

**SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF NEW TRENDS
IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET)
IN TURKEY**

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ABSTRACT

SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF NEW TRENDS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET) IN TURKEY

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The aim of this study is to put forth the relationship between the transformation of the labor market and the production process and the vocational education and training in Turkey. The Study will reflect the effects of transformation on the individual and society. The research is conducted through interviews with social partners. The study touches upon the reflection of the understanding of new vocationalism adopted in line with the flexibilisation in the organization of work on the vocational and technical education in Turkey. It tries to explain how this new educational approach is shaped on the basis of the main three discourses such as lifelong learning, employability and flexibility. Consequently, the research focuses on the idea that transformation of vocational education and training in Turkey has occurred at discursive level and also based upon the prevailing opinion on the necessity of developing human resources in compliance with the needs of the economy; that the transformation process. Contrary to expectations of the new vocational education and training system, it produces individual who feel themselves anxious and uncertain about the future, fear and feel in insecure, and accordingly, experiences deprivation and social exclusion.

Key words: Lifelong Learning, New Vocationalism, Social Exclusion, Insecurity, Human Development Resources

ÖZ

TÜRKİYE’DEKİ MESLEKİ EĞİTİM VE ÖĞRETİMDEKİ YENİ YAKLAŞIMLARIN SOSYOLOJİK ANALİZİ

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Bu çalışmanın amacı, mevcut işgücü piyasasında ve üretim süreçlerinde yaşanan dönüşüm ile Türkiye’deki mesleki ve teknik eğitim sistemi arasındaki ilişkiyi ortaya koymaktır. Çalışma, bu dönüşümün birey ve toplum üzerindeki etkisini yansıtmaktadır. Araştırma, sosyal paydaşlarla yapılan derinlemesine görüşmelere dayanmaktadır. Çalışma, işin örgütlenme biçimindeki esnekleşmeye uyumluluk göstermek üzere benimsenen yeni meslekçi eğitim anlayışının Türkiye’deki mesleki ve teknik eğitime yansımalarına değinmektedir. Çalışma ayrıca söz konusu yaklaşımın, hayat boyu öğrenme, istihdam edilebilirlik ve esneklik gibi üç ana söylem etrafında nasıl şekillendirilmeye çalışıldığını göstermektedir. Sonuç olarak araştırma, Türkiye’deki mesleki eğitimde yaşanan dönüşümün söylem bazında olduğunu geçmişten bugüne süregelen insan kaynaklarının ekonominin ihtiyaçları uygun olarak geliştirilmesi yönündeki hâkim görüşe dayandığını ortaya koymaktadır. Ayrıca bu sürecin, yeni mesleki eğitim sisteminden beklenenin aksine geleceğe dair endişeli, korkan ve kendini güvensiz hissedilen bireyler yetiştirebileceği ve dolayısıyla, yoksunluk ve sosyal dışlanmanın yaşanabileceği fikri üzerinde durmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Hayat Boyu Öğrenme, Yeni Meslekçi Eğitim, Sosyal Dışlanma, Güvensizlik, İnsan Kaynaklarının Gelişimi

DEDICATION

To my grandmothers

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ABBREVIATIONS

ATML	Atatürk Technical and Vocational High School for Girls
BYKP	Five-Year Development Plan
ÇSGB	Ministry of Social Security and Labor
DİSK	Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions
DPT	State Planning Organization
EARGED	Education Research and Development Department
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
HD	Human Development
HRD	Human Resources Development
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
İŞKUR	Turkish Employment Agency
ITC-ILO	International Training Centre – International Labor Organization
LL	Lifelong learning
LMSNS	Labor Market and Skill Needs Survey
MEB	Ministry of National Education
MEGEP	Strengthening Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey (MEGEP)
MEKSA	Foundation for the Promotion of Vocational Training and Small Industry
MEV	National Training Foundation
NEC	National Education Council
NQV	National Qualification System
OİK	Special Commission for Development Plans
SMEs	Small and Medium Size Enterprises
TESK	Confederation of Turkish Tradesmen and Craftsmen
TISK	Turkish Confederation of Employer Association
TURKIS	Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
VET	Vocational Education and Training

CHAPTERS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter includes two sections: General Views and Methodology. The first section gives general idea on how the relationship between the national development policies and the efforts for reforms in vocational education and training. Moreover, the main concern to be discussed regarding this relationship was introduced. And secondly, brief description on how the core issue of this research was examined was given under the methodology section.

1.1 General Views

The industrialization thrust of Turkey after the Second World War commenced the importance of raising qualification of the national workforce for the industry and increasing the employment especially for the intermediate (technical) workforce, which was the core issue of developmental perspective of Turkey. These cornerstones of developmental perspective gave rise to the importance of vocational and technical education. Skilled technical labor is becoming more and more important for the economy of Turkey aiming at ensuring its position within the competitive world economy. In this respect, the potential of young labor power has been perceived as the main element of competitiveness within the world market. Accordingly, several labor policies to enhance the quality of existing labor power have been implemented for the last fifty years.

Labor policies aiming at empowering the existing labor potential, especially the young labor, in compatible with the development occurred in the core sectors of the national economy (primarily in industry) have been gradually considered. Furthermore, national labor policies have become one of the main concerns of European Union in parallel to the advancement in EU Accession process of Turkey. The intention behind this concern is, in fact, resulted from the efforts ensuring the structural adjustment of Turkey's potential of workforce to the European labor market for the likely integration in near future. In economic terms, there is obviously a need for integration of national workforce, the majority of which is based on

young active labor, to the European labor market, which is mostly comprised of ageing population.

In this respect, EU started to provide financial and technical supports for this likely integration process via the funds allocated to Turkey and the experts assigned for mentoring the policy development processes after the 1999 Helsinki Summit. The focused issue of this collaboration was to enhance the labor qualification by skilling in accordance with the skills demanded by the global market. Before targeting to fulfill the needs of global market, the problem of mismatching between skills supplied and demanded at national market is needed to be immediately solved. The labor market need analyses which were carried out for the identification of basic reasons of this mismatching and the actual labor needs, demonstrated that the priority problem in national labor market is the lack of adequate skilled technical labor in terms of quantity and quality. This finding also put forth the extensive demand for technical labor in the market and this demand could not be satisfied by the existing labor in spite of a large number of technical labors trained available, but unemployed.

The availability of a large number of technical labors idle started to be seen as the major obstacle in front of ensuring the industrial sector-based economic growth. It is because employers cannot desirably benefit from the technical labor, as the primarily demanded human resource although they are trained via vocational and technical training programs, the investments of which are more expensive than the general education. And also, the existing technical labor does not fulfill the competency (skills and vocational information) required by the labor market because the labor cannot renew itself in line with the technological improvements in production process as rapid as desired. So, there is, on the one side, a manpower deficit in technical labor and on the other side, a huge unemployment for this labor with low adaptable capacity to changes in work organization and technology-based production processes. The underlying reason of this situation was commonly accepted as inadequacy of existing vocational education. So, strengthening the poor vocational education and training provided was considered as the core issue for overcoming the problem of unemployment and removing the technical manpower deficit, which are two basic concerns of national labor policies.

In accordance with this purpose, the understanding of New Vocationalism, which rests upon the idea that the weakness of labor power impedes economic growth and reduces the

competitiveness of the economy and therefore, labor power should be empowered through vocational education taking into account market demands, has been adopted. Thus, this approach has become the prevailing and decisive tendency in planning of national vocational education and training system. Considering the need for integration of domestic labor power with the global one together with the aim of matching the labor skills supplied with the demand ones at national market, this economic educational approach started to dominantly characterize the transformation of the national vocational education and training system. This transformation in line with the New Vocationalism approach is reified by an EU-funded and MEB-coordinated project in the beginning of 2000s: Strengthening the Vocational and Technical Education Project (MEGEP).

Although this Project means a comprehensive reform in the long story of VET system In Turkey, it doesn't lead to an entirely new approach to be adopted because vocationalisation of national education in line with the economic growth-aimed development policies has always remained on the agenda. The distinguishing feature of this Project compared to the previous reforms is that it has more ideological implications on individuals and society in compatible with changes in post-Fordist era such as individualistic modes of thoughts and behaviors, culture of entrepreneurship as the encouraged form of employment, and modularization and fragmentation of daily life. Under the light of these discussions, the primary concern is whether the reform efforts on VET system in Turkey will provide social and economic empowerment as the indispensable goal of human development, which will bring forth social inclusion for vulnerable people; unemployed in particular.

1.2 Methodology of the Study

Considering this discussion, a research focusing on the primary concern expressed above and how this process is perceived by the concerned institutions and organizations (social partners) was designed. It was decided the core issue of this research to be discussed in respect to the prevailing discourse, which is characterized by the notions of *lifelong learning*, *employability* in relation to employment and *modularity* in relation to flexibility.

To make these notions clear, a few supplementary questions were set. They are as follows:

- Non-formal education in Turkey provides an alternative for the ones unable to carry on formal education. However, life-long learning perspective has become dominant

in educational policies. With respect to this, what kinds of renovations does the life-long learning perspective provide in vocational education?

- Flexibility in production and work organization promoted a labor force suitable for this flexibility. What kinds of transformations have taken place as part of this flexibility in vocational and technical education institutions training the intermediate labor force for the Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) which are the basis of industry in Turkey?
- It is said that the globalization of economy, the development of information technology and the transformation of the society into an information society necessitates informational workers with new kinds of skills. In this respect, what are the new basic skills demanded by the new socio-economic structure? How are these new skills taught in the restructured vocational education?
- The regression of social state perspective and policies and the distribution of basic obligations of the state such as education and employment among all the other parties (employers, civil society, individuals) results in significant changes in employment policies necessary for the citizens' maintenance of a certain life standard. In terms of education-employment interrelatedness necessary for the development of the country, what kind of a relationship has been established between vocational education undergoing a transformation in line with competence and employability?
- Is the perspective of the institutions and organizations (social parties) regarding the restructuring of the vocational education in line with the human development perspective supporting the involvement of individuals whether organized or not in the decision-making processes, the self-realization of individuals and the constitution of a better life standard? Or is their perspective more in line with the reductionist developmental perspective supporting the instrumentalist involvement, the economic development by means of high-technology transfer, the acceptance of income increase as an indicator of development, the consideration of individuals as human capital for this development and thus reducing the investments to the human resources development?

Qualitative research method was used to analyze the research problem by means of the above mentioned sub-questions. A literature review on work was done since the research is investigating the relationship between vocational education and employment. In order to make the process of reforming VET system more understandable, long story of vocational education in Turkey was covered within the frame of development plans and national education councils. Questions emerged after these review studies are grouped and the interviewees are determined accordingly. The determined interviewees were as follows:

- Policy Makers: The Ministry of Labor and Social Security (ÇSGB), Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR), State Planning Organization (DPT), Ministry of National Education (MEB);
- Employer Organizations: Turkish Confederation of Employer Association (TİSK), The Confederation of Turkish Tradesman and Craftsmen (TESK) and The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB);
- Labor Organizations: Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions (DİSK) and Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions (Türk-İş);
- Policy Implementers: Atatürk Vocational and Technical School for Girls, OSTİM Vocational Training Center, OSTİM Training Coordination and Foundation for the Promotion of Vocational Training and Small Industry (MEKSA).

In-depth interview was preferred as the most suitable data collection technique for this research. Semi-structured interview questionnaire was used during the interviews. Interviews lasted about 50 minutes and all were recorded.

After the decoding of the interviews, data were analyzed descriptively. Data was carefully read keeping in mind the three basic notions (lifelong learning, employment/employability and modularization/flexibility) and then, the data were reorganized according to the statements of the interviewees regarding these notions. This pre-study on data retrieved from the interviews revealed two mainstream themes which enabled the data to be sociologically analyzed. These themes are *social inclusion vs. social exclusion* and *human development/ human resources development*. Furthermore, the first group of theme was also handled in relation to the notions of self-actualization vs. the feelings of insecurity/fear.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is composed of three sub-sections focusing on following issues, respectively: Firstly, historical background of the transformation in the organization of work, ranging from Taylorism to Post-Fordism, is explained. Secondly, New Vocationalism as the dominant educational understanding which is shaped under the influence of Post-Fordism was handled and how it plays a complementary role in Post-Fordist transformation. Lastly, MEGEP as the reified form of the New Vocationalism in Turkey was examined in relation to the understanding of New Vocationalism.

2.1 Work in the Post-Fordist Era

We, as human beings, made some efforts to survive throughout the whole life or carry out some tasks to meet our physical and social needs. The vital importance of *work* in human life was emphasized as such: “work is a precondition for the human condition as it is the cooperative effort of humankind, the sharing knowledge and skill to create our human-made world and also, still precondition for releasing people to enjoy self-fulfilling leisure” (Applebaum, 1995:47). Watson expresses the same idea with this sentence: “All living creatures expend some kind of effort in the process of acting upon and taking from their environment whatever they need for survival” (Watson, 1980:112). As human beings are social beings, they need to become a part of social formation to survive. Therefore, people endeavor for making a living both economically and socially. Work is one way of maintenance of his/her own livelihood.

In modern society, people have defined themselves, and in turn have been socially defined, by the type of work that they do in the public sphere. “Work has been a primary factor in socialization, in social cohesion and personal identity formation in modern societies” (Casey, 1995: 28). Watson also stated that work was basic to the ways in which human beings deal with the problems arising from the scarcity of resources available in the environment. This scarcity influences the relations among people and connected them to each other through establishing interdependency between individuals (Watson, 1980: 112).

This interdependency has gradually been deepened as complexity of the society has increased and accordingly, division of labor has been diversified in modern society. Throughout the history of capitalist economy, form of division of labor has always [been] changed in accordance with the conjectural needs of capitalist social formation. As Giddens (2006) said, one form of this division was Taylorism, or scientific management. The other one is Fordism. They are, for some industrial sociologists, low-trust systems. The last one is Post-Fordism which is assessed as high-trust system, unlike the previous two systems.

Taylorism, as a scientific management, has developed at the beginning of 1900s in parallel to the Keynesian-interventionist state policy. It was a form of work organization in which labor process (workers' performance and movements entailed in production process) was strictly observed, planned and controlled by the management. This planning involved the identification of working capacity of each worker, and that of work task by working days, even hours by the management. To do this, all work tasks were simplified and workers were standardized. Taylorism tends to carry the detailed division of labor to new extremes, where work cycles are measured in seconds. It was a system detailing division of labor; however, it differs from specialization. "Through specialization, people can develop themselves further in their crafts or professions; whereas detailed division of labor reduces people to performers of routine tasks" (Pruijt, 2000: 2). The aim was to minimize the loss of labor and unnecessary movements made workers lose time on work. This means that the workers have little control over their work and autonomy over their job they performed. For this reason, this work organization was defined with the notion of low-trusted system. Although workers directly involved in production through shop floor, they had no control over the work which brought about worker alienation, low motivation and poor quality. For all these reasons, Taylorism was criticized as it led to de-humanization of labor process.

As a result of the crisis in Taylorist work organization, Fordism as the incorporation of Taylorism with factory system has emerged in the 1920s, then, became fashionable in the 1930s, and remained very popular after the Second World War (ILO International Training Center [ITC], p.6). Including the labor, means of production were also reorganized. This reorganization refers to the re-defining position of the workers to machines with which they worked. This new system satisfying the need for mass production after the Second World War was named as assembly line system. This system did not require too much skilled labor;

rather, unskilled labor could be worked because tasks were fragmented and simplified, workers started to perform very simple operations at work. In a typical Fordist factory, “anyone can learn the basics of their job in a very short time. In the past, on the other hand, a worker needed long years of apprenticeship to learn the basics of his or her job” (ILO ITC, p.9). Therefore, less skilled and more unskilled workers were both needed and preferred.

The idea behind this model of work organization was to transform the production process from handicraft style to standardized mass production. With standardized production, tailor-made production, in which the workers reflected their handicrafts and their primal choices to the products, was lessened. On the other hand, workers had no chance to make choices and reflect any skills to the products in the standardized mass production. The inventor of this model, Henry Ford’s sayings well described this shift: “Anyone is free to choose the color of the car they want, as long as it’s black” (ILO ITC, p.9). For this reason, the Fordist organization of work was also named as a low-trust system. On the other hand, it is assumed that workers/employees have chances to make freely their choices in contrast to the case in Fordist organization of work.

Furthermore, through this system, workers were immobilized and machines were mobilized while it was the opposite in Taylorism. Thus, loss of time and decrease in productivity and efficiency were kept down. Increase in productivity resulted in the increase in wages. Improvement in income-based standard of living gave rise to mass consumption. In addition, welfare state policy after the War accelerated this improvement in living standard of employees. Workers are given the chance to consume more, to achieve a better standard of living, to lead a normal life once they retire, because the state will take care of them with welfare provisions. Moreover, “workers do not question the control that employers exert over their work, whereas employers provide income, safety and security” (ILO ITC, p.26). In addition to these provisions, employers could provide guarantee of employment to the workers while there is no such a guarantee in flexible production process and working conditions. As a consequence, employability for workers became predominant discourse instead of full employment.

As known, Post-Fordism slowly emerged during the rapid and remarkable technological advancement of the 1970s and 1980s after the crisis in mass production-led Fordist

production regime, which began in the early 1970s. Fundamental reasons of the emergence of crisis in Fordist production structure were briefly described by Roobek (1987) as follows:

Decrease in the productivity growth, and increase in raw material resources and social expenditure, Continuation of increase in wages in parallel to the decrease in productivity, Internationalization of the production process, Over-capacity and stock which was resulted from mass production, Decline in labor-intensive production as a result of technological advancement, Insufficiency of quality control etc.

This period is, on the other hand, named as profitability of crisis. To overcome this crisis, a tendency towards establishing more efficient and cost-effective production system which will also quickly respond to the demands of market was emerged. Thus, organization of work was altered through transition from Fordist division of labor towards post-Fordist division of labor based on “more customized production, a splintering of the labor force, a degree of disintegration of work organization and decentralization of production” (Kumar, 2005), in other words, flexible and decentralized production system.

This new period, which gives “rise to flexibility and insecurity in working condition”, (Giddens, 2006: 747) was described as Post-Fordism or flexible specialization. In this model, new and computerized technologies which requires less labor force were introduced and accordingly, workers started perform less important tasks and comprise “different types of labor such as temporary, part-time, subcontractors, self-employed and so on” (Fincham, 2005: 2). This means that full-time employment was replaced by flexible employment strategies in which workers might feel themselves in less secure working conditions and also find themselves insufficient for performing work tasks as they are rapidly changed.

Kumar (2005: 74) defines the changes of this new era; Post-Fordist period, at three levels: economy, politics and culture and ideology. For him, the most remarkable implications of this change are as follows:

- At the sphere of economy, the rise of global market and of global corporation, the decline of national enterprises, flexible specialization and the dispersal and decentralization of production, replacing mass marketing and mass production and rise in the number of flexi-time, part-time, temporary, self-employed and home workers

- At the sphere of politics, fragmentation of social classes, the rise of social movements and ‘networks’ based on region, race or gender, a labor force divided into core and periphery,
- At the sphere of culture and ideology, the rise and promotion of *individualist modes* of thought and behavior, a culture of *entrepreneurialism*, the end of universalism and standardization in education, and the rise of *modularity* and fragmentation and pluralism in values and life-styles

Grint (1991) stated that information technology has facilitated the construction of a radical new form of work organization: Post-Fordism (Grint, 1991: 283). He summarizes the solution to the crisis of Fordism at the level of workplace is to do away with the assembly line, to increase the skill levels and flexibility of the workforce, to provide team work structure. Grint (1991) pointed out the functional/internal flexibility, as one of the new models of working technology. This model of flexibility, for him, refers to the company’s ability to assign work irrespective of labor involved: “the more multi-skilled or polyvalent the workforce is, and the more it is itinerant, which is free from attachments to particular jobs, task or area territories, the more flexible labor are” (Ibid: 301). Actually, the essence of transition from Fordism to Post-Fordism is one which combines the flexible labor and flexible production method. Grint (1991) noticed differences between two forms of production by briefly defining them as follows:

Fordism represents the archetypical assembly line production system with extensive division of labor and isolated workers using limited skills, whereas Post-Fordism or flexible specialization, occurs when multiple-skilled and flexible workers are engaged in production systems which depend upon team working rather than isolated individuals, and involve a reduction in the division of labor and some flattening of hierarchical authority, that is, devolved responsibility for decision-making (e.g. semi-autonomous work groups) (Ibid: 302).

Post-fordist organization of work has also triggered societal change at the same time: this was called as information society. According to Webster (2006), there are two major approaches to the notion of information society: Those who claim that a radical breakaway from the past happened and a new type of society emerged (i.e. Post-Industrial Society conceptualized by Daniel Bell and Network Society conceptualized by Manuel Castells), and those who claim that there is a continuity of the prevailing social formation (i.e. two approaches: Flexible Specialization and Regulation School Theory).

Bell, in his book *The Coming of Post-Industrialism*, asserted that a new type of society which is information-led and service sector-oriented society had emerged. In parallel to the development of technology, which sustains efficiency at work and increases productivity and therefore, leads to reduce the need for manpower, new type of workforce has revealed. For him, “in post-industrial society, the predominant group [of occupation] consists of information workers” (cited in Webster, 2006: 42). This major part of workers have some distinguishing characteristics as follows: white-collar, more professional, high qualification – equipped with new information and skills through education-, job-satisfaction oriented. For Turkey, this is; however, not the case. The majority of workers are still ‘blue-collar, less professional, low qualified because of being deprived of new occupational skills and ability required by the changing labor market.

Similar to Bell, Castells (2000) believes in breakaway from the past through transition from industrialism towards informationalism as a new mode of development and as a result, emergence of new producers of informational capitalism (managerial elites who are also called as ‘faceless collective capitalist’ by Castells) and ‘informational labor’ consisting of self-programmable labor and manual (generic) labor. For Castells, generic labor will continue to decrease as long as they cannot meet the flexible demands of the [information-based] new economy whereas self-programmable labor as the labor that can be train and retrain [itself] wherever necessary (cited in Webster, 2006: 114). That is to say, the profile of workforce in information society has rapidly changed as such: Innovative, educationally well-equipped, wealth-producing workforce increases whereas unskilled, educationally ill-prepared, rigid, fixed and incapable of adjusting labor decreases. Although Castells assumed that informational labor equipped with new skills and competencies would quantitatively increase, it is better to explain this increase as the increase in employability of informational labor having a chance to retrain itself to satisfy the occupational needs of the global market. For Castells, as the labor needs to be trained and retrained in compliance with the technological improvements and change in organization of work, education is seen as the key quality of labor (Castells, 1997: 345). In network society, education plays a crucial role in acquiring transferable skills (i.e. communicative abilities, team working habits, problem-solving capabilities, adaptability) of the prospective employees in addition to some vocation-specific skills and knowledge.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Regulation School as a Marxian approach to economy argues that Fordism encountered a serious crisis (Dyer-Witheford, 1999: 106). The School focuses on the regularity of the perpetuating mechanism of capital accumulation to understand capitalism could 'survive' despite such serious crisis. According to this School's pioneers, there is a continuously transforming regime of accumulation and the system overcomes each crisis through changing the existing regime of capital accumulation; that is to say, the prevailing organization of production and work. This transformation process is also defined as the process of regulating the system so as to hamper the collapse of capitalism. For them, regulation can be reified as emergence of new division of labor and re-organization of working conditions and relations of work. In any event, the Regulation School theorists agree that "starting about twenty five years ago, capital's most successful regime of accumulation began to falter; sliding profit rates inaugurated a period of continuing flux and uncertainty, disintegration and restructuring in the global economy that continues to this day" (Ibid: 106). For this reason, post-Fordism refers continuity of the prevailing system under a new form of division of labor; rather than a breakaway from the past.

For the pioneers of the idea of Flexible Specialization; Michael Piore and Charles Sabel, post-Fordist organization of work that have emerged to overcome the crisis of Fordism requires skilled labor which has capacity to [re]train itself when necessary and control the high-technological machineries. For them, process of acquiring control over the machinery brought about development of employees' creativity, increase in both physical and intellectual capacities of employees and accordingly, overcoming the problem of alienation (Belek, 1999:77). However, Applebaum (1995), in his work named *The Concept of Work in Western Thought*; argues that "only in their workshops and in their homes, people can have control over their own work; not in the factory". He adds

We no longer design products to fulfill needs as our primary goals. Products are designed that are adaptable to present technology, and then the "need" is created for these products through advertising and marketing. When markets and profits dominate the work process, the quality, beauty, usefulness of product, and satisfaction from work are all secondary to the sale and the profit (Applebaum, 1995: 47).

Considering the point of view of Applebaum, it is hard to assert that ensuring control over the machinery does not directly help in overcoming the problem of alienation because ability

to use and control of high-technological machines does not increase creativity of workers; which also means self-realization of human beings at work.

Similarly, Marx emphasized on that the more deskilling of labor there exists and workers are fragmented, the less productivity and creativity of workers there exist. Under these circumstances, there might be problem in self-realization of human beings. Durkheim explains this problem with the conception of *Anomie* which has occurred during the remarkable changes in society. For him, anomie is a new morality in industrial society which refers to “a feeling of aimlessness or despair provoked by modern social life and also, feeling of anxiety and disorientation that comes with the breakdown of traditional life in modern society” (Giddens, 2006: 15 and 836). Considering the Post-Fordist era, its basic characteristics are identified as rapid technological advancement and rapidly changing and flexible -or *instable*- working conditions influenced by this technological advancement. Under such circumstances, it is more likely that people (labor) have feelings of anxiety, despair, aimlessness because of the reasons above mentioned: workers might feel themselves in less secure working conditions and find themselves insufficient for performing work tasks as they are rapidly changed. Rapid change can be destabilizing: “workers in many different types of occupation now experience job insecurity and a sense of apprehension about both the future safety of their work position and their role within the workplace” (Giddens, 2006: 775). This destabilizing, what Durkheim describes such conditions as the provocative factors for subverting social order and accordingly, obstructing social integration, might strengthen the feeling of anxiety for people. This is because the drive for efficiency and profit means that those with few skills –or the ‘wrong’ skills *mismatching with the skills appropriate for the market*- are relegated to insecure, marginal jobs that are vulnerable to shifts in global markets (Ibid, p.777). This also brings about the power of ‘hire-and-fire’ to be hold by the employers. Under such a model of employment, it is less likely that division of labor produce solidarity which brings about the emergence of anomic division of labor, as Durkheim conceptualized. However, for Durkheim, the state of *anomy* happened in case relations of groups of people are not regulated while, today, anomic state happened as relations of groups of people continually disrupt and re-constructed under this flexible working condition. Marshall Berman (1983) conceptualized this ‘state of anomy’ as *self-destruction*. He pointed out “a mode of production which feeds on unending cycle of competition, innovation and destructive/creative change” (Goankar, 2001: 3). There is no stability, as Durkheim emphasized. From this point of view, the ideal of personal “growth” is just such an

ideological reflex, a rationalization of capitalism's need for unrestrained economic growth. The continual transformation of work and family life wrought by the expansion of markets and the pressures of competition appears to Berman as "dialectic" of "innovative self-destruction". It appears as "the destructive power of capitalist 'progress,' which uproots people from kin and communal ties, transforming them into mobile, interchangeable units of 'human capital'" (Scialabba, 1983).

Considering all these approaches, the rise of feeling of loneliness or being isolated for individual might trigger the rise of feeling of insecurity and accordingly, fear. Thus, the society becomes a social medium where individuals, *who are anxious, have some fears and feels themselves insecure*, get together. In other words, with the increase in complexity of division of labor in parallel to the advancement of technology, feelings of insecurity and fear has emerged in human beings' daily life and these feelings have gradually been rising as a result of the increase in flexibility in work and employment practices at post-Fordist era. The point to be decisively noticed, here, is that these feelings might have a social class basis. That is to say, working class people, who are in general the low-skilled labor, are closer to experience these feelings rather than middle class people, who are mostly high skilled labor because they are much economically privileged people in accessing education and thus, following and acquiring new information and skills required by the market. This social class-oriented implication is based on the emphasis on two types of flexibility (i.e. *flexibility for predictability* and *flexibility for adaptability*) and their difference in practice (Watson, 1995: 346). As Watson stated, the former type of flexibility is centralized and has "top-down control with a mix of low-skilled labor force which is readily obtainable or dispensable while the latter type of flexibility is a relatively autonomous one operating units with a mix of high-skilled labor force given security and regular learning opportunities" (Ibid: 347). This can be re-defined as such: 'working class' is relatively deprived of feeling of security as they are seen as the labor which is easily indispensable as a matter of flexible employment practices.

All in all, these negative feelings are undesirable ones for this context of society and work because they may lead to risk of decrease in productivity and efficiency of labor as individuals will be dissatisfied from the circumstances that they are experiencing. As one of contemporary theories of work organization; Neo-Human Relations School's proponents asserted, "Material rewards and security of work are negative motivators in so far as their

absence decrease productivity while their presence is the precondition for higher productivity” (Grint, 1991: 125). Moreover, the School put forth the importance of assigning more responsibility to workers, which help them for self-fulfillment at work. It is known that one of way of achieving self-realization for individuals is work in case that individual identifies him/herself with work and particularly, his/her occupation.

Consequently, in order to eliminate the risk of being unproductive of labor to be revealed as a result of being deprived of self-realization, meaning of work at the era of post-Fordism was re-defined as follows: more than a way of earning income, flexible, team working which ensures flexibility, reduces the feeling of being isolated while rises autonomy, more responsibility assigned to the employees. In order that this new meaning of work is well embedded by the labor, a functional role is given to education system. So, the need for restructuring educational systems in compliance with the changes in organization of work and global market has emerged. The reflection of this need in the sphere of education has been the re-invention of the vocationalist approach; called as New Vocationalism.

2.2 New Vocationalism as the Complementary to Post-Fordism

The major stimulus behind change in work and labor organization is technological improvements which are triggered by the competitive market economy. The economy has not only influenced the work conditions and labor organization, but also field of education which is seen as the major institution which produce work force required for the labor market. So, schools are seen as *the factory of human capital*. This economic view towards the education has gradually increased and evolved in parallel to the changes in global economy.

