

Neo-liberal Transformation in Turkish Higher Education System: A New Story of a Turning Point: Draft Proposition on the Higher Education Lawⁱ

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Abstract

Neo-liberal policies have been affecting in waves all public services in Turkey since 1980s. The most affected institutions in this process were education in general and the higher education institutions in particular. This article consists of two dimensions. In the first dimension, the process, in which the neo-liberal policies started with a breeze in 1980s, but got stronger and stronger in every decade and became a storm to destroy the public space in many parts of the world, will be examined in the context of Turkish and higher education policies. In the second dimension, the focus will be on the attempted changes on the draft proposition of the higher education law which was shared with the public in 2012 and was on the agenda for a considerably long time. The basic assumption of the study is that this draft formed the second most important step of the neo-liberal transformation in the Turkish higher education system, and was actually the shaping of the process into flesh and bones which started in 1980s. Also, this process shows similarities with the countries where neo-liberal policies are implemented, and a common language is used in the destruction of the public space.

Keywords: Neo-liberalism, higher education, capitalism, critical pedagogy.

Introduction

The university/higher education adventure of Turkey, started at the end of the Ottoman Empire and the beginning of the Turkish Republic, has a painful institutionalization history. The university history has had a parallel course with the Turkish political history since the foundation of the Turkish Republicⁱⁱ, and advances simultaneously with the military coups. All the legislative regulations except the university law enacted in

1946 have been enacted by the governments formed following the military coups.ⁱⁱⁱ Thus, the Turkish university history is remembered with the history of military coups. On the other hand, the most fundamental change in the Turkish university history was put into practice following the 1980 military coup when liberal policies and military precautions were put into practice simultaneously.

1980s are important for Turkey in terms of both economical-political structure and educational policies. Turkey's efforts for integration and articulation with world market were intense in 1980s. The economic part of this articulation process was 24 January decisions, and the social part was the 1982 Constitution. The institutionalization of this construction at university level was provided by the Higher Education Law Article 2547 (Aslan, 2008: 57). With this process started in 1980, new restructuring plan or neo-liberal policies were put into practice in the Third World Countries led by the World Bank (WB) and the International Money Fund (IMF), and these programs were named as "structural adaptation reforms". These "structural adaptation reforms" which carried out the neo-liberal policies were actually a part of the articulation process to synchronize the Third World Countries to the capitalist world economy for the sake of overcoming the new structural crisis the system entered following the years of 1970s.

Capitalism, which has been present within the national borders, passed beyond the borders and headed towards covering the whole planet with new types of processes by the end of 20th century. In other words, capitalism displays a development that it is becoming a world regime. The exploitative feature of capitalism and the process of commoditization of the environment continue with the utilization of new production and communication techniques (Önder, 2000: 29). Globalization discourse or the process taking place under the name of neo-liberal policies, is the articulation of social and economic parts, forming the world economy, with each other and the world market, increasing of the international competition (Carnoy, 2000: 46; Stromquist and Monkman, 2000: 3-6; Somel, 2002: 207; Yeldan, 2002: 20), in short the efforts of the central countries in shaping the world economy according to their needs. In this process, the government is not in the hands of the states but instead, it is

governed by the capitalist class/bourgeoisie. The aim of the multinational legislative class is to determine the capital, provide accumulation, and also to protect and promote the advancing a global bourgeoisie and a new global capitalist-historical block (McLaren, 2007: 43).

There are national and international actors of the process in developing countries such as Turkey. Among the primary international actors are the institutions such as IMF, WB, European Union (EU) and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). World Trade Organization (WTO) has become one of these institutions since 1995. WTO, with the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), which was signed also by Turkey in 26th March 1995 and which set forth the opening of almost all service areas including education to market economy, and market rules to be dominant, made a contract in liquidation of the public sector to a great extent, and in the restructuring of the government. According to Rikowski (2003), GATS is a commitment towards expanding the sectorial realm of authority of the capital.

These institutions/organizations transform the economic, social and political life through the credits they give^{iv}, adjustments policies they impose, commercial or investment treaties they made, not only in Turkey but also in the majority of the Third World countries. This transformation is not only realized by the international organizations, but also the internal dynamics of Turkey, Turkish Industry and Business Association (TÜSİAD), and some of the non-governmental organizations, especially the trade unions should also be considered within this scope.

In terms of neo-liberal transformation in Turkey, some significant grounds have been gained in both education and other social areas. While the effects of neo-liberal policies on education/higher education in developed countries have been presented by the researchers for the last quarter of the century (Clark, 1998; Slaughter, 1998; Lee, 2000; Magrath, 2000; Mok&Lo, 2002; Apple, 2004; Giroux, 2008; and others), analyses regarding this transformation in the developing countries and the late-capitalized countries have been brought to the agenda since the middle of 2000s (Ünal, 2005; Yolcu, 2007; Aslan, 2008; Kurul, 2012; İnal, 2012;

Polat, 2013; and others). What have been happening in the Turkish higher education system can be considered as an institutional transformation regarding the integration efforts of a late-capitalized country into the world capitalist system. In the following section, the effects of this process at higher education level will be examined in the context of the latest Higher Education Draft Law, and the higher education policies followed in Turkey.

