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The Level of Teachers' Agreements on Curriculum Changing Causes

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to put forward teachers' opinions about the reasons for changing curriculum at schools in Turkey in 2006-2007 education period. In this way, it will be possible to determine whether or not teachers are aware of the aim of new curriculum application. At the same time, with the new findings, the realization level of the aims that Turkey wants to achieve through the new program will be estimated.

Key words: New primary school curriculum · constructivism · student centred instruction

INTRODUCTION

Thanks to globalization, the concept of education and educated person has diversified with national, regional, personal and universal values and has become much more complex. Education systems, in accordance with this diversity, haven't been indifferent to those paradigms. As a result of this, education has encouraged learning richness based on producing knowledge personally, going beyond useful and true knowledge In short, necessary conditions have been striven for in order for the student to learn as desired, to be active in learning situation and to enjoy learning. This process where the student is centred includes student's bearing responsibilities about learning and orientations about it [1]. Although learning is described here as a particular organization of learning situations, what determines the direction and quality of it is the functioning of the education system, especially its theory-practise aspect in an integrative way. This integrity is attained by children via the activities between teachers and students and the systematic learning atmosphere [2]. The execution of learning systematically in this profile includes providing appropriate feedback for students which will help them direct the appropriate learning activities and knowledge, code and process knowledge [3]. This co-operative process can only be organized formally by the understanding of constructivist program, because what should be structured are not only knowledge but also current traditional models and functions shaped around this understanding.

Constructivism, which has become popular with the new curriculum, means building new knowledge in mind through connections between the knowledge he/she has and the knowledge around him/her by interacting with the environment. Accordingly, student becomes the centre of learning and the main determiner. Knowledge and situation which are shaped and structured according to the student aren't something out of him/her but something coming inside him/her by structuring as a result of interaction [4-6]. In the essence of constructivist model exist student's forming his/her learning system and his/her processing the knowledge according to his/her potential. Therefore, in order for the student to organize learning, necessary orientation should be done professionally, because forming his/her own learning systems or encoding some acquisitions personally depend on the organization of main inputs provided for him/her [7]. The student shapes what he/she learns via his/her own experiences. [8-10]. In the constructivist method, knowledge cannot be acquired in a passive way and nor can it be imposed to the student. Student acquires knowledge to his/her cognitive structures actively and by structuring on his/her own knowledge makes it premises of the decisions he/she will make in the future [11-15].

These cognitive processes which are coordinated with the curriculum and adapted to formal experiences

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categorize knowledge processing methods. The purpose of the curriculum is to process structured learning contents in such a way that promotes student responsibility and qualifies democratic life. Therefore, in making the applications functional, it is possible that knowledge mechanisms which overlap personal and social values have close relationship with experiences [16]. This planned process which will be carried out under teacher's control, enables students to be aware of individual learning and to reconstruct their learning environment according to possible variables [17-19]. The focus based on instructional orientation involves considering how the new curriculum philosophy affects instruction and learning in the classroom [20]. Application of the curriculum points out a ceaseless relation ship between planned and evaluated processes. In these very well-structured applications, one needs orientations such as a) perceiving theoretic background and b) guiding learning experiences [21]. Therefore, student's constructing personal learning depends on teachers' reflecting the available theoretic variable on education situation [22]. However, in order for teachers to put these structures which are the basis of new curriculum into practise correctly, they need to understand why the curriculum theoretically needed such kind of changes, because in the essence of applying the curriculum consciously are theoretic acceptances and adopted intrinsic values. When perceptions between theory and learning experiences are examined, it is seen that academic competence and application competence do not always overlap. Especially at this point, it is required that action researches be carried out and those involved in this situation be studied to increase the quality of the applications in current situations; in other words, to make applications more meaningful and functional, first of all, it is required to reflect theory to examination [23].

