Innovation Efforts in Education and School Administration: Views of Turkish School Administrators

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Abstract

Problem Statement: In the current information era, nearly all organizations make efforts to make innovations in the fields of information, communication, technology, etc. Educational organizations are no exception to this trend. Moreover, it can be argued that educational institutions make a particular effort to rapidly keep pace with change. In recent years, the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) has demonstrated efforts to actualize many innovations in Turkey. However, these innovation efforts have been intensely criticized by students, parents, teachers, and even educational administrators. Many implementations are removed from the system after a few years or a shorter period, and subsequent implementations that again only last for a few years are introduced to replace them. Some implementations that require very radical changes are incomprehensible to teachers and administrators and thus are impossible to spread. In-service education designed to actualize the innovation efforts have also been exposed to criticism in terms of their quality.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this research is to determine the opinions of school administrators about the innovation efforts of MoNE in Turkey that have gradually increased over recent years.

Method: This research used qualitative methods, and data were collected through the form of semi-structured interview. The interviews were conducted with 25 school administrators working in elementary, secondary and high schools. The data were analyzed by content analysis.

Findings and Results: According to the findings, school administrators believe MoNE doesn't consider the criteria of relative advantage to old

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implementation and the compatibility of new implementation to the Turkish education system when it puts innovation efforts into practice. Moreover, the participants specify that the innovation efforts aren't sufficiently tested and sufficient notification or training has not been conducted in relation to these issues. While the participants have found the performances of school administrators in actualizing the innovation efforts sufficient, they specify that the innovation decisions should be made via wide-based participation in order for MoNE's innovation efforts' success.

Conclusions and Recommendations: Consequently, school administrators have negative opinions about the manner in which innovation implementations by MoNE are realized. MoNE should consider the compatibility of the innovation efforts with the existing education system, and it should improve its pilot studies. For the innovation to spread, innovation decisions should first be made via extensive participation, and in-service training relevant to innovations should be made more suitable for its purpose.

Keywords: Turkish educational system, educational administration, school administration, innovation in education

Introduction

In the current era, the information humanity has increases with incredible speed, and new concepts, comprehensions, and processes that were recently unknown come to the fore with this increasing information. This new information has made it obligatory for organizations to renew their purposes, structures, functions, and processes. This process of change, which can be deemed as an obligation produced by the information era, can be conceptualized as innovation. In the literature, innovation has been defined in different manners such as a thought, implementation, or objective that is perceived as new by those who are affected (Rogers, 2003, p. 12); a change in existing habits, rules, and implementations by the entry of something new (Noone, 2000, p. 26); or the act of putting something new in the pot and making changes to what was previously customary (English, 2006, p. 507). Basaran (2004, p. 203) defines innovation as "changing the organizational purposes in order to meet the changing requirements of the environment; reorganize the structure, function and productions processes of the organization."

As observed in these definitions, the concept of innovation is closely related with the concept of change. While change can arise automatically, however, innovation is planned. While the direction of change is nonspecific, innovation is by its nature directed forward. Moreover, innovation is required to be both quantitative and qualitative. In addition to these factors, despite the fact that the concept of innovation has a close association with the concepts of reconfiguring, transformation, development, modernization, improvement, revolution, growth, evolution, and

invention, it is in spirit different from these concepts (Basaran, 2004, p. 204–206; Hanson, 2001; Noone, 2000, p. 26; Ozdemir, 2000, p. 30-32). In this study, the implementations made by MoNE that aim to contribute to education system were termed "innovation efforts."

Innovations in the field of service can be either technological or in the fields targeting organizational and relational changes and the capacity of humans and organization (Howells & Tether, 2004). Innovations in management are defined as finding and implementing a management process, implementation, structure, or technique that is different from the current state and that intends to move the organizational purposes forward (Birkinshaw, Hamel, & Mol, 2008). Innovation in educational administration, governance, organization, and administration of schools can be relevant to schoolwide reform, education programs, or strategies relevant to education (English, 2006, p. 507).

Education is a field in which continuous innovation is obligatory (De Luna, 2015). Innovation in the education field is generally perceived as a technological concept and a concept mostly relevant to equipment. Technology is an important factor in the innovation process, but innovation essentially means to perform something through a new route (Smith, Brand, & Kinash, 2013). In this respect, innovation shouldn't be addressed in terms of technology alone. In Turkey, implementations such as the credit system, the arrangement of education programs according to the constructivist approach, total quality management implementations, strategic planning implementations, teacher carrier steps implementation, the increase of compulsory education to twelve years (known as 4+4+4), the implementation of free clothing, and the FATIH (Movement of Increasing Opportunities and Improving Technology) project can be identified as innovation efforts. However, a significant part of these efforts have either been removed from implementation, been marginalized by the system, or been rendered ineffective to be internalized. In this case, the manner in which MoNE has implemented innovation efforts becomes a significant problem that must be questioned.