Changes in the Perception of Public Services and Decline in the Public Funding

One of the most important steps for the realization of the neo-liberal transformation in Turkey is the transformation of the educational system. This transformation is important for two reasons. First, with Amin's words (1997:198), the "social reproduction" function the education, and the second is that the education being the largest part of the social services in terms of both social funding and the social workers employed. In other words, when the educational system is transformed institutionally and constitutionally, almost half of the public sector will be transformed. Discussions forming a basis for transformation at higher education level, and the emphasis that the higher education is a "semi-public" service which has a higher private return than societal return have been the justifications for the decline of public funding reserved for higher education. The higher education service perceived as a public service until 1980s was defined as a "semi-public" service with the Higher Education Law passed in 1981 (law number: 2547). In the background of this definition is the Economic Stabilization Package enacted in 24 January 1980 which could be called the Constitution of the neo-liberal transformation in Turkey. Starting from the related legal regulations the higher education students participated in certain percentages to the cost of education they received. This contribution, called contribution margin, has been increasing with years. It is seen from the examination of the income resources of the Turkish state universities that the student contribution was 2% in 1990, 4% in 2000, and 5% in 1995 and 2005 (YÖK, 2005:132). An interesting development was experienced in 2011 when the neo-conservative party –Justice and Development Party- made a change in the Article 46 of the Higher Education Law and brought the provision that the government was going to address the "current service

cost per student” provided that the formal education^v students complete the program in the planned duration. Students of foreign origin, evening education, open and distance education, and students who did not complete the program in the planned duration were excluded from the application. There is an irony here. On one hand, the government transforms all of the areas of education by neo-liberal policies, and increases the commercialization activities of the state universities, and on the other hand, it creates a disintegration and ideological illusion between the higher education students. This ironic situation reminds us the meaningful contradiction in the implementation of neo-liberal policies mentioned by Apple (2004:105). Apple states that behind the neo-liberal policies lies the market belief in the basic justice and equity. On the other hand, the continuation of the tuition fees of the evening education students creates a concern about the probability that all higher education students would be included in this description or the evening education quota in the state universities would increase in the coming years.

Social state gains in developed countries, welfare states, and developing countries has been recessed with the crisis capitalism entered in 1970s which has a significant share in the changing of the public service perception. According to Kwiek (2003: 136), neo-liberal policies coincided with a particular historical development of capitalism weakened the two basic foundations, nation state and welfare state, behind the globalization course and the modern university institution. That means that the state becomes the regulator and facilitator of the public services rather than the provider, and resigns slowly from the activities implemented using the public resources.

One of the areas where we can observe the concrete effects of the neo-liberal policies is the public resources allocated to education. Table 1 gives the annual investment budgets of higher education and Ministry of National Education (MEB). According to this data, while the rate of the higher education budget in the total education budget was 39.5% in 1997, it recessed to 32.5% in 2012. The rates of the higher education budget in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and consolidated budget increased in the mentioned period from 0.69% to 0.89%, and from 3.18% to 3.63% respectively, whereas the number of higher education students

increased 3.7 times (27%) from 1 322 345 (MEB, 1999: 139) in 1997-1998 educational year to 4 936 591 (www.osym.gov.tr) in the 2012-2013 educational year.

The preference of the state related to education investments is one of the indications where we can see the effects of neo-liberal policies. It can be seen from the Table 1 that the MEB investment budget^{vi} decreased significantly between 1997 and 2012. While the rate of the MEB investment budget in the total education budget was 15.01% in 1997, it fell to 6.64% in 2012. Also, the rates of the MEB budget decreased significantly in the consolidated investment budget (28.35% in 2000; 8.09% in 2012) and in the GDP (0.40% in 2000; 0.18% in 2012). These data show that while the number of students increased, the State resigned slowly but significantly from education in general and higher education in particular.

Table 1.

Higher Education Budget and MEB Investment Expenditures

	Of the Higher Education Budget			Of the MEB Investment Budget		
	Rate in Total Education Budget	Rate in GDP	Rate in Consolidated Budget	Rate in Total Education Budget	Rate in Consolidated Budget	Rate in GDP
1997	39.5	0.69	3.18	15.01	-	-
2000	31.5	0.63	2.25	19.90	28.35	0.40
2005	35.1	0.80	3.34	8.27	12.13	0.19
2010	33.1	0.85	3.26	6.32	8.06	0.16
2012	32.5	0.89	3.63	6.64	8.09	0.18

Source: MEB Formal Education Statistics, 2013.

This is not specific to Turkey only. These data is in coincidence with the other developing countries where Structural Adjustment Programs within the scope of neo-liberal policies are implemented. For example, Stewart (1995: 180-184) conducted a study between 1981 and 1989, covering 21 Sub-Saharan Africa countries and Latin America and some other countries which implemented Structural Adjustment Programs. The study revealed that while the educational expenditures in the GSMH increased in 4 of the 21 Sub-Saharan Africa countries (Ghana, Kenya, Republic of Central Africa, Zimbabwe) in the mentioned period, the educational expenditures decreased in others. In the same period, educational expenditure per person decreased in 11 of the 16 countries. With some exceptions, neo-liberal policies or the Structural Adjustment Programs caused decline in the educational expenditures in Latin America and Africa.

