards which cultural dimensions become apparent in academic organizations and of what they are composed.

*Methods:* In this research, qualitative and quantitative methods were used together. Researchers realized semi-structured interviews with the faculty members, first in their own organizations. Later, based on the interview notes, a questionnaire composed of a wide-item list towards academic organizations' culture was developed. This questionnaire was applied to

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\* Prof. Dr., Akdeniz University, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, TURKEY, ferdem@akdeniz.edu.tr

\*\* Instructor, Akdeniz University, Faculty of Communication, TURKEY, fulyaerendag@akdeniz.edu.tr

\*\*\* Research Fellow, Akdeniz University, School of Tourism and Hotel Management, TURKEY, aylinaktas@akdeniz.edu.tr

\*\*\*\* PhD, Akdeniz University, Graduate School of Social Sciences, TURKEY, gozdebaser@akdeniz.edu.tr

200 faculty members working in faculties of economics and administrative sciences in six public universities. Basic cultural dimensions were determined and interpreted.

*Findings and Results:* Leading dimensions in culture of academic organizations according to perceptions of the faculty members were as follows: Management style-value consistency, changeability, motivation and communication. Management style is regarded important, especially in providing autonomy. It was determined that organizations' initial missions and values didn't completely overlap with their present applications and universal values. While motivation is perceived as an interactive phenomenon, change is perceived as a phenomenon that will be resisted. Also, it is observed that academic relationships in these organizations are continued within small groups.

*Conclusion and Recommendations:* This pilot research seeks to determine which cultural dimensions should be thoroughly assessed in academic organizations and which need to be analyzed in detail for the contextual conditions affecting the content of these dimensions. In order for strategic management to take interest in higher education in Turkish institutions in the last term, it is necessary for them to have data from these types of studies.

*Keywords:* Academic organizations, organizational culture, universities, faculty members, Turkey

Most organization studies essentially describe culture as a "behavior regulator" (Deal & Kennedy, 1982); "collective meaning system" (Pettigrew, 1979); "mental programming of a group" (Hofstede, 1994); "the way organization members think, feel and behave" (Cameron, 2004); and "a system of codes which a group develops and transfers to its new members in the process of solving the problems of internal integration and harmony with outside environment" (Schein, 1984). Hofstede, Neuijen, Ohavy and Sanders (1990) argued that basic perceptions of an organization's members concerning organizational life have formed the basis to explain culture. Every organization produces a culture, and its characteristics are affected by internal (founders, leaders, organization members, etc.) and external elements of the organization. For this reason, no organization can be identical to another due to its internal dynamics, even if it performs the same work as the other. Culture is metaphorically the DNA of an organization. On the flip side, societal (macro) culture explains differences in work due to various understandings among countries. It also enables us to understand similarities in different organizations in the same cultural context (Hofstede, 1994).

Every organization is composed of sub-cultures, and its effects and powers are different (Van Maanen & Parley 1985). Organizational culture is a product of the interaction of sub-cultures. Strong cultures are expected to produce common understandings and perceptions that will create synergy among sub-cultures (Erdem & İşbaşı, 2001). In critical constructivism, culture is considered not homogenous or

consensual but “multivoiced,” as institutional members struggle with the coexistence of differing meanings, representations, and interpretations (McLaren, as cited in Gallant, 2007). Dominant values and applications in the organization are generally under strong sub-cultures, and when cultural properties of an organization are explained, values of the group become especially apparent (Robbins, 1993), just like the dominant effect of faculty members on values of an academic organization.

#### *Culture of Academic Organizations and Faculty Sub-culture*

Educational organizations have a direct effect on human culture because of their distinct mission to change behavior and define culture. Therefore, even though their basic functions are similar to other organizations, the individual dimension of their processes is more important than the institutional dimension; informal applications are more widespread than formal applications; and in solving problems, effective methods rather than authority figures are seen as valid (Şişman, 1994). Educational organizations' important sub-cultures are administrators, educators and students, and culture develops based on the interaction of these groups. Hence, the culture of academic organizations is shared by the faculty members, students and managers and is composed of assumptions, beliefs, values, norms, symbols and applications. These are affected by the cultural paradigm of the society and properties of the work of education (Erdem & İşbaşı, 2001). Educational culture has three important dimensions: academic values, human values and ethical values (Erdem, 2003). Belief or ideology systems, which form the basis of these values, occur at three different levels: the culture of the academic enterprise, the culture of the academic profession at large, and the culture of distinctive ideologies of the academic disciplines (Hergüner, 2000) which have rules, values, communication styles, life patterns, and pedagogical and ethical codes (Gizir & Gizir, 2005). Bailey (1994) has also stated that culture in universities has a content based on conventional academic discipline, but new accreditation standards create paradigm change. While new technologies, new student profiles and varied expectations have especially resulted in the prevalence of private and virtual universities, increased competition has also added economic values (profit, entrepreneurship, customer satisfaction, etc.) to human and ethical values of universities. This situation sometimes makes the conflict between economic and other values inevitable (Erdem, 2003). Giroux (2002) has stated that neoliberalism affects the culture of academic institutions negatively, and privatization and commercialization preferences put pressure on the academic culture.