Rogers (2003), in his theory of the diffusion of innovation, reveals five criteria relevant to the success of innovation efforts. According to his theory, the level at which an innovation is adopted is closely related to its relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. Perception that the innovation's relative advantage, compatibility, trialability, and observability are high and that its complexity is low increases the adoption speed and level of that innovation. These criteria relevant to the adoption of innovations have been defined as follows (p. 15–16):

Relative advantage refers to the perception that the innovation is better compared to the notion it replaces. The important point is not the innovation's objective advantage but its perception as advantageous. Compatibility describes the innovation's perceived consistency with existing values, past experiences, and the requirements of those who will adopt the innovation. It is clear that an innovation that is in compliance with a social system's values and requirements will be adopted

more rapidly than the one that is not in compliance. Complexity is the perceived degree of difficulty of understanding and implementing the innovation. Complex innovations are more difficult to adopt due to the requirement they create to develop new skills and comprehensions. Trialability describes the ease of testing an innovation. An innovation will be spread easily to the extent that it is easy to test. Observability refers to the visibility of the innovation's consequences. For the relevant individuals, the visibility of an innovation's results facilitates the adoption of that innovation.

In Turkey, it is arguable that MoNE fails to sufficiently consider the relative advantage of innovations. Their planned innovations give the impression that they are being put in place without sufficiently considering implementations in developed countries and without determining their trialability and compatibility or observing the relative advantage principle. Increasing compulsory education to 12 years (or 4+4+4) seems to be against the trialability principle in that it was put into practice without a pilot study. Moreover, this implementation has been criticized for being relevant to political preferences rather than pedagogic reasons that rely on a scientific basis (see. Guven, 2012). Furthermore, it can be argued that the principle of observability is not generally considered in MoNE's innovation efforts. Continuously changing the transition to secondary school and examination systems constitutes an example of changing a system that has been put in place recently without being able to observe its outputs. Rapid changes to implementations relevant to the selection of school administrators also give the impression that there is no concern for observing the consequences of innovation. Many similar innovation efforts are being intensely criticized by nearly all educators, from researchers to practitioners. The purpose of this study is to determine the opinions of school administrators about MoNE's innovation efforts in education and school administration. The research questions are as follows: According to school administrators;

1. Does MoNE sufficiently consider the relative advantage of new implementations compared to old implementation?
2. Does MoNE sufficiently consider the compatibility of new implementations with the Turkish education system?
3. Does MoNE sufficiently test the new implementations?
4. Does MoNE provide sufficient notification/training to practitioners regarding the new implementations?
5. Are school administrators able to demonstrate the required effort in actualizing the innovation implementations?
6. What can be recommended to successfully actualize MoNE's innovation implementations?

Method

Research Design

For this research, the qualitative method was preferred as it provides the opportunity to obtain in-depth information by working with a few individuals (Yildirim & Simsek, 2008). Yin (2009) stated that case studies were preferred (a) to

answer "why" and "how" questions, (b) when the researcher's control over events is limited, and (c) when a current phenomenon from real life is focused. This research was designed as a case study in which the opinions of each administrator constitute a case. The interview technique was used in order to determine school administrators' opinions that are relevant to MoNE's innovation efforts.

Research Sample

The study group comprised 25 school administrators working at the center and seven counties of the province of Tokat (a province of Turkey). The maximum variation sampling technique was preferred to select the participants. Four of the participants were female, 21 were male, 10 were school principals, and 15 were vice principals. Six were working at primary schools, nine at secondary schools, and 10 at high schools. The average age of school administrators was 41.64, and they had an average professional seniority of 18.64 years and an average seniority in administratorship of 8.8 years.

Research Instrument and Procedure

The data were collected through a semi-structured interview form that was developed by the researcher. Semi-structured interviews were preferred as this approach is an option that can both draw up a specific frame for the interview and obtain in-depth information in the field of interest (Buyukozturk, Cakmak, Akgun, Karadeniz, & Demirel, 2013, p. 152). The questions included in the interview form were largely formed as a departure from the diffusion of Rogers' innovation theory (2003). According to this theory, the adoption speed and level of an innovation are closely related to the perception that its (1) relative advantage, (2) compatibility, (3) trialability and observability are high and that its (4) complexity is low. These criteria were converted to semi-structured questions. Additionally, questions relevant to (5) the performances of school administrators in the process of actualizing innovation efforts and (6) their recommendations for improving the process were also included. Thus, a form consisting of six questions was formed.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure a valid and reliable research process, the study followed a set of procedure. First of all, the interview questions were derived from related theory. Afterwards, a draft form was presented to experts to obtain their opinion, and the form was revised based on their recommendations. Moreover, the form was given to two school administrators, and its comprehensibility was tested. During the administration of the interviews, participants were redirected to obtain related explanations when the questions were misunderstood. Codes and themes formed to ensure the content analysis process' reliability were reviewed by an expert in the field, and his approval was obtained. Moreover, the obtained findings were shared with two participants, and they were asked whether or not they agreed. Finally, when reporting the findings, the codes formed were embodied by providing quotations.

