

THE ATTITUDES OF THE DEANS OF THE FACULTIES OF EDUCATION REGARDING CHANGE IN THE RE-STRUCTURING PROCESS

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1-INTRODUCTION

Herakleitos (500 B.C.), aiming to indicate the indispensability of change, said, "Today's world is different than yesterday's, and tomorrow's will not be the same as today's."

Change meets us in today's world as a concept that defines our century.

It is a widely accepted fact that change in today's world is accelerating and spreading to an extent that now our century can be called the century of change.

In general, change means an alteration in the situation of something from one stage to another. Organizational change, however, expresses a change in the status of the organizations regarding their areas of interest from the current one to another one (**Koçel 1998: 477**).

Instead of considering organizational change as a process initiated to solve daily problems or to adapt to the current situation, we need to consider it as an efficient activity which involves the implementation of models resulting from long-term improvements (**Aydin 1969: 136; Özkalp and Kirel 1996: 397**).

Being a product of the social environment they are in, organizations are aware of the fact that they can continue to survive as long as they can keep up with the change coming from the surroundings. The main characteristics of the organizations which can continue to survive for a long time are to adopt and change their objectives (economic, social and cultural) in accordance with the demands of the environment. In order to survive, the institutions are obliged to, from a Darwinian perspective, "fight for life" (**Tosun 1971: 432**). In this respect, it can easily be seen that the organizations that can

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keep up with the change and adapt themselves have power which enables them to keep the balance between environmental and organizational change, and in this way they can influence and control their surroundings (**Saglam 1979: 61**).

The inclinations for change stemming from the internal structure of the institutions and the obligations for change stemming from the environment make the need for an adjustment stage quite obvious.

The fact that organizations, like every living creature, experience change highly concerns both the employees in the organization who constitutes the human part of the organization and the consumers, clients, and other legal entities who are in close contact with the organization. In this framework, in organizations which produce products or offer some kind of services, change should be considered as the first variable and the administrators, the employees, and the real or legal entities who buy these products or use the service offered should be considered as a different variable (**Çelebioglu 1990:5**).

In the 1990s, "change" used to be one of the primary subjects in individual and organizational life and rather than the necessity of change, the main subject of discussion was the speed of institutional change and whether the change was sufficient or not.

In this respect, Drucker defined change as "the improvement of the ability to change in the structure of each institution" (**Drucker 1992: 97**).

The Reasons for Organizational Change

Even though there are differing approaches, the dynamics that force the organization to change are generally considered in two groups.

The 1990s are considered as the years that reflect the change in the administration and in which the institutions learn how to the change. The increase in the rate of involvement of women and minority groups in the workforce, the necessity of a decent level of education and in-service training in the workforce make change in the workforce obligatory.

Technological changes, use of computers and robots, flexible production systems, changes in information technologies, the fast spread of information in the organization increase the speed of organizational change.

Economic instability and crises, oil prices, fluctuations in the stock market, inflation, changes in the interest rates, the efforts to keep peace, the wars in different parts of the world resulting from ethnic origins and religion create change in terms of economic and social life.

These and similar reasons constitute the external dynamics of the change and result in change.

When we look at the social tendencies in our country, the increase in the demand for education, the efforts to spread 8-year compulsory education institutions all over the

country in a balanced way, unemployment, the importance given to quantity, the foundation of open universities, night classes in the universities, and private universities resulting from a high demand for higher education, the rapid increase in the shortage of classroom and subject teachers in the primary education, and the attempts to solve the problems with daily precautions instead of taking radical measures make the change and re-structuring of the Faculties of Education a must (YÖK 1998).

The Internal Dynamics Forcing Organizational Change

The structural improvement that the organizations experience, low productivity, low morale and motivation level, individual and group conflicts, creativity, new ideas and service types can be counted as the internal dynamics forcing change (Koçel 1998: 481).

2- METHOD

This study was carried out to evaluate the attitudes of the Deans of the Faculties of Education regarding the change in the re-structuring process.

The framework of the research consisted of the Deans of the Faculties of Education who were in charge in the year 2000.