An academic organization culture is a synthesis of national culture, professional culture, discipline culture and organization culture (Campbell, 2003), and its main sub-cultures are administrators, faculty members and students. The faculty members forming the core of the academic workforce (Sokugawa, 1996) are a dominant sub-culture in terms of assumptions, values and the application of culture. Renn, Dille and Prentice (2003) stated that the faculty members were rational, unemotional, objective, unbiased and detached rather than passionate. On the other hand, because of autonomy restriction, high formalization for this sub-culture isn't preferred (Bazzi, 1999).

This group isn't homogenous within itself, however, because of different academic titles and different university experiences, as well as conflict potential. Disunity is not desirable in the excessive homogenous cultures necessary for the performance of academic organizations. Research culture based on intellectual inquiry is dependent on creativity, innovation and even the destruction of usual molds and differences. Hence, academic freedom in universities is the most important value (Oviatt & Miller, 1989).

In this study, the culture of faculties of economics and administrative sciences (FEAS) was adopted as an academic organization culture type, since it characterized the findings stated above. The aim of this research is to investigate essential dimensions forming the culture of these organizations, depending on perceptions of the faculty members being the most important sub-culture group. The basic research question involves which organization culture dimensions become apparent in academic organizations of what these dimensions are composed. Although the research is limited with FEAS, this limitation also forms the distinctive aspect of the study. The findings of this research will especially contribute to understanding cultural properties of faculties of economics and administrative sciences (89) (<http://www.ulakbim.gov.tr/cabim/ekual/uye/fakulte.uhtml>), being the second largest group after faculties of science and literature (97) within the Turkish higher-education system.

## Method

### *Research Design*

In this study, the method of developing a questionnaire was preferred for determining cultural dimensions of academic organizations, instead of benefiting from foreign scales. Transferring measurement tools from Anglo-Saxon literature is problematic in the analysis of social phenomena like culture due to the relativity of the social world. It is necessary to explore the context from the inside (for cultural relativism see Yeganeh, Su & Chrysostorne, 2004). This argument forms the basis of the Emic approach, which has been strengthening increasingly in social sciences in the last years. Thus, authors of this study who were members of the academic organization made exploration from the inside possible both during the interviews and the discussion of the results.

For the development process of the questionnaire, there were three stages as follows: forming the question pool, structuring, and applying the form (Schwab, 1980). In the early stage, in order to develop items for the questionnaire, views of academic organization members about the organization culture were taken according to the method of scale development (Hinkin, 1998). In this research, semi-structured interviews were first made for about 17 hours with 14 faculty members of various academic titles who worked in different departments (management, economics, public administration, public finance and international relations) of the Akdeniz University FEAS. Some studies handling organization culture dimensions were examined to form the interview questions (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988; Rousseau, 1990; Sashkin, 1996; Denison & Mishra, 1995). Some questions (management style, mission and values, faculty members' attitudes towards change and innovations, relationship

and motivation) were formed by taking dimensions often emphasized as foundational in these studies. The participants were asked to tell about organization culture in the context of these questions. In the content-analysis stage of the interview notes, descriptions the participants made most often towards organization culture were determined, and these statements were protected with as much originality as possible and transformed into items.

#### *Structuring the Questionnaire*

The first version of the developed questionnaire was presented to a small group of faculty members in the same organization. Some statements were revised by feedback. The appearance and content validity of the first version of the questionnaire consisting 41 items was provided and arranged according to a five-point Likert scale. Questions about academic title, employment period and any required administrative duties were also added to the questionnaire. A single open-ended question (what should be an academic organization's values?) was also added to the last part of the form.