Data Analyses

The questions were directed to school administrators, and the answers were recorded. The data were analyzed by content analysis. Within this scope, the school administrators' answers for each question were coded, and themes that emerged from the codes were determined. The results of each research question are portrayed in tables that include themes, codes, and frequencies. Additionally, some quotations about prominent results are provided to concretize the real context. Each participant is coded as A1, A2 (Administrator1, Administrator2) when quotations are provided.

Results

Relative Advantage of New Implementations to Old Implementations

School administrators were asked whether MoNE considers the relative advantage of new implementations to old ones. The results of content analysis are presented in Table 1.

Table 1.

Relative Advantage of New Implementations to Old Implementations

Themes	Codes	*f*
Relative advantage is not being considered (*f*= 25)	Long-term implementations improving the old implementations aren't being performed	6
	Political concerns rather than relative advantage are being pursued to replace the old implementation	4
	The system of 4+4+4 is not better than the old one	4
	Problems relevant to the FATIH project impossible to resolve	4
	Instances occur where beneficial implementations are replaced with a worse implementation	4
	The implementations are unable to spread to a broad base	1
	The implementations are mostly received from Western countries	1
	When the quality of education is considered, it is understood that the principle of relative advantage is not being considered	1
Relative advantage is being considered (*f*= 5)	The FATIH project is providing greater advantages compared to the old implementation	4
	New implementations are providing significant developments to the education process	1
It changes by implementation (*f*= 2)	The FATIH project is good compared to the old implementation, but 4+4+4 is not sufficiently scrutinized	1
	Smart boards are beneficial, but tablets are generating problems	1

As seen in Table 1, administrators' opinions about whether MoNE considers the relative advantage of new implementations while commissioning innovation implementations are compiled under three themes. While a large part of the administrators specified that the principle of relative advantage was not being considered (*f*= 25), some administrators specified that it is being considered (*f*= 5) and others that this condition changes by implementation (*f*= 2).

The administrators who specified that the principle of relative advantage was not being considered also specified that long-term implementations improving the old implementations are not being performed (f= 6), that political concerns rather than relative advantage are being pursued to replace the old implementation (f= 4), that the system of 4+4+4 is not better than the old one (f= 4), and that problems relevant to the FATIH Project are impossible to resolve (f= 4). Two opinions summarizing the administrators' general opinions on these issues are as follows:

> *A3: I don't think so, because, the implementations are changing as the minister changes. For instance, implementations such as SBS, credit system, which were introduced as the invention of era, were revoked in a very short time. I believe one day implementations are being made in the name of saving the day.*

The administrators who specified that the principle of relative advantage was being considered in the implementation of innovation said that the FATIH project was presenting many advantages compared to the old implementation (*f*= 4) and that the new implementations were providing significant improvements to the education process (*f*= 1). The opinion of an administrator about FATIH project was as follows:

> *A25: One of the old implementations was video projectors. As video projectors only had reflection feature, they were not sufficient. There were connection and sharpness problems. The smart board is hardware that the students are able to use by themselves during breaks, and teachers' files and information are always accessible to students.*

One administrators who specified that MoNE considers the principle of relative advantage in some innovations thought that the FATIH Project was much better compared to the old implementation, but the education system of 4+4+4 was not sufficiently scrutinized; another administrator said smart boards were beneficial but tablets generated problems.

Findings Relevant to the Compatibility of New Implementations with the Turkish Education System

School administrators were asked their opinions as to whether MoNE considers the compatibility of new implementations with the Turkish education system while commissioning innovation implementations. The answers were subjected to content analysis, and results are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2.

Compatibility of New Implementations with the Turkish Education System

Themes	Codes	f.
Compatibility is not being considered (*f*= 23)	The characteristics of students are not being considered	5
	The characteristics of teachers are not being considered	5
	Compatibility with the system is not sufficiently being considered	4
	The status of schools is not being considered	2
	Compatibility with the system comes behind political concerns	2
	Being a Western implementation comes before compatibility	2
	There is a lack of concentration on the main requirements	1
	A concern such as compatibility with the system is not being pursued	1
	A comprehension of compatibility focused on the Minister is being pursued	1
Compatibility is being considered (*f*= 8)	Compatibility is being observed even if there are deficiencies	3
	The new implementations have no aspects that conflict with the system	2
	The implementations are being performed in accordance with the purposes	2
	Required sensitivity is being shown on this issue	1

As seen in Table 2, a significant portion of school administrators think MoNE doesn't consider compatibility with the Turkish education system when commissioning innovation implementations (*f*= 23). In contrast, other administrators specify that compatibility is being considered (*f*= 8).

