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**World Bank Education Policy: The Impact of World Bank Education
Projects (1997-2007) on Turkey**

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WORLD BANK EDUCATION POLICY: THE IMPACT OF WORLD BANK EDUCATION PROJECTS (1997-2007) ON TURKEY

“If Turkey wants to ensure that its citizens do not become the low-paid service workers of Europe, it must provide a high-quality education to all of its young people.”
(World Bank, 2005)

“The most critical area for education policy improvement in Turkey is teacher quality.”
(World Bank, 2005)

Introduction

The influence of World Bank on global education and its policy reforms in Turkey is important to analyze despite of the critiques. World Bank education policy on education has shifted from one to another; manpower (vocational training) to basic education, from neoclassical economics to neoliberal agenda since 1980s. With about three billion dollars per year in loan commitments, the World Bank supports hundreds of thousands, of locations in over 100 countries in six regions. As being the single largest source of development in the field of international education, the World Bank is in stages of preparing a new education strategy that will be released in November 2010. Undoubtedly, this new education strategy will also reflect the stakeholders view in education for the next decade.

There exists difficult times for the World Bank, as in any international organization, to identify a clear-cut policy on education as a result of living in a constant changing world. Nations are sovereign, and education policy matters are nations' decisions and the World Bank's mission is to help clients to implement their education strategies. Turkey received its first education loan from the World Bank in the early 1980s. A remarkable progress was observed with Ministry of National Education's endorsement of eight-year of schooling since 1997. Basic Education Law (No. 4306) mandated the extension of the period of compulsory basic education from five years to eight years. The latest World

Bank's engagement in Turkish education sector provided a valuable support for Turkey to improve its effectiveness, equity and efficiency of its education system. Turkey requested the World Bank to provide support in two different periods in 1998 and 2002. Further, Turkey began implementing series of economic and social reforms with the validation of start of membership with European Union on October 2005.

This paper attempts to ascertain the impact of World Bank education policy on Turkish education sector from 1997 to 2007. The paper is presented in three parts. Part 1 presents the role of education in the international development arena and World Bank education policy including the critiques. Part 2 includes general background of Turkey followed by a brief introduction to Turkish Education System and World Bank-funded education projects between 1997 and 2007. Part 3 provides the evaluation of the most current situation in Turkish education. The paper concludes why World Bank's "prescriptive measures" and its adherence to some neoliberal principals work in the case of Turkish education sector and summary of recommendation.¹

PART 1: The role of education

The role of education has changed over the centuries. One of Aristotle's quotes on education reads "Education is the best provision for the journey to old age." Education has traditionally been associated with the process of instructing the young people, and forming a mind and character to lead to a stage that is called Wisdom. While education was seen as a lifelong journey to be a wise man, only more recently has education been associated with schooling, development, and productivity. However, there is a growing concern that education, instead of serving as an opportunity equalizer, serves as a mean to rank, classify individuals in the society. Wolf (2002) pointed out that education in the 21st century operates as a way to rank people, which is indeed a great help for most employers. Additionally, Fuller (2003) presented his worries about education: "Contrary to the name 'knowledge society,' knowledge functions more as a principle of social stratification or a source of capital development, but not a form of inquiry" (p.106).

¹ The views expressed in this working paper are based on personal research and do not necessarily represent the views of any institutions, national authorities or the World Bank.

Further, Bourdieu (1998) referred to the “new capital” and to schools as institutions that reproduce social spaces and capitals (p.22). Therefore, education is now seen as lifelong continuity in which individuals who want to improve their social and economical status and their opportunities for a better employment.

Education in international development

In the context of international development education can be defined in two different ways. The United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan described education as “a human right with immense power to transform” and claimed that on “its foundation rest cornerstones of freedom, democracy, and sustainable human development” (UNICEF, 1999, p.4). According to his view, there are two different views in the discussion of education in developing countries. One view sees education as an important factor for socio-economic development of developing countries, which may lead to freedom, democracy, and sustainable human development. The other view regards education per se as valuable because education is a human right.

What is the concept of “human capital”? In the 18th century Adam Smith considered human beings as playing a critical part within national welfare. He did not explicitly mention the role of education in a national economy, but he argued that one sort of labor adds value to the national economy and another has no such effect (Otteson, 2004). This suggests the importance of labor force in economic growth, which led to the human capital theory in later years.