#### *Applying the Questionnaire*

Developing the questionnaire requires a pilot study of testing the draft form on a sample that has a similar quality with the original sample. Reliability of the survey draft is provided through descriptive findings, internal consistency, relation analyses and the elimination of unsuitable questions (Şencan, 2005). Therefore, the FEAS of universities in 10 different cities were selected for this research having the quality of a pilot study, but the feedback was obtained from six faculties (Anadolu, Akdeniz, Aksaray, Gazi, Osmangazi and Uludağ Universities).

#### *Sample*

Two hundred ten faculty members with different titles and at least two years of experience in these six universities participated in the research (see Table 1 and 2), but 200 forms were taken to evaluate.

Table 1

#### *Academic Title of Faculty Members*

<b>Academic title of faculty members</b>	<b>N= 200</b>
Professor	26 (13.1 %)
Associate Professor	21 (10.6 %)
Assistant Professor	77 (38.9 %)
Research Assistant	58 (29.3 %)
Instructor	16 ( 8.1 %)

Table 2  
*Employment Period in the Faculty*

<b>Employment Period in the Faculty</b>	<b>N= 200</b>
2-8 years	86 (45.3 %)
9-15 years	79 ( 41.6 %)
16-22 years	15 ( 7.9 %)
23 and more years	10 ( 5.3 %)

As can be seen from Table 1, the number of assistant professors and research assistants is more than other groups. As a matter of fact, these two groups have a large part among the faculty members in public universities all around Turkey (<http://yogm.meb.gov.tr/devletogretimeleman.htm>). This situation also explains the big ratio (86%) of those working between 2-8 years. On the other hand, 24.3% (50 people) of participants were undertaking different administrative duties (chair of departments, etc.).

#### *Validity and Reliability of the Research Tool*

Methodologically, unsuitable items are eliminated by examining the pilot study results through descriptive findings, internal consistency and relation analysis, and therefore, reliability of the draft form is provided (Şencan, 2005). The data of this research have been analyzed with internal consistency, relation analysis and explanatory factor analysis, and unsuitable items have been eliminated.

#### *Reduction of Scale and Internal Consistency Analysis Results*

In the reduction of items taking place in the scale, internal consistency values of the scale were first observed. The Cronbach Alpha value of the first state of the form with 41 items was 0.61. Later, correlation values of items among themselves were calculated, and 28 items having a lower value than 0.40 were eliminated. The Cronbach Alpha value of the questionnaire with 13 items was elevated to 0.69. Therefore, the questionnaire's internal consistency was provided.

#### *Explanatory Factor Analysis and Results*

The explanatory factor analysis was made for the remaining 13 items after an attempt was made to explore the main factors pertaining to cultural properties. Factor analysis provides the data to be presented more meaningfully and briefly depending on relations among numerous variables. This analysis also provides the emergence of hidden dimensions, which are called factors (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 1998). In this research, the KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) value of Sampling Adequacy used in determining the suitability of the data to factor analysis was calculated as 0.85 (> 0.70). The result of the Barlett's Test of Sphericity stating the general meaningfulness of relations among variables is meaningful at the 0.001 level. Explained total variance was calculated as 0.59. It can be said that all these values are at the acceptable level for a questionnaire that has been newly developed (Akgül & Çevik, 2003) (see Table 3).

Table 3  
Factor Analysis

ITEMS	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2 Change	FACTOR 3 Motivation	FACTOR 4 Relations
	Value Consistency Management Style			
Decisions are taken democratically in this faculty.	.754			
This faculty's present values and applications are in harmony with universal values necessary to be had by academic institutions.	.743			
This faculty's written mission and goals reflect present values and applications.	.691			
The faculty management protects the institution's interests against pressures coming from the outside.	.689			
An attitude of focusing on faults rather than success is widespread in this faculty.	.651			
Successes are appreciated in this faculty verbally and in writing.	.646			
The faculty management provides a free studying medium to the extent that the academic life requires.	.642			
In this faculty, resistance to change is demonstrated, because it creates work load.		.842		
In this faculty, the most important reason for resistance to change is that personal interests are regarded more preferential than interests of the institution.		.690		
Interacting with students is the most important element for increasing motivation.			.831	
In this faculty, senior academicians play an important role in the motivation of the young.			.588	
In this faculty, academic cooperations are only widespread among those working in the same field.				.853
Communication and relations among departments are weak in this faculty.				.655
<b>EXPLAINED VARIANCE RATIOS (%)</b>	<b>30.6</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>8.0</b>

\*KMO.852, Explained Variance 58.7, General Cronbach's Alpha 0.69

### Findings and Results

The first among the four factors determined as explaining cultural properties of the FEAS was named with double labels (Factor 1: Management style and value consistency). In the management style, dominant guidance methods include decision-making; providing autonomy, meaning and value of success; and protecting the institution against external pressures. Other the hand, value consistency has to do with values explained by academic organizations and their present applications and organizational values with universal values. In addition, being in the first factor is coherent, because value consistency has been shaped by management applications.