As it was possible to reach all 42 Deans of the Faculties of Education who constituted the framework of the study, samples were not taken.

A questionnaire composed of 14 items which was designed by the researcher was used as the means of data collection.

The survey was sent to 42 Deans of the Faculties of Education, all of whom responded with the exception of the Dean of the Faculty of Education of Middle East Technical University.

The rate of the participation in the research was 97.6%.

The statistical analysis of the survey was carried out by using the SPSS software program. The analyses were generally made by summarizing the answers provided for the questions in terms of percentages and rates.

3-FINDINGS

The questionnaire was administrated to determine the attitudes of the Deans of the Faculties of Education regarding the change in the re-structuring process; to analyze and interpret the findings and to make suggestions, if deemed necessary. The distribution of the answers given to the questions in terms of percentage and the weighted means are given in the table below.

The table was examined in accordance with the order of the questions and after that a brief summary was presented.

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**THE FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTIONS WITH REGARD TO ATTITUDES
(PERCENTAGES)
CHOICES**

QUESTION	NO ANSWER			1 (LOWEST)		2 (LOW)		3 (MIDDLE)		4 (HIGH)		5 (HIGHEST)		MEAN \bar{X}
	n	n	%	n	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1	41	0	0	0	0	1	2,4	7	17,1	17	41,5	16	39	4,1
2	41	6	14,6	26	63,4	8	19,5	1	2,4	0	0	0	0	1,3
3	41	4	9,8	29	70,7	5	12,2	2	4,9	1	2,4	0	0	1,3
4	41	2	4,9	0	0	0	0	6	14,6	15	36,6	18	43,9	4,3
5	41	6	14,6	21	51,2	10	24,4	3	7,3	1	2,4	0	0	1,5
6	41	5	12,2	9	22	8	19,5	6	14,6	8	19,5	5	12,2	2,7
7	41	0	0	0	0	1	2,4	3	7,3	13	31,7	24	58,5	4,4
8	41	1	2,4	1	2,4	4	9,8	5	12,2	19	46,3	11	26,8	3,8
9	41	1	2,4	0	0	1	2,4	0	0	16	39	23	56,1	4,7
10	41	4	9,8	24	58,5	9	22	4	9,8	0	0	0	0	1,4
11	41	0	0	1	2,4	0	0	9	22	18	43,9	13	31,7	4,0
12	41	3	7,3	0	0	7	17,1	8	19,5	10	24,4	13	31,7	3,7
13	41	0	0	1	2,4	0	0	0	0	7	17,1	33	80,5	4,7
14	41	4	9,8	27	65,9	6	14,6	0	0	2	4,9	2	4,9	1,3

Question 1. Interest towards change

The analysis of the table showed that, the attitudes for the idea "I like changes at work" is as follows: "high" with 41.5 %, the "highest" with 39.0 %, "moderate" with 17.1 % and "low" with 2.4 %.

It is quite interesting that none of the subjects selected the option the "lowest".

The weighted mean is in option "high" with $X=4.1$.

Certainly, it is very important for the future of Turkey that the change be started in the structures and the processes of the Faculties of Education, the aim of which is to train teachers. The reason for this is the observation of TÜBİTAK which indicates that “Turkey is a country which is raising its status in the century’s dominant technologies but which has not been able to pass over the change-transformation threshold in terms of production norms yet; however, it is under the influence of this global process. Keeping up with this process and catching up with the technologies on which this change is dependant is in Turkey’s agenda as a vital problem.” (TÜBİTAK 1997: 19) because this observation focuses attention on the need for a change especially in science and education.

As a result, the Deans of the Faculties of Education want change in the restructuring process of the Faculties of Education at the “high” level.

In accordance with the statement “A nation is only as good as its teachers,” the quality and the quantity of the change to be made at the Faculties of Education are important for the future of our country.

Question 2. Resistance to change

As was seen in the table, the answers of the Deans of the Faculties of Education for the attitude “I generally resist new ideas” are as follows: the “lowest” with 63.4 %, “low” with 15.5 %, and “moderate” with 2.4 %.

The “high” and “highest” options were not selected.

The weighted mean is in the option the “lowest” with $X=1.3$.