The significant role of education, especially vocational education and training on the economic growth has always been emphasized. This role is described as producing the appropriate labor force needed by the labor market. In this context, investment to education signifies investing human capital which is seen as essential for economic growth and social development. From this point of view, the notion of training the labor force through education; especially, the intermediate technical labor force through vocational education becomes decisive in restructuring the national education system. On the other hand, there are some educators think that education, in fact, is not a process creating employment itself.

Rather, it is a process facilitating employment of individuals through providing them to acquire vocational information and skills (Aksoy, 1996: 94). However, in the last instance, close relationship between [vocational] education and economy has been overtly emphasized. In parallel to the development in economy, this emphasis brought about the approach of vocationalism in the field of education to be become significant. From a sociological perspective, vocationalism is defined as “a philosophy of education promoting the idea of that the content of curriculum be governed by its occupational or industrial utility, and marketability as human capital consideration” (Marshall, 1998).

Since the oil crises of the 1970s, an intensification of vocationalism has seen. The outcomes of this have been the increasing number of vocational learning opportunities and qualifications at upper secondary and tertiary levels in education systems across the world, and an increasing emphasis on developing work-related skills in the young. The driving force for this increasing emphasis on vocationalism in education policy has been the “increasing involvement of the business community in education systems, both at the level of policy and increasingly in terms of the funding and practices of colleges and schools” (Hayward, 2004: 4).

It is mainly seen as a form of education shaped with the instrumental purposes. In other words, for the trainers who have a mind of vocationalism, the basic objective of education is to prepare students for the world of work and employment (Winch & Gingell, 1999: 246). So, for the understanding of vocationalism, students are being made ‘employable’ (Gaskell, 1993: 67).

As Hayward (2004) stated, the idea of vocationalism evolved in line with the rapid improvements in technology and accordingly changed labor organization. Before pointing out the relationship between changes in sphere of economy and the emergence of new-vocationalism, linkage between technological improvements and work and labor organization at globalized economy should be explained. Nico Hirtt (2005) expresses this multi-dimensional relationship as follows:

Firstly, we have an exacerbation of economic competition, which resulted initially from the economic crisis in the late 70's. This means great instability, high unemployment rates, heavy pressure on public expenditures and a continuous pursuit of competitiveness.

Secondly, industry and services have been entering the era of new technologies, especially information and communication technologies.

These technologies lead to new forms of labor-organization, with more flexibility, just-in-time production and a fast internationalization of production and exchanges. But it means also more unpredictability, instability and more unequal development, which in return feeds the exacerbation of economic competition. (CEC, 1997; Field, 1997)

So, while technological development is stimulated by investors, by companies and by governments as a way of solving the problem of competitiveness at the local or national level, it becomes a key-element in keeping up an exacerbated economic competitive environment at an international level (Hirtt, 2005: 3).

For Hirtt, not only the sphere of economy and its components like labor market, work, technology and so on is globally transformed, but also education systems are evolved at global level. He describes the global evolution of education with some common trends released mostly in industrially developed European countries. These trends are as follows:

*The first trend is **decentralization** and **deregulation** in the field of management. The former centralized education systems, run by state, are transformed into networks of flexible, competitive schools, often managed by local authorities or non-governmental groups. There is given more local power for developing own programs, own teaching methods.*

*Secondly, the very fast growth of **educational expenses** that characterized the fifties, the sixties and the seventies has been dramatically slowed down in the 80' and the 90'.*

*Thirdly the emphasis is now not more on knowledge or "general culture", but more and more on **skills** destined to prepare for "life-long learning" : professional skills (mastering a second language, or ICT-related skills) and vague transversal skills (like problem solving) or so-called "social skills" (like adaptability).*

*Another trend is a **growing work-orientation of education**. More emphasis is put on vocational training, on work-related teaching, on developing partnerships between schools and private companies, on promoting "entrepreneurship" in education.*

*The last two interrelated trends are diverse forms of **commercial presence** in the schools such as advertisement on the school-walls, sponsoring the activities by private companies, and **Education Business** which means education becoming itself a new profitable market: private teaching, online learning (Ibid:1-2).*

Considering these trends, it is hard to say that all trends are apparent in Turkey; however, some of them are reflected to the national education system as Turkey is a developing country with a high motive for placing at competitive global market. So, emphasis on VET in Turkey has strengthened as it was seen as the key for producing skilled intermediate labor

satisfying the need of market and accordingly, enhancing the global competitiveness of Turkey. In this context, the most remarkable trends in Turkey are the *work-oriented* and *skill development-based education*. As Hirtt asserted, “under the pressure of the heavy economic competition, governments adapt swiftly and narrowly the contents and structures of education so that they respond better to the changing demand of skilled workforces” (Ibid: 5). This change indicates a more work-oriented education and rise of promoting entrepreneurship in education. Moreover, acquisition of some skills, instead of obtaining knowledge, becomes much preferable because, as again Hirtt emphasized, it can guarantee flexibility and adaptability of the workforce (Ibid: 5). Therefore, in schools, ‘learn to learn’ to be able to adapt quickly to the fast changing technological environment and to the rapid rotation of labor force in industry and services (Ibid: 5) is more emphasized than ‘to learn’.

Additionally, as Hirtt pointed out, schools as the institutions for formal education became integrated with the market. As an outcome of neo-liberal policies, reduction of subsidies for the educational expenses has accelerated the process of *marketisation of schools*, as Hirtt conceptualized. Herbert Schiller who is one of Marxian scholars describes this process as the *commodification of information* acquired in schools or through education because the impress behind the development and dissemination of information is the market (Schiller, 1981:127). For Schiller, at the age of information society, information as well as many things is commodified. This means, individuals need to pay to acquire information as it became a commodity. For him, this commodification leads to a new type of stratification, which he calls as information-based stratification. He pointed out inequality resulted from information-based stratification: the most remarkable feature of this inequality is the information gap between *those who are economically and educationally privilege* and, therefore, able to extend their advantages by access to sophisticated information resources such as on-line data bases and advanced communication facilities and *those who are deprived of* these facilities because of the lack of this economic and educational privileges (Ibid: 149). At the age when advanced information and communication technologies become primarily determining factor on the position of individuals at the labor market, acquisition of market-needed information and transferable skills provide individuals with advantage to be employed.

As a consequence, this new context influenced vocational education and training system and the concept of vocationalism was reinvented. In other words, idea of **new-vocationalism**

which gets closer the education to the economy has become significant in the late of 1970s in Britain and in 1990s it was also adopted by other developed and also developing countries; and was integrated into the curriculum. As a result of neo-liberal economy policies and rapid technological advancement at work at the beginning of 1980s, youth unemployment has significantly risen in industrialized countries. Rising unemployment had been focused policy makers' attention on that education was failing to produce appropriately skilled and motivated young workers. In Britain, in parallel to rise of New Right ideas at the end of 1970s, the view of which education has a function of providing equality of opportunity for all and therefore, was deemed less important than the needs of industry was replaced by the new educational emphasis called as New Vocationalism. At that time, in Britain, employers were telling them that education was not meeting their needs, and part of the reason why there were so many unemployed was that they were unemployable. They did not have the skills required (Covington, 2000). This meant that potential workers/employees has been poorly trained and therefore, unproductive workforce. The weakness of workforces was seen as an obstacle in front of the economic growth and competition. For this reason, aim and curriculum of education and vocational education in particular were re-defined and planned by taking the interests and needs of employers into account. That is to say, new vocationalist policies have shifted power into the hands of employers and national politicians (Ibid: 5).

New vocationalism has been actually developed on the base of a shift from supply-driven to demand-driven understanding of public service and social policy in line with neo-liberal tendencies. The more neo-liberal policies are permeated into the society, the more market economy becomes decisive in social sectors, too. This gives rise to new values to be emerged, such as encouraging the entrepreneurship, individual competition and autonomy, flexibility and acquisition of generic (basic) skills demanded by the market (Emirgil, 2009: 580). Approach of this neo-liberal view towards education is built upon the necessity of structuring the curriculum by the needs of the market as a result of localization of education system and establishing close relation between education and economy (Zajda, 2006). The closeness leads to exerting pressure on all industrial nations to move their education systems in a more 'vocational' direction in order to create a more highly skilled labor force (Hichox, 1995: 156). As a result of this pressure, dual system which combining apprenticeship with vocational training has underpinned the creation of a highly skilled workforce suited to the needs of a dynamic modern economy (Ibid: 156). This is what post-Fordism requires from the labor and the vocational schools different from the needs of Fordist era. Hichox pointed

out this difference as follows: Traditional forms of pedagogy stressing passivity and obedience, so one might argue, fitted the bureaucratic, hierarchical work relations of the Fordist mass production period whilst Post-Fordism, on the other hand, requires the kind of adaptable, autonomous, and committed worker resulting from a vocationalist form of schooling containing a progressivist stress on team-work and experiential learning (Ibid: 159). Generic skills as the pre-requisite for sustainable development was identified as “*critical thinking and problem-solving, creative thinking skills, information handling skills, communicating skills, teamwork skills, technology application skills, autonomous learning skills*” (Park, and et al., 2009: 232).

On the other hand, new vocationalism was criticized by some Marxists writers as, it firstly, deepens class division, *which have influences on the process of integration of people into the society*, by “encouraging working class pupils for vocational education route to lower paid/status works while most middle class pupils follows the academic education route to high pay, skill and status employment and secondly, ensures social control by taking potentially unemployed youth ‘off-the-streets’ and subjecting them to working place discipline” (Livesey & Lawson, 2008: 262). Similar to that, a Marxist sociologist, Phil Cohen, criticizes the idea of new vocationalism as for him; the real purpose of New Vocationalism is social control which means to create good behavior and discipline rather than training for work. Young people who refuse to take part are ‘punished’ by having benefits withdrawn (Cohen, 1984). Moreover, Andy Green argues that vocational schemes legitimate division of labor because they are based on the idea that middle class should be ‘educated’ and working class should be ‘trained’ (Green, 1986). Furthermore, some feminist writers have also some critics on the idea of new vocationalism regarding girls or women to be trained through this model of education. They criticized vocationalism for challenging girls into ‘traditional’ female areas of the workforce – hairdressing, secretarial and ‘caring professional’ work such as nursing (Ibid: 262) because, as Livesey and Lawson (2008) stated, secondary [vocational] education were designed to prepare boys for various form of skilled manual works in industry and girls for lower level of non-manual occupations (secretarial, nursing and etc.) and domestic skills (needlework, cookery etc.) that reflected both their general economic position and family role (Ibid: 254).

Consequently, while taking into consideration the role of education in changing global economy and accordingly, work and labor organization, it is much easier to assert that

education has a 'reproductive' function of prevailing relations of production through disseminating the ruling ideology (Blackedge & Hunt, 1985), as Althusser (1971) and then, Bowles and Gintis (1977 cited in Blackedge & Hunt, 1985) emphasized. For Althusser, education as an Ideological State Apparatus performs its function of reproduction of the capitalist system through firstly, teaching the skills and techniques appropriate for the child's future job; secondly, imparting the 'rules of good behavior' or the attitudes suitable for the child's later economic role (Ibid., p.161) Moreover, according to Bowles and Gintis, for the long-run success of the system depends on 'a widely accepted ideology justifying the social order' and at that point, they defined that education serves for the maintenance of the capitalist economic system through reproduction of the existing social order (Ibid., p. 136). In the last instance, from the point of view of thinkers adopting Theories of Direct Reproduction in education, the role of education is to perpetuate the dominant 'capitalist' relations and the 'ruling ideology'. Considering vocational education more specifically, it is seen that dominant discourses of today's 'ruling ideology' are entrepreneurship, individualism, employability, flexibility and lifelong learning.

2.3 Reflection of New Vocationalism in Turkey: MEGEP

The current application of this re-defined approach towards vocational education and training in Turkey is embodied through a European Union-funded Project which is called as the Strengthening Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey (MEGEP). Overall objective of the Project was defined as assisting the Turkish Government, through the Ministry of National Education, in the process of modernization and adaptation of the VET system to the socio-economic needs of the country and to the principles of life-long learning (MEB, 2006: 5). Considering the idea of the new vocationalism, it is seen that this Project aims at filling in the gap between the needs of labor market and outcomes of the national vocational education and training; in other words, to match the demands of the market economy and the supplies of educational system. The aspiration behind the attempt for overcome the mismatching between market and education is to strengthen the linkage among education, market and employment (Emirgil, 2009: 577)

When it was focused more closely on VET of Turkey, the major problem was seen as the low employment rate of graduates of VET schools or underemployment for a remarkable number of graduates. To illustrate, in 2006, unemployment rate for those who were at the ages of 15 and 24 was nearly 19 percent while this rate reached almost 24 percent for the

graduates of vocational high-schools (UNDP, 2008: 62). Moreover, data on employment rate for 16975 VET school graduates, which was obtained through online survey conducted under the E-Graduate Project executed by the MEB shows that majority of graduates (67%) are not still working (MEB EARGED, 2009: 30). As mentioned before, high rate of youth unemployment in Britain gave rise to new vocationalism to overcome this social problem. Turkey has a similar problem, even youth trained through vocational education and training was also unemployed. On the basis of similar social problem to Britain, Turkey also preferred to adopt new vocationalism approach to overcome this problem.

In addition, not majority but a remarkable group of VET school graduates are employed in works unrelated to their vocational background; vocational education they have already received. To illustrate, 51 percent of the graduates employed in related works while 24 percent (one quarter of the surveyed) employed in totally different work (MEB, 2009: 39). Both data explicitly shows that curriculum has no capacity to renew and improve itself (A Qualitative Assessment of the Curriculum Development Process at Secondary Vocational Schools in Turkey, 2001). For this reason, it is assumed that restructuring the curriculum of VET in compliance with needs of the market play a crucial role in ensuring and increasing employment for those who graduate from VET schools. It is also expected that restructuring of vocational curriculum enables students who are potential workers to be acquired *generic (basic) skills* that employers demands. According to the findings of Labor Market and Skill Needs Survey (LMSNS) 2005 conducted with 96 239 enterprises in 31 provinces of Turkey by İŞKUR under the MEGEP Project (MEB, 2006: 56), the most mentioned skill problem is social and communication skills (27% of all answers) whereas less mentioned are commercial and selling skills (8%), willingness to coach others (9%), abilities for heavy physical work (5%) and financial and budgeting skills (4%). Moreover, the following skills problems were also expressed: management skills (13%), elementary and basic skills (13%), work planning skills (11%) and ICT skills (10%). In addition, insufficiencies about some technical skills, which imply that employees do not have enough knowledge to carry out their job, were also mentioned by the enterprises. The most mentioned technical skill problems are as follows: theoretical knowledge (36% of all answers), vocational competencies (34%) and then, communication skills (6%) and so on (Ibid: 59). This figures show that for enterprises, well-acquired occupational skills are more needed than social skills. The main reason of this situation is that vocational competencies have more weight on profitability and productivity of the enterprises.

Compliance with the labor market needs in information society, the new skills that enterprises demanded from the employees are defined as follows: the personal ones – problem solving, taking responsibility and initiative, team working capability, open to improvement and learning and the vocational ones – well-trained, competent, open to innovation and eager for self-development, ability to review and update his/her own knowledge, ability to utilize interdisciplinary knowledge, having specialized and transferable skills and information, and lastly the ones related to ICTs – ability to use ICTs, functional digital literacy, open to technological advancement and easily adaptable to new technologies (NVF and ETF, 2002: 338-339). In order that students, who are potential employees, are able to acquire such skills and information necessary for their employability, the current education system and in particular, the vocational education and training system need to be re-structured compliance with technological improvements and needs of labor market. Need for a more flexible training program, which enables the system to be rapidly and easily adapted to the changes in labor market, comes into focus. Moreover, the notions of student-centeredness and modularity, which are based on the ideas of self-learning and individualism, have gained importance in training programs. Through MEGEP Project, these new characteristics of the vocational training have permeated to the national vocational education system.

In addition to emphasis on individualism, the notion of employability has also gained importance in the field of education. As a discursive component of new vocationalism, the understanding of *education for employment* was replaced by *vocational training for employability*. Employability implies the ability of individual to be employed at more than one work –without sticking to only one work- as a result of developing generic and transferable skills which protect the individuals from insecurity and risks of rapidly changing conditions of the market (Emirgil, 2009: 580). As stated by the representative of the ISKUR, increasing employability of the current intermediate labor, which are mostly needed labor force by the labor market, depends upon skilling and upgrading the levels of skills in accordance with the technological advancement. In this sense, active labor program, the core issue of which is to ensure employability for the labor, have been undertaken by ISKUR. In compliance with the European Employment Strategy, it was stated that these Programs are adopted in order to alleviate unemployment, long-term unemployment and more importantly, social exclusion. Under the programs, the provided services were defined

as follows: career and vocational counseling, vocational training associated with the employment, developing the strategies for job seeking. Activities carried out under these Programs have the aim of development of human resources in addition to employment. Key points in the implementation of these activities are firstly, establishing collaboration with *social partners* and secondly, ensuring flexibility in the training programs, the field of profession and the target groups because of the importance of being adaptable to rapidly changing conditions of the marketing economy (NVF and ETF, 2002: 295-312).

In the LMSNS conducted in 2006, the interviewed companies assessed the quality of their VET graduates on a range of skills as “low”, “normal” or “high”. According to its findings (MEGEP, 2006: 73-74), companies are usually negative than positive about the following key skills: foreign language (81%), administrative skills (43%), client orientedness (35%), technical and professional skills (31%), computer skills (30%) and willing to work hard (28%). On the other hand, they are positive about these skills: willing to learn (40%), adapt to a work environment (31%), practical skills (23) and social and communication skills (21). Moreover, for companies, VET graduates seem to lack specific theoretical know-how to meet the demands of their occupation (36%) and operational skills (42%). Other categories, like technical drawing skills, computer skills related to their subject area and skills to handle specific equipment are mentioned less often.

Consequently, acquisition of these new skills in the context of information society is viable for all because they are the key for employment under the rapid changing working conditions. In an International Seminar on Vocational Training and Employment organized with the cooperation of National Education Foundation and European Training Foundation, a speaker, who is the director of HRD Centre in Bulgaria, emphasized on that rapid development and diffusion of information and communication technologies have affected employment in terms of its volume, content and organization. In line with the technological changes, enterprises seek to respond to the fast moving competitive environment of information society and they found more flexible forms of employment (i.e. part-time work, temporary employment) as the quick answer. These new forms of work affect people at all levels of skill. These changes reflect the idea that people cannot any longer expect the nature of their work environment to remain unchanging, even in the shorter term (NVF and ETF, 2002: 313-316). This means that there is no longer stability at work and guarantee of employment. In addition to flexible forms of employment, effective working condition and

organization is now widely seen as a critical factor in competitive success. In the Seminar, the needs for continuous development of skills and competences, training (particularly on-the-job-training), permanent opportunities for acquisition of higher and new qualifications, ensuring environment for self-preparation and self-training, and lastly, maximum usage of the desire for self-training were expressed (Ibid: 316).

In this sense, the need for employability-focused vocational training points out the necessity of adopting lifelong learning (LL) approach. LL is, in general, defined as “a new model of education and training which is established on the basis of need for preparing workers to compete in the knowledge economy and therefore, encompasses learning throughout life cycle from early childhood to retirement, and for this reason, includes formal¹, non-formal² and informal³ education and training” (World Bank, 2003: 3). On the other hand, Ünal draws attention to the covert idea of preferring the term of lifelong *learning*⁴ instead of lifelong *education*⁵. She explains difference between these two notions as follows: Learning, in fact, is a natural process for human, which does not necessitate specific conditions for its realization. Rather, we learn continuously (throughout life span) through interactions with nature and human in our daily practices without making an effort. On the other hand, education implies the purposive processes in which the things that the individuals will learn have already determined and the appropriate setting for learning have already been established (Ünal, 2006). For Daun, lifelong education is a concept initially in relation to socialization or human development whilst lifelong learning is seen as a concept primarily “in relation to human resources development to improve economic productivity” (Daun, 2009: 46). Daun emphasizes that socialization is learning throughout life and in all situations, and so is lifelong learning. However, the principal difference between the two is that lifelong learning is purposefully aiming at improvement of knowledge, skills, and competence in compliance for the needs of market economy (Ibid: 52). In connection with the market, for Preston, lifelong ‘learning’ is a controlling mechanism in which the market

¹ Formal Education and Training includes structured programs that are recognized by the formal education system and lead to approved certificate system (World Bank, 2003; 3).

² Non-Formal Education and Training includes structured programs that are not formally recognized by the national system. Examples include apprenticeship training programs and structured on-the-job training (World Bank, 2003; 3).

³ Informal Education and Training includes unstructured learning, which can take place almost everywhere, including the home, community, or workplace (World Bank, 2003; 3).

⁴ Lifelong learning had been used by OECD and UNESCO already in the 1970s, but principally as an argument for reorganization of adult education rather than as an operative concept, and until the 1990s it did not attain a strategic position in the discourse (Daun, 2009:50).

⁵ Lifelong education was a term mostly implying adult education and it was used as early as the 1920s (Daun, 2009:50).

mediates (Preston, 1999). Market –mediated learning process is described by Preston as the ‘marketization’ of it. This view depends on the motto of ‘everything is learnable and purchasable in anywhere and anytime by anyone’ in neo-liberal era. In compliance with this point of view, the idea of that individuals are the free to choose what they learn, but also responsible for their own acquisition of human capital (Daun, 2009: 53) is continuously imposed.

Under these circumstances, another challenging question comes to mind: what will be the role of ‘social partners’ since social partnership as one of the mainstream discourse in ‘new’ vocational training system and employment of VET high school graduates? Social partnership, which is basically used to refer the notions of collaboration between government, employer groups and trade unions and their communications, also named as social dialogue between partners, is a term transferred from Europe to Turkey in the course of EU harmonization process. As Turkey is a country with a deep-rooted statist tradition, social dialogue between the representatives of the State and other national organizations also and working in cooperation has not been experienced for a long time. Therefore, Emirgil draws attention to the difficulty of the VET system, which has been restructured for meeting the labor needs required by the labor market, being worked in the atmosphere that culture of social dialogue has not been prevailed like in Turkey (Emirgil, 2009: 594).

On the other hand, it has been practiced through intensive works (i.e. identification of occupational standards, vocational qualification, standards for vocational training) carried out for restructuring and strengthening the national vocational education system. One of the objectives of MEGEP Project is defined as strengthening Institutional capacity at national, regional and local level of public administration, social partners’ representatives and companies (MEGEP, 2006: 5). It is expected that one of the significant outcome of this collaborative works will be the enhancement of employment opportunities for people. According the findings of LMSNS conducted in 2006 under MEGEP Project, the desired level has not been reached, yet. To illustrate, 74 percent of the 19 457 interviewed companies for the Survey stated that they did not hire any VET graduates during the last 12 months (MEGEP, 2006: 72). Consequently, strengthening partnership between government and employers’ organization implies that school-industry cooperation are enhanced and private sector take more responsibility in financing the educational expenses as emphasized in new vocationalism paradigm. However, as the majority of private sector in Turkey is

based on small and medium sized enterprises, it seems very difficult that small enterprises incur such a financial responsibility and accordingly, the main responsible body will be the public sector as usual.

CHAPTER 3

A REVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENT TOWARDS VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL TRAINING SYSTEM IN TURKEY

This chapter explains the long story of vocational education and training in Turkey from the Early Republican Period up to date. This story focusing on the general tendency is given under four sub-headings which focusing on Early Republican Period, periods of Five-Year Development Plans, reflection of the neo-liberal tendencies on the national education system and lastly, the EU Accession Period.

3.1 Vocational Education and Training during the Early Republican Period

Even though the origins of vocational and technical training in Turkey dates back to pre-Republican period, the expansion of technical training in a planned manner and the shaping and development of technical training institutions according to the needs of the country corresponds to the Republican period. Although vocational and technical training in Turkey has gained a different dimension after 2000 with the works carried out under the framework of EU harmonization program, it was considered before to be largely identical with apprenticeship education and non-formal education aimed at acquisition of skills by adults.

The idea that vocational education which was seen to have an important role in economic development should be separated from apprenticeship education and organized on the level of general education had emerged for the first time in 1800s. For this purpose, as a beginning, an Agricultural School was opened in Yesilkoy in 1847. However, the school was not long lived. Then, for the purpose of training the technical personnel needed by the factories started to be newly established, a Commercial School was founded in 1848 in Zeytinburnu, Istanbul, where industrial enterprises were densely located; but the school could not start education despite the large amounts of expenditure made for its establishment. The reason why these first two implementations in which the idea of organizing vocational education on the level of formal education came into existence were

unsuccessful is suggested to be the financial difficulties of the period and the insufficient level of knowledge and competence of the people assigned the task of establishing the schools.

There are many challenges faced during the period of construction in an economically, politically and socially different perspective of the Anatolian territory influenced by the First World War in 1900s and the following Independency War. One of these challenges was that qualified and educated manpower to bear the steps taken for economic development was extremely low. During the period in question, plans were made based heavily upon industrial development but difficulties were experienced in finding qualified technical personnel to work in the industry. Although there were vocational schools meeting this need though on a small scale, there were differences among the qualifications of the people educated since there was no unity in education and training. In this sense, in order to remove the disorganization in training and regulate training under state authority (Başaran, 1999: 97), Law on Unity in Training was enacted in 1924. However, despite this, standardization in the quality of the work force⁶ trained by the schools training technical personnel could not be reached. Serious quality differences revealed by the trained manpower on the basis of educational institutions are an important problem still continuing. With the studies on restructuring vocational training carried out after 2000, vocational and educational standards and training programs were prepared, to be implemented in all the educational institutions and establishments in order to ensure standardization in vocational qualification. However the extent to which this standardization is effective in overcoming the problem of quality differences has not been clearly revealed, as the implementation is yet new.

The planning of national education during the foundation years of the Republic was largely influenced by internationally known educators (Dewey, Decroly etc.) making recommendations for developing the educational programs targeted at training professional experts in relation to agriculture, textiles and basic industrial production. Decroly's Affective School-Working School Approach was reflected upon the national education planning first in 1926. According to this approach, school and work life is integrated; training accustoms the child to constantly establish relations with his/her environment orienting him/her towards making observations and measurements. This approach also adopted in planning education resulted in practical aspect of education to become more prominent besides theoretical

⁶ Work force is the economically active population, that is the population between the ages 15 and 65.

training. İsmail Hakkı Tonguç, one of the most important pedagogues of the foundation years, has emphasized the use of knowledge in the production of goods and services saying “Knowledge which is not applied is a meaningless and unnecessary knowledge: To know means to do” (UNESCO-Doğan, 1999: 196).

One of the biggest steps taken for making vocational and technical education a central policy subject was the establishment of General Directorate of Vocational and Technical Training under the body of the Ministry of National Education in 1929. During the years 1927-1941, the number of technical schools has steadily increased. The number of secondary level vocational and technical schools, which was 21 in 1923, has reached 86 in 1940 (Alkan, C., 1999: 233). During 1930s and 1940s, Art Institutes for Boys and Art Institutes for Girls were opened almost in all the provinces and large districts (Başaran, 1999: 106). In addition to these formal education institutions, Public Houses and Public Rooms were opened in the early 1930s with missions such as introducing, voicing and settling through implementation of *Revolutions of Atatürk*. Following the late 1930s, in these places giving non-formal education, courses for men and women in villages were opened; educational studies were carried out for equipping willing villagers with knowledge and competence in issue like forging, carpentry and tailoring (Başaran, 1999: 109). These implementations sometimes resulted in identification of vocational education with non-formal education in public perception.

As a result, during the *structuring period* between 1923 and 1940, vocational education was considered to be one of the dominant elements in restructuring the society in parallel with economic development plans. The main aim was to attach vocational and technical education the necessary importance within the totality of the education system and to reorganize this level of education according to the changing and developing social and economic conditions of the country (Alkan, 1999: 225).

During the years between 1940 and 1950, it was tried to train the manpower needed by the country through formal vocational education institutions. During this period, important developments were realized structurally, financially and legally in the area of vocational education. Firstly, the planned works started in 1942 with the Law numbered 4303 were continued with the Law numbered 5642 in 1950, and Vocational and Technical Training Institutions entered into a great development phase. However, the developments observed in

vocational high schools during 1940s could not be reached in any of the five yearly planned periods (Okçabol, 1999, p.182). The greatest development experienced during this period was the spread of art and trade schools over the entire country. However the policies followed for developing art and trade high schools during these years show differences with respect to the perspective foreseen in the first years of the Republic. Until 1935, the principle was to develop these schools according to regional needs, establish advisory committees for the purpose of ensuring communication with the environment, provide the presence of representatives from the industry in exams, share out management and current expenditures among the centre and the provinces, and the main aim was to train the vocational personnel needed through apprenticeship and schools. After 1935, art and trade high schools were tied up to the central system; all their expenditures were met by the state; the same programs were started to be opened everywhere without taking account of local needs; and apprenticeship system was embraced. As a result of these policies adopted during 1940s, the principle of local participation and school-industry cooperation, followed since the foundation of the Republic was largely invalidated. Consequently it is observed that in 1940s traditional opinions were called back, the connection of the school with the environment weakened (except for Village Institutes), bookish knowledge was given more weight than practical knowledge (Doğan, 1999: 204-206).

In late 40s, reactions started to be arisen against breaking off the connection between school and implementation. During the period between 1950 and 1960, the education system underwent a standstill, if not a downfall (Başaran, 1999: 102). Yet, it is possible to say that the period between the years 1940-1960 was a period in which vocational education spread and developed over the whole country (Alkan, 1999: 225).