In this study, it is aimed to share the impressions of teachers about the reasons for the application of new curriculum philosophy. The feedback in these sharing will contribute to putting forward new approaches in teachers' efficiency in perceiving this formation in theory and their application styles. Also, in this study, a benefit is expected towards the harmony of theory and practise.

Below are two questions to be answered during the study:

- To what extent do the teachers agree with which changing reasons of curriculum?
- How does their agreement with curriculum changing reasons differ from each other?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this study, it was aimed to determine whether or not 100 teachers working in primary schools in the city centre of Kutahya in 2006-2007 education period agree with the reasons for the changes in the new curriculum application. In this way, teachers' being aware of the changes in the old and new curriculum and how much they agree with the change were tried to be found. Survey method was used in data collection, analysis and interpretation. Accordingly, the population of the research consisted of the schools and the teachers in these schools in Turkey. In determining the study group, convenience sampling was used. Related literature and introductory materials prepared by National Education Ministry were used in preparing the questionnaire questions, necessary corrections were done by Turkish Language Department instructors and final format was prepared after professional view. The questionnaire composed of 46 questions was prepared in 5 Likert Type ($\alpha = 0.94$). Frequency, percentage and t-test and variance calculations were conducted statistically and technically in the analysis of the data. SPSS 11.5 package program was used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, the opinions of teachers about the reasons for the change in the curriculum were presented. Accordingly, to what extent they agree with the articles about the reasons for the change in the curriculum and whether the level of this agreement changes according to their gender, experience in teaching and branches were determined. The data acquired through the analysis of their answers are below in Table 1.

Total 100 teachers, 56 of whom (56%) are male whereas 44 of whom (44%) are female, participated in the study. While 10% of them have 5 years and less experience in teaching, 25% have 6-10 years, another 25% have 11-15 years, 24% have 16-21 years and 16% have 21 years and more experience in teaching. In terms of their branches, 15% are Turkish teachers, whereas 14% are Science and Technology, 14% are Social Sciences, 10% are Mathematics and 46% are Primary School teachers.

As can be seen in Table 2, as a result of t-test according to gender, there is a significant differentiation at the level of $p<0.01$ in favour of females in the articles as follows: "One of the reasons for the change in the

Table 1: Personal information of the subjects and frequency and percentage values of independent variables

Variables		Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Standard deviation	Total
Gender	Male	56	56.0			
	Female	44	44.0	1.44	0.49	100
Experience in teaching	5 years and less	10	10.0			
	6-10 years	25	25.0			
	11-15 years	25	25.0			
	16-20 years	24	24.0			
	21 years and more	16	16.0	3.11	1.23	100
Branch	Turkish	15	15.0			
	Science and technology	15	15.0			
	Social sciences	14	14.0			
	Primary school teaching	46	46.0	3.5725	1.54	100

Table 2: Differences among the opinions of teachers about the reasons for the change in curriculum according to the variant of gender

One of the reasons for the change in the application of the new curriculum is …	Gender	N	X	Ss	t	df	P
That it facilitates classroom management	Male	56	3.33	1.03	2.56	98	0.012
	Female	44	3.84	0.88			
To establish school culture	Male	56	3.37	1.00	2.71	98	0.008
	Female	44	3.88	0.84			
To facilitate being an information society	Male	56	3.57	0.98	3.12	98	0.002
	Female	44	4.15	0.86			
That it gives importance to socialising	Male	56	3.57	1.04	3.37	98	0.001
	Female	44	4.20	0.76			

application of the new curriculum is that it facilitates classroom management" as ($x = 3.84$, $sd = 0.88$, $p<0.01$); "One of the reasons for the change in the application of the new curriculum is to establish school culture" as ($x = 3.88$, $sd = 0.84$, $p<0.01$); "One of the reasons for the change in the application of the new curriculum is to facilitate being an information society" as ($x = 4.15$, $sd = 0.86$, $p<0.01$); and "One of the reasons for the change in the application of the new curriculum is that it gives importance to socialising" as ($x = 4.20$, $sd = 0.76$, $p<0.01$). According to the findings, it was determined that female teachers stated more positive opinions about the reasons for the change in curriculum than the male.