As a result, by choosing the “lowest” option for the item “I resist new ideas”, the Deans of the Faculties of Education indicated that they are in favor of this attitude.

This attitude can stimulate our nation to reach the level of contemporary civilization.

Question 3. The relationship between change and success

The analysis of the table showed that the answers of the Deans of the Faculties of Education for the idea “I do not like the administrators who support change since they are usually unsuccessful” are clustered around the options the “lowest” with 70.7% and “low” with 12.2%.

It is interesting that 9.8 % of the subjects did not provide an answer for the question. However, it is thought provoking that 7.3 % of the subjects preferred the options “low” and the “lowest”.

The weighted mean is in the option the “lowest” with $X=1.3$.

In general, the Deans of the Faculties of Education do not agree with the statement “I do not like the administrators who support change since they are usually unsuccessful.”

If the beneficial change is supported, it will provide the administrators with leadership qualifications.

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Question 4. The benefits of change

As was seen in the table, the answers of the Deans of the Faculties of Education for the attitude “change is for the benefit of the organization” is as follows; the “highest” with 43.9 %, “high” with 36.6 % and “moderate” with 14.6 %.

The weighted mean is in the option “highest” with $X=4.3$.

As a result, the Deans of the Faculties of Education agree with the idea that the change is for the benefit of the organization at the “highest” level.

However, this attitude should not mean that nothing can be worse than this.

Question 5. The foundation of change

The choices of the Deans for the attitude “most of the changes include negative thoughts” are clustered around the options the “lowest” with 51.2 % and “low” with 24.4 %. These are followed by “moderate” with 7.3 % and “high” with 2.4 %.

It is quite interesting that 14.6 % of the whole group preferred the option No Answer.

The weighted mean is in the option the “lowest” with $X= 1.5$.

As a result, the Deans of the Faculties of Education do not agree with the idea that most of the changes include negative thoughts. This attitude could create a positive effect on the re-structuring process of the Faculties of Education.

Question 6. The value of change

The interpretation of the distribution of the answers for the attitude “change is for the benefit of the employees” is a difficult one. The ideas of the Deans concerning this attitude were distributed in a fluctuating way among the whole options.

The percentages for the options are as follows; the “lowest” with 22.0 %, “low” with 19.5 %, “moderate” with 14.6 %, “high” with 19.5 % and the “highest” with 12.2 %. The fact that 12.2 % of the subjects preferred no answer option result in interpreting the distribution of the answers in a different way.

The weighted mean was in the “moderate” option with $X=2.7$.

As a result, the Deans of the Faculties of Education have difficulty agreeing with the idea that the change is mostly for the benefit of the employees.

This result calls attention to the variables which enhance the attractiveness of the organization.

Question 7. The necessity of change

The analysis of the percentage distribution and the weighted mean results indicated that the Deans agreed with the statement “change is necessary” at about the “highest” level. The percentage distribution of the answers are as follows; the “highest” with 58.5 %, “high” with 31.7 % and moderate with 7.3 %.

The weighted mean is in the option the “highest” with $X=4.4$.

As a result, the Deans of the Faculties of Education agreed with the idea that change is necessary at the “high” and “highest” levels.

Certainly, the cause-effect relationships which are included in the concept of change are relative. Most of them could be sampled from an ideal environment. Thus, because of the special nature of these relationships, a solution is unlikely to be found.

Question 8. Force for the change

The answers of the Deans for the idea “I use my authority with those who resist change” are clustered around the options “high” with 46.3 % and the “highest” with 26.8 %. These are followed by “moderate” with 12.2 %, “low” with 9.8 % and the “lowest” with 2.4 %.

The weighted mean is in the option “high” with $X=3.8$.

As a result, 73.1 % of the subjects indicated the options “high” and the “highest”. This shows that, the Deans of the Faculties of Education agree with the idea that “I use my authority with those who resist change” at the “high” level.

It is expected from the Deans of the Faculties of Education to try ways of influencing rather than using authority.

Question 9. Developing new approaches

The answers of the Deans of the Faculties of Education for the idea “I develop new approaches” are clustered around the options the “highest” with 56.1 % and “high” with 39.0 %.