When this short history, especially the history of vocational education during the Republican period is viewed under the light of industrial development plans characterizing the development of the country, it is seen that statist policies and an understanding of partial development setting economic growth through developing industrial infrastructure as basis had been dominant in Turkey from the Economic Depression of 1929 until 1960s. As a result, "Turkey has adopted the policy of industrialization through statism in 1933 due to the insufficiency of private capital accumulation. Governments have made plans for regulating capital expenditures". The first of such plans was the First Five-Year Industrial Plan covering the period of 1933-1937, aiming at production of certain consumption goods inside

the country through making investments in principal industrial sectors like textiles, paper, iron and glass. According to the State Planning Institution, “policy of import *substitution* which has become a tradition of Turkish industrialization policy systematically and by the state has started with this Plan. The Plan embodied an attitude encouraging production based on domestic raw materials. The Plan text also included secondary goals such as production of investment goods and intermediate goods, creation of new areas of work, and turning towards the use of idle capacity in railways and seaways” (DPT, 2010). More comprehensive of this plan was the Second Industrial Plan covering the period 1938-1942; however this plan could not be implemented due to the break out of the 2nd World War, and despite it was prepared. In addition to these, the plan aimed at realization of “Marshall Plan” during the post-war period, and the Five-Year Economic Development Plan of 1947 and Vocational Education Plans which were never implemented were the products of the same period. When it is taken into consideration that the share of infrastructural investments increased even more within public expenditures after 1950, it can be said that the period between 1950 and 1960 was a period of infrastructural investment. However the fact that the amount of investments targeted at infrastructure significantly increased during this period has created the need for performing a more macro level, medium and long term, coordinated and in this sense more planned study” (DPT, 2010). Consequently, the rise of this need has become the beginning of the period of planned development.

The basic tendency reflected upon the economic development plans during this period also reflected upon the National Education Councils of the period. Firstly, preparation of separate course books for vocational and technical schools was decided in the 2nd Council of 1943, and in the 3rd Council of 1946, the structure, programs and regulations of vocational and technical training institutions were addressed to a large extent. In the 6th Council in 1957 vocational and technical training was a priority issue, due to “its close relationship with the economic and industrial life of the country” and “its significance over the world.” Public education was dealt with as the second significant issue for “it has goals such as giving information on good life, citizenship and health, enlightening the public, preparing people for professions, increasing efficiency and ensuring progress in professions in general as well as struggling with illiteracy” (MEB 4th NEC, 1957). In this respect, during the period before 1960, in which the economic development of the country was based on strengthening the industrial infrastructure, vocational and technical education was addressed on central policy level as late as the end of 1950s. Prior to the planned development period, a new period

started with certain decisions taken for developing vocational and technical education system. These decisions were the following:

- “Education year of the institutes shall be lengthened and they will be transformed into art high schools,
- Foreign language, music and physical training courses shall be added to the course programs of vocational education institutions,
- Apprenticeship schools shall be opened for primary school graduates,
- Duties and responsibilities of technical schools shall be reviewed,
- At schools, branches will be opened in line with current needs,
- In trade high schools, students shall be given more applied vocational education,
- In private schools giving education in foreign languages, trade branches shall be opened,
- Girls shall be started to be accepted to some of the departments of institutes of art” (MEB, 1957, 4th NEC).

One of the most important among these decisions taken for overcoming many deficiencies in vocational education was that girls would be accepted to art institutes. By this way, the aim of technical training for girls besides non-formal education was “defined as giving vocational education through housewife education according to the needs of individuals, families, the society and the country” in this Council” (MEB 4th NEC, 1957).

3.2 Vocational Education and Training in the Five-Year Development Plans (BYKP) between 1960-1980

For Turkey adopting the path of planned development with 1961 Constitution, the years in question meant a period of transition from a Keynesian statist economy policy to a mixed economy. Nevertheless, the idea of development not only relied on economic growth but also turned to include social and cultural development from then on. In 1963 when the first development plan of this period was prepared, the basic concern was “to evaluate the socio-economic potential of the country and to direct this potential in the best way with midterm plans.” Two plans were prepared during the 60s. While the 1st Five-Year Development Plan (BYKP) gave weight to basic infrastructural investments, employment problem and rearrangement issues, the 2nd BYKP adopted especially the principle of making the industrial sector motor of the economy” (DPT, 2010).

In this period, training of the manpower in the country in line with the goals set in development plans was the principal basis. In the 1st Plan, education's function of training the required number of personnel with the necessary quality for attaining development plans was underlined as well as its social functions, and thus it was stated that education should be addressed together with the issue of employment (DPT, 1962: 441). From this perspective, one of the prominent goals in the Plan was “to direct young people at ages of secondary education towards vocational and technical education, and to establish and manage vocational and technical training as a system in total harmony with the industry from apprenticeship to technicianship” (Eray, Yüceer, & Çakar, 1995: 202). Since the 1st Plan marked a period in which industrialization was the backbone of development, the investments made for ensuring industrialization have increased the demand for manpower⁷. Therefore, educational institutions were considered to be the principal institutions expected to meet the demand for qualified work force. In addition to education institutions, the significance of education within the industry was highlighted, and an approach that the required work force can be met through education was adopted. Within this framework, to take various measures was also considered. Among these measures, the most remarking one which also has reflections upon today was the article stating that “the significance of high quality industrial workmanship should be publicly expressed through various means, and the social value of this should be raised” (DPT, 1962:462). In fact, this statement reveals a number of important points at once. Firstly, there was great need for qualified industrial workers in a period of a move towards industrialization and there was also need for awareness on part of the public of the role of this in development. It is known that the tendency towards vocational and technical education of the public aware of this would increase and a certain distance would be covered in bringing vocational and technical education, which was behind the general education, to the required level. At the same time, there was need for taking a measure for raising the 'social value' of industrial workmanship, especially the qualified workmanship, in other words, for giving industrial workmanship a place respected within the social perception. This also shows that the significance and necessity with respect to social benefit of the professions gained through vocational and technical education could not be understood and thus they were 'looked down'. The negative

⁷ Manpower is the group within the work force, which has gained the knowledge and skills for production of goods and services (DPT, 1972: 81).

perception of the society towards vocational and technical education in that period increasingly deepened and continued up to date.

Later on, with the 2nd BYKP, “it was aimed to develop the human factor, to equip it with knowledge and skills, to increase efficiency in the industry, to ensure unity of course programs at all stages of general vocational and technical education ... in order to ensure the necessary economic development required for reaching the desired development level”. In addition, the concept of on-the-job training was given place for the first time in this plan and it was decided to prepare “the fundamentals of on-the-job training course programs according to the needs of employers and taking into consideration the technological developments” (Eray, Yüceer, & Çakar, 1995: 202). However, Alkan and Doğan have drawn attention to the fact that the goals set in relation to vocational and technical education in these two plan periods could not be realized. They state the reason for this failure to be the lack of sector-based planning in addition to a main plan in relation to vocational and technical education in Turkey despite the changing environment with which vocation and technical training interacted (Alkan & Doğan, 1976: 27). Alkan and Doğan refer directly to public and private sector industries with the definition of *the environment with which the schools interacted* in a research dated 1974, in which they examined 1960's. They affiliate the problem in this relationship with the change in services expected by the industry from the schools due to the rapid increase in new technological implementations in the industrial establishments in question. Therefore they insistently stress the need for preparation of a vocational and technical education main plan to include a stronger foundation with regard to school-industry relations (Ibid: 28). One of the most important issues expressed in this study carried out in 1974 was that maintenance of secondary education system separately as general and vocational education was not for the benefit of the country.

When the view that the manpower of the quality required by the country could not be ensured solely through formal education institutions started to gain weight in 1960's, various steps were taken for developing and expanding vocational education. Vocational and technical training were addressed in detail in the 7th National Education Council dated 1962, in which the studies conducted during this period was decided upon. According to this, it was decided that girls' institutes “be transformed into three-year vocational schools based on secondary school education and giving young girls the knowledge and skills to enable them earn their livings as productive individuals as well as the qualities necessary to be good

housewives and citizens.” On the other hand, Evening Art Schools for Girls were described as “course-like schools making Turkish women competent in solution of problems related to food, nutrition, child care and education and in managing their homes skillfully; and enabling them to earn their livings, if necessary, through one of the handicrafts,” and it was considered appropriate to name these schools as “women's vocational schools.” It was also decided to transform art schools for boys into “three-year vocational schools based on secondary school education” and to prepare three-year programs for areas of construction, motor, chemistry, textiles and printing to be taught in these schools (MEB, 1962: 3-4). In the Council the secondary schools also covering vocational education were defined as “... institutions having the duty of revealing and developing students' interests, talents and skills; making students competent with the knowledge and skills necessary for following later stages of education and training; and giving those who want to go into work life the requirements of success in the works they will engage in” (Ibid: 2). But most importantly, the aim of national education was redefined from the development perspective with this Council. According to this, the aim of national education was accepted to “train citizens at every age on top level according to their talents and skills within equal education opportunities; to make them good and productive citizens beneficial to our nation and to humanity; and to prepare the manpower with the quality necessary for the implementation of social and economic development programs” (Ibid: 2). By this way, it was accepted that national education “is not only a means for training young people but is also and especially an affective investment to speed up and realize national development” (Ibid: 2), and the necessity to prepare curriculum programs of every type of school in line with these principles was emphasized.

Since the education year 1968-1969, technical training institutions were collected under three different types of schools to train productive technical personnel with different qualities on three distinct levels under the level of engineer such as operators, workers, semi-skilled workers, foremen and technicians. These are Practical Art Schools, Art Institutes and Technician Schools. In the education year 1969-1970, technician schools were opened for the purpose of training auxiliary technical personnel between the engineer and the skilled worker and foremen.

During the 1970's, there were important developments anticipating the cooperation of educational institutions and the industry. During this period, joint education implementations

were commenced in some vocation areas such as textiles, printing, metallurgy as required by protocols made with certain public institutions and establishments. Thanks to this joint work conducted with business places, the students could receive both theoretical and practical education. The requirement for rapprochement of education and the industry was clearly expressed with the following words by the then Ministry of National Education in the 8th National Education Council held in 1970: “Today, we feel the obligation to establish an education system oriented towards the needs and goals of the society and the economy more than ever” (MEB, 1970: 1). Within this context, the duty of secondary education was defined as “giving students a common culture and citizenship education with the quality necessitated by individual and social life; preparing them to work areas, professions or higher education according to their interests, talents and skills” (Ibid: 2). However, until 1973, those graduating from vocational and technical training schools on secondary education level could not enter universities. For the purpose of assuring this, the name of all these schools was changed as high schools with the Basic Act on National Education enacted in 1973 (Başaran, 1999: 106).

In addition, it is seen that an understanding of education distant from rote learning, based on teaching how to learn, giving the ability of scientific thinking and research, ensuring lateral and vertical transfer opportunities, which is not coercive but instructive, planned to be implemented through an EU project at the beginning of 2000's, was expressed for the first time in those years. However in the 9th Council held 4 years after this Council, it was emphasized that the education system faced serious problems, and that it was necessary to carry out studies for developing the education system so as to respond to the needs of the society. Among these studies, those based on legal arrangement for “determining the occupational ranks and types of occupations and the titles, duties, authorities and responsibilities of the personnel to hold each rank” were as if to set the ground for the study aimed at formulation of occupational standards and definition of competences under the framework of MEGEP Project performed in 2002. Within this context, the following provision of the Basic Act on National Education enacted in 1973 was referred to: “arrangement of programs of every kind of formal and non-formal vocational education institution in accordance with these ranks defined” (MEB, 1974: 27). In this Act enacted in 1973, one of the general aims of national education was defined as giving knowledge and skills to every individual in the country in line with their interests and skills, preparing them for work life by giving them the habit of working, and providing that they gain professions

which would ensure the happiness of both themselves and the society⁸. The Act underlines that it would be possible to increase the welfare of individuals and the society and also to support economic, social and cultural development in case this is achieved. Another important issue about this Act is that continuousness in education was emphasized in its basic principles (MEB, 1978).

One of the important decisions taken in the 9th Council of 1974 was that “development by the Ministry of the programs of vocational courses and applications given under technical and vocational high schools will be conducted under the framework of a plan and in the form of a research project,” and that in this project “there will be representatives from the sector of employees and workers as well as scientists and representatives of vocational and technical training institutions” (MEB, 1974: 22). In addition to this, the Council decisions that practical training could be done also “in work places in order to prepare students for the real work life” (MEB, 1974: 14) and that the suitability of these work places would be decided upon by a commission joined by business place representatives as well as the related educators reveal that schools and the industry would come even closer.

All these arrangements done and decisions taken are in line with the 3rd BYKP covering the period 1973-1977 and the Perspective Plan covering the period 1973-1995. In the 3rd BYKP, vocational education is considered to be the most important social institution by which the need for developed technical manpower would be met in accordance with the new economic conditions to be created by the push for industrialization in parallel with the technological developments, and thus is expected to assume a key role in the solution of the growing problem of employment.

Before looking closer at the conditions preparing the neo-liberal period gaining weight with 80's and the role of vocational and technical education in that period, it is useful to state this: DPT of the period uses the concept of technical work force in a different manner than today. In the Technical Manpower Inventory Study carried out by DPT in 1974, the concept of technical manpower includes engineers, scientists of the basic sciences and economic and social sciences and technicians (Şahinkesen, 1983: 444). Today the concept of technical manpower is used more in the sense of technicians or intermediary personnel. Therefore,

⁸ According to the Basic Act on National Education dated 1973, Article 2- Attachment, the goals of Turkish National Education is to prepare students to life by developing their capabilities and abilities and giving them the necessary knowledge, skills and behaviors and to ensure that they have professions that will make them happy and contribute to the society's happiness

technical manpower planning in the planned period covered a wider area under the conditions of the day than it does today. A research done at the beginning of 1980's and covering only engineers and technicians as technical manpower revealed that this sector of the society was largely employed in the services sector during the years of planned development (Ibid: 458). However if it is thought that industrialization was the basis of economic growth, it can be said that technical manpower could not be employed in the industrial sector to the desired level and that in this sense there was a relationship weaker than expected between training technical manpower and employment, in other words between schools and the industry. During these periods, the school-industry relationship could not be established to the desired level though it was emphasized in development plans and education plans. This disconnectedness or relatively weak relationship became a problem growing up to date, when the rapid advance in technology is taken into consideration.

Another finding revealed in Şahinkesen's research is that the plan goals of the period 1960-1978 were exceeded for the number of engineers in the country, but the technician numbers could not be reached. Besides, another finding of the research is that despite the ratio of technicians to engineers were aimed to be increased from 1.33 to 1.9 in the plans, it reduced to 0.68. These data also show that addressing the significance of technicians called as intermediary personnel today for the development of the country with high delicacy on policy level could not be sufficient to obtain the desired result in implementation. Besides the lower level of tendency towards technical education compared to general education, the worker emigration to Europe in the second half of the 60's was also influential with regard to the failure to reach the goal set for number of technicians. The failure to establish the relationship between formal education and the needs of the modernizing economy resulted in a failure to qualitatively and quantitatively meet the need for intermediary technical and vocational manpower (DPT, 1972: 110). Also, the resulting gap could not be closed with general education. "General education studies providing that the manpower to enter into labor market from various educational stages takes its place within the production process⁹ consisted more of literacy programs and cultural programs" (Ibid: 85). On the other hand, however, although "practical art schools entering into the system at the end of the planned period provided an important development in the area of non-formal education" (Ibid: 85), it was seen later that the expected level of improvement could not be attained. "The

⁹ Non-formal education has a place within the education and training system in parallel with formal education. Generally, it does not qualify for an official certificate (Mahiroğlu, 2005).

developments anticipated in the 3rd Plan for the organization of on-the-job and in-service training activities, which is an important element of non-formal education, through occupational specialization centers to be established by the production units could not be realized. Certain studies carried out in this direction were addressed so as to create physical capacity resulting in waste of resources, while they had to give weight primarily on programs and contents” (DPT, 1977: 453).

It was expressed in the 3rd BYKP that among the most crucial problems determined in the area of education while entering this plan period was “besides the problem of quantity, the quality of the trained personnel not in harmony with the requirements of economic and social development, due to the disharmony between the education system and programs and the production activities and labor market” (DPT, 1972: 110). As can be seen from the problems expressed in the Plan, the deficit of the formal education institutions which could not train the personnel qualified on desired level for the work life could not be narrowed either by non-formal education. The difference between the existing work force qualification and the qualities demanded by the labor market has grown and continued from the period in question up to date.

Together with these problems, the 3rd Plan period was one of the periods in which the most serious steps were taken for the restructuring of secondary education, as is also mentioned in the decisions of the 9th Council. It is possible to see that the technician schools opened in the education year 1969-1970 were transformed into Technical High Schools in the education period 1973-1974 in line with the 3rd BYKP goals and the 9th Council decisions; that Art Institutes were transformed into Industrial Vocational High Schools; Girls' Institutes into Vocational High Schools for Girls. But while industrial vocational high schools strengthened at the end of this period, the expected development could not be attained in technical high schools. Besides, almost all of the practical art schools opened were closed. The number of students in vocational and technical schools at high school level exceeded the plan goals in mid 70's, but remained behind the goals towards the end of 70's. For the period in which the goals were exceeded, it can be said that investments made for realizing the push towards industrialization and the positive atmosphere created by the investments over the entire country were influential on the increase of the number of students undergoing vocational education. However a qualitative improvement could not be ensured in parallel with this quantitative increase (DPT, 1977: 441). During this period in which the qualitative

competence of vocational education was questioned, the industrial vocational high schools which were more affective in responding to the needs of the industry and thus gave better employment opportunities to their graduates showed a much more rapid development than technical high schools.

As a result, Turkey which had developed consumption and intermediary goods industry but remained behind the industrialization¹⁰ goals in general during 1960's entered into the third planning period. Turkey also developed at the beginning of 70's a long-term Perspective Plan based on the goal defined as reaching the level of European countries, which was indebted to industrialization, for the purpose of accession to the European Economic Community (European Union as it is called today) 22 years later. During this planning period, the state regarded the industrial facilities which were the backbone of the industry, to be not only production spaces but also education-training institutions. In this sense, it was believed that Turkey could become a country capable of producing technology not only through schools but also through the complementary relationship between the schools and the industrial facilities (DPT, 1972: iv). It was also stated in the Perspective Plan that “trying to solve the employment problem by leaning towards labor-intensive technologies in all productive sectors would contradict with the aim of developing via industrialization in the short term” (Ibid: 122), and would not provide sufficient employment opportunities in long term. The expectation that industrialization would bring a solution to employment on the desired level as late as 90's was expressed.

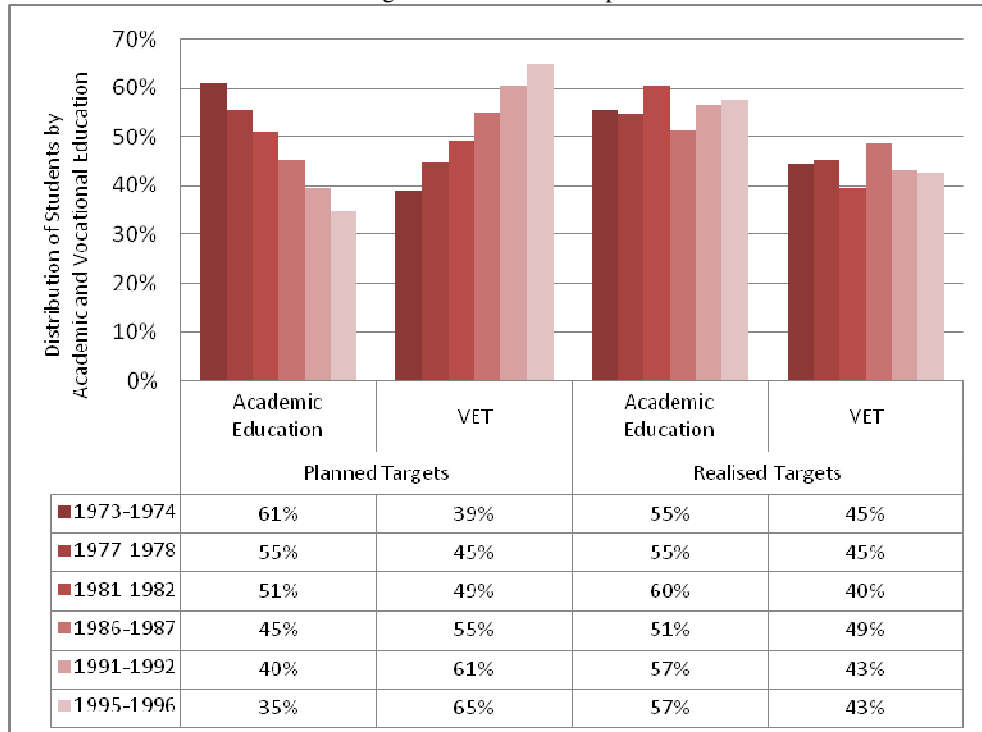
While the Plan emphasized the necessity to target a more rapid industrialization than the two previous plan periods, it adopted an approach that development could not only be evaluated solely by income growth but that the improvements in social infrastructure, accumulation of knowledge and skills on part of manpower and their reflections upon the economy should also be taken into consideration (Ibid: 155). The understanding that development could not consist only of growth in national income resulted in a tendency towards the social dimension of development again within the context of its relationship with the economy. Education is one of these areas. In this sense, the priority of Turkey which had a goal of rapid industrialization was to train higher number of qualified manpower, especially technical manpower. Since “there were accumulations in general education despite the

¹⁰ The aim of industrialization in this period is make “a structural change in the Turkish industry which is targeted more at production of consumption goods, which applies relatively backward production techniques, which is generally composed of small production units” (DPT, 1972: 120).

training of intermediary (technician) work force required by development was fundamental” also in the previous plan periods (DPT, 2001: 22), the need for technical manpower became much more important and urgent issue. Besides the qualitative inadequacy, another important problem was that the qualities of the trained technical personnel were not sufficient enough to meet the requirements of production and industry. It is thought that at the roots of this problem which is mostly expressed even today lies the lack of a strong communication and cooperation between schools and the public and private sectors.

In the Perspective Plan prepared at the beginning of 70's in order to set a long term development strategy, education was considered principally as a means to meet the need for economic manpower. However, addressing education within development with a perspective based solely on economy was objected by educators. Thus, in the National Education Councils held in 70's, decisions were taken to prioritize social demand approach against economic demand approach. This approach was influential in attaching importance to the opinion that a training structure giving priority to interests and skills of the individual as well as the needs of the society should be formed. In this plan, training of a work force with *technical* skills was considered to be a requirement of development, therefore it was not allowed to undergo a development in parallel to common high schools, but preferred to focus predominantly on technical education (DPT, 2001: 23). This preference led to another problem faced today by the graduates of vocational schools giving technical education. Students receiving technical education oriented predominantly towards specific occupations are deprived of other knowledge and skills given in general education and hence they face more difficulty when they are graduated in turning to other jobs and occupations, in orienting themselves to the changing technology, in following the changes experienced in occupations, when compared to general high school graduates. As a result, lower preference of vocational high school graduates than general high school graduates, lower level of their employment rates led to an increasing reduction in the interest towards these vocational and technical schools and accumulations in general high schools. Yet, in the Perspective Plan, reaching the levels in developed European countries not only in industrialization but also in vocational education was targeted; however at the end of the 22-year period, what was realized was seen to be just contrary to what had been expected (Figure 1).

Figure 1 Distribution of Students among Academic and Vocational Technical High Schools in the Perspective Plan



Source: www.meb.gov.tr

The fact that vocational high school graduates came to be the less preferred work force in time resulted in serious difficulties for them in employment. This became a problem not only for the trained technical work force, but also for the state which could not derive added value from the manpower it had trained despite it had allocated important resources and for the private sector that could not make use of the 'trained' work force to increase its production. Comprehensive studies for removing this problem could only be commenced at the beginning of 2000's with an EU-supported project.

3.3 Vocational Education and Training during the Emergence of Neo-Liberal Tendencies (1980-2000)

The year 1980 was the beginning of a new period for Turkey as is the case for the entire the world. The main difference between 1980's regarded to be the milestone of the transition to neo-liberal policies and the preceding period is considered to be the change in economic policies. DPT defines this process as “the abandonment in 1980 in line with the developments in the world of the strategy of industrialization through import substitution

aimed at strengthening the industrial base of the private sector during the period 1960-1980, the opening of the economy to foreign countries, and the formation of the free market system with all its means and institutions” (DPT, 2010). In the 4th Five-Year Plan period covering the years 1978-1983, it is proposed to create an industrial structure that can accommodate to the competitive economy and to establish within this framework an economic structure leaning more towards the production of intermediary goods and investment goods. The social unrest resulted by the economic bottleneck faced at the end of the 70’s also attached to the Plan of this period a mission different than the previous ones. This caused that the Plan has the purpose of “forming the foundations of a democratic and pluralist society” (DPT, 1977: 4). In this context, education was given a role in strengthening the democracy in society. Besides the aim of expanding and strengthening the democracy, raising the social welfare by ensuring an economic development higher than the previous periods was also targeted. The idea that this growth can be achieved through a more active role within the economy, assumed by the capital which had been strengthened via public investments during the previous plan periods and which could then stand on its own feet and which could even establish higher levels of relationship with the world economy through opening to foreign markets gained weight. This in turn brought about a situation that was defined as the ‘downsizing of the state’ and that meant a reduction in public investments and in public services provided by the state.

The plan prepared for second half of the 80's is once again centered around a development model based on industrialization, but this time an industrialization model based on an outward-oriented economy policy stands at the fore. Correspondingly, the flow of foreign capital and thus the development of employment opportunities are aimed. In this period, another element to increase employment is considered to be “to lean towards the use of labor-intensive technologies” (DPT, 1984: 128). This increases the necessity for a more competent work force capable of using technology with the introduction of developed technologies as well as increasing the necessity for work force. The requirement of simultaneous and continuous training of existing or potential work force was included in the plan targets of the period, in order not to turn this condition capable of increasing employment into a disadvantage, as it was thought that the existing work force was behind the rapidly developing technology. One of the important goals set in the plan was “to facilitate employment of unqualified work force through qualifying it by encouraging vocational and in-service education” (Ibid: 128) at levels of both formal and non-formal

education. In this period, to increase employment became an issue as important as the goal of industrialization, because it was anticipated that increase in employment would decrease unemployment and thus increase welfare level of the society and consequently enable a safer environment in the society.

Unavoidably this process of change started to affect the area of education seriously. It is seen that the importance of education, especially vocational education rhetorically continues in the development plans. The Perspective Plan prepared during the 3rd BYKP period and covering the development goals for the period between the years 1973-1995 also reflected upon the plan studies during the 80's. Secondary education institutions expected to assume a key role in “training the intermediary level (technician) work force required by development” (DPT, 2001) in the Perspective Plan continued to be important during the 80's as well. To give weight on vocational and technical education was among the top education goals during the 4th Plan period as well; but at the end of the period even though a quantitative increase was provided, the qualitative improvement could not be ensured as is the case for every plan period. At the same time, in the 4th BYKP, technical high schools were aimed to have a structure “to cover programs in areas required by the industry and to train both girls and boys for this purpose so as to meet the requirement of the production process for intermediary level manpower”. Supportive to this goal, to apply more flexible programs for better strengthening the relationships between vocational education and the industry and to increase the cooperation between the public and the private sectors for developing the practical side of vocational education are among the issues addressed in the Plan (DPT, 1977: 457).

A close look at the employment policies in the 4th Plan can reveal that these policies are affective in determining the goals related to vocational education. One of the issues coming to fore within the employment policies during this period is that continuous training of the work force before entering to the production process or within the production process will be given importance and priority and that within this context “special programs will be developed for training the intermediary level qualified technical manpower which is one of the most important stages in the production process” (DPT, 1977: 277). In the 5th BYKP, on the other hand, an issue coming to fore besides training the technical manpower in line with the requirements is “the on site employment of intermediary and lower level vocational and technical manpower” (DPT, 1984: 133). In addition, in the 4th Plan which underlined the

importance of regional development within the development process, the preference for “encouraging investments belonging to industries and service activities employing unqualified and medium-level qualified workers to regions with intensive supply of such work force” (DPT, 1977: 278) is also a crucial political goal. These issues expressed in the plans reveal that vocational education had great significance for the economic growth of the country and that training of qualified technical personnel had become a greater need increasingly. The technician need which was 131 thousand people in 1984 for construction, machines, motor, computer, mining, technical drawing, chemistry and agriculture areas was anticipated to increase to 194 thousand people in 1989. In other words, estimates that the technician need of the country would increase by 48% within the 5-year development period were made. Planning was built for meeting this need. However the plan focuses on transforming the high schools with appropriate infrastructure to schools training technicians rather than extending over the country the industrial high schools which are institutions to train technicians and qualified workers but are rather expensive for training qualified workers. Within this context, in the 5th Plan, it was planned that 60% of the technician need to rise at the end of the 5-year development period would be trained in these high schools and that the remaining would be trained in technical high schools and vocational schools of higher education (DPT, 1984: 138). Under the subject of education and manpower planning in the development plan covering the second half of the 80's, the significance of vocational and technical education has increased. Here not only formal education but also non-formal education was given a role in training intermediary personnel. In the Plan, it is emphasized that “the basic preference will be non-formal education and in-service education for qualified worker training” (Ibid: 139), and making up of a fund to be participated by state-worker-employer for this purpose was planned (Ibid: 143). This tendency is also a result of the preference for reducing public resources. In the Plan, it was also aimed to “give via non-formal education occupations that can increase employment opportunities to a total of 650 thousand people, among which 150 thousand will be given occupations in branches related to the industry, majority of whom are between the ages 12 – 25, are primary, secondary or high school graduates and do not continue school education but are not economically active” (Ibid: 143). By this way, young people for whom employment opportunities decrease due to being outside the formal education system would be brought into employment via providing them with occupations. An arrangement was anticipated to be made to ensure that non-formal education institutions for which the important task of training qualified workers was defined would apply a program similar to that applied in formal education institutions and

that their graduates would receive vocational certificates that can be accepted equivalent to those given to the graduates of formal education institutions (Ibid: 143). It was preferred at planning level to remove the deficiencies of the existing schools rather than opening additional ones for training of technicians and qualified workers with appropriate qualifications and at the required level by the relevant educational institutions (Ibid: 139).

When development plans were evaluated with respect to their approaches towards vocational and technical education, it is said that the 5th BYKP has an important distinctiveness than the previous ones. In the previous plans, vocational education was addressed by taking into consideration the economic demand approach¹¹ in estimating the manpower demand, but for the plan period covering the years 1985-1989, social demand¹² dimension was more stressed. This change in approach means that vocational education would not be planned under the influence solely of economic targets; but that an understanding of education would be adopted, enabling people to gain occupations in line with their preferences and enabling transfer to other occupations.