Factor 2 is change. The change dimension is related to the organization members' consistency in their attitudes towards change. Change is perceived as a phenomenon to which resistance is shown.

Factor 3 is motivation. This factor shows that in academic organizations, motivation is an interactive phenomenon between faculty members and students and also senior and young academicians.

Factor 4 is relationship. This factor shows that academic relations within small groups, and general relations among departments, are important. In the second stage, frequency analysis was made of perceptions towards statements taking place in the context of organization culture dimensions (Table 4).

Table 4  
*Frequency and Mean Values*

ITEMS	Agree %	No idea %	Disagree %	Mean
ITEM 1. (Management Style)	30.5	37	31	2.92
ITEM 2. (Value Consistency)	34.7	34.2	30.6	2.99
ITEM 3. (Value Consistency)	30	35.5	33.5	2.89
ITEM 4. (Management Style)	52	34	15	3.40
ITEM 5. (Management Style)	38	30	32	3.05
ITEM 6. (Management Style)	42.5	21.5	36	3.02
ITEM 7. (Management Style)	68.5	17	14.5	3.67
ITEM 8. (Change)	44	32.5	23.5	3.25
ITEM 9. (Change)	52.5	28	19.5	3.45
ITEM 10. (Motivation)	77	10	13	3.91
ITEM 11. (Motivation)	53	16	31	3.33
ITEM 12. (Relationships)	61	15.5	23	3.43
ITEM 13. (Relationships)	24	17.5	58.5	2.55

The perceptions are not homogenous for all dimensions, especially towards the management's decision-making style, attitude towards success and value consistency. The exceptions are only the management's efforts at providing autonomy and partially protecting the organization against external pressures. The positive perceptions concerning the appreciation of successes are weak, probably due

to the arrangement of reward policies such as wages and promotions through central systems.

Perceptions towards value consistency show that academic organizations do not yet reflect assertive missions and values expected from their policies and applications. Motivation is an important dimension of academic organizations. It is observed that interaction with students plays a very important role in the motivation of faculty members. This perception represents the highest ratio among items. The effect of the beliefs the educators have on the motivation and learning preferences of the students is especially emphasized (Bazzi, 1999). Further, this research presents different evidence showing that the effect the faculty members has on the student group also affects their own motivations. Secondly, the role of senior academicians on the motivation of the young has become apparent. This finding supports the mentoring phenomenon, which is accepted as an important characteristic of academic organizations in literature and which tells about the master-apprentice relationship (Erdem & Aytemur, 2008).

In views concerning change, more than half of the faculty members think that it is resisted, since personal interests become more significant than interests of the institution. Changes in the education system by environmental pressures (national policies or international affairs) lead to new arrangements, uncertainties, new responsibilities and greater workload. According to Craig (2004), the rapid growth of systems of higher education and the orientation toward the individual, discipline-based career may have contributed to a decline in academic culture and the loss of a unifying system of belief.

The relations among departments are not so weak. Those non-metropolis universities attending the research have become effective in carrying on relations more easily, because in these kinds of universities, different departments are more willing to support each other with limited resources (human or material) for continuing education and teaching. Also, sustaining academic cooperation within small groups is not a surprise. As a matter of fact, the academic promotion criteria have recently encouraged academicians to realize numerous publications or projects (Erdem, 2009).

In this stage, analysis was made of the differences in perceptions concerning cultural dimensions and from where these differences could be sourced. First, by the help of t-test, it was determined whether there was any difference between perceptions of those having and not having administrative duties, but there was no meaningful difference found. Later, ANOVA analysis was made to determine if there was any relation between academic titles and cultural dimensions. A meaningful difference was only found in the motivation dimension ( $p=.027$ ;  $F= 2.813$ ). Which group created this difference was analyzed with the Tukey B test, a Post-Hoc Multiple Comparisons technique. Accordingly, the total points of the group we can call the junior faculty (research assistants, instructors) were lower than those of the senior group (professors, associated professors, assistant professors). It can be said that the first group, being in the beginning of their academic career, especially needs time to explore the effect of motivation and interacting with students. The first group also needs mentoring experience.