The weighted mean was in the option the “highest” with $X= 4.7$.

As a result, the Deans of the Faculties of Education agreed with the attitude “I develop new approaches in the re-structuring process at “high” and the “highest” levels.

This attitude could possibly help the evolution of the faculties.

Question 10. Feeling of trust

The answers of the Deans for the attitude “If there is a change in my work, I feel less secure are as follows; the “lowest” with 58.5 %, “low” with 22.0 % and “moderate” with 9.8 %. It is interesting that 9.8 % of the Deans choose the option “no answer.”

The weighted mean was in the option the “lowest” with $X=1.4$.

As a result, the Deans of the Faculties of Education do not agree with the idea “if there is a change in my work, I feel less secure.”

This result could mean that the Deans are highly self-confident. However, this confidence should not prevent them from taking the necessary measures.

Question 11. Change solves problems

The Deans agreed with the statement that “change helps the solution of problems at work” at “high” with 43.9 % and “moderate” with 22.0 % levels.

The weighted mean is in the option “high” with $X=4.0$.

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As a result, the Deans of the Faculties of Education agreed with the idea that change helps the solution of problems concerning faculty governance.

Certainly, change could be important if it can contribute the realization of the objectives of the organization.

Question 12. General Acceptance

The answers of the Deans of the Faculties of Education concerning the attitude "I accept changes which are approved of by everybody" are as follows; the "highest" with 31.7 %, "high" with 24.4 %, "moderate" with 19.5 %, and "low" 17.1 %. As was seen, the ideas of the Deans showed a tendency which declines from the "highest" to the "lowest" options. It is interesting that 7.3 % of the subjects indicated the option "no answer."

The weighted mean was in the option "high" with $X=3.7$.

As a result, although the Deans are partly doubtful, they agree with the idea "I accept the changes which are approved by everybody."

Being in harmony with others is useful, provided that the direction of the change is right. Actually, the aim is to choose the right way of action, rather than acting with others.

Question 13. Being open to change

The answers of the Deans concerning the attitude "I follow the new developments related with my job" are clustered around the options the "highest" with 80.5 % and "high" with 17.1 %.

The weighted mean is in the option the "highest" with $X=4.7$.

As a result, the Deans agree with the idea "I follow new developments related with my job" at the "highest" level.

Certainly, following new developments is the first step in the improvement of the job.

Question 14. Not losing control

The answers of the Deans of the Faculties of Education for the attitude "change can cause me to lose my control over my job" are clustered around the option the "lowest" with 65.9 %. This is followed by "low" with 14.6 %. It is quite important that 4 Deans preferred the options "high" and the "highest". However, it is very significant that 4 Deans did not provide an answer for this question.

The weighted mean is in the option the "lowest" with $X=1.3$.

As a result, the Deans of the Faculties of Education do not agree with the idea "change can cause me to lose my control over my job."

It is noteworthy that some of the Deans did not have any assessment about this idea.

Definitely, the duty of an administrator is to achieve the objectives of his/her organization. Achieving objectives may necessitate change.

4- RECOMMENDATIONS

The followings can be counted as the ways which should be followed in an attempt to improve teacher training system.

- 1- The Deans of the Faculties of Education should be informed about the “change method” or “change strategies”.
- 2- The academic personnel of the Faculties of Education should be persuaded about the importance and the necessity of change and they need to be made sure that they will not be harmed by the results.
- 3- All the personnel should be provided with academic support for possible adjustment problems accompanied by change.
- 4- The organization that initiates change should provide the necessary facilities (expert support, equipment, education material, etc.) for the organizations which are attempted to be changed.

5. SUMMARY

1- The Deans of the Faculties of Education want “change in the re-structuring process of the Faculties of Education” at the “highest” and “high” levels. In accordance with the statement “A nation is only as good as its teachers”, the quality and the quantity of the change to be made at the Faculties of Education are important for the future of our country. The fact that the administrators of the Faculties are inclined to this kind of an attitude increases the possibility of reaching success in attempts to bring about change.