While the State resigns from education in general and higher education in particular, the space formed is filled in large part by the people/laborers. The results of the “Educational Expenditure Research” conducted by the Turkish Statistics Institution (TUIC) are given in Table 2. According to the data obtained from the study, the educational expenditures were done mostly by the central government (64.45%), and the families come the second most with 32.85%. A study conducted by Keskin and Demirci (2003: IX) found that while 7 quadrillion TL was allocated to education from the tax incomes, the parents spent at least 17 quadrillion TL for the education of their children. Even in the elementary school level, stated to be free of charge at the compulsory and state schools in the 42th Article of the Constitution, money is collected under 30 different titles. That, too, shows that education, from elementary to higher education level, is becoming marketized by etatism.

Table 2.

Distribution of Educational Expenditures in Turkey
Related to Finance Resources

Finance Resources	Educational Expenditures (%)
Central Government	64.45
Local Resources	0.70
Municipalities	0.07
Special Provincial Administrations	0.63
Specific Resources	34.75
Private and Corporate individuals and bodies	1.55
Household	32.85
Educational Institutions	0.35
International Resources	0.09
Total	100.00

Source: www.tuik.gov.tr

Strategies for Privatization, Commercialization/ Capitalization and Diversification of University Incomes

The Capital developed, starting from the second half of the years 1970, various strategies to overcome the crisis it had entered. It tried to diminish the gains of the welfare state/social state on one hand, and create itself in these areas on the other hand. Creation of the Capital in public areas requires the state to withdraw from the public areas and make these areas ready for the Capital. Rikowski (2011: 30) states that the capital commercialized the education with the hope of gaining profit, which means the capitalization of education in terms of creating value and making profit from the educational services. According to Önder (1996:8), this is possible in two ways. First, public services are privatized, and state supports the privatizations; and second, service - despite its being conducted by the state- is commercialized in the areas where privatization is not possible. It is of course not easy to privatize a profitable public enterprise or the services provided as a long-term legal

right. Along with the legislative regulations, also ideological arguments to convince the public sphere and provide support for these implementations should be found. The privatization discussions in Turkey have generally been together with the “efficiency” discussions. Inefficiency of the public services and public workers was frequently emphasized during the reorganization of public sector. For example, the most important legislative regulation is the Public Administration Basic Law enacted in 2003 which opened way to the privatization and commercialization of all public services including education. With this regulation, while the role and the responsibilities of the state regarding its contributions to the capitalist sector were increased, its role in the provision of public services was decreased and the provision of these services turned over to the marketplace.

Education in Turkey, which has a young population, is an important area of investment because of the high demand. For example, the number of students at all levels of the educational system was 22.171.043 in total in 2012-2013 educational year. In the same educational year, the number of students registered in elementary schools was 1.756.618, and 1.128.557 in secondary schools (MEB, 2013). The student placement at the higher education level is done through a central examination organized by the Student Selection and Placement Centre (OSYM). In the 2012-2013 educational year, 1.895.479 students applied to take the Student Selection and Placement Examination (OSYS). While 29% of those students were placed in the license and pre-license programs of the state universities, 4% were placed in the trust/private universities (<http://osym.gov.tr>). The number of students applying for the higher education every year changes between 1.5 million and 2 million.

As seen from the data given above, there is a very high demand for education/higher education in Turkey, and the public sector, especially in higher education, meets only a limited part of this demand. There is a considerably high competition among the students entering secondary education and higher education institutions^{vii}. Students, and therefore their parents have a race in order to be placed in “good” state high schools and “good” universities. Naturally, the families with medium and high level of socio-economic status have greater chance in this race

because they can afford providing private courses and private teaching institutions for their children to enter those schools which require centrally conducted examinations for placement. Although in limited number, some poorer families also send their children to those schools by making sacrifice in their basic necessities/needs. The number of private teaching institutions in 2012-2013 educational year was 3,858, and the number of students attending them was 1,280,297 (MEB, 2013). The size of the private teaching institutions market is estimated between 2.5-6 billion TL. Private teaching institutions have an important function in the commercialization of education in Turkey. The Turkish Republic Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, in an interview on television in November 2013, indicated that the private teaching institutions were going to be turned into private schools, and the state was going to purchase service from those schools. He stated that (<http://www.sabah.com.tr>):

"...We suggest being sincere in this matter. Let us purchase service from you (private schools). What shall we do? Let us turn these private teaching schools into (private) schools. Is there space in the classes when transformed into schools? Our limit is 30. Because we want quality. Do you have 15 students here? We will give you 15 students. If we cannot give you 15 students, let us say the annual cost of those 15 students to us is 2 thousand, 2.5 thousand Liras. Let us give you that amount for each student so that you can continue your business here comfortably..."

The statements of the Prime Minister are significant in terms of showing how education in Turkey is commercialized and privatized by the state. The process of education becoming a profitable investment area and of knowledge becoming meta forms the basis for privatization and commercialization applications. Knowledge is produced not for its intrinsic value but for its exchange value.

The inequalities in education will be deepened even more when those institutions are transformed into private schools. Thus, education in Turkey preserves its denominational quality as is the case in all of the countries where capitalist economic system is dominant. Education

preserves its denominational quality and also becomes more “elitist” with the effect of reflections of the neo-liberal policies to this area.