The administrators who specified that compatibility is not being considered specified that student characteristics (*f*= 5), teacher characteristics (*f*= 5), and compatibility with the system (*f*= 4) are not being considered. Additionally, administrators specified that the status of schools is not being considered (*f*= 2), that compatibility with the system comes behind political concerns (*f*= 2), and that the implementation is Western based comes before compatibility (*f*= 2). A phrase reflecting these opinions is as follows:

> A4: I don't think so. As the clearest example, the freedom in clothing and an excessively student focused approach can be given. As these implementations took the authority and power of school administrators and teachers, excessive disciplinary gaps and as a consequence moral collapse is occurring at schools.

The administrators who stated that MoNE observes the compatibility of new implementation with the Turkish education system specified that compatibility is being observed even if there exist deficiencies (f= 3), that the new implementations have no aspects that conflict with the system (f= 2), that the implementations are being performed in accordance with the purposes (f= 2) and that required sensitivity

is being shown on this issue (f= 1). One of the quotations reflecting the opinions of school administrators on this issue is provided below.

> *A3: I think it is suitable despite having deficiencies. For instance, the FATIH project seems to be a good implementation with respect to its scope.*

Findings Relevant to Pilot Studies of New Implementations

School administrators' opinions about whether MoNE sufficiently tests innovation efforts (pilot studies) when commissioning them were requested. The administrators' answers are provided in Table 3.

Table 3.

Pilot Studies of New Implementations

Themes	Codes	f
Pilot studies are insufficient (*f*= 17)	Pilot studies are not sufficiently effective to get a result	6
	The status at schools where pilot studies are performed does not representing general conditions	5
	Pilot studies are not being performed with the purpose of testing	3
	The results show that it is not being tested sufficiently	3
Pilot studies are sufficient (*f*= 5)	I think a sufficient level of testing is being performed	3
	I think implementations are being tested sufficiently with some exceptions	2
I don't know (*f*= 4)	We don't have sufficient information on this subject	4

As seen in Table 3, a large number of the administrators specified that studies are insufficient (*f*= 17). In addition, there were also administrators who specified that pilot studies are sufficient (*f*= 5) and that they had no information relevant to pilot studies (*f*= 4).

Administrators who specified that pilot studies are insufficient said pilot studies were not sufficiently effective as to get a result (*f*= 6), that the status at schools where pilot studies are performed doesn't represent general conditions (*f*= 5), that the pilot studies are not being performed to test in real terms (*f*= 3), and that the results show that the implementations are not being sufficiently tested (*f*= 3). One opinion of such a school administrator on these issues is provided below.

> *A1: No, I don't think so. Schools preferred for pilot studies are extremely equipped. Their physical structure is sufficient. Yet, not all the schools in the country are ready for it. Most of our teachers aren't ready for these new implementations.*

Administrators with a positive opinion of pilot studies specified that a sufficient level of testing is being performed (*f*= 3) and that the implementations are sufficiently being tested with some exceptions (*f*=2). One quotation reflecting a positive administrator opinion about pilot studies follows:

> *A22: Some of the new implementations in education were directly passed on to implementation without a pilot study. But the pilot studies of ones such as smart boards and education suitable for multiple intelligences were made in a suitable and timely manner.*

Additionally, some administrators specified that they couldn't obtain sufficient information regarding the testing of new implementations (*f*= 4). The opinion of one of these administrators is provided below.

> A21: *We are also following it from the press. Thanks to Ministry that it is testing. But I don't know whether the deficiencies are being removed after testing and whether the ones being performed are the forms in which the deficiencies are removed. If innovations are being brought in as corrected, I'm curious about their uncorrected form.*

Findings Relevant to Notifications and Training Performed Regarding New Implementations

School administrators were also asked whether they thought MoNE provides practitioners with sufficient notification/training regarding new implementations when commissioning the innovation implementations. The participants' answers were reviewed by content analysis, and the results are provided in Table 4.

Table 4.

Notification/Training Relevant to New Implementations

Themes	Codes	*f*
There are deficiencies (*f*= 14)	The provided training remains insufficient	10
	Notifications are not being made in a timely manner	3
	Notifications are being made, but resistance to change is not being considered	1
Required actions are not being performed (*f*= 7)	Required notifications are not being made	7
Required actions are being performed (*f*= 4)	Required training is being provided	3
	Notifications are being made even if it is brief	1

As seen in Table 4, administrators' opinions relevant to notifications made for the innovation implementations and training provided are compiled under three themes. A significant number of the administrators specified that training is being provided but possesses deficiencies. In addition, some of the administrators specified that the required notifications are not being made (*f*= 7). Administrators who specified that the required actions are being performed were the minority (*f*= 4).