2- The Deans of the Faculties of Education show that they do not agree with the idea “I resist new ideas” by choosing the option the “lowest”. This kind of an attitude can be a stimulating factor for our nation to reach the level of contemporary civilization.

3- The Deans of the Faculties of Education do not agree with the idea that “I do not like the administrators who support change since they are usually unsuccessful.” This kind of a result suggests that the Deans may take bold steps in favor of change, which shows their leadership qualifications.

4- The Deans of the Faculties of Education agree with the idea “change is for the benefit of the organization” at the “high” level. This attitude shows that the Deans regard change not as something uncertain but as something beneficial for the organization. However, this kind of an attitude should not mean that nothing can be worse than this.

5- The Deans of the Faculties of Education do not agree with the statement “most of the changes include negative thoughts.” This attitude could create a positive effect on the re-structuring process of the Faculties of Education.

6- The Deans of the Faculties of Education have difficulty agreeing with the idea “change is mostly for the benefit of the employees.” This result calls attention to the variables which ensures the attractiveness of the organization.

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7- The Deans of the Faculties of Education agree with the idea “change is necessary” at the “high” and the “highest” levels. Believing the necessity of change also means supporting the change. Certainly, the cause-effect relationships which are included in the concept of change are relative. Most of them could be sampled from an ideal environment. Thus, because of the special nature of these relationships, a solution is unlikely to be found.

8- In terms of using authority with those who resist change, 73.1 % of the subjects indicated the options “high” and the “highest”. According to this, the Deans of the Faculties of Education agree with the idea “I use my authority with those who resist change” at the “high” level. However, it is expected from the Deans of the Faculties of Education to try ways of influencing rather than using authority. In other words, the acceptance of the change at the organizational level is only possible if the employees believe the change and are persuaded that they will not be harmed by the change. Realizing change by means of giving orders is not a healthy or a lasting approach.

9- The Deans of the Faculties of Education agree with the attitude “I develop new approaches” at the re-structuring process at the Faculties of Education at the “high” and the “highest” levels. This kind of an approach is in harmony with the attitude of the administrators who are active participants of change. Leaving change just to the external forces is not a right way in terms of the “change method.” Changes should also be fed by external forces and should be based on the attitude “constant change” in the organization. This attitude could possibly help the evolution of the faculties.

10- The Deans of the Faculties of Education do not agree with the statement that “If there is a change in my work, I feel less secure.” This result suggests that the Deans do not have any problems regarding self-confidence. However, self confidence of an individual does not necessarily mean that he or she is ready to implement every kind of change.

11- The Deans of the Faculties of Education agree with the idea that “change helps the solution of the problems concerning faculty governance.” Certainly, change could be important if it can contribute to the realization of the objectives of the organization and these kinds of attempts of change are likely to be successful.

12- The Deans of the Faculties of Education, although they are partly doubtful, agree with the idea “I accept changes which are approved by everybody.” Being in harmony with others is useful, provided that the direction of the change is right. However, the real aim is to choose the right way of action, rather than acting with others.

13- The Deans agree with the statement “I follow the new developments related with my job” at the “highest” level. Certainly, following the new developments is the first step in the improvement of the organization.

14- The Deans of the Faculties of Education do not agree with the statement "change can cause me to lose my control over my job." It is noteworthy that some of the Deans did not have any assessment about this idea.

Based on all these results, we can reach this conclusion; the facts that the Deans of the Faculties of Education are in favor of the change and that they believe it to be necessary and beneficial depicts a positive picture in terms of improving the teacher training systems. This kind of a situation offers a very important possibility for the renewal of the teacher training system in Turkey. However, we need to be cautious that the change attempts initiated by YÖK at the Faculties of Education should be interpreted and evaluated in the same framework. Thus, we should not overlook the appointment hierarchy between the institution that initiates the change attempts and the administrators. This relationship may play an important role on the tendencies of the administrators. Also, it is not only sufficient to have administrators who are in favor of change. Especially, since the universities are not organizations which work in an order-command chain, it is very important for the change attempts that such attempts should be agreed and approved by the academic personnel. For this reason, it is expected from the Deans to focus on ways of influencing rather than using their authority.

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