Educational system has a critical elimination function from elementary to higher education level. Only the children of the families with socio-economic status middle or higher can reach the upper level of the education system which shows that the Turkish educational system has been “successful” in this elimination function. The system realizes this elimination function in two ways. On one hand, it monitors the classes of the students entering the “good” state schools or universities by central examinations, and commercializes the education in the state schools on the other hand. It supports the private schools by legislative regulations and incentives.

The increase in the number of private schools and of students in those schools is an important indication to show the effects of neo-liberal policies. In Turkey, the number of private schools and of students at all levels increased more than those of the state schools and students in the last decade. When examining Table 3, the highest increase in the school and student numbers in private schools has been in private pre-schools followed by universities. The increase in the number of state universities has been 2.9 times, in the number of students in those universities 6.6 times, and the increase in the number of trust/private universities has been 71.0 times and the students in those universities have been 591.8 times in the last 26 years.

Table 3.
Numbers of Schools and Students According to Education Levels

	Years	Public		Private	
		School	Student	School	Student
Preschool	1986-				
	1987	332	98.036	105	6.531
	2012-				
	2013	1,884	953,209	1,403	124,724
	Increase rate^{viii}	4.7	8.7	12.4	18.1
Elementary education	1986-		7,786,97		
	1987	54,239	3	232	57,847
	2012-		10,829,2		
	2013	44,260	21	1,896	331,675
	Increase rate	-0.2	0.4	7.2	4.7
Secondary education	1986-		1,114,63		
	1987	2,692	6	91	23,109
	2012-		4,838,95		
	2013	9,385	8	1,033	156,665
	Increase rate	2.5	3.3	10.4	5.8
Non-formal education	1986-		1,219,42		
	1987	1,268	5	1,135	328,120
	2012-		4,755,50		3,316,00
	2013	1,614	1	12,118	7
	Increase rate	0.3	2.9	9.7	9.1
University*	1986-				
	1987	27	356,967	1	386
	2012-		2,718,83		
	2013	105	8	72	228,824
	Increase rate	2.9	6.6	71.0	591.8

Source: Higher Education Statistics, www.osym.gov.tr

* Other institutions which provide education at higher education level are not included.

Another reality related to private schools and universities in Turkey is that despite the state's efforts such as incentives, tax reductions, student funds, land subsidies, and low-interest credits related to opening private

school and university, there has not been a parallel increase in the student numbers with the school numbers. Because of this, a significant number of private schools and universities have been running below their capacities. This could be explained by another reality, the low rates of per capita income in Turkey. According to the calculations done by Bakır (2013), the real value of the per capita income in Turkey with inflation and currency changes excluded, which has been increasing at peak reaching 10 billion Dollars on paper, and occurred at 10 thousand 497 Dollars level in 2012, is at 6,067 Dollars which is about the half of this value (www.dunya.com).

The 2013-2014 educational year tuition fees of the two-year pre-license programs of the trust universities was 4,000-7,000 Dollars, and of the license programs 7,000-15,000 Dollars. This figure changes between 13.5 thousand and 25 thousand Dollars at the universities such as medicine, dental medicine and pharmacy which have high profit in the marketplace (www.posta.com.tr). When the “real” national income rates and the trust/private university tuition fees given above are compared, a restricting effect of the national income on the increase in the number of private school students may be suggested. On the other hand, the problem is not only the quantitative increase of the student numbers in the private schools but also, as Giroux (2007: 102) stated, “the real danger of the privatization process is not the money flow to private universities by the students enter those universities, but the private universities being a part of the process to diminish ‘the public spheres where social problems may be solved by democratic ways’”.

The state subsidizes on one hand, and cuts the allowances and investment shares from the central budget of the state universities despite the increase in the number of students enrolling those universities (Table 1). The increase in the number of public universities was 1.9 times, and in their student numbers was 2.6 times (Table 3). These increase rates may mean that let alone the current infrastructure is improved, it is used by an increasing number of students each year causing compensation from the quality.

The public universities which could not receive the sufficient share from the central budget, found the solution in the capitalization/commercialization of the service they provide. As has been the case with the last Draft Law, there has been emphases in many of the policy papers shaping the higher education that the public universities should “diversify” their incomes, be entrepreneur and competitive (DPT, 2000, 2006; YÖK, 2007; TÜSİAD, 1994, 2003). This diversification occurs in two manners in Turkey. First, increasing the tuition fees, and second, marketing the services they produce in the marketplace. There are different/various ways that the public universities introduce their services to the marketplace. Developed universities continue their business operations through research activities, and developing universities through instructional activities. The latter offers fee-paying programs to individuals and organizations through lifelong learning or continuous education centers, and opens to the marketplace by non-thesis master’s programs, teaching certificate programs or other forms of fee-paying programs under various names whereas the former universities run local or international projects. The number of academics “running after projects” has been increasing in primarily those developed universities regardless of the public benefits of those projects.

It is possible to see this functioning when the annual incomes of the universities are examined. In 1990, 79% of the university budgets were from the general budget, 19% from private means and other channels, and 2% was from the student fees. In 2005, these rates were 57%, 38%, and 5% respectively. As seen in Table 4, diversification of university incomes means decrease in the share from the general budget, and increase in income produced by services provided by the university, and increase in the student shares.