The role of education in economic development is clearly formulated by economists such as Schultz, Becker, and Mincer in the 1960s and 1970s. Schultz (1963) proposed the notion of human capital, which asserts that “people enhance their capabilities as producers and as consumers by investing in themselves and that schooling is the largest investment in capital” (p.x); the framework to evaluate the returns of human capital uses the concepts of foregone earnings and opportunity costs (pp.5-6). Also, Becker (1964) developed a formula of how human capital can be formulated for economic growth. In his nominal book, he discussed special kinds of human capital with attention to on-the

job training and then moved to a general theory that applies to any kind of human capital (p.153). He claimed that individual's investment behavior accumulates the human capital in the light of the cost and benefit of education, i.e. an individual's optimum behavior. In following that Mincer (1974) proposed Mincer Specification, an economic model that estimates the rate of return in education in order to quantitatively measure an individual's investment behavior toward the human capital.

Role of education in growth at a macro level

Many economists analyze the role of education in economic growth by using growth accounting, which is based on the idea of production function in macro economy. Some of those arguments reflect the notion of human capital. Within the neo-classical growth model, Solow (1956)'s production function only contains physical capital and raw labor; human capital is exogenously determined. Solow's model includes diminishing returns to increased physical capital per worker. This model does not consider human capital, and it treats technical progress something that cannot be explained by the input of physical capital and labor as an exogenous factor. On the contrary, Lucas (1988) asserted the linkage of human capital to the dissemination of technical change. His model is known as endogenous growth theory. The production function of Lucas places the human capital centrally in growth; the levels of human capital are endogenously determined by household time allocation decisions. According to Mankiw, Romer, and Weil (1992) constant returns to scale when human capital is included. They demonstrate that there are diminishing returns to human and physical capital, but countries with a higher rate of investment in human capital continue to grow faster.

The Total Factor Productivity, output per unit input, is explained by Denison (1962) empirically regarding the role of education on economic growth. In the determinants of economic growth of U.S. from 1929 to 1957, he noticed the existence of a non-negligible amount of "residual" part which the increase of inputs of capital stock and labor cannot explain (p.229). He believed that the factors of production in traditional economics, i.e. physical capital, labor, land, could not explain America's economic growth during these years; but he acknowledged the fact that the improvement of knowledge, which is

brought by education or human capital, better explained the growth of U.S. between those years. Later, Denison (1967) analyzed the advances of knowledge as 23% of the sources of growth in U.S. between 1950 and 1962. The World Bank included total factor productivity in its analysis when analyzing the high performance in East Asian countries in the 1980s and claimed that the growth of total factor productivity was a cause of growth in East Asia (World Bank, 1993). Additionally Krugman (1994) contended that the economic growth in East Asia was not due to the progress in technology but to the improvement of the educational level of the labor force, and the growth of capital.

Role of education at a micro level

The role of education in economic growth has been analyzed as at a micro level by using the rate of return analysis of education. Schultz (1963) identified the private benefit of education by using the cost of education, including forgone earnings as well as individual's income and the social benefit of education in economic growth (pp.5-11). Using Schultz's conceptualization, Becker (1964) established the theoretical framework of rate of return analysis of education. The rate of return analysis of education is explained by private rate and social rate. Becker explained the private rate of return by stating "because observed earnings are gross of the return on human capital, some person earn more than others simply because they invest more in themselves" (p.153), which means the private rate of return to education quantitatively measures an individual's benefit of education. Meanwhile, the social rate of return to education is usually used to decide an investment priority from the government's point of view: "some investments in human capital do not affect earnings because costs are paid and returns are collected not by the persons involved but by the firms, industries, and countries employing them" (Becker, 1964, p.154).

Later, Mincer (1974) proposed an econometric model to analyze the role of education in economic growth by using the earning function regression method. In following Schultz concept of private and social rate of return to education, Rees (1979) contributed the idea that private and social benefits of education is significant for governments while making decisions for the amount of resources they allot for the education sector. He also added

that for the market for human capital is “for the service of the capital rather than for the capital stock or capital goods” and “this is the major reason why most of the investment in schooling is made by students or their families, and much of the rest is made by governments or such nonprofit institutions as foundations and universities” (Rees, 1979, pp. 35-36).