Finally, ANOVA analysis was made again to determine if there was any relation between being a member of a different academic organization and cultural dimensions. A meaningful relation was detected in the management style ( $p = .001$ ;  $F = 4.442$ ) and relations ( $p = .008$ ;  $F = 3.208$ ). Which academic organization created this difference for these dimensions was analyzed with the Tukey B test again. In the management-style dimension, the total points of Anadolu and Osmangazi Universities were higher, followed by Aksaray and Akdeniz, Uludağ and Gazi Universities, respectively. In the relations dimension, the total points of Aksaray, Osmangazi and Akdeniz Universities were higher than Gazi, Uludağ and Anadolu Universities. The universities having the highest total points are younger. This situation indicates that the relationships among the faculty members can be relatively more powerful in young universities.

### Conclusions and Recommendations

Academic organizations are a delayed research area within organizational culture research. Comprehensive research projects are needed to elicit the characteristics of these organizations and the content of these dimensions to be understood. It can be said that the results of this research—being a pilot research—presented cues that could be deemed important about academic organization culture. In the research, the culture of faculties of economics and administrative sciences that was developing under the effect of the same discipline culture was examined. According to results obtained, the management style, consistency of values, change, motivation and relationships came to the foreground as cultural dimensions of these faculties. The management style is comprised of democratic decision-making, attitudes towards success, providing autonomy and protecting the organization against external pressures. This content shows that the faculty members greatly perceive the essential function of management as the ensuring of academic freedom. It is not surprising that the hard managerialism that is violently defended with dimensions of seeking efficiency, cost effectiveness, and accountability and emphasizing executive management in academic organizations in the last term is not a priority for the faculty members' group. Similarly, Yokoyama (2006) handling this topic in detail has stated that academicians in their organizations prefer to adopt the collegiality value based on trust and minimum hierarchy, not managerialism. Doubtlessly, the most important managerial application supporting this value is to sustain decision-making processes democratically. However, this situation is not seen satisfactory in the universities attending the research. Thus, it can be said that the effect of managerialism was felt in the organizations participating, but this finding is in itself a research topic.

On the other hand, while it is expected that values adopted in academic organizations will be strongly consistent with universal values, perceptions show that available values and applications don't completely overlap with idealized values. In order to understand what the faculty members meant by universal values, the values they stated in the last part of the questionnaire were examined. The most-often-emphasized values were cooperation, clarity, freedom, egalitarianism, justice and academic ethics. It is therefore not possible to say that the cultures of organizations attending the research were strongly based on these values.

Doubtlessly, value inconsistency is not only a problem for educational organizations. Today, in increased competitive conditions, many institutions are trying to restore their

missions, visions and values according to the expectations of public opinion. This effort is even described as a strategic decoupling to which the organization applies in order to gain legality against environmental pressures (Bastedo, 2004). According to the new institutional theory, decoupling is when organizations create an impression in accordance with the wish of looking suitable to expectations for their legitimacy (Hernes, 2005). However, this impression is sometimes not the original situation of the organization. Already, according to findings of the research, perceptions of the faculty members show that decoupling can be valid for academic organizations, but is most often perceived as dissatisfactory, because it will continuously create a pressure for development. As emphasized by Trivellas and Dargenidou (2009), academic organization culture serves a crucial role in determining "what the institutions are and what they might become."

The resistance to change can be perceived as a paradox for academic organizations expected to be fast change advocates. Despite the pressure of many groups (legislator, community leaders, students, parents and others) who are closely interested in the output of academic organizations and make organizational change necessary (Craig 2004), it is known that change is not easy in these kinds of organizations. Trivellas and Dargenidou (2009) attract attention to the studies proving that in higher education, the resistance against change has a long history. Craig (2004) also states that higher education institutions produce a culture resistant to change, and its main reason is that the organization members prefer the comfort of the current status. A change to an organization's shared beliefs is considered a threat to existence. There is fear of losing power and resources on longstanding traditions and a wide variety of subcultures created by organizational role, institutional position or disciplinary affiliation. Therefore, there is a need for supportive social norms for change management in the organization (Pratt & Margaritis, 1999).