Table 4.

Annual Distribution of Income Sources of State Universities (%)

Years	Budget	University^{ix}	Student
1990 ^x	79	19	2
1995	69	27	4
2000	57	38	5
2005	57	38	5

Source: YÖK, **The Current State of the Turkish Higher Education**, Ankara, 2005, p.132.

Another privatization implementation at higher education level in Turkey involved state universities opening branches in other countries. This started with the branch university opened in 2000 in Northern Cyprus Turkish Republic (NCTR) by the Middle East Technical University (METU), and continued with the branches opened in the same country in 2012-2013 educational year by the İstanbul Technical University (İTU) and Çukurova University (ÇOU). This number is expected to increase with the universities in preparation to open branch universities. With this application, a state university gains private university status when it opens a branch in another country. McBurnie (2000) explains this process with the Overseas Education (OSE) concept, and this application has gradually been widespread. Another common application regarding the OSE is the state universities running joint programs at international level with private universities. For example, in 2012-2013 educational year, 29 international joint license program was run at 11 state universities (ÖSYM, 2013). With these applications, while the quality of public services changes slowly, these services go through commercialization and capitalization process and its content also changes ideologically.

Another way by which the universities may become commercialized is through technopoles established in the university campuses under the name of “university-industry cooperation”. These establishments first appeared under the names Research Park, Science Park or techno-park (technopole) in the United States in 1950 has become an inseparable part of the university organizations. These establishments functioning as an instrument of the universities to commercialize the knowledge they produce, provide the transformation of the public knowledge into private meta. This process started for the Turkish universities in 1980s with İTU, and Turkey’s largest/biggest techno-park was established in METU campus in 1991. The techno-parks functioning within the Technology Development Zones were legalized with the “Technology Development Zone Law” enacted in 2001. By October 2012, 45 Technology Development Zone have been established two of which outside

university campus. The purpose of these zones was regulated in the Article 1 of the related Law:

“The purpose of this Law is to “produce technological knowledge to create an industrial structure with export and competition capabilities by providing cooperation between universities, research institutions, and production sectors; develop innovations in productions and production techniques; increase the quality and standards in productions; increase productivity and decrease production costs; commercialize technological knowledge; provide support for technology-dense production and entrepreneurship....”

This potential the universities have with their position of being a monopoly in knowledge production is tried to be handed to industry's service together with their cheap infrastructure and labor supports. It is clear that these centers where university academics work full-time or part-time have no public concern. Public knowledge is transformed into commercial good or product through these structures. University-industry cooperation has been emphasized in most of the policy papers, with the latest draft law being in the first place, which steer higher education.

Making the Market Language Dominant over the Organizational Culture and Transformation in Research

We cannot read the transformation of the universities that have been going through in the neo-liberal period as a financial congestion condition in public universities and increase in the number of private universities only through privatization and commercialization. The value system and the concepts that form a reference to these values that the university has created in its 900-year history and carried until today are changing. The role of the higher education and the denominational status of the university are re-defined through these new reference concepts.

Starting from the years following the Second World War, massification of education, right to education, and the gains of the welfare state or social state have affected the role of the universities within the capitalist system. This role allowed for public responsibility, creating citizenship

consciousness function of the universities, critical knowledge to find a place in the structuring of the university, in other words, to the social and cultural functions of the higher education as well as its economic function. According to Blackmore, these functions related to social and cultural values of the university forms the basis for the welfare state to provide free higher education (2000: 337). Today, universities go through a process where the economy-politics of the knowledge is restructured. The economic quality of knowledge got ahead of its social and cultural quality. Because of this, criteria for what is valuable for the university, what is to be researched and what should be acquired by the student, or what are the functions of the university, have been changing. As the criteria moves from individual and societal needs to market needs, the university's curricula, the quality of the bond it forms with market and society, and values and rules directing its inner functioning changes. Of course, as Morrison puts it, the universities do not only conduct research like other educational institutions, but also produce discourse-laden government and value (Morrison, 2000: 277, cited by Giroux, 2008: 85). This discourse in the neo-liberal period makes it possible more to give meaning and evaluate the marketing concepts and academic life. In this process, the evaluation criteria for the professional capabilities of the academics leave its place to "performance measurement techniques" which are expressed by numbers as much as possible (Tekeli, 2003:159). Not only the way in which academic cadre is evaluated but also the institutional evaluations have been changing. Universities are evaluated institutionally through concepts such as Total Quality Management (TQM), Strategic Planning, Strategic Management, and Performance Budget. In the university, the scientific concerns leave their place to concerns such as productivity, affectivity, performance, and benefit in the knowledge production process (Aslan, 2008: 97-98). According to Buenfil (2000: 276), in both industrialized and the Third World countries, self-criteria of the universities diffused by adjustment policies and voices from market advocates have increased.

At the same time, this language is presented as being supra-ideology. For example, as is the case with every law article, the latest Higher Education Law Draft carries the economic, ideological and political traces of the current era. One of the most noteworthy points in this Draft is that

the principles of higher education have become to be expressed by concepts such as transparency, quality, competition, productivity, accountability, and participation. For example, the basic principles of higher education have been expressed in the Draft as “Higher education is planned, programmed, and regulated based on the principles of academic and scientific freedom, institutional autonomy, variability, transparency, accountability, participatory, competition, and quality” (Article 2).