Although vocational education gained weight within the development of the country, national education councils which reviewed and planned according to current needs the structure of education and training were not held for 6 years during 80's. In the council of 1988 when this delay ended, the entire education system was reviewed and the need for a serious reform in Turkey was expressed. Behind the emphasis on the requirement of a reform in education lies the approach that "realizing infrastructural investments, ensuring industrialization, increasing exports, showing economic successes only are not sufficient for the development of a country" (MEB, 1988: 2) and the opinion that people must be better educated to achieve development. In line with this approach, it was decided in the 12th Council to make extensive arrangements in vocational and technical training programs and education institutions' structures, saying that "vocational and technical secondary education

¹¹ In Economic Demand Approach "education is accepted to be a means that must be used to reach economic goals. According to this approach, the main aim of education is to train the man power with the quality and at the quantity required by the economy. In this approach anticipating that economy and education goals are addressed in a unity, education is planned for the purpose of ensuring good functioning of the economy by making a balance between the supply and demand in the labor market. In the economic demand approach, first the economy is planned and then the man power targets necessary for reaching the plan goals are determined. The educators are given the duty of training the man power quality and quantity of which has been determined" (DPT, 2001: 22)

¹² In Social Demand Approach "education needs and desires of individuals and families are taken as basis. In this approach in which education is accepted to be consumption good, economic preferences are determined taking into consideration the quality and quantity of man power and the wages in the labor market affect the education preferences of individuals. In a planning done according to social demand approach, transferability of vocational knowledge and skills to be given to individuals to other jobs and educations for adults aimed at occupation change are very important" (DPT, 2001: 22)

will be defined as institutions preparing both personnel for occupations and work life and students for higher education and implementing programs of industrial education, art education and vocational education” and “the implementation by which students who are graduates of common high schools but could not enter any higher education institution will be enabled to enter into work life via one-year vocational and technical education programs in areas of need at schools (Industrial Vocational and Health Vocational Schools etc.) will be extended”. In addition, decisions were taken for “developing the training programs of vocational and technical secondary education institutions continuously and according to the needs of the environment and the labor market and ensuring the necessary cooperation between these institutions and the sectors of agriculture, industry and service within the framework of education-manpower-employment relations” (Ibid: 5). These changes in the economic orientation of the country led to a different atmosphere beforehand in general in the society.

But as a result, the efforts for developing education could not much succeed after the 1960's. According to the evaluations made by the DPT at the end of each five-year development periods, developments in education had always behind the plans. Especially the evaluation made for the 5th BYKP implemented after 1980 shows that education investments much reduced compared to the previous periods. In fact it is said that 1980's is a period of deterioration rather than a standstill for education (Başaran, 1999: 104). In this period, vocational education was restructured in line with technological developments. The arrangement putting its mark on the period is the Law on Apprenticeship and Vocational Education numbered 3308, which was enacted in 1986 and was more comprehensive than the one enacted in 1977 and which corrected the deficiencies in implementation. With this Law, apprenticeship and vocational education was addressed as a whole; the opportunity of application was brought for vocational high school students; and measures were taken for the wages, health, protection against work accidents, and insurance of apprentices and vocational high school students (Başaran, 1999: 110). The most significant transformation brought by this Law to vocational education is that the work force required by the industry would be trained with cooperation between schools and the industry.

Behind all these experienced lie the realization of neo-liberal policies in many countries of the world and the effort to create a more integrated economy on the global scale. To detail this giving peculiar attention to Turkey, it can be said that as a result of the neo-liberal

policies realized also in Turkey, “all the emphasis made in relation to education by the understanding of development based on the level of nation started to change during the 1980’s” and “during these years, schools in which work, education and systematic knowledge were produced gained special significance for companies and individuals in competition on the global scale” (Ercan, 1999: 23). Ercan also notes that “the knowledge insistently stressed within the liberal literature is the knowledge useful for the economic units striving to survive within the market under intensive competition” and underlines that the capital had transformed the quality of knowledge with the start of the neo-liberal period. Ercan defines the difference of approach towards education in this period compared to the previous period of planned development with the following words: “With developmentalist analysis, it was aimed to increase the given level of people and to create the basic mechanisms of national development and thus to realize economic and social development. However, with the introduction of the market-oriented neo-liberal policies of 1970’s, an education system serving the market and aiming to maximize the individual interests was started to be built” (Ibid: 23).

The 90's which is a different period within the brief history of vocational education within the context of development plans, the socio-economic conjuncture in which Turkey entered into the 90's, the development targets of the 90's have been revealed examining the 6th BYKP prepared in 1989 and covering the period between the years 1990-1994.

“Increasing the welfare level of the society in line with the principles of open society and competitive and open economy” was defined to be the main goal of the 6th Plan (DPT, 1989: 1). The entrance of Turkey in 90’s into a rapid but socially and economically balanced and stable development process was the basis of this period. For this reason, “improving the income distribution and reducing unemployment and regional and local differences with respect to development” (Ibid: 1) is among the priority goals desired to be reached with this Plan. For economic growth which is one of the most affective elements for reaching such goals, the need for making better use of “dynamism of the private sector” and for making “the public sector having a more guiding and encouraging role in economic activities” was expressed (Ibid: 1). In addition, for the growth of the existing economy of the country, the need for a structure more integrated with the internationalizing economic structure was also expressed. The following Plan goal clearly reveals this approach: “Preparatory and harmonization studies in line with the goal of full membership and integration to the

European Community will be accelerated and sustained, and necessary measures will be taken under the framework of certain priorities for adjustment to the requirements of the Community's Internal Market (Ibid: 2).

In addition, the performance of the investments necessary for development with a sectoral sharing among the public and the private and in this sense “the concentration of the private sector on investments in manufacture industry and especially in sectors oriented towards export” were encouraged, while public investments were preferred to give weight to education and health sectors. This is a result of the preferences made for breaking of the economy more into free market and in this sense for giving the state a moderator position not an interventionist role as had been the case in the past. It can be said that the state has by this way left the sectors which were the motor of economic growth increasingly to the initiative of the private capital owners. However the state has accelerated this process via transferring the existing public investments of the country to the capital owners through privatizations. This is concretized in the Plan with the decision that “it will be ensured that State Economic Enterprises operate more efficiently via increasing their competitive power under the framework of the understanding of modern management and the studies for their privatization will be accelerated” (Ibid: 2).

The main tendency in economic policies was also very influential on the manpower planning and employment policy of the country. In this period in which a rapid but balanced development was targeted, “a rapid increase in the level of maturity of our social resources via both formal education institutions from primary schools to universities and non-formal education methods such as in-service trainings and skill courses, apprenticeship and on-the-job education” (Ibid: 298) was set as the main goal in manpower planning. It was also proposed that while realizing this goal, “vocational schools of higher education training qualified manpower at intermediary level and vocational high schools should be associated within a unity and the preservation of branches not valid any more and excessive diversification should be avoided” (Ibid: 298). On the other hand, non-formal education was considered to be an affective means for accommodation to a world in which technology develops rapidly in terms not only of work force but also of adult population. It was for the first time expressed in the 13th Council held in 1990 that “in a world in which today's society is called ‘the information society’; in which this society will need more informed, researcher

and trained manpower; and in which information changes rapidly, continuous training is unavoidable for this trained manpower to follow such change closely” (MEB, 1990: 1).

Besides, it was proposed to tend towards a more defined division of labor in which education and employment are more associated, in line with the needs and capacities of both sides. The division of labor in question is explained in the 6th Plan as follows: “braches and programs in vocational schools of higher education and vocational technical high schools shall be re-evaluated in line with the needs of the economy and the labor market, and non-formal vocational education shall be given weight in order to meet the need for work force on time and sufficiently through skill courses and on-the-job education in occupational areas for which there is no necessity for long-term formal vocational education and for which short-term skill courses would suffice. Formal vocational education, on the other hand, shall be directed towards the training of manpower needed by the industry and other sectors, with qualities that cannot be given through short-term vocational education” (DPT, 1989: 298).

At the beginning of 90's, various studies were carried out in line with the following Plan principle in relation to the manpower planning: “occupational qualifications shall be determined according to the needs of the labor market by preparing occupational standards based on work analysis, and vocational formal and non-formal education programs shall be arranged in a modular structure so as to give the necessary knowledge and skills” (DPT, 1989: 301). One of these studies is the Project for Development of Vocational and Technical Education (METGE) which was started to be implemented in 1993 in one province from each region (Bursa, Erzurum, Eskişehir, İzmir, Malatya, Mersin and Trabzon) and which was implemented in 57 schools in 33 provinces in 2003. The purposes of the project was to develop schools structures and training system sensitive to local needs, to provide the participation of the environment, to develop needs-oriented modular education programs, to carry occupational standards in training, to prepare source materials (modules etc.), to raise the awareness of students about the work life, to create resources, and to increase equipments of schools (Günceoğlu, 2003). However the studies aimed at the affective use of labor market analysis in vocational education planning, detailed definition of occupational standards, and giving the education system a modular structure could be realized as late as the beginning of 2000's.

When the issue is examined with respect to manpower planning approach, it was emphasized as had been in other plans that it was a basic principle to prioritize vocational and technical education for the training of qualified intermediary manpower needed by the economy. In addition to this, in the 6th Plan, a decision was taken for “taking measures necessary to ensure that schools follow the developing technology” (DPT, 1989: 295). For non-formal education, on the other hand, it was aimed to give priority to give skills to people in an employment-oriented manner in line with manpower planning approach. Besides, as had been the case in the previous periods, it was decided that in-service trainings which had an important place in qualifying workers would from then on be considered more as a means for increasing the efficiency of the work force and that “studies aimed at associating such trainings with the wage-promotion system shall be started” (Ibid: 295).

As a result of the internationalization of capital and trade's move to the global scale, the understanding of marketing the product rather than the new technologies has started to become dominant in the world markets. “In the face of this situation making technology transfer difficult, the significance for countries of producing their own technologies increases” (DPT, 1995: 66). Within this context, the need of the countries for the work force that has the capacity (such as foreign language, research-oriented approach, technical knowledge and quick comprehension) to follow and produce the developing technology grows increasingly. However, the low level of education of the existing manpower makes reaching such a capacity and hence employment difficult in the short run. But in contrary to this approach, according to the 1995 data of a research carried out among the OECD countries, “it is seen that higher levels of education do not considerably affect the rate of involvement to the work force in Turkey” (DPT, 2001: 54). Despite this, it is preferred in the development plans to focus on a close relationship between the low level of involvement to the work force and the low level education of the work force. As a result, training of the qualified work force promoting competitive power for Turkey, especially the training of qualified technical personnel, became one of the priority issues towards the end of 90's. In this sense, the 7th BYKP was prepared in order to establish the infrastructure necessary to prepare Turkey for 2000's.

The Plan includes goals based on new approaches such as giving prominence to the individual and ensuring a sustainable growth as well as goals like increasing employment, speeding up industrialization, raising the welfare level of the society, improving the income

distribution, which was given place also in the previous plans (DPT, 1995: 19). It was also thought that one of the prominent elements for increasing the welfare of the country in general was to make changes in manpower planning. It was proposed “to shift the work force with low level of education from activities with low added values to activities necessitating the use of advanced technology and creating high added values” (Ibid: 20), and it was anticipated that by this way an increase in efficiency and thus an improvement in the welfare level could be attained. However it was planned at this point “to downsize the state by speeding up its withdrawal from the production sphere via privatization” and “to make the state focus more on issues of education¹³, health and social security, which are of social benefit” in order that it ensures the change in question (Ibid: 20). For Turkey, the end of 90’s basically represented a period in which it was aimed to protect the environment of sustainable growth, to make fundamental changes in the economic and social structure in order to catch up with the information society created by the rooted changes in the structure and organization of production, brought about by the rapid development in information technologies, and in which certain structural harmonization policies were given weight in this sense. Within this framework, giving weight to studies aimed at developing human resources was considered. One of the main reference points here is that Turkey which is a country wealthy of young work force is considered to have an advantageous position compared to EU countries expected to experience a significant manpower deficit in the near future. These statements in the Plan also verify this: “Our well trained human resource will increase the competitive power of our country increasingly opening to foreign investments on the one hand, and will enable to take greater share of the added value created by the European Union on the other” (Ibid: 22).

It is seen that the mobility of the work force is at least as much important as the global mobility of the capital for integration with the world markets. It can be said that the flow of domestic work force into international labor markets with the same speed of the capital will not be easy and rapid as the existing work force is below the competence demanded by the market due to its low education level¹⁴. Since the second half of the 90’s, the need for

¹³ However, that the state supports education with allocating more resources, withdrawing from the production sphere is not valid for all stages of education. Here, the basic responsibility of the state is the obligatory basic education and it was a 5-year education until the second half of the 90’s. The tendency to share the financial burden brought upon the state by education with the related parties (citizens and private sector) gains increasing importance in later stages of education.

¹⁴ According to results of the General Census of 1990, only 5.2 % of the work force is graduated from higher education, 9.7 % from high schools and their equivalents, 7 % from secondary schools and their equivalents, and the remaining 78.1 % are primary school graduates or have lower education levels (DPT, 1995: 230)

ensuring the simultaneous mobility of the capital and the labor was taken into consideration in manpower planning. In the Plan in which “the investment made to the human factor” was defined as the most efficient investment, the first priority in manpower planning was to make the education reform, and within this context, the basic obligatory education could be raised to 8 years in 1996. Certain arrangements were made in relation to vocational education but these remained behind the plan goals to the most part. While it was expected from the private sector to lean towards the vocational and technical education more, qualification of the work force through in-service education remained behind what was expected since “the opportunities of the small and medium sized enterprises in which intermediary personnel (technical work force) are predominantly employed are insufficient, and allocation of resources for education by such enterprises is limited” (Ibid: 25). As had been targeted before, vocational standards could not be formulated, and much development could not be achieved in the studies related to the new types of occupations. Another issue is that the technological renewal at schools was not performed at the same speed with rapidly developing technology. This decreased the quality of education; training of qualified worker/technician at the desired level could not be possible.

When all these problems and needs are taken into consideration, ensuring an economic and social development by developing the quality and quantity of the formal and non-formal (business places and education centers above the enterprise level) education system, and training qualified work force in order to increase the competitive power in the international arena by this way gained even a higher level of priority. Among the main goals of this period is giving education to people in line with their interests and skills, increasing the resources allocated to education making use of also the private sector resources. In line with these goals, the need to restructure the existing vocational education system to make it evolve into a vocational education based on school-work place integrity and capable of giving some new capabilities such as skills and work techniques directly oriented towards the occupation and the ability to rapidly adjust to new conditions was set in the 7th Plan (Ibid: 27).

This renewal includes arrangements such as “formation of a flexible structure giving the opportunity of vertical and lateral transfers between formal and non-formal education institutions and programs at every stage; giving the opportunity to those completing their education or entering into work life without completing their education for various reasons to develop their knowledge and skill in their areas; giving the curriculum programs a modular

structure; and giving equivalent occupation certificates to people with the same skills without regard to whether they have received formal or non-formal education” (Ibid: 29). Although these arrangements putting vocational education at the centre were given place among the development goals for the second half of the 90’s, they could be realized as late as the aftermath of 2000 with the funds provided by the EU under the framework of the process of EU harmonization. Another issue planned for the 7th plan period but could be realized as late as the beginning of 2000’s is the arrangement in relation to the employment policy. In this plan it was aimed to “realize an arrangement of a both secure and flexible labor market, and give weight to active labor market measures under the scope of policies of harmonization with EU and the globalization process with harmonization studies including skills education and re-education programs to enable the work force to respond better to the market requirements.” The related structural arrangement planned to be done in line with this goal is the re-organization of the Turkish Employment Agency providing it with a service capacity for meeting the requirements brought by the changing conditions (Ibid: 54).

As is seen, the policies and goals set in relation to the vocational and technical secondary education in the midst of the 90’s could only be realized after 2000 as part of the studies to be conducted during the period of EU harmonization. Even though it was emphasized in the five-year development plans and in some government programs that vocational education shall be given weight, sufficient investments were not made in this area (Okçabol, 1999: 182).

In the 15th Council held in 1996 in harmony with the goal of reviewing the education system according to current needs as it was set in the 7th Plan, the issue of reform in education was addressed again. In the Council, the main targets emphasized were “to make obligatory education at least an 8-year education, to train students in line with their interests and skills and to create qualified intermediary level manpower” (MEB, 1996: 3). Through the end of this period, on the other hand, it is seen that the tendency towards changing the general structure of secondary education evolved into a comprehensive arrangement in the structure also of vocational education in particular. In the 16th National Education Council held in 1999, the requirement to restructure vocational and technical education was on the agenda. This requirement is closely related to the fact that the following goals had increasingly been clarified with the studies conducted before the Council: adjusting to the knowledge-based economic structure, strengthening the relationship between education and economy and

increasing the competitive power of Turkey on global level. In summary, the goals set in Council are as follows:

- 1- Restructuring the existing system as a broad-based and modular system enabling obtaining diplomas and various certificates,
- 2- Catching up with the international standard and applying VTE programs so as to facilitate the process of harmonization with EU,
- 3- Making the existing capacity capable of being in service full day during the whole year.

In addition, it was emphasized that the traditional structure which was based on giving skills in only one profession should be removed (MEB, 1996).

It is seen that the development understanding in Turkey entered into a different stage with the neo-liberal tendency gained weight in 1980's. What was expected with this change was to increase the competitive power of Turkey in the world markets determined by the knowledge-based technological development and in parallel to this to realize social and economic development. This in turn led to an increase in the influence of vocational and technical education within the country's development. The process of harmonization with EU which accelerated after 2000 was another turning point within the history of vocational education as were the Republican period, statist planned development years and the neo-liberal period. For this reason, vocational and technical developments after 2000 will be addressed from perspective of *development* policies during the EU process.

3.4 Vocational Education and Training during EU Accession (2000 and after)

As is seen from what has been told thus far, Turkey has for a long time regarded the presence of trained manpower, especially the manpower trained via vocational and technical education within the country's economic and social development and employment of this manpower as an important development indicator. In parallel with the economic tendencies of the country, structural arrangements were continuously made in educational policies regarded as a component of manpower planning. 2000's should be seen as a significant turning point as well as a part of continuity in this sense.

As preparation of the 8th Plan begins immediately after the Helsinki Summit, 1999, when Turkey's candidacy for full membership to EU is confirmed, in this five-year development

plan period the basic focus was on the studies for changes in economic, social and cultural spheres, required by the process of harmonization with EU. Within this context, it was especially emphasized that “taking measures for meeting the Copenhagen criteria and adopting the Community’s *acquis*” would be accelerated (DPT, 2000: 25).

The most important characteristic differentiating this period from the previous periods is that through the end of 1970's “the globalization process that has started with the deregulation movements in financial markets and the developments in communication technologies; accelerated with the liberalization in foreign trade and the technological development that has speeded up; and penetrated into other spheres of the economy has started in the recent years to become decisive also on social and cultural areas” (Ibid: 1)”. The transformation through which the social life has undergone under the influence of economic and technologic developments has been called as *transition to information society*. It is anticipated that the information society will have positive affects on the economy and the social life. However, it can be said that this positive affect will seen with changes such as the emergence of new job opportunities for different professions, the increase in employment and social welfare, and thus a more rapid and easy access to public services by the citizens in general. But in consequence, the existence of change has even more raised the level of expectation in the society for the realization and increase of such positive developments. As indicated in 7th BYKP, it is seen that there is need for removing the deficiencies in the existing structure in order to satisfy these expectations and to reach the goals. According to the Plan, “as information is the most important production factor during the formation process of the information society, the importance of raising the quality of the work force and possessing a developed communication infrastructure increase. Thus, the greatest contribution to the development of the developing countries in the 21st century will be the investment made to human resources and the improvement made in infrastructure” (Ibid: 2).

The development plans prepared thus far had been written with a focus on the significance of developing and efficient use of human resources within the country's development and more importantly, practice had largely been behind the plan goals. In the 8th Plan, it is once again expressed that qualified technical personnel at the desired level could not be trained and that education level of the work force could not be increased to the desired level during the previous period. According to the figures given in the Plan, for the period in question, “79.1% of the employment composed of those graduated from secondary and primary

schools or from no school and those without even literacy” (Ibid: 103). On the other hand, there also was a difficulty in employing the unemployed with high levels of education. This is an indicator that the knowledge and skills possessed by the work force with higher levels of education do not correspond to the needs of the labor market. In order to reduce this problem, the Turkish Employment Agency has carried out active work force policies for “encouraging productive employment of the unemployed and the workers with low levels of skills by enhancing their qualifications” (Ibid: 103). Under this scope, until the year 2000, “skill courses with employment guarantee were organized for 81 thousand unemployed people” (Ibid: 103). However, it is known that gaining skills does not mean to have occupations and it is not always possible for the unemployed to continuously gain new skills in the face of the rapidly changing market conditions. Failure to improve the quality of the work force can also cause a slowdown in economic development. For these reasons, a tendency to support the small and medium sized enterprises in which the work force with low levels of qualification (work force with limited knowledge and skills and low education levels) and which provide the highest employment level within total employment has increasingly strengthened. Therefore, in the 8th Plan, developing SMEs under the policy of industrialization was given weight.

For the first half of 2000’s too, in a manner to ensure certain continuity, ensuring employment, succeeding sustainable development via developing a competitive economic structure, reducing unemployment and poverty by increasing employment opportunities in relation to these were among the principal goals (Ibid: 219). For reaching all these goals, the issue of developing human resources was given great importance. In particular, goals were set to improve the technical infrastructure of education and increase the qualities of educators by improving their capacities. Similarly again, building a close relationship between the education system and the labor market was among the most important issues addressed (Ibid: 222-223).

At this point, it is thought that the most affective result could be gained by making a comprehensive intervention to secondary education. In the *Report on Secondary Education: General Education, Vocational Education and Technical Education* prepared before the Plan, “facilitating both the transfers among formal, non-formal and apprenticeship education institutions via closing the gap between vocational and technical education institutions and the transfers from school to work life and from work life to school” (DPT, 2001: 80) was

defined as one of the principal aims of this period. In addition to this, “recognizing the students the flexibility to choose programs appropriate to their learning speeds and depths” and “giving the students the opportunity to be graduated from programs by taking courses from secondary education institutions other than the schools they are registered to” (Ibid: 80) were among the short-term goals. Besides, it was aimed to “prepare vocational and technical education programs in a modular structure and thus give them a flexible structure to orient towards the change in the employment structure” (Ibid: 82). The commission also points out the importance of planning the arrangements foreseen in relation to training programs at secondary education level in unity with higher schools of vocational education and considering them as structures complementary to each other. All these arrangements were planned to be realized within the framework of “the approach of lifelong learning (LL) for everyone.”

Within the framework of preparation of the plan in this period, another ÖİK Report examining the LL approach due to the significance the concept has gained within this period was also prepared. According to this report, “rapid changes in knowledge and skills necessitate taking into consideration new education strategies and goals to assume a role in training of individuals not only about what is already known but also about the issues they will face in the future.” However “traditional school systems are insufficient to meet the new education needs emerging as a result of rapid change. In a world as such, other education types and other opportunities are necessarily needed” (Ibid: 9-10). For this reason, LL covers formal and informal education¹⁵ as well as non-formal education that can last for the whole life and that is based on giving skills to adults outside the formal education, as is known up to date. The basic aims put forward in 2001 in the study carried out by the Specialization Commission in relation to the concept of *Lifelong Learning for Everyone* including dimensions such as “adoption of an approach putting the individual at the centre, giving importance to training outside the school as well, changing the role of the school, reducing the weight of the state in education and strengthening the roles of social parties” can be listed as follows:

- Qualitatively and quantitatively expanding pre-school education,
- Creating a real learning basis in primary and secondary education,
- Facilitating transfers from school to work life,

¹⁵ Informal education which is one of the life long learning types is described as a type of education which does not have to be aimed as in the case of formal and non-formal education and in which the daily life is followed and hence individuals easily gain knowledge and skills in their daily lives. Within this context, informal education is considered to be complementary to formal and non-formal education within lifelong learning (Mahiroğlu, 2005).

- Encouraging adults to learning,
- Renewing the sources of the system,
- Ensuring consistency among the system components (DPT, 2001: 2)

Ensuring continuity as well as up-to-datedness has great importance in the new vocational education based on the idea of developing training programs according to the needs and demands of the labor market. In this context, purposes such as *facilitating transfers from school to work life and encouraging adults to learning* as expressed by the commission are based on the idea that the work force continuously engages in self-training about the knowledge and skills required by the changing professions and ensures its employability and thus re-joins the work force even though the labor market undergoes a rapid change. In addition they foresee that the individual easily engages in efforts to acquire knowledge and skills and gain competency to have a profession not solely during the limited time period of formal education covering a certain age interval but also during the time period following the school ages.

The life long learning approach which means ensuring the continuity of individuals' education foresees modular education programs to provide flexibility in education. The reason why a flexible structure was brought to education and training similar to the flexibilisation in the area of economy and production is that the rapid development in production techniques rapidly makes work environments and work styles flexible and that individuals are required to be prepared to this new work organization through education. This requirement is emphasized more clearly in the 8th Plan than other plans. Turkey which has started to predominantly use information technologies requires the work force capable of using and producing when necessary such technology. As discussed before, Turkey has gone through many structural arrangements in the education system up to date in order to train the qualified work force. As of 2000's, on the other hand, it is seen that a comprehensive qualitative improvement is aimed in vocational education under the framework of structural harmonization programs required to be performed during the period of pre-accession to EU. With the financial support received from the EU, an important study, Project for Strengthening the Vocational Education and Training (MEGEP), aimed at reaching this goal was commenced. The purpose of this project performed during the years 2002-2007 is "to strengthen and support the affective implementation of vocational and technical education system capable of training the intermediary level man power with high quality and

performance necessitated by the country's economy and of developing and producing technology” (MEB, 2006: 4).

The first arrangement done in line with the aim of this project was “providing the students with the opportunity to undergo education and training in areas and branches according to their interests, desires and abilities, starting education and training based on a four-year (4-year) modular program, 9th grade being common, in vocational and technical secondary training institutions for the purpose of reflecting sectoral development and demands upon training programs” (Ibid: 4). By this way, the first step in planning vocational high schools and general high schools in a more integrated manner. In formal education, the first grades of general high schools and vocational high schools became common and included the same courses. It was preferred to give the students certain basic courses and basic knowledge and skills in the first year and to make students choose certain professions in the next years with the help also of certain vocational informing and guidance.

At the basis of the change made in vocational education lies the desire to pass from the traditional training program to the modular training program. In the new approach, the training programs have inclined towards a fragmental modular method centered around students with strong connections to daily life, which is based more on individual learning through research, is not limited to course books and school places, covers every kind of information source; and thus is different from the didactic and compact traditional method which has weak connections to daily life and is centered around the teacher. However the reform process in vocational education started with MEGEP is not limited to the change made in the training program.

It would be a correct method to study the transformation in question within the context of the goals of the project. The first goal of the project was “to develop the quality and relevance of the vocational education system through the implementation of a national reform also including the formation of a National Qualifications System¹⁶”. In line with this goal, labor market and skills need analysis are conducted in order to remove the problem that the labor demand of the economy does not correspond to the existing labor supply; that is the labor quality demanded and the quality of the trained work force do not meet. Such analyses can

¹⁶ National Qualifications System is defined as “a system based on accepted vocational standards, appropriate for evaluation, grading and certification at all levels, including open channels for progress between vocational and academic areas” (MEB, 2006: 6).

be conducted on sectoral basis or on provincial basis. After the work force need is determined together with the required qualities, national and internationally valid occupational standards¹⁷ are developed according to the international classification of occupational standards, in which detailed definitions of the related occupations are made. The main aims for preparing vocational standards are the following:

- “to help the education programmers in preparing curriculum, revealing the qualifications¹⁸ required by the labor market,
- to help the establishment of a recognized and reliable examination and certification system appropriate to international norms,
- to increase the mobility of a qualified work force with qualifications certificate,
- to help ensuring standardization in wage system” (Altın, 2007: 172-173)

Occupational standards can be updated, developed or totally removed in line with the changing needs just like the modular training programs. This standardization study also having the aim of ensuring harmonization with occupational standards in the EU is also oriented towards facilitating the work force to go beyond the national labor market with certificates/diplomas having international recognizability and certifying that the person has the necessary qualifications and to enter into the labor market in EU after ensuring certain standards. However it is necessary for this that qualifications are proven by certain standards, the level of qualifications¹⁹ is determined and officially certified. In 2006, Qualifications Law was put into force in order to meet this need, and Qualifications Institution was established under the framework of this law. The institution continuing its activities from then on has given authority to many education institution/centre for giving qualifications certificate. Among these are the International Technology and Research Centre for Gas

¹⁷ Occupational standards are the minimum norms showing the duties and processes which must be done for the successful performance of an occupation, the knowledge and skill which must be owned and attitudes and behaviors which must be displayed (Altın, 2007: 207).

¹⁸ Qualifications is defined as “the situation in which works, duties and/or qualifications are certified by accredited institutions in line with quality standards recognized on national/international level” (MEB, 2006: 77).

¹⁹ Occupational level is defined as “the complexity and level of the qualifications and responsibilities required by an occupation” (MEB, 2006: 78). According to international standards, there are 8 occupational levels. The 1st level describes unqualified occupations with limited skills and is equivalent to the 9th grade (high school grade 1) after primary education in the education level. The 2nd level describes semi-qualified occupations with limited skills and knowledge and corresponds to the 10th grade in education level. High school education is determined as the 4th level in occupational classification. The 5th level corresponds to the level of vocational schools of higher education which is a level of specialization in technical education. The 6th level corresponds to undergraduate education, the 7th and 8th to graduate level.

Education. This centre²⁰ gave its first graduate in 2009 in the branch of Plastic Welding (3rd level). Thus the first Qualifications Institution certificate was given.

In addition to identifying occupational standards and qualifications, it is also needed that the education to be received in order to gain the qualification in question is standardized. The education standardization showing that the content of the education received (knowledge, skills and qualification) will be the same in every situation and under every condition will both ensure that the qualification, knowledge and skills received is transferable and help providing a certain standard in the occupation. Since ensuring standardization also in education will have such returns, education standards²¹ are formulated according to international norms for the purpose of ensuring the national and international validity of the field²² diploma or branch²³ certificate received in certain stages of education. Modular training programs can be developed based on the education standards developed for all courses (work²⁴).