There are findings asserting that faculty members become motivated with internal rewards rather than wage or security elements, and their self-achievement, social respect, autonomy and self-actualization are powerful (Pinto & Pulido, 1997; Wallin, 2003). In Feldman and Paulsen's (1999) studies concerning faculty members' motivation, external rewards include granting of tenure promotion, merit pay, travel provisions, payment of incidental department and professional expenses, clerical assistance, and special privileges. Internal motivators include problem solving, wanting to be helpful, students' development, feeling satisfaction from interacting with students, feeling a sense of competence, having opportunities for learning, and using skills. In this research, the roles of interacting with students and the roles of senior academicians over the young have especially come to the foreground. Thus, to qualify these two motivators as internal only will be a poor evaluation. The thing to be emphasized here is that the faculty members' motivation has a relational or interactive content. It can be considered that this situation is also related to higher education problems in Turkey. It is known that economic consideration problems have gradually deepened, especially in the state universities, and many academicians have moved on to the private sector or to private universities, the number of which has increased in the last years (Küskü, 2003). It is natural for faculty members not using these options to idealize their work, give priority to the mission of raising up another generation, and seeking satisfaction. The second evidence that faculty members perceive motivation as an interactive phenomenon is the role of senior academicians over the young. It is known that young academicians live their socialization towards academic life and organization culture in a

larger part of the academic-development process together with senior academicians (mentors). Erdem and Aytemur (2008) in their research on mentoring relationships, career development and psychological supports were vital elements of academic culture, and proteges who couldn't obtain enough mentor support developed negative opinions against university life.

Findings of this research have revealed two aspects of relationships in academic organizations: academic cooperation and relations between departments. It is expected for academic cooperation to be widespread, especially among faculty members working in the same field. Collegiality develops more easily for faculty members having the same research interest; however, the criteria of promotion in academic organizations have stiffened, especially in the last years. Increased competition makes the probability greater for collegiality to slide from the trust base to the interest base. Similarly, Barbosa and Cardoso (2007) also emphasize that individualism, selfishness and competition come to the foreground more than collectivism, cooperation and solidarity, and this is a safer way to develop a professional identity. On the other hand, the reason why relations among departments are not weak is related to expectations and needs, as emphasized before. Departments are expected to support each other in educational processes and sustain a working relationship.

As a result, it is considered that all these findings and evaluations have presented cues about the complicated culture of academic organizations that can be deemed important. Maybe the most important contribution of this research is that it attracts attention to the dimensions that should be researched more deeply in the culture of academic organizations. This includes the need to discuss in detail contextual conditions affecting the content of these dimensions. It is necessary for such research to refine as much as possible perceptions of every sub-group forming the culture. The next goal of this pilot research is to analyze if the determined dimensions are valid in other FEAS in different universities.

Doubtlessly, this study includes a set of limitations. An analysis based on perceptions of only a single sub-culture group can enlighten only one aspect of examined organizational culture. Authors of this research are aware that neglecting perceptions of other sub-groups (students, managers, administrative personnel, etc.) creates the limitation of rich data. However, this necessity, which is quite comprehensive and requires time, should be accepted as a long-term goal of this research. Furthermore, different research projects are needed regarding this subject. For example, the comparison of perceptions of the faculty members working in state and private academic organizations can be an interesting research subject. Also, examining academic organizations depending on different scientific disciplines (natural sciences, social sciences, etc.) comparatively and determining the effect of the discipline culture on organization culture will contribute to the efforts of transforming the heterogeneous structure of the university culture into a synergic character. It is only possible to execute a strategic management-taking interest in higher education in Turkish institutions in the last term with the data obtained from these types of studies. Otherwise, all further efforts will fail to assist the core needs of universities and will decrease the chance of academic organizations in competing, especially at the international level.

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## **Akademik Örgütlerin Kültürel Boyutları: İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakülteleri Üzerine Bir Pilot Araştırma (Özet)**