While working at the World Bank, the economist Psacharopoulos applied all these models to analyze education in developing countries. Based on the results of cross-national analysis, he concluded that “primary education continues to be the number one investment priority in developing countries” and “investment in women’s education is in general more profitable than that for men” (Psacharopoulos, 1994, p.1325). Despite the fact that there are controversies in selecting which schooling primary, secondary, tertiary would be the major investment in a developing country; in general many donor agencies are encouraged to assist in primary education. It is still important to note that in the World Bank “universal rules cannot be applied and that educational investment must be broad and diverse if it is to respond to the diverse needs of developing countries” (Psacharopoulos & Woodhall, 1985, p.321). While Barro (1991) provided how the investment of both primary and secondary education contributes to economic growth, Pritchett (2001) argued that education is not a sufficient condition for economic growth. He demonstrated “in some countries, schooling has been enormously effective in transmitting knowledge and skills, while in others it has been essentially worthless and has created no skills” (p.387). He also asserted “education contributed much less to growth than would have been expected in the standard augmented Solow model” (p.387). This concludes that endogenous growth theory (new growth theory) may have a better impact on the long-run growth of an economy. Policies that embrace openness, competition, change, efficient and effective means of production, new forms of technology may promote growth.

The World Bank and World Bank Education Policy

The World Bank as a key player in the area of international development is a large institution that loans billions of dollars to developing countries every year. With its over

10,000 staff members located in over 100 countries, the World Bank is divided into two primary lending organizations: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Development Agency (IDA). In 2007, around 300 projects were approved for a total of US\$24 billion in loans. The breakdown of lending by the two primary lending agencies is presented in table 1.

Table 1 2007 World Bank Lending by Sector

Sector	2007 (%)
Water sanitation, and flood protection	12
Transportation	20
Law, justice and public administration	22
Information and communication	1
Agriculture, fishing, and forestry	8
Education	8
Energy and mining	7
Finance	7
Health and other services	11
Industry and trade	5

Source: World Bank Annual Report 2007

The World Bank did not start operations in education sector until 1963 (Psacharopoulos, 2006). In the 1980s, the World Bank made its first significant move to diversify its support of infrastructure (e.g., roads, electricity, dams etc.) to include human capacity building (e.g. education). This was the human capital theory started to be utilized, and economists in the World Bank were in charge of calculating the earning functions (Heyneman, 1999). To reiterate the notion of human capital, it is important to note again that education and training are investments in capital that links people in their knowledge, skills, health, and values (Becker, 1993). Through education individuals become more productive, and consequently increase their likelihood to improve economic conditions within a society (Psacharopoulos, 1988). With human capital theory as a foundation, the success of education is analyzed using rate of return analyses.

Through Psacharopoulos' studies from 1981-1998, the World Bank policy documents and research papers used the findings of Psacharopoulos to form education policy. He

repeatedly found primary education to be a better investment than secondary education, based on the fact that unit costs for primary education are small relative to productivity associated with literacy. However, given the size and influence of the World Bank, much criticism has been wielded against World Bank's work and ideological position. Specifically Psacharopoulos (2006) claimed that the World Bank was very late to start operations in the education sector, because in the late 1950s education was considered the "soft sector" (p.330). Additionally, Goldman (2005) argued, due to the World Bank's widespread influence of shaping government spendings , "The global political economy has at its core a set of elite power networks in whose reproduction the World Bank is deeply embedded" (p.12). Likewise, Heyneman (2003) questions who needs to be held accountable for the World Bank's dysfunctional education policies between 1960 and 2000.

So far, I have briefly reviewed the role of education growth in international development, human theory capital, and the place of the World Bank as the key actor in international development arena. While keeping the existing criticism in mind, I would like to focus on the World Bank's education projects at the country level, more specifically in Turkey. The rest of this paper present general background of Turkey, its political and socioeconomic characteristics, highlights the main challenges in the education. Later the paper focuses on the World Bank education lending in Turkey between 1997 and 2007. The last part of this section reviews the impact of education projects in those years.

PART 2: Country Background

Geography

Turkey (Türkiye_in *Turkish*)² is a Eurasian country, straddling the continents of Europe and Asia, bordered by eight countries: Bulgaria to the northwest, Greece to the west, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Iran to the east, Iraq and Syria to the southeast, Georgia to the northeast. Additionally, the Mediterranean Sea and Cyprus are to the south, the Aegean Sea to the west, and the Black Sea is to the north. Territory of the country is a little bit less than 800.000 sq km (774,815 sq km), which makes it one of the biggest countries in

² Official name "Republic of Turkey"

Europe and the Middle East. Population size of Republic of Turkey at the beginning of 2008 was about 74 million; about 67 percent of its population lived in urban areas (World Bank, 2009).

Political

The creation of Republic of Turkey was immediate years after World War I. The modern Turkey state was founded on November 29, 1923, Kemal Atatürk as the first president. Under Atatürk's direction, Turkey had substantial modernization, reforms, industrialization after abolishing sultanate and caliphate. In 1952, Turkey became a full member of NATO, was a signatory in the Balkan Entente (1953), joined the Baghdad Pact (1955; later CENTO), joined the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) and the Council of Europe.