Modular structure means establishing a flexible structure for making vocational education more adjustable to the changing economic and social needs. A work force with new qualifications is required with the rapidly changing technology. In parallel to this, skills requirements of vocational personnel in the sector rapidly changes. It is expected that vocational education provides to the work force the qualifications required by this change. Therefore, vocational education is needed to have a flexible structure. As this flexibility also

²⁰ The modular training programs implemented in vocational training centers and vocational high schools in formal education are the same. This makes possible transfers between formal and non-formal education institutions.

²¹ Education standards are criteria related to program, duration, evaluation, certificate, conditions environment and implementations in relation to the education process to give the occupational personnel the required qualifications (Altun, 2007: 207).

²² Area of occupation is defined as “the area including more than one occupational branch with common characteristics and giving providing knowledge, skills, attitude, behavior and employment opportunity” (MEB, 2006: 77). Students start to take area courses at the 10th grade after completing the 9th. But when the person leaves education at the 10th grade for any reason, he/she is able to receive a certificate showing that he/she is at the 2nd level in the occupation, as a document showing the course he/she has taken up to then (knowledge, skills and qualifications). Then he/she can receive the 3rd and 4th level certificates completing the remaining courses. Besides, he/she can also get an area diploma by taking courses on general knowledge in addition to vocational courses. It has also become possible to make transfers from non-formal to formal education with a similar method

²³ Branch of occupation is defined as “each of the work branches under a certain occupation area and requiring knowledge, skills, attitude and behavior targeted at specialization in certain subjects and providing employment opportunities” (MEB, 2006: 77). Students direct towards the branches they will specialize in the occupation after completing common courses in the 9th grade and taking area courses at the 10th.

²⁴ Some changes have been made also in the terminology used with MEGEP. One of these is the *work* description. In fact *work* in the new system, what we call as *course* is defined as “the all behaviors set in terms of rules and regulated gained in a certain education and required to be performed/done in order to earn one's living” (MEB, 2006: 77).

ensures that the system can be updated continuously and rapidly, it is thought that a more efficient education medium in harmony with labor market requirements shall be formed.

Modular system means that the education programs are composed of modules²⁵. “With each module, knowledge and skills are given for a certain qualification. Module is composed of training experiences based on individual learning, having a certain a start and an end point, showing a unity in its own, and arranged within a systematic framework” (MEB, 2006: 25). The student is alone with the modules during the training period and this enables the student to use a study method according to his/her own speed. When each module is completed, the success of the student in relation to the module is measured by the teacher based on certain criteria and evaluated rapidly. Then the student is guided according to the result. Therefore, the role of the teacher like that of the student has changed with this system. The duty of the teacher or the educator is defined as “designing, forming and implementing the appropriate training methods for each module or series of modules” (Ibid: 29). To enable the teacher perform this duty, it is expected first that “students adopt learning approaches²⁶ appropriate to their individual characteristics and learning styles²⁷” and that “the most appropriate learning methods and techniques are applied to the students” according to such approaches (Ibid: 29). In this sense, it is said that modular training “presents a flexible learning approach suitable for providing learning opportunities that can be arranged according to learning styles appropriate to individuals” (Ibid: 30). Within this context, education has become student-centered rather than teacher-centered. The aim of the student-centered education is defined as “to provide the student with the opportunity to discover his/her own learning profile and type and thus to *teach learning*” (Ibid: 30). While gaining knowledge and skills for the occupation is left to the student him/herself, what is essentially desired is to graduate the students who have learned the general learning methods or the learning methods related to his/her occupation. The person gaining the capability to learn learning is expected to adjust to changing conditions more easily and rapidly. This expectation in turn strengthens the

²⁵ Module is defined as “the program unit in a training program of an occupational area, complete on its own, having a content that can be thought on its own, capable of creating broader groups of occupational functions by merging with other programs in its area”(MEB, 2006: 79). In other words, each subject under the related unit within courses is called a module.

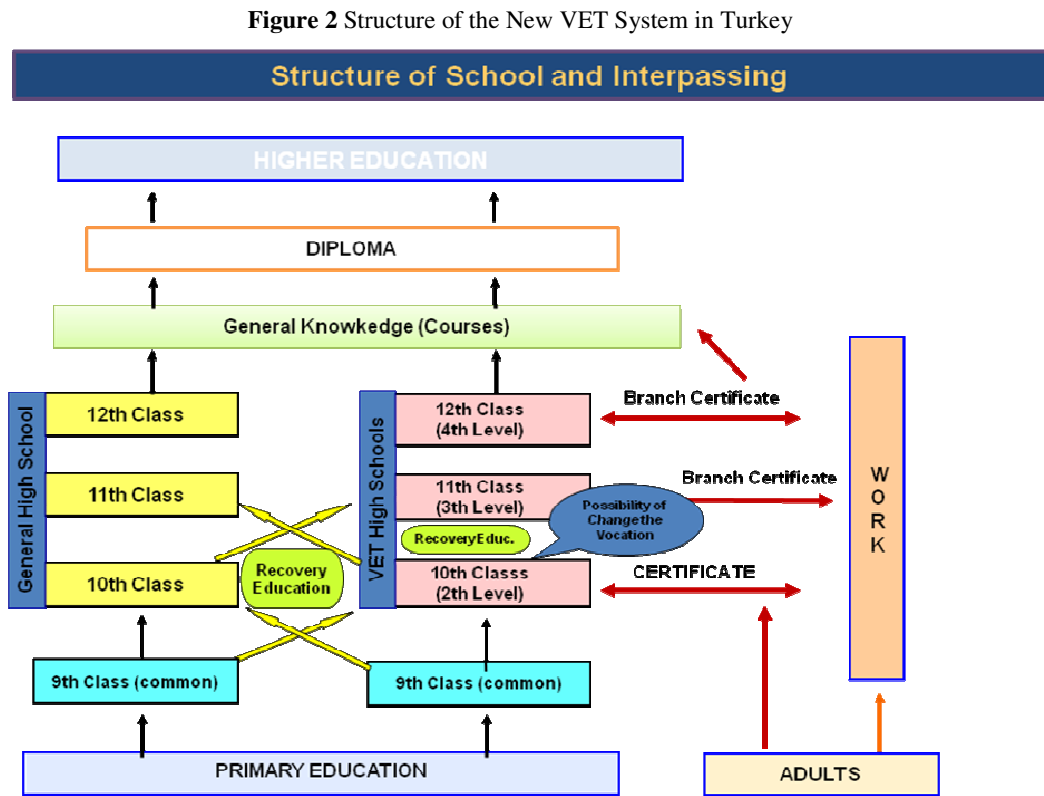
²⁶ Some of the learning approaches anticipated to be used in this system are the following: cooperative learning, learning through discovery, problem-based learning, active learning, learning through multiple intelligence theory, open-ended learning. (MEB, 2006: 30).

²⁷ Students can be gathered under four different categories according to their learning styles. These are those who learn by doing, those who learn by watching, those who learn by thinking and those who learn by feeling (touching) (MEB, 2006: 30).

expectation that the person has an up-to-date and continuous connection to the economic and social life.

In other words, in modular system, the modules have been determined taking into consideration the basic qualifications expected from the national and international work force and employee's opinions and occupational qualifications. By this way, it is aimed to facilitate the employment of the students graduating in their own occupation branches (Fer, 2000).

To sum up, the vocational and technical education system has gained a new mechanism as is pictured below:



Source: MEB, 2007, New Approach in VET

Its second goal, on the other hand, is “to strengthen on national, regional and local levels the institutional capacities of public institutions, social partnerships and enterprises”. Attention was paid in order to carry out all the studies performed in line with this goal (such as labor market analysis, preparation of standards, and formation of modules) in coordination with all

the relevant social partners. Besides creating a culture of collective work, capacity building studies aimed especially at education of school administrators and teachers. These studies carried out for the training of trainers include “the issues of changing roles of students, student-centered approach and preparation of the learning medium for the students” and are performed on a continuous basis. In addition, the infrastructure of education institutions have been improved with equipments related especially to information technologies.

The last goal of the project was defined as “to speed up the process of localization of the system through including the local actors within the implementation of the reform process”. Localization of vocational education is based on informing the society about the arrangements made in relation to vocational education and their returns and on public awareness raising about the significance of vocational education for the economic and social development of the country. In addition, localization can also be defined in terms of some sub-goals such as planning and managing education more efficiently with local resources and opportunities.

In the final evaluation made in relation to MEGEP in 2007, it is said that the Labor Market and Skills Need Analysis Survey which was the first comprehensive study on the structure of Turkish labor market had been conducted within the Project duration in cooperation with the Turkish Employment Agency and MEB in a total of 5700 enterprises. It was aimed with this survey to gain information about the situation of the labor market in the province in question, the occupations that can be popular in the future and the occupations and related skills needed. Based on the information gathered, in 2005, analyses about 576 occupations were made, and among these for 65 occupations in 51 areas, occupational standards in 2nd, 3rd and 4th levels were developed according to international occupational standards. Based on these occupational analyses, occupational qualifications have been determined and an education standard was prepared according to the international education classification for 197 (branches) occupations in 42 areas on the 4th level. Within this scope, a total of 5662 modular education material were prepared and added to the system. A pilot implementation was done in the education-training year 2004-2005, and it was extended to the entire country in 2005-2006 (MEB, 2007)

As a result, it is aimed with this Project “to strengthen as a whole the effort towards raising the vocational and technical education system in Turkey to the standards of EU and

developed countries in line with socio-economic requirements and the principles of life-long learning. It was also aimed to contribute to the formation of a modern, flexible and high-quality vocational education system capable of responding to the needs of the labor market, which is in unity with the basic education, general secondary education and higher education systems” (MEB, 2006: 4).

In 2008, a research was carried out on MEGEP effectiveness under the scope of postgraduate thesis. The research is based on the opinions of 410 administrators and teachers in 18 vocational education institutions. According to the research, “under the scope of the project, occupational qualifications, modular education implementations and In-Service Training activities are found effective, while industry-education cooperation and the educational tools provided are thought to be insufficiently effective” (Dursun, 2008). In fact, teachers think that modular education implementations and in-service trainings are also ineffective, while they share the idea of the administrators about industry-education cooperation and the educational tools. This shows that the modular education structure based on qualifications has been designed comprehensively on discursive basis but there are still problems in implementation.

Within the period of transition from the 8th BYKP to the 9th BYKP, the 17th Education Council was held. The council included a comprehensive evaluation of the past and gave idea on how secondary education would be shaped in the future. The most remarkable aspect of the Council reflecting the tendencies of this period is that the education system was addressed within the framework of globalization and harmonization to EU. The education system addressed from this perspective was evaluated in detail under the headings *life-long learning, mobility in education and quality of education*. The basic arrangements considered to be necessary to carry out in the education system with respect to life-long learning were; “not limiting education to the ages 24-64, establishing an open system in which every individual in the society can access to education at any time and from any location, raising the awareness of masses about the issue, and rapidly improving the capacities of the related formal and non-formal education institutions” (MEB, 2006: 5-6). The issue of mobility in education is shaped through incentives and measures to enable both students and teachers to benefit from different education institutions in the country and abroad (Ibid: 6-7). Under the issue of quality in education, the issue of making comprehensive arrangements for training more qualified teachers was given weight.

The 9th Development Plan prepared immediately after the Council was prepared within the framework of the vision of a “*Turkey growing in stability, distributing its income more fairly, having competitive power on global level, transforming into an information society, completed the process of harmonization to EU*” (DPT, 2006: 1). In fact the plan was designed as a basic strategy document to contribute to the process of membership to EU. And for this reason, “The Plan period was prepared so as to cover the years 2007-2013 taking into consideration the EU financial calendar. By this way, the period of determining the policies and goals targeted at the development of the country through five-year periods has also ended” (Ibid: 1).

It is expected that the plan “serves providing a unity in long-term perspective and goals not only for the public sector but also for the society in general” and “contributes within this framework to the communication and cooperation for common goals among the public sector, private sector and the civil society” (Ibid: 1). It is expected that economic and social development will gain pace in an environment where public and private sectors and the civil society are integrated, and more importantly it is thought that such a synergy defined as “an inclusive development process” will “increase the life quality of the people” (Ibid: 1). The emphasis of civil society in development and of life quality rather than life standard are prominent for the first time in this plan. The strategic goals of the plan, as has been expressed during the last 25 years, were to *increase the competitive power and employment, ensure regional development and increase the effectiveness of public services*. However the social policy issues addressed with a different approach are defined in terms of the concepts of *social development* and *social solidarity* as expressed for the first time. In addition, *social dialogue, participation* and *human-oriented development* are concepts emphasized more in this plan.

If some of the strategic goals of the Plan are viewed as sub-goals that can be associated with development of vocational education, it is seen firstly that there is an emphasis on the need to “expand information and communication (ICT) technologies, improve the work environment, reduce the black economy, and pass to a production structure with high value added in sectors of industry and services” for *increasing the competitive power* (Ibid: 4). Expanding ICT means that a long distance is covered in technology literacy as an important indicator of social development, and hence the technical work force becomes more qualified

than in the past. The need to improve the work environment can become more important for intermediary personnel employed in heavy industry or in labor-intensive sectors when compared to other areas. Ensuring an improvement in this issue can contribute more the increase in the interest towards vocational education training the technical work force. Similarly, improving the work conditions of the technical work force employed in SMEs where black economy is experienced at most will positively affect the interest in vocational education. Passing to a production structure with high value added in sectors of industry and services will also mean employment of a more qualified work force, and this will also mean more employment opportunities for the technical work force trying to be made more qualified through improving vocational education.

For *increasing employment* which is another strategic goal of the plan, it is planned that steps will be taken for “Developing the Labor Market, Increasing the Sensitivity of Education towards the Labor Demand and Developing Active Work Force Policies” (Ibid: 4). Active work force policies considered to be an effective means in increasing employment “aims at increasing the employability of the work force by developing its skills and qualifications and covers training of the work force, vocational education and work force adjustment programs, presenting services of vocational guidance and vocational counseling, developing job search strategies, employment of disadvantaged groups such as the unemployed, disabled, women and young people, entrepreneurship trainings and training programs with employment guarantee” (Ibid: 39). Within this context, during the 9th Plan period, it is aimed that the unemployed, women and people with low level of knowledge and skills outside the agriculture sector are covered by the active work force policies and included in the labor market with various vocational guidance, skills courses and entrepreneurship trainings.

The third strategic aim of the Plan is to strengthen social development and social solidarity with sub-goals such as “Improving Income Distribution, Social Inclusion and Struggle against Poverty through Developing the Education System” (Ibid: 4). For supporting the improvement of human resources of the country, arrangement of the education system according to current needs like the rapid changes in information technologies is the main goal. For a better adoption of the understanding of long-life learning, it was aimed to develop non-formal education opportunities, to encourage those who have passed education ages to benefit from learning opportunities at any from and from any location thanks to technological developments, and hence to enable them to gain skills and acquire a

professions (Ibid: 86). As it seen, steps taken to improve the education system in this direction are closely related to enabling individuals to participate in the work force. Especially when people who are adults but have low qualities and therefore unable to participate in the work force are considered, it is expected that vocational education given a flexible (modular) structure will enable such people (the inactive work force) to become re-qualified and enter into the labor market. By this way, it is anticipated that people will participate in the social life that is they will be socially included through participating in the work life. People who cannot be employed or who do not have permanent jobs or who are employed at low wages are highly likely to be subject to impoverishment and social exclusion. Among the goals of the 9th Plan is carrying out studies for making people with such a risk take part in the economic and social life and increasing their life qualities. Besides the Plan also has the goal of “taking the measures necessary for covering the poor working informally under the social security scheme and making them work in proper jobs” as well as “performing services aimed at reducing poverty, preventing the creation of a poverty culture and ensuring that the poor sectors of the society become producers” (Ibid: 89). The policy measures to be taken to achieve the goal related to reducing poverty are closely related to restructuring vocational education. When the socio-economic status of the families of those undergoing vocational and technical education are considered, it can be said based on many researches that these families are generally from poor sectors of the society. Therefore, under the condition that vocational education trains more qualified technical work force and that the trained work force is employed in decent work conditions, it is expected that the situations of their families will improve first of all economically and then socially.

In case this expectation realizes, it is anticipated that the perception in the society that 'vocational schools are schools to which poor children enter' can also change. However as it is seen from the development plans prepared up to date and the existing economic indicators and the education indicators, apart from providing a rapid development in this sense, the related goals have always been unachieved. In line with the goal of Strengthening the Social Structure as set out in the 9th Plan, 17th Council and the 60th Governmental Action Plan, a Vocational and Technical Education Action Plan has been prepared for the years 2008-2012 under the coordination of the General Directorate of Technical Training for Boys for the purpose of increasing the rate of schooling in vocational and technical secondary education. Plan has once again put forward that the goals could not be reached.

The goal of the Action Plan in question is to achieve in education institutions an increase of 50% by the end of 2012 with an annual increase of 3%. However as the establishment and renewal of the workshops and laboratories necessary for vocational education institutions have high costs, it is desired that the private sector has more responsibility in the issue. Making legal arrangements to facilitate this is also a concern of this Action Plan. However it is expressed in the Action Plan that determination of the level of qualifications as a result of measuring and evaluating the knowledge and skills gained through education with MEGEP, and hence studies of certification with international validity have not reached the desired level despite the project has been completed and that this is among the issues to be improved. It is anticipated that certification of qualifications with certificates and diplomas with international recognizability and validity will enable the work force trained with the new system to mobilize easily in the labor market, especially in EU countries.

This Action Plan prepared in 2008 reveals another problem: “A significant portion of the students sent to enterprises for vocational education are employed by the enterprises in irrelevant areas; affective controls cannot be done; education units are not established by the enterprises; students cannot perform sufficient implementation” (MEB, 2008: 10). However the most important deficiency determined in this Plan is that “work force requirement planning is not done in vocational education; it is not known which occupational branches have personnel deficiency or excess” (Ibid: 11). The result of not knowing the personnel need is that “vocational education students have difficulties in finding jobs” and this “reduces the interest towards vocational education. This has revealed once again a very crucial problem in the relationship between vocational education and employment.

CHAPTER 4

ASPECTS OF SOCIAL INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

This chapter focuses on the interviews held with the concerning social partners sharing roles and responsibility on the process of restructuring of national vocational education and training were analyzed in the light of the conceptions of social inclusion and exclusion. While examining the views of social partners with respect to these general social terms, it was recognized that social inclusion of individuals in a society is quite related to the conception of self-actualization at from both economic and socio-physiological aspects, and on the other hand, social exclusion of individuals in a given society becomes apparent through revealing the feelings of insecurity, fear and anxiety. These two themes are handled considering the most frequently used terms by the Social Partners to reflect their perceptions on the national vocational and technical education system and the latest challenges. These terms are Lifelong Learning (LL), Employment/Employability and Modularity/Flexibility.

4.1 The Conceptions of Social Inclusion and Exclusion

The notion of social inclusion is explained as “well-integrated individual who will have a stable job, good education, and strong family and community relationship. This individual is deemed to have social assets required to achieve strong social and economic integration” (Munck, 2005:35). As seen, social inclusion rests on the stable job meaning that people have also job security but which has been disappeared in parallel to the flexibilisation of work. So, instead of inclusive society, people begin to live in a society having risk to exclude people. As Çakır pointed out, one of the major factors of a potential social exclusion is change in labor market; which is reified as flexibility and deregulation revealed as a result of liberation of trade and rapid technological advancement (Çakır, 2002: 89). All in all, flexibility removes the idea of guarantee of employment and brings about the feeling of insecurity.

The notion of social exclusion is, in general, defined as “the inability of our society to keep all groups and individuals within reach of what we expect as a society” which might lead to that “some people feel excluded from the mainstream, as though they do not belong” (Power & Wilson, 2000: 1). It is, in brief, summarized as the state in which individuals, who are deprived of economic resources and social services bettering their quality of life, are likely encountered. However, Oppenheim draws attention to the difference between the terms of social exclusion and deprivation: *deprivation* is defined as “lacking access to adequate standards of material resources, services and amenities; whilst *social exclusion* implies isolation and alienation from economic, social, political and cultural life” (Oppenheim, 1998 cited in Melbourne, 2002: 327). Although they differ from each other by definition, priority-sequential relationship between them draws attention. I mean, social exclusion can be perceived as the consequence of the state of deprivation because isolation and alienation from different aspects of life might be triggered by unavailability of access to some resources, or capitals –economic, social and cultural- as Bourdieu has conceptualized.

As a result, being isolated for individual means stay outside the existing social formation due to non-participating in the casual activities of the society to which they belong. But, as Power stated, social exclusion becomes apparent when feeling of non-belonging has revealed. This feeling, in fact, is expected to come to light lack of self-actualization, which is also perceived as the attainment of the psychological needs such as feeling in secure, belongingness and self-esteem. In addition to importance of these psychological aspects leading individuals to be socially excluded, the research will start to handle the issue in terms of its economic aspects. As pointed out, the main focus of this research is social exclusion that can be experienced as a result of failure in the participation to the labor market which promotes economic integration. In economic terms, social exclusion is anticipated to be apparent in case individuals are obliged to unemployment, which means becoming deprived of economic material resources need for maintenance of minimum standards of living. As education, especially in the context of training of workforce, is one of the most efficient instruments which enable people to be employed, it can be perceived as a necessary means for avoiding them from social exclusion. Similar to Oppenheim, Çakır expressed that the driving forces revealing social exclusion are basically economic exclusion, which is the focal issue for this research, and then, weakening the social relations, being deprived of social and institutional supports (Çakır, 2002: 83)

In addition to the economic integration function of the labor market, the existence of welfare state which providing social services for bettering the living standards of its citizens also ensures social integration for individuals. However, with the decline of welfare state in parallel to empowerment of neo-liberal state, social services provided by the State have been restrained. Thus, risk of being excluded regarding the aspects mentioned above has emerged for the citizens; especially for those who have already had some deprivations (i.e. unemployed, people on a low income, young people, less educated people). Considering that we are living in a perpetually updating knowledge-based economy and continuously changing society, the major driving force for individuals to be socially excluded is seen as being deprived of access to information resources (i.e. educational institutions, training courses) throughout our lifespan. Under these rapid changing flexible circumstances, significancy of lifelong learning in ensuring people's integration to the society from different aspects (i.e. economic, social and interpersonal aspects) has increased. That is to say, it enables people to be possessed both vocational skills required for their employability and basic/personal skills facilitating their integration into society through strengthening their ability of adapting to the fast and continuous changes in society. Otherwise, individuals will encounter the problem of isolation within the community and isolated individuals might accelerate social disintegration and break in social solidarity. This social context is expected to push individuals into the pool of fear. So, individual, who feel anxiety about the future and therefore, feel unsecured, might face with the state of *anomie*.

4.2 Analysis of the Interviews

Lifelong Learning

Lifelong learning (LL) is new form of 'educating' individuals in a given society. It is actually seen as a **subjective process** which individuals prepare themselves for make their adaptation easier to the societal changes. This process can be experienced by the individuals consciously or not. But, in all case, it is a process which is on individual's own hands. For Olssen, "lifelong learning represents a global discourse for the flexible preparation of subjects" (Olssen, 2006: 38). Policy makers with whom interviewed for this study have similar views on that lifelong learning is inevitable process individualized:

“People are responsible from their self-development; or rather that is the rule of life...” (ISKUR)

The emphasis on **self-learning** through LL is resulted from “the discourse of autonomous and independent individuals who are responsible for updating their skills in order to achieve their place in society”, as Olssen expressed (Ibid, 41). But for him, this individualized learning process enables **self-actualization**, too. He says, “Ultimately LL shifts responsibility from the system to the individual whereby individuals are responsible for self-emancipation and self-creation” (Ibid, 41).

This is actually emerged in parallel to the increasing emphasis on culture of **individualism** in the neo-liberal post-Fordist era, as Kumar stated in Chapter 2. However, this emphasis points out that the **individualized learning process** is a **market-guided process** rather than a process aiming at self-creation. To cover the change, it is better to point out what has been changed: “Compared to what had happened in the past, the process of entering the labor market for the first time became more ‘individualized’” (Roberts, Clark, & Wallace, 1994). “We are all convinced of the crucial importance of learning throughout life for enriching personal lives, **fostering economic growth** and maintaining social cohesion” (OECD, 1996, p. 21). As stated, OECD pointed out the vitality of LL in the labor force preparation process and lifelong learning is required due to economic competition and rapid technological and societal change. Moreover, in parallel to the accelerating technological improvement and its reflection of the organization of work and production at global level, LL becomes the core issue of its national education policy. Consequently, as the notion of learning has gradually been associated with the market, the individuals become more responsible for their own **vocational development in addition to their personal development, which are also called as development of some basic skills.**

In addition, the main tendency of today’s global market is going towards stressing the relatively higher importance of developing basic skills through LL than developing vocational skills.

“If the educators provide a firm basis in vocational education, the children can become successful in every field. It should not be one-dimensional. The children should be able to develop their skills so as to work in different jobs. I mean the education should provide this. In fact the education is about giving basic skills.

The students can add on to these basic skills. LLL is for providing a source to these new skills.” (TISK)

“LLL is not only about vocational knowledge and skills. People can also utilize LLL centers for their personal development” (DPT)

Although LL is a learning process covering both vocational and personal development through formal, non-formal and even informal learning throughout life, in Turkey, LL is mostly matched with **adult education** as a form of **non-formal learning** providing “life occupation opportunities to those who have never taken formal education, or to those who are at any level of formal education or have left formal education” (Bilir, 2007: 622). “Non-formal education programs focus on a wide range of people from rural and urban settings, employees, employers, farmers, students, tradesmen, housewives and many others. The most important educational characteristic of this group is that they are outside of school and that they are not regular students” (Ibid: 623). However, being student of non-formal education irregular doesn’t mean that learning process is unsystematic; it is planned and organized. In this sense, it differs from disorganized informal learning but similarly, continues throughout life, which means not limited to the duration of compulsory education. “Adult non-formal education not only provides professional and technical training; it provides the learners with basic literacy and helps continue their educational development; it contributes to the preservation and improvement of national and cultural values; it creates an awareness of citizenship and democratic thinking; it helps to keep up with the contemporary developments; it provides social guidelines and examples about development; it spreads ideas regarding social life” (Bülbül, 1987: 338). Despite its comprehensive contents, it is mostly limited to learning process for socialization of individuals through acquiring basic skills like literacy. However, in Turkey, there is a common perception that adult education as a non-formal education concerns mostly with taking up a new hobbies, teaching literacy and carrying out some social activities for self-realization of the learners rather than bringing vocational skills. For all these reasons, lifelong learning is directly matched with adult education. To specify,

“Honestly, there is not an end to learning. Education relaxes people in every way, from psychological to spiritual levels. It enhances inter-personal relations. Employment is not an end in itself. Learning has societal value. It gives you joy while enriching you. Giving joy to everyone... It is important for holding on to

life, for enabling mixing with society for people of certain age...” (An adult trainee in the courses of ATVS)

“In fact LLL is informal education... It is up to the people after the formal education. They need to put an effort for self-development after the formal education; they can attend several courses like BELMEK courses women attend...” (OSTIM Training Coordination)

This perception leading a mismatch is actually quite understandable because lifelong learning has become a notion which “pays less regard to the role of formal institutions and **more to non-formal and informal learning** in a variety of settings” (Tuijnman, 1999: 6). The reason of increase in the emphasis on non-formal and also informal learning in lifelong learning practices is that up to date, non-formal learning was utilized as a way of providing opportunities or ‘second chance’ for ‘deprived’ groups (i.e. young unemployed, women, disabled, unskilled or old-skilled adults) to sustain their lives. So, this function of non-formal learning helps LL to be perceived as a way of maintaining social inclusion of these people; not only for unemployed. The interviewed representative of the vocational school, which is the pilot school of MEGEP Project and has also some non-formal training courses, expressed this function as follows:

“We started a course as part of Prime Ministry’s SRAP in Çin Çin neighborhood. We certified the courses and proposed the trainees to offer haircut service cheaper that is if the haircut is 5 TL in the neighborhood, the trainees would charge it 1 TL... We told them that if they do five haircuts a day, they would earn their daily subsistence. There is unemployment but why aren’t the people protesting it? Because either this or another way, they earn money. They find ways to survive.” (ATVS)

These public training courses are mostly seen as a part of **survival strategies for the ‘deprived’** people; especially for the unemployed, the household women and the migrants such as;

“South-eastern women do not know Turkish but when they go to the city centre there is Turkish everywhere. They for example cannot go to the hospital because of this. We should teach them Turkish first of all. This is LL... It is about integrating those women to the society... It is about making their contact with hospitals possible...” (ÇSGB)

In addition to being a survival strategy for vulnerable groups in the society, LL is seen as an opportunity for the adults, especially for the housewives in their **self-actualization** outside domestic works. In addition to that, it is believed that learning

process, whether it lasts through life cycle or not, should be a process making people happy since it provides people with a valuable asset for self-actualization.

“Let’s say a housewife wishes to improve herself on a subject. She can get a certificate after attending courses. They do not want to waste their times, they want to get educated.” (ATVS)

“We believe that people should be able to develop their skills and that the education process should provide satisfaction and be challenging from the start to the end” (DISK)

Furthermore, there are some policy makers advocating that non-formal learning practices should **not only** be matched with the **unemployed or housewives**. If LL covers **everyone** at discursive level, it should also concern with the working people, too. The employees can benefit from lifelong learning practices for **upgrading their own skills or learning the new ones** because they may be dissatisfied from their works allocated and therefore, want to change their jobs or their occupation. Now, LL enables people to acquire new vocational skills and thus, obtain new occupation, in addition to improving their existing skills and abilities.