The administrators who specified that there are deficiencies in notifications and training activities further specified that the provided training is insufficient (*f*= 10), that the notifications are not being made in a timely manner (*f*= 3), and that resistance to change is not being considered in training (*f*= 1). One quotation reflecting the opinions of school administrators on this issue is as follows:

A3: Notifications and training for practitioners are being provided, but this training remains very insufficient. Notification-training operations should be more extensive and longer term. For instance, within the scope of the FATIH project, notifications are made only one or two times. I think this training is very insufficient. Longer term training should be provided in an applied manner.

An administrator who thought MoNE was not performing the required notifications and training for new implementations specified his opinion as follows:

A7: I think the main reason for changing each new implementation in a short time and passing on to other implementations is a lack of communication with the stakeholders. Unfortunately, the practitioners, who are the most significant stakeholders of the new implementation, are being remembered only at the end.

Findings Relevant to the Efforts of School Administrators

The participants' opinions about whether MoNE showed the required effort to actualize the innovation implementations were requested. The results of content analysis are provided in Table 5.

Table 5.

Efforts of School Administrators

Themes	Codes	*f*
Administrators are showing an effort (*f*= 19)	The required effort is being shown	8
	All kinds of effort are being shown despite the limited opportunities	5
	Changing per the administrator	4
	Newly appointed administrators are showing more effort	2
Administrators are remaining insufficient (*f*= 4)	Authority of the administrators remain insufficient	2
	Budgets of the administrators remain insufficient	1
	Administrators' qualifications remain insufficient	1
Administrators are not showing an effort (*f*= 2)	The required effort is not being shown	2

Table 5 reveals that most of the participants think school administrators show sufficient effort when putting innovation efforts into practice (*f*= 19). In addition, some participants think that the administrators remain insufficient on this issue (*f*= 4) and that they don't show the required effort (*f*= 2).

The participants with a positive opinion about school administrators' efforts of further specified that the required effort is being shown (*f*= 8), that these efforts are being performed despite limited opportunities (*f*= 5), that the effort shown changes per the administrator (*f*= 4) and that the newly appointed administrators show more effort (*f*= 2). One quotation reflecting the opinions of participants on this issue is as follows:

> *A1: I'm showing all kinds of effort. The physical structure of my school is not sufficient for many implementations. I'm encountering material obstacles in actualizing many implementations. Despite that, I'm doing my best.*

The participants who specified that administrators remain insufficient in these efforts further specified that administrators' authority (*f*= 2), budgets (*f*= 1), and qualifications (*f*= 1) are posing obstacles on this issue. A phrase exemplifying such opinions is provided below.

> *A8: The efforts of the school administrators are sufficient, but they are not enough to get results. Because, despite the fact that the current laws and regulations impose many responsibilities, they provide nearly no authority. They are being obliged to bear and continue to work with teachers and personnel who don't work and who have not adopted the vision and mission of the school.*

Findings Relevant to Recommendations Regarding Innovation Implementations

Finally, school administrators were asked what their recommendations were for MoNE to successfully actualize innovation implementations. The results of content analysis relevant to the participants' answers are represented in Table 6.

Table 6.

Recommendations of School Administrators

Themes	Codes	*f*
Implementation manner of innovation (*f*= 29)	Innovation decisions should be made by extensive participation	10
	Effective pilot studies should be conducted	6
	New implementations should concentrate on the versatile development of the student	3
	The implementations should be extensive and long term	2
	The innovation implementations should be opened to discussion by society	2
	Innovation shouldn't be made with political concerns	1
	Local conditions should be considered in implementations	1
	Innovations should be performed insistently	1
	Implementations should be more planned	1
	Implementations should observe equality of opportunity	1
	They should conform to our culture	1
Problems in implementation (*f*= 19)	Effective training fitting the purpose should be given	6
	Infrastructure, equipment problems at the schools should be resolved	5
	The quality of teachers should be improved	4
	The quality of administrators should be improved	2
	Performance should be inspected	2

Table 6 shows that, school administrators' recommendations to make innovation implementations more effective are compiled under two themes: implementation manner of innovation (*f*= 29) and problems in implementation (*f*= 19).

The recommendations that were specified the most by the participants, recommendations regarding the implementation manner of innovation, included making innovation decisions by extensive participation (*f*= 10), administration of effective pilot studies (*f*= 6), focus of new implementations on students' versatile

development (*f*= 3), that implementations be extensive and long term (*f*= 2), and opening the innovation implementation to discussion by society (*f*= 2).   One quotation reflecting these participant opinions is as follows.

> *A2: I think it is required to put into practice decisions made by enabling homogenous participation in workshops from all locations and all levels in Turkey.*

The administrators who provided recommendations relevant to solution to problems in the innovation implementation provided recommendations to provide effective training fitting the purpose (*f*= 6), to solve schools' infrastructure and equipment problems (*f*= 5), to improve the qualities of teachers (*f*= 4) and administrators (*f*= 2), and to inspect performance (*f*= 2). One quotation reflecting the recommendations of two participants on this issue is provided below.