As a result of one-way variance analysis conducted to determine whether there is a significant difference among the articles about experience in teaching, some significant differences were obtained. Accordingly, there is a significant difference at the level of 0.05 in the article which shows that teachers see "Developments in pedagogy and learning approaches" as one of the reasons for the change in the curriculum. The difference occurred in favour of those with 5 years and less experience when considered among those with 5 years and less experience (4.30), those with 6-10 years experience (3.52) and those with 21 years and more experience (3.43). Moreover, the difference occurred in favour of those with 11-15 years experience when considered among those with 6-10 years experience, those with 11-15 years experience (4.00) and those with 21 years and more experience.

Also, there is a significant difference at the level of 0.05 in the article which shows that teachers see "Need for such an education that is sensitive to economy and socio-cultural structure" as one of the reasons for the change in the curriculum. The difference occurred in favour of those with 5 years and less experience when considered among those with 5 years and less experience (4.40), those with 6-10 years experience (3.44), those with 11-15 years experience (3.60), those with 16-20 years experience (3.54) and those with 21 years and more experience (3.37).

Moreover, there is a significant difference at the level of 0.05 in the article which shows that teachers see "Need for development of national values together with global values " as one of the reasons for the change in the curriculum. The difference occurred in favour of those

Table 3: Variance analysis conducted regarding the reasons for the change in the curriculum according to experience in teaching

Articles	Experience in teaching	N	X	Ss	F	p	Levene statistics	LSD difference
Developments in pedagogy and learning approaches	1.5 years and less	10	4.30	0.67	2.91	0.025	F = 1.013	1-2
	2.6-10 years	25	3.52	0.82			Sd = 4.95	1-5
	3.11-15 years	25	4.00	0.91			P = 0.40	3-2
	4.16-20 years	24	3.70	0.62				3-5
	5.21 years and more	16	3.43	0.89				
Need for such an education that is sensitive to economy and socio-cultural structure	1.5 years and less	10	4.40	0.69	3.12	0.018	F = 1.281	1-2
	2.6-10 years	25	3.44	1.00			Sd = 4.95	1-3
	3.11-15 years	25	3.60	0.64			P = 0.28	1-4
	4.16-20 years	24	3.54	0.72				1-5
	5.21 years and more	16	3.37	0.80				
Need for development of national values together with global values	1.5 years and less	10	3.70	0.67	2.58	0.042	F = 0.622	4-3
	2.6-10 years	25	3.48	0.87			Sd = 4.95	4-5
	3.11-15 years	25	3.44	0.82			P = 0.64	
	4.16-20 years	24	3.95	0.99				
	5.21 years and more	16	3.12	0.71				
Desire for adaptation to the current age for global development and competitiveness	1.5 years and less	10	3.50	1.08	4.56	0.002	F = 0.425	4-1
	2.6-10 years	25	2.76	0.87			Sd = 4.95	4-3
	3.11-15 years	25	3.32	0.90			P = 0.79	
	4.16-20 years	24	3.83	0.86				
	5.21 years and more	16	3.56	0.96				
Using information technologies more efficiently	1.5 years and less	10	4.10	0.87	3.25	0.015	F = 0.269	3-2
	2.6-10 years	25	3.52	0.87			Sd = 4.95	4-2
	3.11-15 years	25	4.12	0.83			P = 0.89	4-5
	4.16-20 years	24	4.25	0.79				
	5.21 years and more	16	3.62	0.88				

Table 4: The extent of teachers' agreement with the reasons for the change in the curriculum