“LLL embraces everyone who left and had to leave formal education, unemployed and discontent with their jobs. LLL is not only for the unemployed. Even I can take LLL courses. I can improve my computer skills.” (DPT)

“In our consideration LLL is not a humanitarian conception. People can develop their qualities by means of education. They can accomplish many things but there is a limit to this. LLL creates an intervening situation in people’s lives. It puts constraints on people’s lives, causes an endless self-questioning and effort – an effort that is not creative – and is in fact an adaptation for different situations and is not humanitarian.” (DISK)

Opportunity to be able to change the job through obtaining new occupation is like a key opening the door to **be employable** in accordance with the flexible working conditions leading to perpetually changing jobs. In this sense, **lifelong learning practices**, in general, are mostly guided by the economic interests and therefore, **based on development of skills required by the labor market**. This is a valid process of transformation for **adult education**, too. “With increasing influence from economic interests, the demands for improved efficiency of vocational and professional training and the growth of the international organizations, adult education more and more came to be seen as training for competence in the

economic affairs” (Daun, 2009). Thus, LL, which also covers adult education, requires that individuals update and upgrade continually their skills to be able to adapt the rapid changes at both economic and social spheres of life. This perception is in fact quite understandable because policy makers, even the policy implementers, usually emphasize on the **necessity of acquiring new skills** and developing the existing ones through LL practices as it is the easiest way for everyone to be **socially included**.

“Everyone has to develop his/her skills. Not only the high school but also university graduates are unemployed... Employers demand second language and computer knowledge. They even demand master’s degree. If you are a specialist in IT, you can find a good job. The education system should be able to provide skills needed for an easy access to job market. LLL is a perspective that can provide all these...” (DPT)

“LLL is for the increase of the vocational qualification that is the inclusion of necessary modules of the sector. For instance take a look at the industrial sector: machinists are needed but their knowledge is based on 20 years old machinery knowledge... It is very different now, today’s machinery is computer based. Our old machinists have difficulty in keeping their job. It is them who feel the need for new knowledge. He needs to get current [vocational] knowledge to keep employed... In addition to this, he will need to get foreign language, computer education and certain social skills. LLL is very important in this sense... What I mean is that LLL is an indispensable part of vocational education...” (MEKSA)

“In the past, people had the chance to use the knowledge they got from vocational education till the end of their lives and employment. The speeding up of technology and changing production structure made LLL indispensable and people are forced to a continuous self-development, competition and a struggle for keeping their jobs.” (TURK-IS)

Social inclusion of all individuals, even if they are employed or unemployed, young or old, man or woman, disable or not, is anticipated to be occurred with the help of LL practices. In contrast to the role of LL as facilitating the adaptation of individuals to the perpetually changing condition, **some adverse effects** on the individuals to be appeared are expected. The likely effect of LL is actually resulted from intensive pressure on individual as a non-stop self-development. There might be **different outcomes of this pressure** in the individual’s daily life. For instance;

“You can become of nothing while trying to develop yourself in several ways. LLL can have only this shortcoming. People may not be able to learn anything fully while trying to learn many things.” (ATVS)

“The worker should renew his/herself continuously but how long? How rational is a continuous job change for a worker? In fact it creates a sense of fear for the worker... In my view, there is the continuous self-renewal but there is also a fear that this workplace could be shut down and they can become unemployed or something else can happen. I do not believe that people can be content under these circumstances that they can work properly to tell you the truth. This is in fact the basis of LLL philosophy.” (ÇSGB)

As seen, this **negativity** has mostly psycho-social aspects, rather than economic aspects. That is to say, pressure on individuals to persistently improve their competency in order not to be excluded from the society has triggered the **reveal of the feelings of fear and anxiety** about their future. These feelings are caused by being in a state of despair about maintenance of better life which means to have a good job providing satisfactory income and accessibility to all basic social services. The **feeling of despair** for individuals, especially for the adults, is mostly fed by **uncertainty** in their working life. The state of uncertainty, which is reified as the risk of being suddenly unemployed at any time, is actually produced as a result of increase in **flexibilisation of work organization** in post-Fordist era. The risk of being unemployed has triggered the feeling of being insecure and also has been any individual **vulnerable to** harsh working conditions; in other words, competitive labor market. Moreover, Streeten emphasizes that we are now living in a ‘**risk society**’ with reference to Ulrich Beck. He adds “people are bombarded with assessments of risk of decisions. They have lost the old certainties about how their lives will turn out: no more jobs, or marriage, for life” (Streeten, 2003: 79). So, the state of uncertainty about future of life is expected to drive people to despair, anxiety and once for all, to fear. Heidegger pointed out “in every fear; there is the recognition of our vulnerability” (cited in Lingis, 2007: 113). Today’s world, vulnerability is also defined as being deprived of skills and competencies required by the labor market, which is needed for our employability. In this sense, so as to alleviate this *vulnerability*, lifelong learning process is insistently suggested to be benefited. However, possibility of isolation due to intensively individualized social context and the feelings of anxiety, fear, hopelessness which are triggered by the being isolated was also emphasized.

“[LL] depends on the character and the psychology of the individual but I think that it should not cause a loss of trust. The technology advances and we have to renew ourselves accordingly. The youth should be able to renew themselves without the feelings of obligation... It depends on the personality traits but it is

tiring for everyone... Being in competition with others in work place causes an obligation of getting new knowledge and of not losing the opportunities of knowledge... In our era, it is said that competition causes alienation of individuals and damage social relations. But the motivation is again the determining factor... The employers should reward the employees enhancing themselves. These rewards can be like a praising word, not necessarily material ones.” (TOBB)

Additionally, the adverse impact of LL might be **deepened** due to some economic obligations. Therefore, one of the major policy makers suggested that, because of its potential negative impact on individual and community, LL should be **primarily focused on unemployed**; not the whole society:

“LLL should only cover the employment of the unemployed. If it is taken as a continuous self-development, like first learning computer skills then to another course and another, individuals will spend all their lives in an atmosphere of courses-works and anxieties which will in turn increase the problems of the society. [In addition to this] we spend all our salaries on credit cards; then we will spend this MEBy on courses. This would ruin the already unhealthy social structure. [Therefore] we should make use of this system for the employment of the unemployed in the short run.”(ÇSGB)

In contrast to the emphasis on negative psycho-social influence of LL, there is also a belief in the ‘**usefulness**’ of the feeling **of fear for ensuring efficiency of workforce**. For example,

“People should change themselves according to the circumstances... Because in the private sector, they are inclined to hire new employees if you are not that good... There is a continuous competition in private sector. There is a continuous pressure on people but I believe that this is necessary because self-development is indispensable for self-protection in job. But this is not the case in public sector. When someone has job security, s/he gets lazy at job while the others handle many duties and develop themselves.” (TESK)

In spite of the feeling of fear to loss job, which leads to dissatisfaction and disappointment for individuals at work, it can be seen as driving force motivating workforce for its own development. When the feelings of anxiety and fear triggered by the lifelong learning approach are disregarded, it is quite beneficial for self-development. For this reason, lifelong learning practices are encouraged as **purposeful learning activities**. In this sense, the idea behind lifelong learning is to

generate *rational learning agent*²⁸ needed **for market economy** rather than to be beneficial for individual's self-actualization. For Maslow, people learn for their own curiosity or self-actualization (Maslow, 1971). But, under the domination of market economy, people need to learn for **fulfilling the competency-based needs of labor market**. Thus, individuals become **rational learners** who decide what they 'need to be learnt', who make rationally their choice on training programs for skill developments and benefit from the training programs enabling them employable. This means, individuals become a rational learners similarly to the rationality of homo-economicus, **rather than a learner for self-actualization**.

"It commoditizes the education shaped by the needs of the capital and suitable for it rather than conceptualizing the education as a process enabling skills development. It is the most concrete example of labor power commoditization... While it is possible to form an educational conception supporting the well-being and the expectations of individuals, it is conceptualized as a negative process consuming the individuals" (DISK)

"If I want to perform my job better, I should go and attend different courses and follow new developments. It can never cause harm or something negative. It creates self-confidence and motivation in the end" (OSTIM Training Coordination)

In addition to all these aspects of lifelong learning, there is another point of view asserting that *inclusive LL* is an **'illusion' which conceals the social inequalities**. This inequality is based on whether people can access economic resources and social services for sustaining a better life or not. In this context, enriching and expanding the educational, even learning opportunities for everyone are expected to alleviate social inequality in society and accordingly, lessen social exclusion.

"The concept of LL conceals the structures of inequality.... [because] it is taken for granted that lifelong learning gives everybody similar chances. ...[inequalities in society] are due to differences in knowledge and not to inequalities built into social and economic structures. And education or learning is perceived to remedy such inequalities by helping to distribute knowledge" (Daun, 2009, p.53)

If the imposed idea of individualization of the learning process is combined with the 'illusionary' inclusive context that LL discourse has created, the individual is obliged to face with a dichotomy in his/her daily life. This dichotomy is, in fact,

²⁸ The conceptualization of Rational Agent is derived from one of the ideal types of Max Weber's rationality; which is purposive/instrumental rationality.

produced as a result of the **mutually exclusive discourses**, which are, on the other side, perceived by the proponents of the prevailing views as mutually complementary discourses. The main two discourses I have pointed out are as follows: First one is that “Lifelong learning is an inclusive process because it is for everyone in any time and any where” whilst the second one is that “Lifelong learning has become a new form of learning for the individual, which means a self-learning process”. I think, as well as the former is based on an inclusive discourse, the latter is based on a covert exclusive discourse because it concerns with atomization of the society through stressing on the importance of individualization of the learning process which enables people to be joined in life, in general terms. “Society is represented as atomized; it is an agglomeration of freely choosing individuals that have the same opportunities” (Rygg, 1997). Consequently, it is likely that the individual is exposed to live in an **atomized society in which the state of anomie leading self-destruction** has become possible for individual. In this context, for the individual who is obliged to live under such circumstances, there will be a perpetual risk to be socially excluded, in the long run, even if ‘a second chance’ is provided through lifelong learning practices for everyone.

Employment/Employability

Today’s world serves lifelong learning on a silver platter to all people with the discourse of ‘a **second chance**’ for everyone; in particular, the deprived groups of people –the unemployed, housewives, the disabled and the elderly people- to be able to access better economic resources and social services. It is perceived like this since skill development-based lifelong learning practices are anticipated to facilitate employment processes of individuals because these skills will increase their chance to be employed; in other words, their **employability**.

“[LLL] is very important for a second chance in life... For instance, someone finishes the vocational school but cannot find a job. If there is not such a conception, employment is no longer possible him. He cannot find a job and it is really difficult to embrace him in the labor force... It is especially important in a country of young population like ours... It is really good to learn but the most important thing is giving a second chance. He tries but cannot accomplish; in the standby period, LLL is a critical life saver.”(TOBB)

Employment is seen as a key which enables individuals to be got a place in a society; in other words, to be socially included. In this context, a different form of employment and some recruitment policies facilitating social inclusion of the people are discussed. The mentioned form of employment is **self-employment**, which is also named as **entrepreneurship**. In parallel to the increase in unemployment in more flexible and unstable working conditions, entrepreneurship became a **survival strategy** which is permanently encouraged by the policy makers. “[Learners] must also be prepared for a radically new labor market [through LLL] in which traditional wage-employment may be the experience of only the minority and self-employment in various forms may offer a high potential for economic independence in a new era of entrepreneurship” (UNESCO, 1999b: 5). In this context, the function of entrepreneurship has been described as follows:

*“The economy policies after 1980 period especially after the 2001 economic crisis led people to entrepreneurialism. **There are very limited job opportunities in state sector** and working for minimum wages in private sector does not give hope. **Therefore entrepreneurship** became a tempting solution.” (ÇSGB)*

“People should enrich themselves in their occupation or in other fields and do some certain things. This is not accomplished when people do not have entrepreneurial soul. One gets graduated from vocational school and expects the state to provide a job. The expectation of state helps in occupation, such an ongoing mentality for years; if this country would develop, it is for everybody. We need to train people not in one dimensional way but as entrepreneurs.” (OSTIM Apprenticeship Training Centre)

“We value entrepreneurship educations because the increase of entrepreneurs is really important... It would increase the number of the employed. When entrepreneurs open their own business, they employ others too. It has an incremental effect on employment... Not only being employed in a sector, working in a branch of industry is important but also having the guts to open a business and employ some people more is important.” (TISK)

Although entrepreneurship as a form of self-employment has been encouraged with the purpose of increasing employment and by this way, ensuring social inclusion of many ex-unemployed is expected, in practice, there might be some obstacles in front of the new entrepreneurs as follows:

“We support new entrepreneurs but this is a challenging process because it necessitates capital accumulation, circles and proper attainment of channels. In order to utilize supports for entrepreneurship, one needs to be registered which also necessitates some tax liabilities. Since this is a burden on people, they are

inclined to find informal solutions and thus cannot utilize supports or give up their willingness from the start.” (ISKUR)

For the reasons mentioned below, this option may not be an efficient solution for reducing the unemployment; especially for the VET graduates because their financial and social capitals (network) won't most probably fulfill the requirements for self-employment.

Rather than individuals to be passive labor waiting for a suitable job opportunity, the changing labor market prefer them to be self-employed. This means to **ease the employers' burden of employment** and accordingly, to **share this responsibility with the employees**. This also implies that the risk of being socially excluded is avoided through self-employment strategy. The most efficient and responsive way of doing this seems to be as entrepreneurship as the new driving forces for revival and sustainability of the market economy. It is expected that the individuals, in this way, become “**self-confident, autonomous** and mobile labors, **freer** of social structures than ever before” (Jarvis, 1999, p.123). From this point of view, it is anticipated that individuals are more aware of the changing demand of labor market and thus, take more responsibility for their employability.

“The discourse is agent-oriented; everybody should be involved and have options. The individual is free to choose, but is also responsible for his or her own acquisition of human capital” (Daun, 2009)

“The ones realizing the changes in labor power market search for new opportunities. They either attend to some educational programs or renew themselves within the scope of life long learning. The ones who are ignorant of this process are the outcasts of labor, power market which is unequal... The awareness of the individual is very important here. If s/he has the consciousness of the situation, s/he struggles to solve the problem. But the ones ignorant of the roles assigned to them by the new world system, expects the state or relatives solve their problems.” (ISKUR)

On the other hand, it was criticized that sharing of responsibility of employment, which means shifting the responsibility from the State to the individuals; even if they employers or employees, is an illusion as the parties, the State, employers and employees, are not equal and more importantly, unemployment is a social phenomenon, rather than individual problem. However, as the society is more atomized, individuals become more responsible for social problems in their daily life because the idea of 'unemployment is also resulted from the personal failure' is

regularly imposed. As a result, individuals are obliged to develop themselves by pushing their own limits, which likely leads to perpetuating states of self-destruction and reconstruction for human beings.

“The state leaves the individuals unprotected against the capital. [As a result]Unemployment is not a personal problem, not caused by personal inefficiencies. It is a problem faced by the individual as a result of the state policies.” (DISK)

“Such a division of labor leaves the responsibilities of the state to the market. But this issue has such a value that it cannot be left to the market conditions because we are talking about human beings. This causes people to become racer throughout their lives. This mentality names unemployment as personal deficiency. Then you should learn foreign language, learn this and that. The condition you are left alone is thus informal employment.” (TURK-IS)

Nevertheless, individuals are now **free to decide** on what they need and to choose what they will learn so as to improve their own human capital; however, they are, in fact, not aware of what their actual needs to be stayed in the labor market as a employee are. In this sense, considering the continually changing occupations, **vocational guidance** has emerged as an urgent need for the potential workforce.

“The globalization age causes an endless occupation change. This causes the necessity of the acquisition of new vocational knowledge and a continuous update need of this knowledge.” (ÇSGB)

“...The service of carrier consultancy is needed. Student advisors should pay more attention to this. Similarly, the number of career consultants and vocational guiders should be increased and the quality of consultancy services should be improved in provincial boards of employment. The vocational choices of the students should be directed with a conscious guidance... They should be helped in making the right decisions... Otherwise the choices are made randomly and the labor power accumulates in certain sectors. But how will the help be provided? By means of the communication of labor market and vocations... But the students will make their decisions.” (İŞKUR)

Procurement of **career consultancy service** for individuals is actually for the purpose of **human resources planning**. In addition to that, in case of lack of well-matching the supplied labor and the demanded one, excessive employment in some sectors is inevitably expected. So, this unbalanced situation may lead the unemployment to be maintained for a long time and accordingly, possibility of social exclusion for larger group of people might increase. But, more importantly, if the

individual cannot be employed despite the occupational guidance, this situation may trigger that he/she thinks the reason of not being employed as his/her own failure.

Moreover, the idea of entrepreneurship was encouraged through the education system; by integrating 'entrepreneurship' as a must course in the curriculum of both formal and non-formal education institutions.

"Entrepreneurship is in the curriculum now. I am not sure whether this can solve the problems. [But as a result] there are classes on the obstacles on entrepreneurs, the elimination of fears on entrepreneurship." (ÇSGB)

Similarly, active labor, programs developed and executed by İŞKUR for ensuring employment opportunities have been carried out as a means for social inclusion of people, especially the deprived ones (i.e. women, unemployed, immigrants) in the society.

".....women are our priority as their labor force participation is limited and young generation is also important as each year nearly 700 thousand young labor force participates in the labor force sector for the first time. Similarly, the handicapped population is also important for us since they are one of the segments of the population having difficulty in employment." (İŞKUR)

"It is important that the state provide the inclusion of the unemployed into the labor force but the abandonment of employment field to the social parts should also be prevented. [But still] the knowledge transfer and discussion among social parts on the possibilities of vocational education for the unemployed and the migrants from the rural areas to the country in order to settle them to available occupations can be possible." (ÇSGB)

"In general, the active labor power programs are for profession acquisition in line with the demands of the labor power market in a short time or for easing the employment opportunities." (İŞKUR)

In addition to entrepreneurship and active labor programs, **certification of the skills and competence** required for employability of individuals has been started to be emphasized as another way of social inclusion.

"The indicators of employability have changed. In the past it was based on educational degrees but it is not adequate any more. Additional knowledge and skills are needed along with those degrees. These skills should be certified like educational degrees." (MEKSA)

"The certification of the professional sufficiency has been discussed by TR. [In this context] Board of Vocational Adequacy is established. One of the most

important functions of this board is to certify all professions apart from professions whose entrance is enacted by law such as engineering, medicine and law. [In fact] this is a system evaluating and certifying the knowledge level of the applicants regarding the applied positions... For instance, someone graduates from vocational school from the department of electronics but s/he needs to prove his/her knowledge and skills level by entering an exam and certifying the needed skills and knowledge; that is s/he will be designated as a level four electrician for instance... [In short] this is an important change in the certifying of professional career of the labor power.” (İŞKUR)

“The certification of LLL or vocational education documents is needed so as to provide an easy access to labor power market and to good jobs.” (DPT)

Although the officially-approved certificates prove that the graduates are occupationally competent for various works, these legal documents may not be considered as ‘satisfactory’ for fulfilling the job requirements and therefore, be found adequate to be employed in practice. This can be resulted from the fact that ‘certificate’ is not a prerequisite at domestic labor market. Considering this fact, the need for certificates to be accepted and demanded by the employers has been drawn attention. For instance,

“As you know there is now a certification system. The student gets a certificate when s/he leaves in 10th grade and the courses s/he got so far are not wasted. We name these levels as the first, second, third and fourth level grades... If a legal regulation easing the process of hiring labor power by means of specific workforce demands, the employers will prefer labor power that had certified skills. The enforcement of this is the government’s business...” (ATVS)

The necessity of having certificates started to be emphasized by the policy implementers because they believe in that employers insistently demand certificates as a part of their recruitment policy to be created new employment opportunities for the potential labor force; especially the vocationally trained individuals. To say explicitly,

“Just like the necessity of certification for the heating system installer, all the other workers such as in flour plants let’s say should have certificates or be a graduate of related school. If s/he does not have a certificate s/he will get it by entering national adequacy exam. You will get a certificate anyway.” (ATVS)

In this context, the certificates are to become the key for social integration of individuals through employment. However, this point of view might lead to raise the tendency of ‘fetishation’ of the certificates and of commodification of the

certification process. At this point, a question comes to mind: For employers, certificates are expected to become a decisive and eliminative factor in recruiting the most 'suitable' employees? If this would be the case, then, certificates will be the 'gold bracelet' that workforce is absolutely needed to be put on in order to increase the opportunity to be employed. More importantly, individuals, *the potential employees*, will be obliged to 'buy continuingly new bracelet', which means to collect certificates on various fields of expertise for ensuring a good standard of living at minimum level and also, bettering it.

Nevertheless, everyone cannot have accessibility to such training opportunities due to their worse economic conditions. Benefiting from certification system, which will be a requirement for recruitment soon, will not be accessible for everyone because it is a commodified process, in compliance with the commodification of all educational process in neo-liberal era.

"The isolation of the individual by means of the abandonment of the state of its responsibilities to the individuals means the marketisation of employment. The process of the achievement of employments is also marketised and one needs to complete the levels that are marketised in order to get the skills needed." (DISK)

On the other hand, even if individuals get chance to 'buy' certificates confirming their vocational skills and competency, traditional approaches as crony relationship are still prevailing in the recruitment policies. Therefore, individuals have two basic obstacles, which are lacks of financial capital and social capital, impeding his/her employment. Although there are some sectors and large companies preferring vocational school graduates (educated technicians), they are very limited because majority of employment is based on small and medium-scale enterprises and these enterprises employ both low skilled workers in large number and skilled technicians by working informally. So, the prevailing tendency is not to put the certificates at the top of list of requirements. Instead, in practice, another rooted mechanism is functioning: **crony relationship!** It is a kind of **social network** which is in use.

"The process of acquaintance recommendation in employment ranks the first as seen in E-Graduate [project] screening research results..." (ATVS)

It is seen that social network, with the Bourdieu's term; social capital, is very crucial in accessing job opportunities; especially for the graduates of vocational schools.

However, a social network enabling them to be employed may not be large as their family background is based on low socio-economic status. Related to that, any improvements in the vocational education system may not be helpful for overcoming this social barrier in front of access to more job opportunities for the children of poor families. For this reason, this new VET system may not be an efficient way of social inclusion for these children as expected.

Another important issue as well as the certification of vocational qualifications is the **flagrant necessity for skilled ‘intermediate’ laborer**. It is asserted that low level of employment is basically resulted from the low level of education of the workforce which means low skilled or unskilled laborer. So, it is expected that skilling the existing workforce with qualifications in line with the new technological improvements will enhance employment because the changed labor market now requires workforce equipped with new skills like technology literacy, adaptable to flexible working conditions, presentable, team work ability in addition to technical knowledge.

However,

A small core of highly competent people is needed in these sections of the economy (Cox, 2000), and they are employed in what has been called the Post-Fordist mode of production and work organization. However, for large sections of the economies, the organization of production and work is not very different from before (Carnoy, 1999; Lorenz, Lundvall and Valeyre, 2004).

According to all “social partners” interviewed, skill development enabling workforce to become more competent and qualified labor is necessary for their adaptation to continuously changing condition of the labor market. As seen in the expressions of the social partners, the integration of workforce with low vocational qualification into the labor market is considered as a way of ‘vulnerable’ people, as they are faced with the risk of being unemployed, to be socially included. On the other hand, having **become multi-skilled and flexible labor**, in other words; highly competent people, is anticipated **not to be sufficient for social inclusion** of a large group of people who have unskilled or less-skilled because it is asserted that change in today’s organization production and work for the large sections of economies is not totally differentiated from the previous one, just for a small section, flexible work

and production is valid. With regards to this, **increase in the number of skilled labor** employed is **not** anticipated to be **high as expected** because;

“Our labor power sector feeds mostly from services sector... The number of the employed in industry is the same, stable. The dissolvment in the agricultural sector is speeding up. The ratio of services sector in the total employment figures is increasing day by day. But the structure of services sector shows that it cannot generate a qualified labor power.” (ÇSGB)

Despite the possibility of less demand for skilled intermediate labor on the perpetually changing market, **increasing the number of high-skilled intermediate workers** is aimed **through the restructured vocational education** and training. It is stressed that **skilling**, especially **for manual labor**, is needed for ensuring their **employability** in a competitive market. With the purpose of increasing the skilled intermediate workforce, the need for producing more skilled labor through a new VET system which is much more compatible with the demands of the labor market has been discussed for the last decade, but the discussions on the necessity of restructuring the existing vocational education and training system have been intensified in parallel to the accelerating EU harmonization process after 2000s. In this context, some structural reforms on VET system, as mentioned in Chapter 3, have been undertaken. One of the basic aims of the reforms is to draw the attention and interests of young people to the vocational education and training.

Despite that, difficulty of guiding young people towards vocational education and training has been observed. More importantly, **high level of disinterestedness to vocational education** is overtly seen in the society. The main reason of this low interestedness of the youth is that occupations to be acquired are **not found as fit to themselves** because they are perceived as lower prestigious occupations in society. In general, people desire to have **higher prestigious** jobs or occupations like doctor, engineer, and advocate rather than being car mechanic, welder. In addition to their prestige, the formers were much preferred than the latter jobs because possibility of earning **satisfactory and sufficient income for better standards of living** is higher with more prestigious occupations.

“One graduates from industrial vocational school and becomes electrical technician but does not perform it. Why? Because everyone wants to become a lawyer or a doctor... They do not consider employment in fact... As a matter of fact, everyone is looking for a status... Since mobility is high in our country; a

herder can become the president. The importance of vocational guidance is seen in these examples.” (ÇSGB)

“One of the dimensions of the issue: The segment of the society called bourgeoisie does not wish their children to get their hands dirty literally. This is one of the reasons why the vocational education is not attracting. This situation is the result of a mentality wishing their children to graduate from the university and become an engineer but not to get involved in literally dirty jobs.” (MEB)

Furthermore, occupations acquired through VET schools and institutions do **not provide** them with **satisfactory and proper working conditions** (i.e. a good salary, job security and social security). The VET graduates are mostly working in **informal sector** without social security and with no job security. Even if they do have any idea how the work they desire is conceptualized, they are in the search of ‘**decent work**’, which is described as “promoting opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive works, in the conditions of freedom [expression and getting organized], equity, security [i.e. social security, job security] and human dignity” (ILO, 1999: 3). It is a term characterized by “productive and secure work” (ILO , 2009) implying the work in better quality and with better income. Considering the main aspects of decent work, disinterestedness of young people to VET training becomes more understandable. Disinterestedness to VET and desire for decent works are expressed by the representative of institutions providing vocational training in different ways on behalf of the young people, as follows:

*“One graduates from vocational school but does not work in his/her **field**. There are a lot of people like this. These children **do not want to work in hard conditions or with low salaries...** Since the wages policy is wrong in that hard jobs are not paid high salaries, they do not prefer to work in such jobs. If s/he sees that the same salary can be earned as a cashier let’s say in clothing sector, s/he would not prefer to earn it at a more tiring job. People are not getting the deserved salary. If they are not paid minimum wages, then they would not prefer to become cashier. [Or] they become janitor in their schools rather than performing their profession. Why? Because they consider it **a more clean and decent working environment** and thus prefer it.” (ATVSL)*

*“...the graduates do not prefer to work in **oily jobs** with a salary lower than the minimum” (TESK)*

“What does the family want? That their daughters and sons graduate from the university. That they get desk jobs, clean jobs. They consider the workers of CNC, welders or intermediate staff as secondary staff. ” (OSTIM Training Coordination)

“...the parents wish their children work in clean jobs. In addition to this, they cannot stand troublesome education like the vocational. Because we have the mentality of earning MEBy in desk jobs not with hand labor... The vocational education we give necessitates great effort. This is also considered to be difficult...” (OSTİM Apprenticeship Centre)

As the decent working conditions are not provided for the people, they will prefer working at a different place requiring another occupational skills different from his/her own skills obtained in the school. On the other hand, accepting the working conditions of technicians as hard and improper in all cases and that such conditions lead to low status might be seen as over-generalization. Moreover, it is thought that this **over-generalization** tendency can be changed **by the media**. For instance;

“...The press should produce more programs about the honest ways of making a living rather than show programs. For example there was once a miniseries called ‘En Son Babalar Duyar’ where it was shown that a CNC worker’s life was not so bad at all. That kind of programs should be produced more. Another example is ‘Ekmek Teknesi’. We see that a baker can also, survive. They have to show that every profession is sacred, you can make a living and lead a quality life.”(ATVS)

On the other side, there might be different motivations for young people and their families who are preferred not to obtain vocational training such as:

“I want to hire an apprentice for a 500-600 TL salary. But they do not like it. Why? They say that they will work day and night in the industry, paid 600 TL; that they do not need that. I ask why he does not need such a salary he says that he lives in his home, that he is given fuel and food allowance, that he can handle his needs with the green card and that he gets this 600 TL just sitting at his home.”(OSTİM Training Coordination)

This is another point of view on the disinterestedness of people to the vocational education and training. In addition to these, **poor technical capacity of the educational institutions** obstructs students to learn updated information and gain skills needed by the market. The deficiency related to technical capacity negatively affects the concern of young people and their families towards VET. As a result, vocational school graduates are mostly unemployed or work in poor conditions (without social security and with minimum wage).

“There is a problem in salary policies and social security premiums of workplaces for vocational school graduate because informality is high in them...”

This causes a loss of security on the part of the youth. Therefore they do not want to get vocational education” (ISKUR)

As these working conditions are worsening the living conditions rather than bettering quality of life, they **cannot feel satisfied** even though they are obliged to work under these conditions. Mostly, graduates of VET schools have to work under worse working conditions but higher wage or under better, ‘proper’ conditions but with fewer wages. This dissatisfaction drives the workforce a perpetual seeking for a different and more satisfactory job throughout his/her life. The seeking for a better job might lead to the **long-lasting state of discontentment at work** or the state of **unemployment which brings about the feeling of anxiety and fear about the future.**

“The vocational school graduates get a job in some way or another. You can find a job with a 700-800 TL salary anywhere for them. But since the working conditions are worse and they do not like the job, they prefer working as instance janitor for 500 TL of salary. How far they would get satisfied in these jobs is another issue too...” (ISKUR)

“The neo-liberal condition results in an endless race among the people in terms of employment. Four or five times of profession change throughout a life-time is being discussed now, that is totally inhumane. It is impossible for an individual to have a capacity knowledge and skill for five different professions.” (DISK)

Furthermore, the mentioned dissatisfaction can be resulted from the negative perception, in the society, for the jobs undertaken or occupation acquired. As expressed before, some jobs or occupations are perceived to be placed on **low status** because works of the dissatisfying jobs are **simplified and casualised**. This simplification is about both the duties of works, but actually resulted from the **fragmentation of works** in parallel, **decomposition of labor** as manual and mental. in respect to this decomposition, **manual labor** have always been matched with **working class people** as the manual works do not require high skills or better level of education. So, people from working class are mostly employed at manual works as they are relatively deprived of many economic resources and opportunity to access better education enabling them to overcome easily the mental works. So, all these circumstances are anticipated to bring about **social exclusion** for lower class people.