> *A4: I think both the administrators and teachers should be required to be subjected to extensive, planned, and continuous in-service training in accordance with the purpose.*

Discussion

School administrators believe that MoNE fails to sufficiently consider the relative advantage of new implementations versus old ones. As specified by Rogers (2003), practitioners' perception of an innovation effort as relatively facilitates its adoption. Toremen (2002) also specified that the success of change at schools is related to the belief of teachers, administrators, and students who will be involved in the process in the change. Thus, MoNE first must convince school stakeholders and particularly school managers of the importance of innovation implementations. Otherwise, it will be difficult for administrators who are not convinced about innovations to convince teachers and other stakeholders.

School administrators think that the compatibility of innovations with students, teachers, schools, and the system in general is not being sufficiently considered. Unfortunately, as scientific information generated in Turkey in educational administration cannot go beyond the reproduction of Western cognition style (Turan & Sisman, 2013), MoNE's innovation efforts are mostly unable to go beyond imported implementation. It is arguable that the continuous lightening and dying out of implementations such as total quality management, performance management, and strategic management are indicators of this. These and many similar implementations are being implemented at some schools with special conditions, but they are unsuccessful at the local level. For MoNE's education system to succeed, models that conform to the culture, social structure, economic status, geography, and similar features of Turkey should be generated.

School administrators generally find pilot studies insufficiently relevant to innovation efforts. The ministry should follow their innovation efforts more meticulously. Pilot studies must become more extensive and long term. Perhaps most important of all is careful assessment of the results of pilot studies and demonstrating courage to abandon implementation if required. As stated by a participant, any implementation that has been abandoned due to its pilot study's ineffectiveness is unknown. However, each large scale unsuccessful implementation costs much for Turkey, which has scarce resources.

According to school administrators, MoNE has failed to provide sufficient notifications and training for its innovation efforts. This shortcoming has also been specified in the Scientific and Technical Research Council of Turkey's report (TUBITAK) (2005) in which it draws its vision for education and human resources for 2023, and the poor quality of in-service training activities for teachers is noted as the weak point of the system. In fact, as specified by Ozdemir (2000, 28), the servers must first understand an innovation in order to obtain success via the innovation. However, MoNE generally remains insufficient in terms of training activities relevant to innovation implementations. For instance, the insufficiency of training performed under the FATIH Project, which is based on the interaction of smart boards and tablet computers connected to internet, is an important problem that the participants also specified. This technological equipment that can provide many opportunities is unable to go beyond than its current use for reflection. Furthermore, research shows that teachers have difficulty finding materials compatible with the smart boards (see Keles & Turan, 2015). Regarding the innovation efforts, the Ministry should organize longer term, more extensive and applied training from instructors specialized in the field.

The participants believe school administrators show the required effort to actualize innovation efforts. In research by Argon and Ozcelik (2008), school administrators specified that their competencies at managing change were high. Sart (2014) specifies that new leadership styles that can support positive change and development in today's continually changing education systems are required. Accordingly, it can be argued that school administrators should play a role not in following changes but in starting and directing them. Such an approach requires proactive leadership. Calik (2003) alleges that the success of the efforts to enact change in education largely depends on the belief of stakeholders in the change and their voluntary participation in the process of enacting change. School administrators, who are maybe at the most critical point among the stakeholders of change due to their administrative responsibilities, should be deemed MoNE's most important change agents who can ensure innovation efforts achieve success. At this point, MoNE should support school administrators with more notifications, training and material resources to start.

School administrators advise MoNE to make innovation decisions via broad based participation for the innovations' success. In this process, especially convincing teachers is important. As also specified by Geijsel, Sleegers, van den Berg & Kelchtermans (2001), the successful implementation of extensive innovation programs in schools is enabled by the participation of teachers in innovation decisions. MoNE should make innovation decisions as the result of meetings held with administrators, students, parents, NGOs, and other stakeholders as well as the teachers.

Conclusion

In sum, it is possible to say that MoNE puts into practice many innovation efforts. In terms of the results, however, it is difficult to say with confidence that these efforts are sufficient and successful. The innovations are being made from the center, in a hurry, and without sufficient forethought, and problems have arisen in the transition

of these innovations to schools. For instance, teachers are encountering significant problems implementing education programs geared toward the constructivist approach, and thus the benefit expected from this innovation cannot be achieved. The teachers are fulfilling the requirements of constructivist approach on paper, but they internalize the innovation in spirit by absorbing the old implementation. In fact, as previously specified by Altrichter and Posch (2014, p. 8), for innovation efforts to be positively reflected in the class environment, teachers should be willing to actualize the innovation efforts and to question their education.