The effect of corporation culture and corporation course on universities has increased in the neo-liberal period (Giroux, 2008: 85-118). Thus, it is expected from public universities to act like corporation and be entrepreneur. Turkish universities, have been graded according to a scale called “Entrepreneur and Innovative University Index Indicator Set” since 2012, are competing with each other in terms of their entrepreneur features and processes of capitalizing the services.

Entrepreneur and Innovative University Index Indicator Set is given in Table 5. According to this indicator set, universities could find a place in the grading as long as they can get into cooperation with industry, and commercialize their products, in short, as much as they capitalize service. It could be seen in the set that universities are graded not according to their contribution to culture and social services but according to their contribution to the market and commercialization. This indicator set is important in that it shows us how the universities become commercialized and for what purposes they function. According to the 2013 Index, 34 of the first fifty higher education institution were public universities (www.tubitak.gov.tr).

Table 5.
Entrepreneur and Innovative University Index Indicator Set

Size and Weight	
Ratio (%)	Indicators
Scientific and Technologic Research Competence (%20)	1. Number of scientific publications 2. Number of citations 3. Number of projects received from R&D and innovation endorsement programs 4. Amount of funds received from R&D and innovation endorsement programs

Table 5.

Entrepreneur and Innovative University Index Indicator Set

Size and Weight Ratio (%)	Indicators
	5. Number of national and international awards in science 6. Number of graduates with PhD
Intellectual Property Pool (%15)	1. Number of Patent application 2. Number of Patent letter 3. Number of Utility model/industrial design document 4. Number of international patent application
Cooperation and Interaction (%25)	1. Number of R&D and innovation projects done with university-industry cooperation 2. Amount of funds received from R&D and innovation projects done with university-industry cooperation 3. Number of R&D and innovation projects done with international cooperation 4. Amount of funds received from R&D and innovation projects done with international cooperation 5. Number of instructors/students in circulation
Entrepreneurship and Innovation Culture (%15)	1. Number of programs in entrepreneurship, technology management, and innovation management at license and graduate levels 2. Number of staff working full-time at Technology Transfer Offices, technoparks, incubation centers, and technology development centers 3. Presence of Technology Transfer Office structuring 4. Number of education/certificate programs in entrepreneurship, technology management and innovation management run outside university
Economic Contribution and Commercialization (%25)	1. Number of active firms academics fully or partly own at technoparks, incubation centers, and technology development centers 2. Number of active firms university students or graduates of the last 5 years fully or partly own technoparks, incubation centers, and technology development centers 3. Number of people employed at the technoparks, incubation centers, and technology development centers fully or partly owned by academics 4. Number of licensed patent/utility model/industrial design

Discussions about the commercialization of universities have become more evident in terms of countries which are living in the higher stages of capitalism. These universities which rapidly increase in number and

given names such as entrepreneur university model and/or corporate university model are becoming widespread in the Third World Countries also. Even, regulations regarding the organization of public universities congruent to these models have been increasing.

Today, in Turkey, there are universities with two different status; Public and foundation^{xi}. With the latest Higher Education Draft Law, a third one was added to these: private universities through corporations may also be established (Article 29). Also, establishment of “information licensing offices” in joint company status was stated in the Draft (Article 33). With the Higher Education Law in effect, it has become possible for the universities to open higher education institution abroad^{xii} (Article 27) or opening foreign higher education institutions in Turkey (Article 26). Turkey, with this Draft, realized another regulation regarding the provision of “opening all service areas including education to market economy” which is one of the provision of GATS Agreement signed in 1995, and give way to national and international capital at higher education level.

Emphasis on the need that universities should diversify their incomes, and decrease in the public resources speeds up the neo-liberal process. Decrease in the public resources allocated to universities led universities and academics toward studies that are market oriented and project based. Table 6 depicts the distribution of Research-Development expenditures in Turkey in the last 30 years. According to this data, while 69.8% of the total Research-Development expenditures were done in higher education institutions in 1990, this decreased to 46.0% in 2010. The significant decrease in the Research-Development expenditures allocated to universities in the last thirty years caused the universities to turn to the market in order to create new resources. National and international projects conducted by the universities have become covering a significant part of their budgets.

Table 6.

Annual Distribution of Research-Development Expenditures in Turkey (%)

Years	Public	Private Sector	Higher Education
1990	9.8	20.4	69.8
1995	7.4	23.6	69.0
2000	6.2	33.4	60.4
2005	11.6	33.8	54.6
2010	11.4	42.5	46.0

Source: Statistics by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜRKSTAT), [www. tuik.gov.tr](http://www.tuik.gov.tr)

For example, METU, one of the most important universities in Turkey, and which is in 499th in Webometrics list and in the 1st order in Turkey in 2010, obtained more than 35% of its total incomes from the national and international projects it conducted (www.pdo.metu.edu.tr). The latest Higher Education Draft Law also states that research done in the universities would be supported according to its contribution to “economy” (Article 38/2).