Consequently, the interest in vocational education is very low in Turkey. It has several reasons but one of major reasons behind the existing disinterestedness seems as desire for freer of low social status. That is to say, ‘poor worker families’ and ‘technical training’ are always matched and this leads to a social trauma in the children who see ‘better’ living standards. It was normal at the beginning because technical training was seen as essential for fulfilling the need of worker during the rapid industrialization periods. Nobody wants to live at low standards of living, to have less accessibility to social services. Related to that, as the newer generations do not want to have a similar quality of life as their parents, they want to hold and benefit from new opportunities for upward mobility. For them, vocational and technical training means to sustain the poorer living conditions, not to avoid.

Modularity/Flexibility

Up to date, there has been no opportunity to return to school and terminate their education for the ‘dropped outs’ in the current education system; however, the national secondary education system, which has been reformed in parallel to the structural adjustment programs for EU Accession, now enables individuals, who have already been withdrawn the formal education, to **be re-joined to the system**, as explained in detail under Chapter 3. This has been occurred as a result of transition from fixed and inflexible educational structure to a changeable and flexible structure. Flexibility in education system has been ensured through modular training programs.

“All the educational programs that are part of MEGEP are reconsidered as modules. By means of these modules, the modulations among professions and the levels of professions will be possible.” (MEKSA)

“Students sometimes leave their education as a result of some problems (economic etc). They become part of the labor force and work. Ten years later let’s say, they want to complete their education. They say for instance ‘I have 1 more years. I can complete my modules and my education’. A housewife wants to improve herself on a subject. She attends a course and gets certificate. The same is true for prisoners... They do not want to waste their time, they want to get education. [With the modular system] we can provide these to them” (ATVS)

Modularization of the training programs implies that learners can utilize the programs, separately. For instance, learners can select a training module on the basis of their needs or interests either for having an occupation or acquiring competency.

After the completing the modules belonging to the field of an occupation, learners can get a certificate confirming the level of competency.

“The modular system established by means of MEGEP is based on sufficiency. Within the scope of this project, sufficiency criteria are set and modules are prepared. When the students learn these modules, s/he will get sufficiency. S/he will get degree in the end. I believe that this will ease employment both in the country and abroad.” (ATVS)

All in all, the vocational education system has become more flexible in line with changes as a result of transition towards more flexible production and work organization. The need for ensuring flexibility through modularity in education system is caused by the need of producing individuals resistant to harsh conditions arising from economic crisis; which means adaptable individuals to the rapidly changing conditions. Through modular training system, individuals learn how to behave in the face of any change affecting their life and thus, become familiar with flexible conditions and rapid changes. In this sense, for today, level of qualification of any workforce depends on its capability of adapting and upgrading itself because working life is running and changing very fast.

“.....of course the high quality of labor force is very important but today the institutions are very unstable and mobile... They can be established today in Romania, then in Egypt. They thus prefer to employ labor force adaptable to these circumstances.” (DISK)

“The professions are constantly in change and it should not be considered only in terms of the children raised... Teaching profession is changing too. They should abandon traditional and didactic teaching methods and adopt a more guider’s perspective. There are teachers resisting to this. Therefore the teachers who completed their service should retire immediately. Younger teachers who are more inclined to easy adaptation to changing circumstances should be integrated into the system” (MEB)

As seen, adaptability of labor to the flexible and rapidly changing conditions is significantly important for employability. Otherwise, individuals have a risk of being unemployed and so, socially excluded. The possibility of such a risky situation may lead to that individuals usually feel anxiety and insecure. In case individuals feeling themselves under insecure conditions have increased and therefore, their feelings of anxiety and fear have deepened, it is likely to trigger emergence of a state of anomie in the society.

This rapidity may easily put the stable, inflexible and resistant worker out of the labor market, which means to become unemployed. On the other hand, flexibility in the education system is seen as easy transition from formal to non-formal education or from one vocational branch to another provided that must courses are received. Moreover, this modular (flexible) structure offers those, who are working and at the same time wants to continue education to complete or improve his/herself, to arrange working and studying times as to his/her own suitability. But, in this case, **time allocated for studying means to diminish his/her spare time for self-actualization**. Although studying time is also fruitful time for the self-development but, in the last instance, it is of service to the interest of employers and in general term, the labor market.

“All the schools are integrated under single program as part of MEGEP. Today it is easier to transfer among regular schools to vocational schools or trade tourism school to girl’s vocational school and there to industrial vocational school... The students have the chance to choose among fields where they can express themselves, find themselves. This is a positive development...” (ATVS)

In addition to that, increase in the working time results in decrease in leisure time needed for reproduction of human being. Instead of some fruitful activities, the limited time of the ‘overloaded’ laborer is covered by some destructive emotions like fear and anxiety; particularly on job loss.

“The workers started to work longer hours after the economic crisis. It is considered as one of the reasons of the stability of the employment...The person working for 63 hours would be totally exhausted and in addition to this s/he will live with [the fear of losing job] anxiety. They are already striving hard so that their workplace won’t be shut down and that there won’t be a loss of profitability. It makes no sense leaving them with such fears additionally!” (ÇSGB)

Economic crisis triggered the flexible working time; which means the extension of working hours. This leads to workers to be deprived of leisure time for self-realization. Under these circumstances, individual satisfaction and happiness in their spare time will be replaced by fear and anxiety.

CHAPTER 5

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AS AN APPROACH OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT OR OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT?

This chapter focuses on the interviews Interviews held with the concerning social stakeholders of the process of restructuring of national vocational education and training were analyzed in the light of the conceptions of human development and human resources development. These two themes are handled considering the most frequently used terms by the Social Stakeholders to reflect their perceptions on the restructuring the national vocational and technical education. These terms are Lifelong Learning (LL), Employment/Employability and Modularity/Flexibility.

5.1 The Conceptions of HD and HRD

Human development (HD) is a term, as Fukuda-Parr and Kumar stated, accepted in the development economics literature as an expansion of human capabilities, a widening of choices, an enhancement of freedoms and a fulfillment of human rights (Fukuda-Parr and Kumar, 2003: xxi). With the adopting this perspective, the emphasis on increase in income through economic growth was replaced by the emphasis on human well-being. Thus, people are moved to the centre of development agenda. Furthermore, “human development is assumed to have two sides: One is the formation of human capabilities – such as improved health, knowledge and skills– through investing in people. The other side is the using those acquired capabilities for employment, productive activities, political affairs and leisure. A society needs to build up human capabilities as well as ensure equitable access to human opportunities” (Haq, 2003: 18-19).

This approach was embodied with the Human Development Reports prepared by UNDP since 1990. From the perspective of UNDP, human development is defined as process of enhancing choices for individuals and ensuring necessary and convenient conditions for

healthy and long life, better standards of living and access to information. As stated by Mark M. Brown, administrator UNDP in 2003, “human development has also altered the way we assess progress. Progress can be judged only if we see marked improvements in the lives of people – in their health, in their levels of education and in their sense of security. Ultimately, development is about improving the quality of people’s lives” (Fukuda-Parr & Kumar, 2003: v). In this sense, human development differs from market-oriented neo-liberal approaches; for instance, human resources development focusing on accumulation of human capital as the means for economic growth.

The key conception which identifies economic growth-based development approach; human capital, was replaced by another key conception identifying human development approach; human capability. Amartya Sen (2003) put forth difference between these two concepts as follows: “human capital concentrates on the agency of human beings –through skill and knowledge as well as effort- in augmenting production possibilities whereas human capability focuses on the ability of human beings to lead lives they have reason to value and to enhance the substantive choices they have” (Sen, 2003:35). That is to say; “capability refers to a person’s freedom to choose between different ways of living” (Ibid: 35). In respect to this, the most remarkable difference between these two concepts is that human beings are seen as ‘means’ of economic growth for human capital-based approach whereas they are seen as ‘ends’ of social change/development for human capability-based approach. The reason why human beings are the ‘ends’ for the latter approach is that capabilities of human beings and their expansion are considered as instrument for social change, implying well-being, in addition to economic change. For Sen, “capability serves as the means not only to economic production (to which the perspective of ‘human capital’ usually points), but also social development” (Ibid, 36-37).

For all these reasons, the main objective of development for Sen is “to ensure well-being, expand freedom of people and enhance people’s choices, not only increase efficiency of workforce and productivity for economic growth” (Ibid, 36). In respect to this, the notion of *education* is seen as an issue vital for ensuring accessibility of human beings to socio-economic opportunities (i.e. job, public services) whereas the notion of *training* are emphasized by neo-liberal tendencies for producing qualified workforce for economic growth. However, as human development perspective focuses on expanding freedoms for people like access to social opportunities which enhances individuals’ capabilities, the notion

of education basically concerns with school enrolment and literacy rather than focusing on vocational training for producing more educated labor force. That is to say, “while human development approach views investment in education as having intrinsic value for human lives, the human resources development approach stresses how education enhance productivity, and have important value for promoting economic growth” (Fukuda-Parr S. , 2003: 94). “Human development recognizes education as human rights, while neo-liberalism considers them investments with high [economic] returns” (Jolly, 2003: 85). Considering this difference, the term ‘human capability’ is matching to ‘human development’ whilst the term ‘human capital’ is matching with ‘human resources development’.

So, in order to avoid confusion of human development (HD) with the term human resources development (HRD), it is better to describe clearly the term HRD as “the formation of human capital”, in contrast to HD as “the formation of human capability”. The perspective ‘human resources development’ is defined as “the process of developing human skill or competence in producing goods and services in the society” (UNDP, 1987). “Although manpower planning of the 1950s failed to prepare most countries to handle the educational crises in the 1960s and 1970s, a variation on it—human resources development— became very popular in the 1980s. With education defined as a basic human need, human resources development became a prerequisite to social or human development and momentum built toward establishing minimum standards of basic education for all individuals, particularly previously disadvantaged groups” (Chabbott & Ramirez, 2000: 179 cited in Hallinan, 2000).

In contrast to the idea that people are the active agent of social and economic change, the understanding of human resources development tends to regard “people as the passive beneficiary of the services provided to meet basic needs” (Fukuda-Parr & Kumar, 2003: xxii). As Parr and Kumar reminded that the concept of satisfying basic needs as the goal of development was a significant influence in policy debates of 1970s. Similarly, “the concept of human resources development – i.e., investing in the education of people as a means of accelerating growth- has been well established in the economics literature and is accepted as a critical element of development policy” (Ibid: xxii). Consequently, this approach was rooted to skill development-based understanding.

As mentioned previously, skills that employees are expected to acquire have been developed in parallel to the change in the nature of work organization. That is to say, the nature of

workforce required has shifted from the low-skilled (manual) labor essential for the mass and intensive production to the high-skilled (mental) labor essential for flexible ICT-based production. Taylor (2005: 202) pointed out that in the past, the term ‘skill’ referred to the capabilities to undertake a task and, in the context of work, the skilled worker was one who was trained. Today, the term ‘skill’ is often collapsed with the term ‘competency’ and has come to imply a post-Fordist neo-liberal notion of the attributes of the ‘new’ worker, namely adaptability, flexibility to change with workplace restructuring, competence with new emerging technologies, perpetual training and possessing ‘transferable behavioral characteristics’ (Wyn & White, 2000: 172 cited in Taylor, 2005). Additionally, in the post-Fordist Era, “students in VET system are expected to learn entrepreneurial skills and self-employment fulfilling the needs of the market, rather than wage employment” (Park et al., 2009). For this reason, it is expected skill development-based vocational training to serve for human resources development, rather than capability enhancement-based human development.

It is possible to see the implications of these two perspectives on the national development policies. To understand these implications, the last development plan which was prepared by DPT can be glanced. 9th Development Plan has five development axes; the most relevant two axes of which are *Increasing Employment* and *Strengthening Human Development* (DPT, 2006: 116). Although similar social policies were labeled under the heading of *Development of Human Resources* in 8th Five-Year Development Plan, the social policies were gathered under the term of *Human Development* in the 9th Plan. As seen, there has been terminological shift from the Plan covering the first years of 2000s to the Plan focusing on the developmental strategies that would “contribute to the EU accession process” (Ibid, 12).

In accordance with the HRD-focused employment policies emphasized in the 8th DP, vocational education and training, which is expected to serve the purpose of producing the skilled technical workforce who are perceived as valuable human capital for the sustainable development, have been carefully focused at national level. It is seen that development of human resources in a country contributes to increase in the level of information and skills of individuals. From this point of view, the basic problem related to workforce in Turkey is seen as qualitative, not quantitative (Ata, 2002: 297).

In the following year, in compliance with the two development axes of the 9th Plan as mentioned above, special attention was paid to national VET system in Turkey and its significant role in struggling with the growing young unemployment was taken into consideration. As of the beginning of 2000s, VET was perceived as a functional means for “creating skilled [technical] human resources required by a competitive economy and information society” (DPT, 2006: 97) and reducing the young unemployment. From this point of view, emphasis on “increasing the sensitivity of education to labor demand” (Ibid, 98) as a development objective for *Increasing Employment* was stressed. This objective is based on revision of the existing education system, and in particularly, “transformation to a modular and flexible system in vocational education” (Ibid, 98) in compliance with the change in labor market. Moreover, it aims at training potential workforce, who will “possess basic skills in order to work in groups, to take decision, to solve problems and to undertake responsibilities, by taking lifelong learning strategy into consideration” (Ibid, 98). Acquisition of basic skills is necessary for ensuring and increasing employability of the workforce in the flexible and changing market conditions. Additionally, *Developing Active Labor Policies*, which is a complementary development objective for increasing employment, include “the promotion of employment of disadvantaged groups including the youth in the labor market” (Leney, 2006: 22) through “labor force training primarily entrepreneurship and employment guaranteed programs, professional consultancy and guidance services” (DPT, 2006: 99).

As a another development axe; *Strengthening Human Development*, aims at “raising the quality of life and welfare of the society by ensuring that all segments of the population benefit sufficiently from the basic public services” (Ibid, 99). Education is one of these public services having priority for human development. In this sense, related objective is to enhancing the educational system from pre-school to university education at both the spheres of formal and non-formal education. The idea of enhancing the existing education system is to “support the development of human resources” (Ibid, 100). Consequently, it is seen that 9th Plan, in fact, focuses on development of human resources although it concerns with human development.

5.2 Analysis of the Interviews

Lifelong Learning

Lifelong learning is mostly perceived as a functional instrument serving the purpose of making labor force adaptable to the flexible market conditions and rapid changes in economic and social life. Since the **‘transformation’ of the labor force as more adaptive and flexible** labor need to be very fast, the existing formal education with a limited period of time will not be adequate for this likely transformation. Moreover, this process is anticipated to be inclusive for everyone in society, but **formal education** will not again achieve this goal because it doesn't cover adults, dropped outs, housewives who are either thrown out the education system or inaccessible to the further educational opportunities. On the other hand, **non-formal education** is insufficient so as to cover all these transformation process. For instance, *public training courses* are not adequate in terms of their technical capacity so as to fulfill the needs of the market economy, or on-the-job training as another practice of non-formal education may not provide a satisfactory workforce training service because of its high cost of investment for the employers. In this context, need for **combining these two main forms of education** to each other has revealed. So, they are combined **via lifelong learning practices**.

“One gets graduated from vocational school metal industry field. He gets a degree. However these do not mean that he has a full vocational knowledge suitable for the needs of the market, because technology develops day by day. The demands of the market changes and develops each day. Therefore the labor power supply should be coordinated and harmonized according to the needs of the market. This can only be achieved by education designed according to the market analysis data” (İŞKUR)

In today's globalized world, ensuring adaptability of labor force depends on acquisition of skills, information and competence fitted to the needs of the labor market. In this sense, skills which will fulfill the expectations of the labor market and be acquired via lifelong learning practices become crucial for everyone. The most preferable skill for today's global market is described as **“to learn how to catch fish, rather than to catch fish”**. This means that to know how to use information we have is more valuable than to use it. To say explicitly,

“Nowadays vocational education has become alike the university education necessitating skills. Globalization has also changed work organization. Knowledge has become of power in terms of compatibility. Therefore the ways of accessing knowledge should be taught rather than an overload of knowledge.”
(DPT)

At this point, significant need for a **vocational guidance**, which is also called as career consultancy in the terminology of the human resources development, has become apparent. Although this guidance is provided for ensuring the employability of the individuals, in this context, necessity of the continuity of this guidance services has been stressed both by the public authority and representative of employers’ organization. In brief, vocational guidance is perceived as one of the major component of lifelong learning practices:

“We need to improve the quality of our labor power by means of continuous education. I mean the education should not be considered as a nonrecurring fact, there should be the philosophy of lifelong learning... Therefore we need to provide professional career development programs for the educating youth, the unemployed and the existing labor power.”(ISKUR)

“A good service of carrier consultancy and professional guidance is needed. Student advisors should pay more attention to this. ... Similarly, the number of career consultants and vocational guiders should be increased and the quality of consultancy services should be improved in provincial boards of employment. It should be understood that the choices should not be made randomly. Our aim is to contribute to the professional decisions of the students other than directing them. By means of the communication of labor market and vocations to the students, they will make their decisions; information about these should be conveyed.” (ISKUR)

“We place great value on vocational guidance and want the MEB to pay special attention to it. We want the students are oriented to the fields they can handle and got skills so that they perform the jobs they know, got skills and joy, because this will increase the efficiency.” (TISK)

In parallel to vocational guidance, necessity of monitoring of the current capacity of the workforce has been pointed so that adaptable capacity of the workforce to the latest changes in labor market can be ensured. Accordingly, lifelong learning requires individuals “to be monitored and assessed [in all domains throughout life] for purposes of their potential for economic productivity” (Hasan, 1999). Such a **regular monitoring** and assessment of individuals’ capabilities is carried out with the aim of need for planning human resources; i.e. allocating the human resources compatible

with the demands of the labor market. Today, the unique means of monitoring the workforce is the labor market needs survey conducted under the coordination of ISKUR with the help of Provincial Employment Councils. The major function of this survey is to match the skills demanded by the labor market with the skills supplied at local or regional levels.

Another benefit of this survey influencing the education system is to reveal the need and importance of continuous **updating of the training programs** compatible with the change in needs of employers. But first of all, the necessity of **updating skills** and information that workforce have already acquired has also been emphasized because training programs provided through the lifelong learning practices are ultimately the instruments available for facilitating the process of skill development for workforce. This need is expressed as follows:

“The tailor of today is different from what it used to be 30 years ago. Therefore the competent workers should renew themselves by means of the training provided by such LL centers and in service training. The dialog between labor market and education, or school-institution dialogue is really important.” (DPT)

“In the past a program was used for 10 or 20 years. These modules now made a continuous update on the part of both the trainer and the trainee enabling a continuously changing program rather than a fixed one. Updates of modules will become possible by means of the communication between sector representatives.” (ATVS)

“There is now such a mentality: a person should change his/her job 7 times throughout the work life... Even the content ones should do this...There are package programs now for you to catch up. Professions and life is changing. The fields of need for the labor market changes. The vocational competency should change accordingly.” (DPT)

As seen, the need of updating skills requires revising and renewing the training programs. Even though education programs are revised in compliance with the market's demands, the **enterprises** might be obliged to **re-train the employees** whether they are VET school graduates or not.

“The institutions re-train the staff at work. They have to do this because the harmony at work, harmony of workers with the machinery can only be achieved this way... The education they get at school is something else.” (TISK)

“The graduates with grade 5 are not oriented to vocational education, only the ones with grades lower than 3 or 5... Then what? The students incapable of the

basic addition and subtraction go to vocational high schools... These kids graduate with difficulty. Then what? They go to the industry sector... What can the businessman do? He tries to find solution on his own. He starts to educate them on his own. This is a waste of time... This causes material waste... He loses his reputation by the mistakes until he learns..." (OSTIM Training Coordination)

However, there are two complementary implications of the on-the-job training activity for the employers. On the one side, employers minimize the likely risk of any failure of the new employees. On the other side, they invest their own human resources for increasing their productivity for their own interests. In this context, it is clear that training of workforce is, in the last instance, for the benefit of employers, rather than that of employees. The only gain of employees is to become an employable labor. Despite this unbalanced benefit distribution, employers complain about taking more financial responsibility of workforce training because they think that labor is the ultimate beneficiary of this process. But on the other hand, one of the largest trade unions, DÍSK, advocates that employers have to take more **financial responsibility** to provide on-the-job training for employees, rather than to delegate to the individuals because employers are the ultimate beneficiary, rather than the employees:

"There is another education the cost of which is paid by the employer as part of their responsibilities... If the employers are so much willing to hire qualified staff, they can provide vocational retraining the cost of which is paid by them, rather than leaving the costs of vocational education on the shoulders of the society. They retrain from such an education and wish to leave the costs of vocational education to the public. If they have such a need, they should pay for the expenses." (DÍSK)

Moreover, DÍSK actually criticizes the assertion that beneficiary of the training process should meet the cost of his/her own training throughout life and suggests that instead of trained individuals, the enterprise as the ultimate beneficiary will undertake the financial obligation of the trainings for the employees they recruited:

"...in neo-liberal discourse, it is claimed that the beneficiaries of this [training] should be responsible for its costs. But I would like to propose another claim: we should reverse the sentence 'the beneficiaries pay the costs' into 'the capital as the beneficiary should pay the costs.'" (DÍSK)

In fact, the idea behind on-the-job-training provided by employers is fed by the motive of employers to protect their own interests and maximize their profits:

“This not only done for the benefit of the worker but also for their own benefit; because the efficiency of the worker increases the efficiency of the products which in turn increases the compatibility. This is really important for the employer...” (TISK)

Employment/Employability

Providing people with **favorable income resources** is one of the basic aims for the *human development* perspective. This is crucial because favorable income resources enable people to establish **better living conditions or improve** the existing one. The most efficient way of achieving this aim is to **provide employment opportunity** for individuals. To **have a good job or to work with a satisfactory wage** enable people to sustain better life. On the other hand, for the *human resources development* perspective, the motivated force behind providing employment for people is, in fact, to **include ‘workforce’ into the production process** for profit making rather than ensuring better living conditions for people. As is clear, the core issue of these two perspectives differs from each other. The former focuses on bettering the life of human beings in favor of the employees whilst the latter focuses on maximizing the profit by utilizing human capital in favor of employers.

Although the national development policy in Turkey basically considers human development approach, the main concern is; however, the development of human resources. As stated in the 9th Development Plan, investing on people is perceived as investing on human capital and the main instrument is described as the education system. In particular, training of workforce in compliance with the market demands is the reification of investing on people, who comprise the reserve of national human capital. In parallel to the changes in globalized labor market, the understanding of education and training, in general, is shifting towards the understanding of **skill development-based training for his/her employability**. The reason why emphasis on skill development through training has been strengthened is that the skills redefined with the name of generic skills are accepted as the pre-requisites for entering into the labor market. In other words, importance of vocational skills was replaced by the **necessity of generic (basic) skills for employability** of individuals. These new skills commonly demanded by the labor market are expressed as follows:

“The currently needed skills for employment are true for the life itself... To begin with, the capability to use new technology is very important... Negotiation ability is important... I mean the importance of such capabilities as being analytical, practical and investigative are increasing nowadays compared to the past... But I believe the most important thing is to be able to use new technology... It is important to have the needed knowledge, the educated ability to put this into practice, having such abilities demanded by the private sector...” (TOBB)

“There is now no guarantee of keeping a profession that you are trained for. You will need those skills may be later or maybe the profession will be disappeared. You need to have different skills enabling you to change your job. The employers believe that if someone has a capacity of quick learning, knows computer skills and foreign language, they can be taught vocational knowledge in six months.” (DPT)

In parallel to the demand for some basic skills to be learnt, there is a common view emphasizing on the necessity of minimizing the decisive role of public authorities in the planning and developing process of the training programs. Rather, it is stressed that private sector should be involved and become more decisive in these planning studies. It is believe that **shifting the decisiveness role** from the public authorities towards the private sector will help to overcome the problem of mismatching of labor qualifications supplied with those demanded. This assertion becomes clearer with the expressions of the representatives of an employer organization and policy implementer:

“We believe that the practical education on vocational training should be handed over to some institutions from the state’s responsibility...the state should only provide the framework, the educational programs and education span but the practical training part should be in institutions responsibility. The state should not intervene because the most accurate information on the needed quality and skills of the labor power can be detected by the institutions. The Board of Vocational Adequacy founded with MEGEP project will certify the adequacy of skills. This process will deactivate the influence of the state in time.” (MEKSA)

“The institutions find the students of vocational education insufficient. Therefore they do not have a positive regard for vocational education. However they also need qualified employees and institutions that will provide them. In fact if they [the institutions] support and help vocational high schools and training centers, they will be able to help the training of the needed labor power.”(TESK)

“I believe that the graduates of vocational high school do not have the needed quality by the market. We believe that we give needed knowledge and skills here but the education system should also be reformed by means of a change in curriculum. We give theoretical education in our centre. The institutions where

*they are employed give practical skills knowledge. We train them together.”
(OSTİM Apprenticeship Centre)*

The driving force behind the emphasis on the necessity of strengthening the decisive role of enterprises in training process as a whole is the **intensifying competitive atmosphere** in global economy. In other words, employers need to intervene in the all relevant sectors influencing the economy. The primary sector is seen as the education system which produces human resources and in this sense, affects the competitiveness of the enterprises. However, this covert motive of the employers, which is legitimized by emphasizing that this intervention is requisite for ensuring employability of the workforce, is paraphrased as follows:

“The economy has become so competitive that it is not enough anymore for the employer that a machinist has only that skill learnt at school. It is important that the staff does good job... But of course if the education given in vocational schools were better, the employer would prefer those graduates” (TOBB)

“The employment problem in vocational education can be solved by educating students as mental laborers rather than hand laborers... They should become designers rather than tailors because only in this way the competitiveness of Turkey can be increased.” (DPT)

“Turkey does not have a chance of competition in the qualified and cheap labor power for textile industry. It is believed that we should produce high quality textile products and should become a brand. But how will [Turkey] we do this? We need to have our own designs. Our own designs and texture should be improved; they should be creative. High quality staff is needed for that; they should be educated according to this.” (TESK)

In addition to providing vocational training services so that unskilled people can gain new types of skills and become employable labor, they can be **encouraged to be entrepreneurs** to generate their own ‘job’ opportunity. This is also seen as a need for development, but on the basis of human resources development perspective. To say,

*“People should enrich themselves in their occupation or in other fields and do some certain things. This is not accomplished when people do not have entrepreneurial soul. One gets graduated from vocational school and expects the state to provide a job. The expectations of state help in occupation, such an ongoing mentality for years; if this country would develop, it is for everybody.”
(OSTİM Apprenticeship Centre)*

*“...LL is a market discourse that orientates education to the enterprise society where learners become an **entrepreneur of themselves**.Essentially, learners*

become the entrepreneurs of their own development. What the states provide are the tools that facilitate and audit the process.” (Olssen, p.41)

The realization of this tendency cannot be achieved only under the responsibility of policy makers. In accordance with a prevailing discourse of ‘**social partnership**’ in the globalized era, collaboration among social partners, which are policy makers, employers and employees, have being intensively stressed. This discourse, which is increasingly emphasized in parallel to the EU harmonization process, implies sharing the role and responsibilities on national employment policy including training of workforce and development of human resources among these partners.

“While new regulations regarding the vocational education are done in line with EU harmonization process, we as the Ministry started to meet social parties including Turkish Employment Organization. What I mean by social parties are worker’s unions and confederations.” (ÇSGB)

“TOBB, TUSIAD, TISK, Türk-İş, Hak-İş are part of the process of the program development and the determination of vocational standards... We are the coalface of the process. The strategic planners should be the social parties. We need make studies on this.” (MEB)

“Vocational education is one of our priorities... The development of vocational education... The private sector and the industry need vocational education graduates. The most important thing is the development of the coordination between industry and schools... In the end, the vocational is about training the needed staff in line with the needs assessment... Secondly, the continuity of the coordination between the employer and the school, whether secondary or high...” (TOBB)

Although the participatory approach is also adopted and considered as important by the proponents of *human development* approach, **participation** to the decision-making processes related to national employment policy is becoming a **compulsory collaboration** for the social partners. As expressed by the representative of MEB, participants of the collective works focusing on the reciprocal relationship between employment and vocational education change all the time in each meeting or relevant activity.

“For instance we conduct a meeting on the strategic development of LLL. The representatives of all social parties attend the meeting but since each time a different representative attends, the continuity of the studies is slow.” (MEB)

Changing chronically participants of these works impedes the sustainability of the ongoing works. This is crucial because continuity ensures, especially for the social partner; employers, **stability**. And, stability, in terms of the field of economy, means stable economic growth through continuing increase in **productivity**. So, **discontinuity** in all market-related works carried out by social partners is still ongoing problems to be immediately overcome.

Modularity/Flexibility

As previously mentioned, the stable and inflexible structure of the national secondary education system has been transformed towards a more flexible and sensitive to the changing occurred in labor market. Flexibility of the system is based on the availability of the modular educational programs which are open to regular changes. Changes to be realized in the education system are determined with the collaborative works of representatives of the private sector, trade unions and public authorities including policy makers and policy implementers.

“We communicate with the social parties now. There have been some issues such as the renewal of the curriculum presented by the employers which are taken more seriously now. They started to follow international developments more closely and this is why the modular educational program is put into practice.”
(ÇSGB)

The focus issues of these collective studies, which are carried out with the aim of maintenance the compatibility of labor supplied with the labor demanded by the market, is based on identification of the labor qualifications required both at national and local levels.

“The most important point on the issue of the education-employment relationship is to make labor power market analysis. I mean we need to know what kinds of and how many staff does the labor power market need? For instance there are lots of agricultural engineer today who are unemployed or machinists. You cannot provide employment for them; they are too many. This analysis of market need of labor power should be made in every city.” (TISK)

Thus, training programs are perpetually renewed in compatible with the needs of the labor market. In particular, there are some views that reforms in the vocational education and training programs as the main instrument for

producing intermediate workforce excessively needed in the national labor should be shaped by mostly taking the demands of the local market into account.