Social

The formation of Turkey's modernization character started with Atatürk. He secularized Turkish society and replaced Arabic script with the Latin alphabet for writing the Turkish language. The contemporary education system started in 1924 by closing the religious schools and establishing new secular schools. Meanwhile secular legal system provided civil rights and equal right for women. Atatürk's reforms between 1924 and 1934 constituted the ideological base of modern Turkey.

Economical

Turkey is considered a high middle income country with Gross National Income (GNI) per capita of US \$ 667 (World Bank, 2010). According to United Nations Human Development Report 2009, human development index (HDI) of Turkey increased rapidly between 1980 and 2007, " rose by 0.93% annually from 0.628 to 0.806 today", which ranks Turkey as the 79th country out of 182 countries (UNDP, 2009). Meanwhile, Turkey has remained one of the World Bank's largest borrowers in the Europe and Central Asia region in the last several years. "New commitments for Turkey averaged around US\$ 1.5 billion annually during FY 06-09" (World Bank, 2010). See table 2 for Turkey's commitment in Fiscal 2007.

Table 2 Ten Largest IBRD/IDA Borrowers in Fiscal 2007

BORROWER	Commitment	
	\$ millions	% of total
India	3,751	15.2
Argentina	1,749	7.1
China	1,641	6.6
Indonesia	1,159	4.7
Turkey	1,158	4.7
Colombia	1,102	4.5
Pakistan	985	4.0
Nigeria	750	3.0
Vietnam	712	2.9
Africa Regional Projects	707	2.9
TOTAL	13,714	55.5

Source: World Bank Annual Report 2007

Turkish Education System and World Bank Lending for Education

In Turkey, education is perceived to be upmost priority. Since the foundation of Republic of Turkey in 1923, education at all levels has been regarded as the most important factor in reaching the level of most civilized European countries.

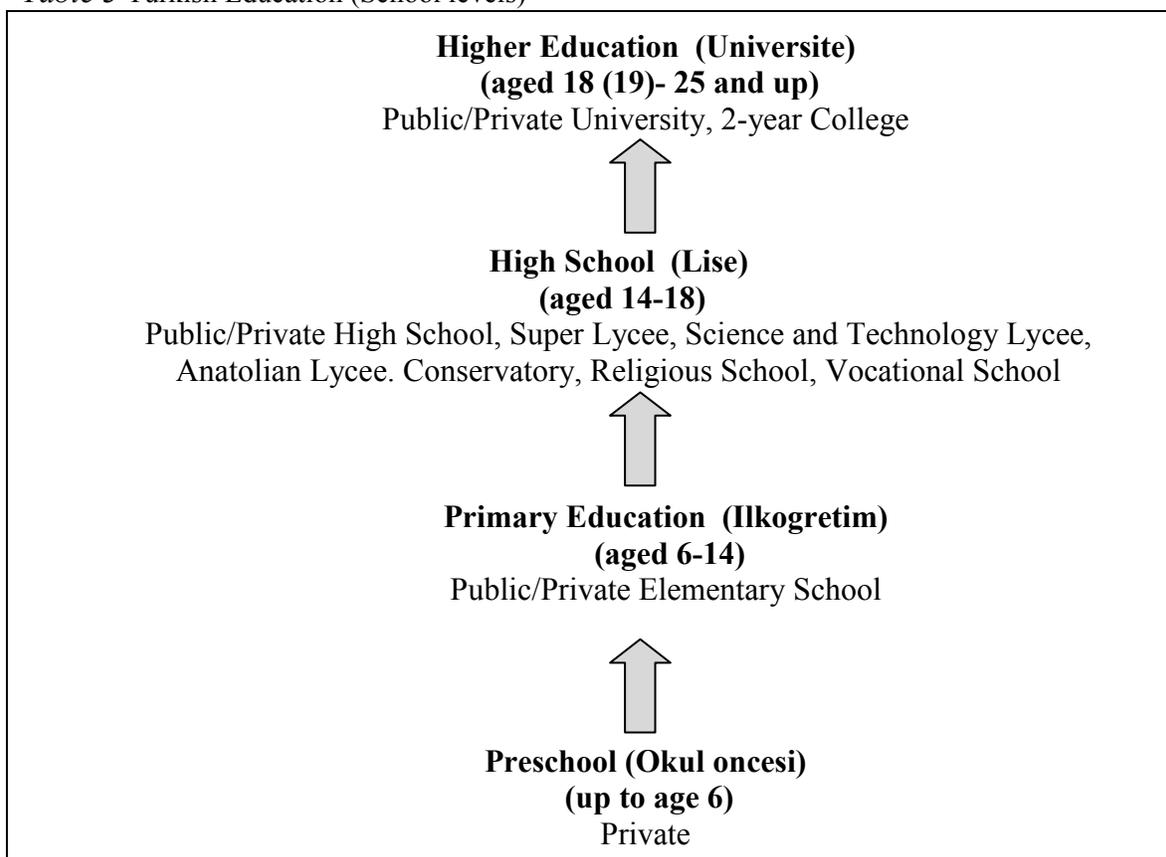
The funding of education is highly centralized, more than the French system (World Bank, 2005). Following the foundation of Republic of Turkey, all schools were annexed to the Ministry of National Education (MONE). MONE is in charge of implementing a contemporary mode of education training for all citizens through primary and secondary education and other institutes.