Neo-liberal policies are commercializing the services in the universities on one hand, and on the other hand it differentiates the areas of interests of the universities through scientists. Here, the research funds and other means of supports provided to universities/academicians may be the determining factors. For example, World Trade Organization (WTO) has been supporting universities economically for the opening of WTO chairs in developing or underdeveloped countries since 2009. According to an official letter Council of Higher Education (YÖK) sent to the universities (08/11/2012 dated, 139 numbered), WTO stated that it would support the universities which establish chairs to conduct academic research and activities in commerce by giving 50,000 Switzerland Franks for 4 years.

According to Kwiek (2001:35), only the universities which agree to function within the frame determined by the neo-liberal logic become corporations; which means the end of the university perception the societies have been used to in two thousand-year process. According to Grioux (2011:95), the new corporal university appears to be disinterested to ideals, learning styles, and research models that have no commercial

value. Miyoshi (2000:692) states that the university becoming incorporation is destructive everywhere. This transformation reduces learning to intellectual meta by obstructing the free flow of knowledge and science.

Transformation in Management and Employment Styles

The most important transformation in this has been the replacing the concept “governance” over “management” at the beginning of 1990s. This indicates beyond a syntactic transformation, a structural transformation in the general structure of the public services (Aslan, 2008: 246). The concept was brought to agenda within the context of Public Administration Reform (PAR) which aims to “discipline” the public, was adopted as one of the principles of the Public Administration Basic Law Draft (PABLD) enacted in 2003 (Güler, 2004: 6). According to Güler, governance is neither a management style nor a participation negotiation process. Instead, governance is a type of governance where public power is directly handed to capital. This multi-actor management model is undoubtedly a participatory formula. However, participation in the governance formula is actually a right, a privilege given to capital on behalf of the society (2003:133-115). The concept has three legs being “state”, “private sector”, and “society”. According to Bayramoğlu (2005:20), governance is a political power model which delivers the future of the societies to the domination of the capitalist class through various mechanisms.

The need for changing the management style of the universities, and suggestions for models have been expressed in public administration draft laws at the beginning of 2000s, in reports prepared by non-governmental organizations representing the capital such as TUSIAD (TÜSİAD, 2003), and in some reports prepared by YÖK (YÖK, 2007). The common grounds in these reports are that universities need to be restructured to be governed by the boards of trustees, and that rectors representing the university at the highest level need not be academics. Representation from capital and various non-governmental organizations is suggested in the boards of trustees. Through these people, relationship between university and the society would be provided, and socio-economic priorities of the society and requirements and priorities of

the business world would be carried to the university. According to Rikowski, neo-liberalism is an economy, social theory and practice for the capital. It has become the common sense of the capital (2011: 115). Thus, capital wants to exist in all public structures and increase its representation ratios which would help a rapid transformation of these structures in favor of the capital. Capital has a tendency to possess high quality manpower trained according to its needs without enduring the cost of the training.

The findings obtained from the qualitative research conducted based on the views of the university academics (Aslan, 2008: 249-256) are noteworthy in terms of negative effects of such a structuring on the Turkish higher education system. In this study, the academics stated that individuals outside of university component (scientists, students, other workers of the university) having a voice in the university administration may be undesirable in terms of university values and priorities. Some of the disadvantages mentioned were universities moving away from their functions, influence of market into university's inner functioning, autonomy being diminished, damaging of the objectivity of the university, university becoming ready to serve for some interest groups, and move away from its public features.

Turkish universities have been administered according to a central administration model since 1981. All of the universities are attached to YÖK therefore have no managerial autonomy. It can be seen that the latest Higher Education Draft Law centralized this already centralized structure even more in terms of administration model rather than eliminating it. YÖK, which has been seen as an obstacle for the managerial autonomy of the universities, was not diminished, but instead its name changed into Turkish YÖK. Thus, university administrations have become more centralized. In addition, the way for capital to have a place in the university structuring through real and juristic persons who pay the highest tax was opened. With this structure, for the first time, a council with some of its members outside university was responsible for the functioning of the university including the appointment of the rector. This council makes strategic decisions such as how to use university resources, which faculties or departments to be opened, what would be

the increasing the criteria of the university staff. This structuring is extremely centralized, opposed to university autonomy, disregarding the opinions of the university staff, and opens the university to the direct intervention of the capitalism. It creates an ideological illusion and has a “false” participation. With the draft law, the right to speak of the university staff was lowered to minimum, but the influence of the political power and capital was increased.

Another area where the effects of the neo-liberal policies at higher education level could be seen is the change in the employment styles. With these policies, the number of workers working in conditions different than the “standard” employment relationship has been increasing rapidly. Standard employment relationship generally means the relationship in which the worker works full-time attached to an employee and gets benefit from the legal assurance. In this employment style, employment duration is not limited (Temiz, 2004). The first full-scale initiative towards reverse the standard employment relationship in public is the Public Staff Law Draft (PSLD) which came up with the PAR package. The Draft opened way to flexible employment styles in public institutions such as “part-time work, temporary work, timed work”. This trend is not only specific to Turkey. Part-time work increased in all EU countries though in different degrees. While 14.2% of the total working population in EU defined themselves as part-time working in 1992, this increased to 18.1% in 2002. However, this increase is not distributed evenly among gender, age groups, countries, sectors or professions. Only a small portion of the EU male population (6.6%) works part-time compared to the female population (33.5%) (www.kamu-is.org.tr).