*Problem Durumu:* Eğitim politikalarında son yıllarda yaşanan değişiklikler ve buna bağlı olarak eğitim örgütlerinin ulusal ve uluslar arası açılımları, akademik örgütlerin dinamiklerini etkilemektedir. Günümüzde bu kurumlar, her geçen gün daha fazla evrensel değerlere ve eğitim standartlarına uygun hareket etmek baskısını hissetmektedirler. Ancak bir akademik örgütün bu konuda bir vizyon ve strateji geliştirmesinin ilk adımı, mevcut kültürel özelliklerinin iyi anlaşılmasıdır. Akademik örgütlerde kültür, öğretim üyeleri, öğrenci ve yönetim alt kültürünün etkileşimi ile üretilse de bu örgütlerin değerlerinin oluşmasında öğretim elemanlarının baskın bir rolü vardır. Bir akademik örgütün kültürel özellikleri açıklandığında, özellikle bu grubun değerleri öne çıkmaktadır. Dolayısıyla bu grubun algılamalarından yola çıkarak akademik örgütlerin kültürel özelliklerinin incelenmesi, araştırma ve öğrenci yetiştirme süreçlerinin geliştirilmesi nedeniyle önemli görülmelidir. Akademik örgütler, eğitim örgütlerinin temel özelliklerini içerse de bu örgütlerin kültürünü açıklayabilmek, üniversite kültürüne yönelik araştırmaların yetersizliği ve eğitim kurumlarına özgün ölçüm araçlarının geliştirilememesi nedeniyle güçtür. Oysa, bir akademik örgütün kültürünü oluşturan akademik, insani ve etik değerler, farklı akademik disiplinlerin değer kodlarından etkilenmektedir ve bu nedenle oldukça karmaşıktır. Dolayısıyla akademik örgütlere yönelik yapılacak çalışmalarda, hangi değerlerin, anlayışların ve beklentilerin öne çıktığını keşfedebilmek için derinlemesine araştırmalara ve bu araştırmaların sonuçlarına dayalı kavramsallaştırmalara ihtiyaç olduğu belirtilmelidir.

*Araştırmanın Amacı:* Bu araştırmanın amacı, akademik örgütlerin kültürel boyutlarını, örgütün en önemli grubunu oluşturan öğretim elemanlarının algılamalarına başvurarak belirleyebilmektir. Araştırmanın temel sorusu, akademik örgütlerde hangi örgüt kültürü boyutlarının öne çıktığı ve boyutların içeriklerinin ne olduğudur. Elde edilecek sonuçların, Türk yüksek öğretim sistemi içinde ikinci büyük grup olan iktisadi ve idari bilimler fakültelerinin kültürel özelliklerinin anlaşılmasına katkı sağlayacağı ve evrensel gelişmelere uyum sağlayabilmek konusunda bu kurumlarda geliştirilmek istenen stratejilere veri sağlayabileceği düşünülmektedir.

*Araştırmanın Yöntemi:* Pilot araştırma niteliğindeki bu çalışmada nitel ve nicel yöntemler birlikte kullanılmıştır. İlk aşamada öğretim elemanlarından oluşturulan bir grup ile yarı yapılandırılmış mülakatlar gerçekleştirilmiştir. İkinci aşamada ise mülakat notları deşifre edilmiş ve saptanan temel temalar ışığında akademik örgütlerin kültürüne yönelik soru formu geliştirilmiştir. Bu form, 6 kamu üniversitesi bünyesinde yer alan iktisadi ve idari bilimler fakültelerinde görev yapan farklı pozisyonlardaki (Prof.; Doç; Dr; Arş.Gör) 200 öğretim elemanına uygulanmıştır. Veriler istatistiki analizlere tabi tutulmuş ve temel kültürel boyutlar belirlenerek muhtemel neden-sonuç ilişkileri tartışılmıştır.

*Araştırmanın Bulguları:* Fakülte öğretim elemanlarının algılamalarına göre akademik örgütlerin kültüründe öne çıkan boyutlar: Yönetim anlayışı-değer uyumu, değişim, motivasyon ve iletişimdir. İlk olarak yönetim anlayışı boyutunun, özellikle akademik özgürlüğün sağlanması konusunda önemli bulunduğu belirtilebilir. Ayrıca algılamalara göre akademik örgütlerin kamu oyuna açıkladıkları misyon ve değerleri, mevcut uygulamalar ve evrensel değerlerle tam olarak örtüşmemektedir. Diğer yandan öğretim elemanı-öğrenci etkileşiminin motivasyon üzerinde etkisi öne çıkmakta ve kıdemli öğretim üyeleri ile olan ilişkilerin de bu süreçleri etkilediği görülmektedir. Araştırmanın önemli bir sonucu ise değişimin direnecek bir olgu olarak algılanmasıdır. Özellikle direncin, değişimlerin işyükü yaratması ve değişim süreçlerine kişisel çıkarların kurumsal çıkarlardan daha önemli bulunması gibi nedenlere bağlı olarak yaşandığı görülmektedir. İlişkiler konusundaki en öne çıkan sonuç ise bu örgütlerde akademik ilişkilerin daha çok küçük gruplar içinde sürdürüldüğünün belirlenmesidir. Muhtemelen aynı anabilim dalı içinde çalışanların akademik ortaklıkları geliştirdiği, disiplinlerarası çalışmaların çok fazla yaygınlaşmadığı söylenebilir.