		Frequency	Valid percent	X	SS
Developments in pedagogy and learningapproaches	Strongly disagree	5	5.0	3.75	083
	Somewhat	35	35.0		
	Agree	40	40.0		
	Strongly agree	20	20.0		
Need for such an education that is sensitive to economy and socio-cultural structure	Strongly disagree	1	1.0	3.59	0.82
	Disagree	5	5.0		
	Somewhat	42	42.0		
	Agree	38	38.0		
	Strongly agree	14	14.0		
Need for development of national values together with global values	Disagree	13	13.0	3.55	0.88
	Somewhat	32	32.0		
	Agree	42	42.0		
	Strongly agree	13	13.0		
Desire for adaptation to the current age for global development and competitiveness	Strongly disagree	1	1.0	3.36	0.97
	Disagree	17	17.0		
	Somewhat	43	43.0		
	Agree	23	23.0		
	Strongly agree	16	16.0		
Using information technologies more efficiently	Disagree	8	80.0	3.92	0.88
	Somewhat	19	19.0		
	Agree	46	43.0		
	Strongly agree	27	27.0		
Making classroom management easier	Strongly disagree	2	2.0	3.56	0.99
	Disagree	14	14.0		
	Somewhat	27	27.0		
	Agree	40	40.0		
	Strongly agree	17	17.0		

Table 4: Continued

Establishing school culture	Strongly disagree	2	2.0	3.60	0.96
	Disagree	11	11.0		
	Somewhat	29	29.0		
	Agree	41	41.0		
	Strongly agree	17	17.0		
Encouraging being an information society	Strongly disagree	1	1.0	3.83	0.97
	Disagree	7	7.0		
	Somewhat	30	30.0		
	Agree	32	32.0		
	Strongly agree	30	30.0		
More emphasis on socialization	Strongly disagree	1	1.0	3.85	0.97
	Disagree	10	10.0		
	Somewhat	20	20.0		
	Agree	41	41.0		
	Strongly agree	28	28.0		

As can be understood from the table, in the articles that show differentiation, teachers mostly agree with the reasons for the change in the curriculum

with 16-20 years experience when considered among those with 16-20 years experience (3.95), those with 11-15 years experience (3.44) and those with 21 years and more experience (3.12).

Besides, there is a significant difference at the level of 0.05 in the article which shows that teachers see "Desire for adaptation to the current age for global development and competitiveness" as one of the reasons for the change in the curriculum. Accordingly, the difference occurred in favour of those with 16-20 years experience when considered among those with 16-20 years experience (3.83), those with 11-15 years experience (3.32) and those with 5 years and less experience (3.50).

Finally, there is a significant difference at the level of 0.05 in the article which shows that teachers see "Using information technologies more efficiently" as one of the reasons for the change in the curriculum. Accordingly, the difference occurred in favour of those with 16-20 years experience when considered among those with 16-20 years experience (4.25), those with 6-10 years experience (3.52) and those with 21 years and more experience (3.62).

Table 4 below shows to what extent teachers agree with the reasons for the change in the curriculum.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

According to the results of the study, depending on the variant of gender, the articles "making classroom management easier, establishing school culture, encouraging being an information society, more emphasis on socialization" that were agreed by teachers in the curriculum change differentiated in favour of female teachers. Depending on experience in teaching, on the other hand, the articles "developments in pedagogy and learning approaches, need for such an education that is sensitive to economy and cultural structure" that are thought to be among the reasons for curriculum change differentiated in favour of teachers with 5 years and less experience. Accordingly, it is concluded that new teachers are more sensitive to the changes in education and changes in curriculum makes education more sensitive to socio-cultural structure through a universal interaction.

The articles "need for development of national values together with global values, desire for adaptation to the current age for global development and competitiveness, using information technologies more efficiently" differentiated in favour of teachers with 16-20 years experience. Accordingly, it is remarkable that teachers, especially who are spending their most efficient period in their profession, see universality of education and information technologies as the reasons for the change in curriculum.

Again, regarding the reasons for the change in curriculum, it was determined that the teachers mostly agreed with the articles about the change in curriculum. This agreement is an important improvement among teachers about the fact that they are aware of the variants that affect learning and instruction and are willing to go through a fitting process of change. In the analysis, no significant differentiation was found related to the reasons for the change in curriculum depending on the branches of teachers.