The second legislative regulation is the Higher Education Draft Law which is considered to be the higher education pillar of the PSLD in terms of employment styles. The Draft brings insecurity, instability, and uncertainty in higher education institutions. With this Draft, the work security of the university academics disappeared to a large extent, and different employment styles came up in the secured cadre.^{xiii} With this Draft, unsecured, conventional, part time and project-based employment styles will become widespread in higher education institutions. Since these employment styles eliminated the work security, they will also limit

the presence of “critical thinking” within the university structuring. Draft contains terms that makes it possible to project based employment of scientists (Article 40/4).

According to Slaughter and Leslie, the current changes regarding universities are as large as the changes took place in the academic line of work in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Globalization destabilizes the working patterns of the university profession developed in the last century (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997: 1; Cited by Kwiek, 2003: 137). With the globalization, changes are observed in the academic group's working patterns. The universities, in an effort to gain success at global level, choose to decrease the education cost to compete with the increasing competition and decreasing public resources. The university in a period needs academic workforce which is based on contract, part-time, a relative decrease in the academic salaries, decreased public funds for basic research, and intensifying the academic workers (Welch, 2002: 470).

Conclusion

The restructuring of the schooling and education systems across the world is part of the ideological and policy offensive by the neo-liberal Capital (Hill, 2003: 2). As it brings in high quality to the labor, higher education is primarily the most affected area by these ideological and political attacks. Since the day science-capital relationship was established, higher education has been an important battle-field. The outcomes of the research and the curricula are the areas of interest of the capitalist class. The capital needs to control and monitor both the curricula and the functioning of the higher education system. This is done directly or through the hidden curriculum. According to McLaren (2011: 312), the hidden curriculum represents the entrance to a certain life style, and prepares students to the ordinate and subordinate positions in the capitalist society.

Neo-liberal policies transform education/higher education from a right into a privilege in Turkey and in many parts of the world. In this process, educationalists' own languages and self-conceptualizations are taken away from them, and market language and concepts are tried to be

made dominant instead. At this stage of the capitalism, like all public institutions, educational institutions also tried to be marketized and function according to its rules. Yet, universities and therefore the scientists have mere public responsibility in the formation of democratic culture, and development and maintenance of the societal. With the neo-liberal policies, universities are rapidly moving away from their public responsibilities with so called “reform” or “law”^{xiv} regulations. Universities have a basic responsibility for not opening way to capitalism but freeing the individuals.

ⁱ This study is the extended version of the paper “Neo-liberal Transformation in Turkish Higher Education System: A New Story of a Turning Point: Draft Proposition on the Higher Education Law” presented at the 3rd International Conference on Critical Education, 15-17 May 2013, Turkey-Ankara.

ⁱⁱ In 29 Ekim 1923, Turkish Republic was founded/established.

ⁱⁱⁱ In Turkey, the Turkish Armed Forces seized power three times, in 1960, 1971 and 1980.

^{iv} For a more detailed information on the effect of WB and EU education projects in Turkey on the neo-liberal transformation, please see Aslan, G., Küçüker, E. and Adigüzel, E. (2012) “*External Education Project in Turkey*”, *Neoliberal Transformation Of Education in Turkey* (Ed: K. İnal and G. Akkaymak), PALGRAVE MACMILLAN, United States.

^v In Turkish state universities, two different programs, formal and evening education, are carried out. The evening education students receive education in the evenings, and pay twice as much tuition fees as the formal education students pay. The tuition fees are determined by the Council of Ministers at the beginning of each educational year. This practice is one of the examples of the commercialization of the Turkish universities.

^{vi} Higher education investments are also included in this item.

^{vii} The compulsory education in Turkey extended to 12 years in 2012, consisting of 4-year primary, 4-year middle, and 4-year high school education. Students are placed in high school after completing the second 4-year according to their academic successes at 6th, 7th, and 8th grades, and according to the results of the central examinations they take at those grades.

^{viii} Increase rates were calculated by times.

^{ix} University incomes include the incomes obtained by working capital, canteen, cafe, dormitory, rentals, etc.

^x 1990 data obtained from YÖK, (2001), s. 127.

^{xi} These universities are not directly attached to the state but they are private universities establish through a foundation and provide private education. These institutions, receiving high tutions compared to Turkey’s conditions, also receive significant amounts of shares from the public resources. Higher Education Law Draft contains provisions that these universities would receive state’s support as much as 45% of their budgets, would be allocated land, and would be free of some of the taxes.

- xii One exception of this application could be seen in Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TTKC). At present, three foremost Turkish universities have campuses under the name of Departments. While these universities are state universities in Turkey, they are in private university status in TTKC. This is an example of marketing the name of a state university, and its privatization within state. These campuses continue their relationships in terms of personnel and budget with the universities in Turkey they are attached to
- xiii Associate professorship and professorship are still secured cadres in Turkey.
- xiv First reactions to the Law Draft which have been discussed and thought to be the legal dimension of the neo-liberal policies at university level came from not the academics but the students. The draft occupied both students and universities for quite long. The draft was withdrawn by the Minister of National Education Nabi Avcı during the time this article was written. The rationale of the withdrawal was explained by the Draft was not found to be liberal enough by the Minister.

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