*Araştırmanın Sonuç ve Önerileri:* Tasarımında nitel ve nicel yöntemlerin birlikte kullanıldığı bu pilot araştırmanın sonuçları, sosyal bilim disiplini içinde yer alan akademik örgütlerin kültürü hakkında önemli ipuçları sunmaktadır. Elde edilen sonuçlar, farklı araştırmacılar tarafından yapılan araştırmaların bulguları ile karşılaştırılarak yorumlanmış, ayrıca Türk yüksek öğreniminin koşulları çerçevesinde değerlendirilmiştir. Araştırmanın sonuçlarına göre özellikle öğretim elemanlarının (genç ve kıdemli akademisyenlerin), yönetiminin temel işlevini öncelikle akademik özgürlüğün sağlanması olarak görmesi, aslında bu alt kültür grubu için beklenen bir durumdur ve farklı araştırmalarla da desteklenmektedir. Diğer yandan günümüzün artan rekabetçi ortamında tüm kurumlar gibi üniversitelerin de misyon, vizyon ve değerlerini kamuoyunun beklentilerine göre restore etme ve açıklama çabaları izlenmektedir. Ancak bu çalışmanın en ilginç sonuçlarından biri, sözkonusu çabaların mevcut durumu yansıtmadığına yönelik görüşlerin ağırlıkta olmasıdır. Ayrıca, farklı araştırmalar akademik örgütlerin çıktılılarıyla yakından ilgilenen birçok grubun baskısı ile örgütsel değişim gerekli de olsa bu tip örgütlerde değişimin kolay olmadığı ve yüksek öğrenimde değişime direncin uzun bir tarihi olduğunu göstermektedir. Dolayısıyla bu araştırmada tespit edilen değişme direnç olgusunun desteklendiği söylenebilir. Yine araştırmanın dikkat çekici sonuçlarından birisi motivasyonun güçlü bir biçimde etkileşimsel olgu olarak belirlenmesidir. Bu durum kurumsal düzenlemelerin yetersizliğine de bağlı olarak (ekonomik ve sosyal) içsel motivasyon unsurlarının öne çıktığını, ayrıca tüm eğitim literatüründe yaygın kabul gören mentoring etkisinin kıdemli-genç akademisyen ilişkisindeki önemini bir kez daha ortaya koymaktadır. Bu araştırma, akademik örgüt kültürü araştırmalarında hangi boyutların derinlemesine araştırılması gerektiğine ve bu boyutların içeriklerini etkileyen bağlamsal koşulların detaylı tartışılması ihtiyacına dikkat çekmektedir. Araştırmanın özgünlüğü, spesifik olarak aynı disiplin kültürü etkisinde gelişen iktisadi ve idari bilimler fakültelerinin kültürü üzerine olmasıdır. Araştırmacılar ilerleyen aşamalarda, belirlenen kültürel boyutların farklı üniversiteler bünyesindeki diğer İİBF'lerde de geçerli olup

olmadığını analiz etmeyi planlamaktadırlar. Ayrıca farklı bilimsel disiplinlere dayanan akademik örgütlerin, karşılaştırmalı olarak incelenmesi ve disiplin kültürünün örgüt kültürü üzerine etkisinin belirlenmesi önemli bir araştırma sorusu olarak önerilmiştir. Bu konuda yapılacak çalışmaların, farklı disiplinlerin kültürlerini bünyesinde barındıran üniversite kültürlerinin sinerjik bir karaktere dönüşmesine katkı sağlayacağı düşünülmektedir. Son dönemde Türk yüksek öğretim kurumlarında giderek daha fazla ilgi gören stratejik yönetimin gerçek işlevine kavuşması ancak bu ve benzeri çalışmalardan elde edilecek verilere dayanmasıyla mümkündür. Aksi takdirde sadece idealize edilen ancak kurumların dokusuna uygun olmayan çabalar sergilenecek ve bu durum, akademik örgütlerin özellikle uluslar arası düzeyde rekabet edebilme şansını azaltacaktır.

*Anahtar Sözcükler:* Akademik örgütler, örgüt kültürü, fakülte kültürü, öğretim elemanları alt kültürü, iktisadi ve idari bilimler fakülteleri, kamu üniversiteleri