“The structure of vocational education should be determined according to regional needs... If you open a welding course in Marmaris it would be meaningless because Marmaris is a tourism region...Tourism education should be given priority there. Wouldn't they need welders there? Of course they will need but the ratio of needed labor supply changes according to regional needs” (MEKSA)

When workforce needs of local market are considered in the planning process of training programs, it is expected that chance to be employed for workforce will increase because employers will find more appropriate labor who has equipped with the skills fulfilling the job requirements. It is also anticipated that modular training programs, which are regularly revised and updated in compliance with the changes in labor market, brings workforce into skills for employability. Today, the leading policy maker, MEB, is awake to the importance of asking their needs to the employers for maintaining the efficiency of the newly-established modular system:

“What does the sector complains about? That we are not training the expected staff... We promised to solve this problem and done what? Our labor market analysts conducted sectoral analysis. They asked all the staff about their jobs and listed them. The vocational standard was determined. The modules are determined by means of the educational standards.” (MEB)

The motivation behind continuous update of the training programs is rapid change of occupations occurred as a result of the **rapid technological improvements** and accordingly flexibilisation at work organization. These changes are obliged to shifting a **modular (flexible) system**. This flexibility in the education system enables individuals to change their occupation, if necessary, and thus, increase chances of employability for workforce.

“The professions faced a fast change due to globalization. In the past, the professions used to stay stable for 40-50 years but they are now in a continuous change. Everyday a new shortage of labor power is seen in a new field. In order for a modulation among professions, the education system should have a flexible structure. The modular education makes this possible.” (DPT)

“[In vocational education] the most important change is the modular system. The modular education provides a flexible structure to the vocational education.

*You can now switch between two fields. For instance, after you complete the common modules of two different fields, you can also get a certificate for another field by completing its modules. You can both get your degree of vocation and get a certificate for the modules of another vocation. This will enable the child to have certificate in different areas even though s/he is a graduate of automotive.”
(DPT)*

In this respect, certification of competency is expected to become a prerequisite during the recruitment processes. However, it can be guessed that utility life of the certificates will not last long because of rapid change in work and accordingly, in skills to be required by the market. Under this circumstance, it looks like that individuals will scramble for certificates in order to hold chance to be employable.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The main driving force in the beginning of this research was what the political, economic and socio-cultural motives behind insistent endeavor for restructuring the national vocational education and training are. In the course of time, this thought-provoking question was narrowed and reified by concentrating on *human development* as the dominant discourse in the field of development. When the basic dimensions of the human development approach were examined, it was noticed that this approach, in accordance with the globalization process and its destructive social impacts (i.e. rapidly and intensely growing unemployment around the world) rests upon social empowerment of people through ensuring their accessibility to the social resources for better quality of life, in addition to economic empowerment through increasing the level of income for better standard of living. From this perspective, the main concern of the research was formalized through this question: Will the main expectations from the reform efforts on VET system in Turkey, which are both social and economic empowerment as the indispensable goal of human development, be fulfilled or not?

This question is tried to be answered with the guidance of National Development Plans and National Education Councils, and by focusing on the Strengthening Vocational Education and Training System in Turkey Project (MEGEP) executed in collaboration of various social partners from public and private sectors. This Project was scrutinized in association with the changes taken place in knowledge-based global economy and more specifically, concerning changes revealed in work organization and production process. Furthermore, their reflections on the labor at national level were tried to be recognized. It was seen that rapid advancement in information technology in Post-Fordist era intensely affected working conditions, which means the flexibilisation of working time, fragmentation of works and labor, and accordingly, transforming casual habits and daily practices of employees at work. Under these circumstances, tendency for altering job descriptions and labor qualifications required by the labor market, as an urgent need for economic sustainability perceived as the base for

social development, has emerged. More specifically, deficiencies of the existing labor power started to be identified through regular and extensive labor market need surveys, and on the basis of findings of such surveys, skills that labor has to possess was broadly defined required by the perpetually changing labor market. Type of skills demanded and preferred in the competitive labor market were shifted from the vocational skills to the basic (key) skills, which are problem solving, taking responsibility and initiative, team working capability, open to improvement and learning that is to say, skill to 'learning how to learn catching fish, rather than skill to fishing'.

Furthering from this point of view, acquiring the skills identified as the precondition for recruitment has become essential for employability for individuals. As seen, in parallel to increase in flexibility in economy and indirectly in social aspects of life, guarantee of employment as a discourse does not exist, anymore. No stable, secure living conditions are the new characteristics of human life. That is to say, potential social problems to be caused by the state of being in insecure and instable conditions are covered by the notion of employability as the new discourse replacing the notion of employment. This idea is fed by the assumption of that today, everything can be changed and this could be continuously and rapidly. The state of change, in this context, means everything can be removed or transformed and the new things (i.e. jobs, occupations) can be emerged. Furthermore, it is expected that this state of insecurity triggers the feeling of anxiety and fear; in other words, a new form of anomie. So, as a social being, individuals should adapt the changing conditions. But for achieving this, individuals need to be well-equipped with some efficient means. This means to be utilized by the individuals is skill.

For this reason, skill development has become a critical asset for ensuring adaptability of individuals. Accordingly, the most efficient way to equip individuals was identified as skill development-based training; rather than traditional understanding of mainstream or vocational education, which play role in producing human resources needed by the economy. Actually, this functional role of education has not disappeared. Instead, it has transformed. The transformation based on discursive shifting is demonstrated in the Figure 3:

Figure 3 Discursive Shifting in the Role of Education and Training

TRADITIONAL DISCOURSE	NEW DISCOURSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supplied-based ▪ Education for employment ▪ Teacher-centered ▪ Separate education and training ▪ Specialization on one skill ▪ Policy making and implementation process under the monopolized power of the State ▪ No transition between formal and non-formal education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demand-based ▪ Learning for employability ▪ Student-centered ▪ Integrated training (Lifelong Learning) ▪ Multi-skill development ▪ Sharing responsibilities: The State (policy maker), private sector (policy implementer) ▪ Open to transition from formal to non-formal education and vice versa

Overall, it can be concluded that education system took the role in producing flexible labor and enhancing the individuals' self-adaptation capability to rapid changes. This is an endless process imposed to individuals, which will bring forth strengthening and expanding the culture of individualism. But, this social imposition is concealed, in other words, legitimized by the 'positive' returns of the notion of lifelong learning for the individuals, such as being free and autonomous in the process of self-learning. So, lifelong learning practices took role in facilitating social, economic and interpersonal integration of people; which means social inclusion.

Moreover, the functional role of education described above has been incorporated into the activities carried out for development of human resources, as one of their indispensable components. If needed to express more explicitly this incorporation, it can be stated, employers also anticipate that employees train and develop themselves by acquiring new skills and competencies. In other words, employers expect that employees upgrade their own vocational skills via additional training courses so that they can be employed. In the long run, it is desired that the labor renew itself in compliance with skills and qualification of occupations demanded at the labor market. It was declared that this was the most preferable way of recruitment for employees. As seen, this is the generation of new educational understanding more sensitive to the needs and fluctuations of the market. Making education more sensitive to the market is the reflection of the New Vocationalism as the dominating educational understanding. With the adoption of New Vocationalism, skilling individuals with basic skills and strengthening the linkage between vocational education and labor market through paving the way of easy transition from school to labor market are aimed.

In Turkey, MEGEP is the reified form of the New Vocationalism. The new vocational education system is organized by considering the economic changes in relation to labor market and skills analysis, by distributing the obligations of the state among the employers, enforcer units and system benefiteres, by including the uneducated persons into the system by means of the flexible education perspective of modular teaching program, by enabling vocational change according to skills, by certifying the knowledge and skills with the national competence system and by supporting the whole system with a life-long learning perspective.

The interviews held for this research put forth that general perception on discursively re-structured vocational education and training system in Turkey rests upon the importance of producing workforce, in particularly, technical labor power, equipped with skills in compliance with the labor market via lifelong learning practices. Although the representatives of labor organizations and partly, of ÇSGB were reserved about the influences of individualized learning process because of its likely

Consequently, training of workforce, either via formal education in schools or on-the-job training as a form of non-formal education implies making investment on human resources. This means making investment on human capital for the interests of the employers, in the last instance. For this reason, it is questionable to assume that reforming the existing vocational education and training will serve for the human development based on enhancing human capabilities, rather than human capital. In other words, it can be asserted that this reform will fulfill economic empowerment of individuals, rather than social empowerment emphasized in human development approach. As a result, it is not anticipated that this reform will bring forth social inclusion for vulnerable people; especially the unemployed, as expected.

APPENDIX

A. The Interviewed Institutions/Organizations

The interviewees, the structures they represent and the reasons behind choosing these structures for the in depth interview is explained below in detail:

1. Policy Makers (public institutions):

1.1. Ministry of Labor and Social Security: The history of the institution goes back to the 1930's. It was restructured in 1982 with the merge of the Ministry of Labor and Ministry of Social Security and named as Ministry of Labor and Social Security. In following years, General Directorate of Labor Health and Safety, Department of EU Coordination, Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR), and Vocational Qualification Agency (MYK) were annexed to the ministry. Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR) has a subcommittee named Provincial Employment and Vocational Training, conducting activities in the context of the relationship between vocational training and employment. Vocational Qualification Agency (MYK) was established in 2006 with the 5544 Law, in order to *determine national qualification conditions in technical and vocational fields based on Professional standards, executing audit, evaluation, and documentation and certification activities*. Its main duty is to establish and operate the “national vocational qualification system” and the 5544 Law dictates that it will collaborate with the Ministry of National Education, Turkish Council of Higher Education, workers, employers and Professional organizations and other relevant organizations. The 1st article of the 3146 Law on the Organization and Duties of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security states the goal of the Ministry as; “regulating and auditing employment, employer-employee relations, labor health and safety, providing, generalizing and improving social security opportunities, protecting and improving rights and benefits of Turkish citizens employed abroad”²⁹. In the process of EU accession, the ministry is directly involved in the restructuring processes of vocational training, due to being the highest

²⁹ <http://www.myk.gov.tr/page.php?page=genel> and <http://statik.iskur.gov.tr/tr/kurumumuz/mevzuat/kanun18.htm>

authority in legislative activities towards adjustment of our labor qualifications to the EU labor market and policy making towards training-employment relations. An interview is conducted with an EU Specialist from the Department of EU Coordination.

1.2. Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR): It was established in 2003 with the 4904 Law, in order to assist protection, improvement, generalization of employment and prevention of unemployment, and executing unemployment insurance services. It is connected to the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, with administrative and financial autonomy. The most central organs of the Agency are the General Directorate and the Provincial Council of Employment and Vocational Training. Under the General Directorate, one of the main service units is the Labor Market Information Services Department, responsible for collecting, analyzing, interpreting and publishing labor market data at local and national levels and establishing the labor market information system. Another unit is the Labor Adjustment Department, assigned to conduct labor and profession analyses, defining and classifying professions and publishing them, providing guidance for students at the stage of selecting vocation, providing consulting services for adults, organizing vocational training, career development and vocational retraining programs in collaboration with relevant institutions and agencies with a lifelong learning approach, providing vocational training and rehabilitation services in order to facilitate employment for social groups with difficulty in gaining employment. Another unit Employment Department is responsible for assisting policy making in the field of employment, regulating hiring and job search, aiding employment of long term unemployed, women, youth, handicapped, convicts and other disabled groups. According to Article 13 of the establishing law, changed on 2008, Provincial Councils of Employment and Vocational Training are established in order to identify the labor force, employment and vocational training needs of the province, developing local policies, planning and decision making for increasing efficiency in vocational training programs at vocational and technical education institutions and enterprises, and on

employment issues and advising relevant institutions and agencies³⁰. Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR) and connected committees are dominant agencies in determining the countries human resources policy and are directly involved in construction of new vocational training and education programs and modules, due to their responsibilities in conducting analyses on labor markets and qualifications. A senior administrator and a specialist from this agency have been separately interviewed for the study.

1.3. State Planning Organization (DPT): While in 1950's when liberal economic policies began to be adopted, the economic role of the state was meant to decline, and public share in investments did not decrease, and in fact, increased in the infrastructure field. Significant increase in expenditures for infrastructure development parallel to agricultural and market economy strengthening, created the need for middle and long term policy and balances to be developed for annual budgets. In other words, the problem of accordance and coordination between macro economic decisions arose. In order to tackle this problem, the idea of more macro level planning for implementing more stable economic policies adjusted to foreign subsidies gained importance. This tendency was actualized with the foundation of the State Planning Organization connected to the Prime Ministry in 1960. Then, in order to speed economic, social and cultural development and provide rational public regulation over the economy, the preparation and implementation of Development Plans was dictated by the 1961 Constitution. The duty of the State Planning Organization is to assist and consult the Government in developing economic, social and cultural policies and goals and coordinating activities related to economic policy. The 1982 Constitution dictated planned development and planning by the state. In 1980's public provisions for strengthening manufacturing sector decreased as a result of the shift towards free market economy. Public Economic Enterprises began to be privatized with the goal of strengthening the private sector. The plans were always considered complementary of the market economy and in this sense; economic and social policies after 1980 were prepared with the goal of strengthening the private sector and in

³⁰ <http://statik.iskur.gov.tr/tr/kurumumuz/mevzuat/kanun2tr.htm>

accordance with the global economical trends. Some examples of this process are Specialized Commission Reports on Life Long Learning or Informal Education, Secondary Education: General Training, Vocational Training and Technical Training, Skilled Labor Power, Professional Standards Regulations and Social Capital Accumulation, prepared for the 8th Development Plan in 2001. Moreover, speeding EU accession process for Turkey has forced DPT to take on organizational restructuring. In 2003 EU Regional Programs Department and in 2009 EU Economic and Social Adjustment Department were established within the organization³¹. Especially after 2000, vocational training became more important among national development policies, parallel to the EU accession process and emphasis on strengthening social capital in development plans. In order to further examine the relationship between development and vocational training, two separate interviews were conducted at DPT; a Planning Specialist formerly working for MEB Projects Coordination Center and another Planning Specialist from the General Directorate of Social Sectors and Coordination.

1.4. Ministry of National Education (MEB): The origins of education and training services in Turkey reach 1800's, gaining an institutional structure with the foundation of the Ministry of Education in Ankara in 1920. Since 1923 the ministry has taken various names, finally named Ministry of National Education in 1991. The ministry is responsible for planning, programming, executing and auditing the formal and informal levels of national education in accordance with the 1924 Educational Unity Law, 1973 National Education Foundation Law and development plans and program. According to 3797 Law on Organization and Duties of MEB accepted in 1992, MEB consists of 4 sections; central unit, local units, abroad units and connected agencies. The central unit includes the Ministry, Office of the Training and Discipline Committee, main service units making administrative decisions on training-education, consulting-auditing units, assisting units and permanent committees. Under this structure units conducting vocational and technical training activities are: General

³¹ <http://www.dpt.gov.tr/DPT.portal>

Directorates (GD) of Male and Female Technical Education, GD of Commerce and Tourism Education, GD of Apprenticeship and Informal Education, Education Research and Development Department (EARGED), Projects Coordination Center (PCC). Connected to the GD of Female Technical Education, there are formal and informal education institutions that serve especially young girls and women but also all individuals towards providing general life skills. These are; Female Vocational and Technical High Schools, Anatolian Female Vocational and Technical High Schools, multi program technical high schools and informal education institutions; Maturing Institutes, Practical Female Art Schools, Application Classes and Kids Clubs. There are also institutions at levels of formal and informal education connected to the GD of Male Technical Education, which states its mission as providing the business world with appropriately skilled labor power towards the development of the country. These are; Industrial Vocation High Schools, technical High Schools, Anatolian Vocational and Technical High Schools, Practical Art Schools, Agricultural Vocational High Schools, Deeds and Cadastre Anatolian Vocational High Schools, Meteorology Vocational High Schools, MEM's, Adults Technical Training Centers and METEM's. Another unit is the GD of Commerce and Tourism Education with the mission of training staff that take responsibility in the development of our country, that pioneer the quality of the service sector, reach and use information, with decision making skill and entrepreneurship. The institutions connected to this GD are; Commerce Vocational High Schools, Anatolian Hotel Management and Tourism Vocational High Schools, Anatolian Communication High Schools, Justice Vocational High Schools and tourism Education Centers. Finally, there is the GD of Apprenticeship and Informal Education, aiming to develop informal education programs for people from every age group and education level, equipping them with business and life skills and training apprentices, foreman and masters that are needed by the labor market. Vocational education centers training apprentices and community education centers that organize various courses for adults. As well as these main service units, there are two units connected to the MEB that directly work on vocational training. The first one is the EARGED. The most important study

conducted by EARGED in this field is the E-Alumni Project, that aims to monitor alumni or vocational and technical secondary education institutions with a web based registration system, in order to determine the level of success for the training program and evaluate the relevance of the training programs to the contemporary needs. Moreover, it conducts studies on evaluating METEM's that combine formal and informal education in smaller populations as well as programs that lost relevance and new vocational fields to be opened for training. Right now, this unit is running the Life Long Learning Development Project³², Secondary Education Project³³ and Human Resources Development through Vocational Education Project³⁴. It plans to launch the Vocational and Technical Education Development in Turkey Project in the near future. The Project Coordination Center works on restructuring vocational education, developing training programs, improving personnel capacity and improving technical infrastructure for formal and informal education institutions. Therefore, a senior administrator from this unit was chosen for interview as the representative of the agency.

2. Employer Organizations

2.1. Turkish Confederation of Employer Association (TISK): With the organization rights for workers and employers given by the 1961 Constitution, Metal Goods Manufacturers Union, İstanbul Wood Manufacturers Union, İstanbul Textile Manufacturers Union, İstanbul Food Manufacturers Union and İstanbul Printers Union formed the confederation in 1962. TISK conducts detailed studies and publishes reports on the relationship between the labor market, education and employment and Turkey's financial situation during the EU succession process. Increasing industrialization and competitiveness and focusing on vocational and

³² The goal of the project is, in accordance with life long learning strategies, to increase accessibility to high quality education appropriate for new technologies and employers' demands, for people in different age groups and education levels, especially women, and to create an institutional roof that is able to offer certification by EU standards. The project is planned to be completed in 2011.

³³ The goal of the project is to restructure, increase the quality of, and to develop general, vocational and technical secondary education systems as well as increase quality by training teachers in accordance with renewed programs. The project is planned to be completed in 2010.

³⁴ The goal of the project is to increase quality of vocational education in the 8 provinces in the East and South East regions, in order to increase the quality of the existing and future labor force, and to contribute to the development and competitiveness of the SME's in the region.

technical education in order to fill the skilled labor gap is among its principles. They have prepared a report titled “Problems of our Vocational Education System and On-the-job Training and Suggestions” in 2004 to be submitted to the Vocational Education Committee. The report emphasizes that due to the conditions of information society we are living in, education and life long learning is an important tool in the changing socio-economic conditions and that vocational training and school-work place cooperation has a key role in international competitiveness for the private sector. TISK is a founding member of the MEKSA Foundation and is represented in MYK and Provincial Employment and Education Committees³⁵. TISK was interviewed not only because it is involved in critical structures that influence the shaping of vocational training processes, but also it voices the employers that complain about the skilled intermediary staff obstacle in protecting competitiveness in the world economy. A specialist from the TISK Research, Education and External Relations Unit was interviewed on the confederations views on vocational training.

2.2. The Confederation of Turkish Tradesmen and Craftsmen (TESK): With the organization rights for workers and employers given by the 1961 Constitution, a law was made in 1964 that transformed the tradesmen-craftsmen organization into the confederation. A change was made to the law in 1991, with which the confederation took on certain rights and responsibilities on the practical applications of the dual vocational training system in the workplace. In this context, vocational education is one of the main fields of operation for TESK. Various vocational training and retraining programs and on the job training courses are organized by the Education and Planning Department, as well as apprenticeship, foreman and master certification courses. These courses are held in METEM that are education centers above companies. The aim of this center is to complete the missing components of practical vocational education that apprentice students receive at the work place and to conduct activities such as technology transfers, vocational retraining and on the job training. Currently, there are 11 METEMs owned by TESK in Turkey, and 2 new

³⁵ <http://www.tisk.org.tr/index.asp>

ones are planned to become active in the near future. The first METEM was established in Ankara and transferred to OSTIM OSB in order to contribute to labor training needed by employers in the region. METEM's training activities include; planning and running training programs based on specific needs of the firms, international education projects, automation systems PLC training programs, CNC training programs, welding programs, furniture making, computer and CAD-CAM courses³⁶. TESK was included in the study because SME's are its members and they intensively employ vocationally trained intermediary staff. Moreover, they directly offer courses that aim to fill the gap in this area. A senior administrator from the TESK Education and Planning Unit was interviewed as a representative.

2.3. The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB):

According to the 5590 Law passed in 1950, TOBB is the official union and legal representative of the private sector in Turkey. The aim of the union is to create solidarity between chambers and commodity exchanges in Turkey, to help the development of commerce and industry towards general interests and to assist its members' professional encounters. In accordance with its purposes, it operates comprehensively by forming various committees and commissions. The union is also concerned about problems of the vocational training field and it established a Vocational Training Commission for more detailed studies on the issue. TOBB is convinced that the root of the problems in this area is in part the business world's lack of involvement and therefore, they prepared a report in 2007 titled "Main Problems in the Vocational and Technical Education Area in Turkey and Proposals" through a commission where various industrial chambers are represented. There are statements on the overall situation of vocational and technical education in Turkey in the report, followed by functional suggestions on possible solutions. Moreover, a restructuring model is offered in order to realize profound changes in the vocational and technical education system in Turkey. This model is thought to be an appropriate prototype for improving existing schools and establishing new agencies³⁷. TOBB is among interviewed agencies because it represents chambers of the industrial sector where intermediary staff work, and it monitors the business

³⁶ <http://www.tesk.org.tr/index001.php>

³⁷ <http://www.tobb.org.tr/index.php>

world and developments very closely. The interviewee is a specialist from TOBB EU Department who was also one of reporters of the Main Problems in the Vocational and Technical Education Area in Turkey and Proposals.

3. Labor Organizations

3.1. Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions (DISK): With the organization rights for workers and employers given by the 1961 Constitution, labor organizations led by Turkey Mining Workers, Plastic Workers, Press Workers, Food Workers and Turkish Mining Workers Unions were united to establish the confederation. DISK defines itself as an independent organization of class and masses. As well as uniting and creating solidarity between 18 member unions, it continues its struggle for basic rights of the working class such as humane work and organization, protection of class interests and preventing any exploitation and coercion towards the working class. DISK Textile Workers Union established the DISK Textile Female Technical and Vocational High School in 1998. IT contributes to vocational education with formal education services in clothing manufacturing technology, textile technology, child development and education and computer technology fields as well as various informal education programs. As a social organization, DISK's contribution to vocational training is not limited to these. DISK was involved in the Vocational Education Development Project (MEGEP) between 2002 and 2007 and Vocational Technical Education Modernization Project (MTEM) between 2003 and 2007. It is still a part of the Provincial Employment and Vocational Education Committee. A specialist is interviewed from DISK Research Institute since DISK is an organization that is an active element of this process and it represents workers in the position of intermediary personnel.

3.2. Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions (TURK-İŞ): Established in 1952, the confederation defines its mission as protecting and advocating workers rights and interests. Turk-İş states that increasing privatization as a result of the changing economic policy after 1980's decreased employment and effected the employment structure of the economy that shifted from industry to the service sector, that technological innovations rapidly change the character of the work, work conditions are changing to the disadvantage

of the workers due to flexible production became widespread and in this changing structure union organizations loose strength. Turk-Is believes, in this context, unions need to restructure themselves and focus on education. In other words, the union states that it is essential to implement “Life Long Learning” for workers. In this perspective, the education commission in Turk-Is is conducting various studies. For Turk-Is, union education is not only for unionized workers but also for unorganized children, youth and women workers. The content of union education has a wide range. Economic issues such as wages, income distribution, social security, collective contracts are included, as well as worker and leadership training, basic vocational training, workers health and work safety training, women, youth and child workers training. Moreover, computer and language training, family and child care training, economy, law, environment, human rights and consumer rights are considered in the scope, in order to train well informed workers. Turk-Is is an active participant in the process and another big organization representing workers. Therefore, a specialist was interviewed from Turk-Is Research Department.

4. Policy Implementers:

4.1. Ataturk Technical and Vocational High School for Girls (ATVS): It is a high school connected to MEB, found in 1928 with the name Evening Female Art School. It was called Institute for Girls in the 40’s, offering cultural courses such as Turkish, civics and music, as well as child care, sewing, fashion, embroidery, laundry, home economy, cooking and general technical drawing. Institutes for Girls offered planned education based on young women’s needs. The purpose is to raise good wives and mothers, as well as informed and cultured citizens. In the 60’s the scope and span of education was expanded. In 1974 it was turned it to a Vocational High School for Girls, and new departments such as ready clothing and food technology were added. When Literature, Mathematics and Natural Science courses are added, the high school curriculum began and the school became a Technical High School. In 1986 the 3308 Vocational Education Law was approved, leading to practical training in work places and various vocational training programs. IN 1990, with the addition of computer,

graphics and ready clothing courses, it turned into Anatolian Vocational High School for Girls. In 1994, MEB's Vocational and Technical Education Development Program identified a need for beauticians and skin care specialists, resulting in the launch of these departments as well as hand crafts technology and dry cleaning. In 1996 the school started to allow male student and was named Ataturk Vocational High School. In the 2004-2005 academic year, it became one of the pilot schools for MEGEP and currently it offers formal courses in 10 vocational topics³⁸ and informal training in three topics³⁹. The school is included in the interviews because it is involved in MEGEP. Instead of personal interviews a focus group session was held with various branch teachers and the school administration.

4.2. OSTIM Vocational Training Center: It is one of the first education centers established after 19.06.1986 when 3308 Apprenticeship and Vocational Education Law came in effect. The center offers adjustment and vocational courses in 139 fields for apprentice candidates, apprentices, foreman, masters and adults. The center has arraignment, printing press, metal works, wood works, motor, plumbing, electric, electronics, hairdressing, PVC frame, cooking workshop and laboratories as well as a dormitory for 100 students. In order to contribute to the vocational and social development of the students, the center organizes evening courses on electrical systems, technical drawing, computer and scouting⁴⁰. The center was chosen for interview due to the need for a close look into the informal education aspect of the transformations we observe in vocational training. A senior administrator was interviewed.

4.3. OSTIM Training Coordination: In 2004 Education Coordination Unit was established at the OSTIM Foundation, in order the answer the training needs of the firms within OSTIM and intermediary staff needs of manufacturers in the region. This unit identifies labor needs of the firms in

³⁸ Formal Education Programs: Information Technologies, Electric-Electronics Technology, Food and Beverages Services, Garment Production Technology, Graphics and Photography, Child Development and Education, Gardening, Shoes and Saddlery Technology, Food Technology and Printing. Informal Education Programs: Food and Beverages Services, Child Development and Education and Beauty and hair Care Services.

³⁹ <http://www.atamml.meb.k12.tr/>

⁴⁰ <http://www.ostimmem.com/index.html>

the region, worker profiles for SME's and organizes training programs⁴¹ in different fields according to these needs. Their mission is to integrate education into the work life and to do this in collaboration with other relevant parties. OSTIM Education Coordination Unit provides on the site training programs according to specific needs of firms as well general public programs. It offers courses on leadership, foreign languages, sales and marketing internally, and technical courses in collaboration with vocational high schools and training centers in the region. Furthermore, they organize courses on various topics according to employers' demands for increasing efficiency and assisting workers in the work place⁴². The reason for this OSTIM unit to be interviewed is that it tries to respond to the much emphasized problems of correspondence between employers' needs and existing skills and weakness of the links between training institutions and work places from the employers' point of view. The interview was held with the administrator of the OSTIM Education Coordination Unit at ODTU-OSTIM Techno-city.

4.4. Foundation for the Promotion of Vocational Training and Small Industry (MEKSA): In spite of the first step towards dual vocational training model based on theoretical training at school combined with practical training at the work place, Turkey failed to show much progress in school-workplace collaboration. Firms are insufficient and uninterested in practical training on the job. MEKSA Foundation was established in 1985 in order to fill this gap. It aims to develop and spread the dual vocational training model based on school-workplace collaboration in order to respond to the need for practical training of technical staff. With this aim, MEKSA Foundation opened 26 METEM2s in 14 provinces and organized short and long term programs in more than 30 vocational topics⁴³ since 1985. More than 50,000

⁴¹ Some of training topics are: Importance of R&D Activities, International Commerce, Industrial Design, , English (typist, technical staff, management), Milling, Turnery, Technical and Professional Drawing, Computer, CAD-CAM, Sales-Marketing, Project Management, Executive Assistance and Public Relations, SME Grant Programs, First Aid Training, Simulated Export Training, International Market Research

⁴² Some of the courses in the program are: Secrets of Success in the Business World, Work Security and Workers' Heath, How to Calculate Production Costs, Sale Techniques, Total Quality Management-Institutionalization, Production Planning and control, Stress, Self Esteem and Sense of Struggle

⁴³ Training topics and branches are: **Electric-electronics** (electrical systems, industrial maintenance-repair, electromagnetic carriers maintenance-repair, electrical appliances maintenance-repair and electrical panel montage), **Automation** (Pneumatics, hydraulics, PLC, sensory, mechatronics), **Computer** (CAD, CAM,

people have benefited from these programs. MEKSA Foundation contributes both to the provision of needed labor force and to the development of the dual vocational training model. The fact that its administration involves specialized agencies in education and employment from the public and the private sector (MEB, ISKUR, KOSGEB, HALKBANK, TOBB, TESK, TISK, TURK-IS) has been key to its success⁴⁴. The foundation was interviewed because it is an important NGO that tries to tackle the much voiced problems of weakness of workplace-school collaboration and the insufficiency of firms in providing vocational training with METEM's. One of the senior administrators represented the Foundation.

Computer Technical Service Staff, Computer Aided Accounting, Web Design, Graphic Design and Computer Operation), **Metal** (arrangement, milling, turnery, welding, mechanical drawing, CNC machine operator, natural gas systems), **Sales-marketing-management** (salesperson, cashier, international commerce, office management and executive secretary), **Tourism** (cooking and service) and **Textile** (confection machines operation)

⁴⁴ <http://meksa.org.tr/site/>

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