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Okul Yöneticilerinin Eğitim ve Okul Yönetiminde Yenileşme Çabalarına İlişkin Görüşleri

Özet

Problem Durumu: İçinde bulunduğumuz çağda insanlığın sahip olduğu bilgi inanılmaz bir hızla artmakta, artan bu bilgi ile daha önce bilinmeyen yeni kavramlar, anlayışlar, süreçler gündeme gelmektedir. Bu yeni bilgiler; örgütlerin amaçlarının, yapılarının, işlevlerinin ve süreçlerinin yenileştirilmesini zorunlu kılmaktadır. Bilgi çağının getirdiği bir zorunluluk olarak kabul edilmesi gereken bu değişim süreci yenileşme olarak kavramlaştırılabilir. Literatürde yenileşme; etkilenenler tarafından yeni olarak algılanan bir düşünce, uygulama ya da hedef (Rogers, 2003, p. 12), var olan alışkanlıklarda, kurallarda ve uygulamalarda yeni bir şeyin girişiyle yapılan değişiklik (Noone, 2000, p. 26), ortaya yeni bir şeyler koymak ve alışılmış olanda değişiklik yapmak (English, 2006, p. 507) gibi farklı şekillerde tanımlanmaktadır. Başaran (2004, p. 203) ise yenileşmeyi "çevrenin değişen gereksinimlerini karşılamak

için örgütsel amaçları değiştirmek; örgütün yapı, işlev ve üretim süreçlerini yeniden örgütlemek" olarak tanımlamaktadır.

Tanımlarda görüldüğü gibi yenileşme kavramı değişim kavramıyla yakından ilgilidir. Ancak değişme kendiliğinden oluşabilirken yenileşme planlıdır. Değişmenin yönü belirsizken yenileşme ileriye doğru olmaktadır. Ayrıca yenileşmenin hem niceliksel hem niteliksel olması gerekmektedir. Buna ek olarak yenileşme kavramı; yeniden yapılandırma, dönüşüm, gelişme, çağdaşlaşma, iyileşme, devrim, büyüme, evrim, buluş ve kalkınma kavramlarıyla da yakın anlamlı olmakla birlikte özde bu kavramlardan farklıdır (Noone, 2000, p. 26; Özdemir, 2000, p. 30-32; Hanson, 2001; Başaran, 2004, p. 204–206). Bu çalışmada Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın eğitim sistemine katkı sağlamayı umarak yaptığı uygulamalar "yenileşme çabası" olarak ele alınmıştır.

Eğitim, sürekli yenileşmenin zorunlu olduğu bir alandır (De Luna, 2015). Eğitim alanında yenileşme, genellikle teknolojik ve daha çok da donanımla ilgili bir kavram olarak algılanmaktadır. Teknoloji, yenileşme sürecinin önemli bir unsurudur, ancak yenileşme kavramı esas olarak bir şeyleri yeni bir yoldan yapmak anlamına gelmektedir (Smith, Brand, & Kinash, 2013). Bu yönüyle yenileşme yalnızca teknolojik anlamda ele alınmamalıdır. Türkiye'de kredili sistem, eğitim programlarının yapılandırmacı anlayışa göre düzenlenmesi, toplam kalite yönetimi uygulamaları, stratejik planlama uygulamaları, öğretmen kariyer basamakları uygulaması, zorunlu eğitimin on iki yıla çıkarılması, serbest kıyafet uygulaması, FATİH (Fırsatları Arttırma Teknolojiyi İyileştirme Hareketi) projesi gibi uygulamalar yenileşme çabaları olarak ele alınabilir. Ne var ki, bu çabaların önemli bir bölümü kısa sürede ya uygulamadan kaldırılmış ya sistemce dışlanmış ya da özümlenerek etkisiz hale getirilmiştir. Bu durumda MEB'in yenileşme çabalarını uygulama biçimi, sorgulanması gereken önemli bir problem haline gelmektedir.

Araştırmanın Amacı: Bu araştırmanın amacı, Türkiye'de Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın (MEB) son yıllarda giderek artan yenileşme çabalarına ilişkin okul yöneticilerinin görüşlerini belirlemektir.

Yöntem: Bu araştırmada az sayıda kişi ile çalışarak derinlemesine bilgi sağlama olanağı sağladığı için (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008) nitel yöntem tercih edilmiştir. Okul yöneticilerinin MEB'in yenileşme çabalarına ilişkin görüşlerini tespit etmek üzere görüşme tekniğinden yararlanılmıştır. Çalışma grubunda Tokat Merkez ve 7 ilçesinde görev yapan 25 okul yöneticisi yer almaktadır. Katılımcıların seçiminde maksimum çeşitlilik tekniği kullanılmıştır. Katılımcıların 4'ü kadın, 21'i erkek; 10'u okul müdürü, 15'i müdür yardımcısı olup 6'sı ilkokul, 9'u ortaokul, 10'u liselerde görev yapmaktadır. Çalışma grubunda yer alan okul yöneticilerinin yaş ortalaması 41.64, mesleki kıdem ortalaması 18.64 yıl ve yöneticilikteki kıdem ortalaması 8.8 yıldır. Veriler araştırmacı tarafından geliştirilen yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu ile toplanmıştır. Hem görüşmeye belirli bir çerçeve çizmeyi hem de ilgilenilen alanda derinlemesine bilgi almayı birleştiren bir seçenek olduğundan (Büyüköztürk, Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz, & Demirel, 2013, p. 152) yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme tercih edilmiştir. Görüşme formunda yer alan sorular, büyük ölçüde Rogers'ın (2003) yenileşmenin yayılması kuramından yola çıkarak oluşturulmuştur. Buna göre yenileşmenin benimsenme hızı ve düzeyi; (1) görece avantajının, (2) uygunluğunun, (3) denenebilirliğinin ve gözlenebilirliğinin yüksek ve (4) karmaşıklığının düşük