Openness to adaptation which will be possible with the new curriculum not only necessitates coordinative

transformation of variables but also requires teachers to use these variables successfully. For this purpose, teacher training and occupation-consciousness need to be revised firstly and they can be adapted to technical arrangements such as programmes.

At this point, in terms of teachers to have adequate education in theory and in practise in order to adapt themselves to the new programme, it is advised that those kinds of events should be shared and discussed in National Education Forum.

This study might contribute to putting forward new approaches in teachers' perception abilities and application styles of this programme at macro level. At the same time, in this study, a benefit towards the harmony of theory and practise together is expected.

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SURVEY SHEET

In this study it was aimed whether or not teachers who work at primary/secondary schools and carry out new curriculum agree with the reasons for the application of the new curriculum. The findings in this study will play a key role in determining and evaluating the various opinions about the new curriculum. Therefore, your sincerity about your participation to the elements is very important. We are grateful for your contribution.

Note: You are supposed to tell the teachers that they are required to fill in the questionnaire without being affected by others and not to write their names.

Personal information

1- Sex

a) Male b) Female

2-Experience in teaching

a) 5 years or less b) 6-10 years c) 11-15 years
d) 16-20 years e) 21 years or more

3-Field of Study

a) Turkish b) Science and Technology
c) Social Sciences d) Mathematics
e) Primary School Teaching

4-Work Place

a) City Centre b) Provinces

Grading: (5) Strongly agree. (4) Agree. (3) Somewhat (2) Disagree. (1) Strongly disagree.

Elements

1. Making use of research findings in various science fields
2. Developments in learning approaches and education sciences
3. Reflection of actual contents on instructional sciences
4. Increasing quality in education
5. Need for such an education that is sensitive to economy and socio-cultural structure
6. Developing personal values with national values
7. Need for developing national values with global values
8. Difficulties in the application of former instructional curriculum
9. (Of the former programmes) not arousing adequate learning desire in student.
10. Unbalanced content density in former instruction programmes
11. (Of the former programmes) tendency to memorize.
12. Not finishing the subjects on time in former curriculum
13. (Of the former curriculum) being the purpose.
14. (Of the subjects in former curriculum) not being suitable for the development levels of students.
15. (Of the subjects in former curriculum) not meeting the needs and interests.
16. Not having the necessary harmony between former curriculum and real life.
17. Discontinuity of the process in the 8-year education period.
18. (Of the former curriculum) not showing integrity in the scale of primary school 1/8 classes
19. Not forming a relationship between different lessons in the same classes.
20. No having integrity of the subjects in a particular lesson.
21. Personal Creativity and making decisions becoming more important
22. Qualities such as critical thinking and problem solving becoming more important
23. The need for educating people who can express themselves and who have better education skills
24. Need for cooperation and initiative in society
25. Success expected in centralized exams
26. Wish to perform higher levels in international exams
27. Desire to adapt to today's world for global development and competition
28. Of each child continuing his/her education in the education system.
29. Expectation of the activation of all kinds of education acquisition
30. The need for experiencing democracy personally
31. Harmonizing demand for economic work force and supply
32. Using information technologies more actively and more productively
33. Need for teachers to make instruction methods and qualities more up-to-date
34. Updating physical equipment via new curriculum at schools.
35. Need for alternative approaches in measurement and evaluation.
36. Using inter-disciplines which support lessons and lesson integrity.
37. Increasing active and individual-participated learning
38. Need for such methods as activity-based ones which is centred on the person
39. Providing the flexibility of teaching and learning through programmes.
40. (Of planning and orientations) becoming easier
41. Backing up the programme with guides
42. EU Integration
43. (Of class management) becoming easier
44. Establishing school culture
45. Encouraging being an information society
46. More emphasis on socialization