olarak algılanması ile yakından ilgilidir. Bu ölçütler yarı yapılandırılmış sorulara dönüştürülmüştür. Buna ek olarak, (5) okul yöneticilerinin yenileşme çabalarının hayata geçirilmesi sürecindeki performanslarına ve (6) sürecin iyileştirilmesine yönelik önerilerine ilişkin sorular yazılmıştır. Böylece 6 soruluk form oluşturulmuştur. Veri toplama aracı uzman görüşüne sunulmuş, öneriler doğrultusunda düzenlenmiştir. Ayrıca iki okul yöneticisine uygulanarak anlaşılırlığı test edilmiştir. Sorular okul yöneticilerine yöneltilmiş ve yanıtlar kaydedilmiştir. Elde edilen veriler içerik analizi ile analiz edilmiştir. Bu kapsamda okul yöneticilerinin her bir soruya verdikleri yanıtlar kodlanmış, kodların oluşturduğu temalar belirlenmiştir. İçerik analizi sürecinin güvenirliğini sağlamak amacıyla oluşturulan kod ve temalar bir alan uzmanı ile birlikte incelenerek onayı alınmıştır. Ayrıca iki katılımcıyla elde edilen bulgular paylaşılmış ve katılıp katılmadıkları sorulmuştur. Son olarak bulgular rapor edilirken doğrudan alıntılar verilerek oluşturulan kodlar somutlaştırılmıştır.

Bulgular: Araştırma bulgularına göre, araştırmaya katılan okul yöneticileri MEB'in yenileşme çabalarını uygulamaya koyarken eski uygulamaya üstünlük ve yeni uygulamanın Türk eğitim sistemine uygunluğu ölçütlerini dikkate almadığını düşünmektedir. Ayrıca katılımcılar yenileşme çabalarının yeterince denenmediğini ve bu konularda yeterince bilgilendirme/eğitim yapılmadığını belirtmektedir. Katılımcılar, okul yöneticilerinin yenileşme çabalarının hayata geçirilmesindeki performanslarını yeterli bulurken; MEB'in yenileşme çabalarının başarılı olması için öncelikle yenileşme kararlarının geniş tabanlı katılımla alınması gerektiğini belirtmektedir.

Sonuçlar ve Öneriler: Sonuç olarak, MEB'in birçok yenileşme çabasını uygulamaya koyduğunu söylemek olanaklıdır. Ancak sonuçlar açısından bakıldığında bu çabaların yeterli ve başarılı olduğunu söylemek zordur. Yenileşmeler merkezden, alelacele ve yeterince düşünülmeden yapılmakta ve bu yenileşmelerin okullara taşınmasında sıkıntılar yaşanmaktadır. Örneğin yapılandırmacı kurama göre düzenlenen eğitim programlarının uygulanması konusunda öğretmenler ciddi sorunlar yaşamakta dolayısıyla yenileşmeden beklenen yarar elde edilememektedir. Öğretmenler kağıt üzerinde yapılandırmacı yaklaşımın gerekliliklerini yerine getirmekte fakat özde yenileşmeyi eski uygulama içine yedirerek özümlemektedir. Oysa Altrichter ve Posch'un (2014) da belirttiği gibi, yenileşme çabalarının sınıf ortamına olumlu biçimde yansıyabilmesi için öğretmenlerin yenileşme çabalarını hayata geçirmek için istekli olmaları ve öğretimlerini sorgulamaları gerekmektedir (p. 8). Aynı durum toplam kalite yönetimi, stratejik yönetim gibi uygulamalarda da yaşanmaktadır. Birçok okul bu uygulamalara yönelik olarak yalnızca dosyalar tutmakla yetinmekte ve deyim yerindeyse "mış gibi" yapmaktadır. Geriye dosyalardan dışarı çıkamayan kalite çemberleri ve duvarlarda asılı misyon ve vizyon ifadeleri kalmaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Türk eğitim sistemi, eğitim yönetimi, okul yönetimi, eğitimde yenileşme