“Turkish Education System has democratic, modern, secular and coeducation characteristics. The aims of the system are to increase prosperity and welfare of Turkish citizens and society, to support and accelerate economic, social, cultural development in accordance with national unity and integrity, and to make Turkish Nation contemporary civilisation’s constructive, creative and distinguished partner.”³

³ Republic of Turkey Ministry of National Education, ‘The Turkish Education System and Developments in Education’, January 2001, p.1

Below is the chart for typical school levels in the Turkish Education.

Table 3 Turkish Education (School levels)



Source: Author

In 1997, the duration of compulsory education was changed. Ministry of National Education (MONE) endorsed of eight-year of schooling and Basic Education Law (No. 4306) mandated the extension of the period of compulsory basic education from five years to eight years.

Turkey has been relied on the assistance of external donors to finance a large portion of their education policy because of mainly its high illiteracy rate, (the rate of illiteracy is %18 as versus 3% in Greece)⁴ and another various reasons. The World Bank is a leading international development bank which is to encourage and maintain prosperity, the

⁴ European Commission, 2009 p. 157

economic and social well-being of underdeveloped, developing, and developed countries. Unlike other commercial banks, the World Bank is itself mainly involved in choosing, planning, and overseeing the implementation of the projects for which it makes loans.

The first education loan for Turkey was received in the early 1980s.⁵ World Bank-funded education projects for Turkey since then is listed at below with the project approval years:

- Industrial Training Projects 1 & 2 (1984, 1988)
- Vocational Training Projects 1 & 2 (1987)
- National Education Development Project (1990)
- Basic Education Project 1 & 2 (1998, 2002)
- Secondary Education Project (2005)

In the 1990s, the World Bank's education policy has shifted to primary education with UNDP, UNESCO and committed to expand access to education via the "Education for All" (EFA) campaign (Psacharopoulos, 2006). The World Conference on EFA was held in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990 and the goal was to reach universal primary education by the year 2000. Thus, the World Bank defined its major policy priorities as in the following: higher priority for education in general; greater attention to the linkages between learning and labor market outcomes; focusing public investment on basic education coupled with more household financing for higher education; increased attention to the access of girls, ethnic minorities and other disadvantaged groups; greater household involvement in making choices about schooling; and, more autonomy for schools through measures such as decentralization, "school choice" and cost-sharing.⁶

All governments try to improve and update the education system of their country and try to solve issues for the betterment of its citizens. During the last decade Turkey has

⁵ Implementation Completion and Results Report to the Republic of Turkey for a Second Basic Education Project, Report No: ICR0000651 February 29, 2008, p.1

⁶ World Bank, 1995. *Priorities and strategies for education: A World Bank Review*, Washington, DC

employed series of projects to respond to equity and equality challenges in its education system. The World Bank-funded projects in the past decade is shown in table 3

Table 4 The World-Bank Education Lending for Turkey

World Bank-funded education projects for Turkey	Effective Dates	Aid (in millions of US\$)
Basic Education Adaptable Program Loan (BEP1)	1998	300
Basic Education Adaptable Program Loan (BEP2)	2002	300
Secondary Education Project	2005	300

Source: <http://web.worldbank.org/external/projects/>

Following the world-wide commitment to basic education through EFA, in 1997 MONE adopted eight-year of schooling. Basic Education Law (No. 4306) mandated the extension of the period of compulsory basic education from five years to eight years. The new Basic Education Law required an unprecedented expansion of primary schooling.

In 1998, Turkey requested two projects to provide support in application of this education reform. Basic Education Adaptable Program Loan 1 (BEP1) and Basic Education Adaptable Program Loan 2 (BEP2) projects became effective in 1998 and 2002, respectively. The overall objectives of the project were defined as the following:

- (a) the expansion of the capacity of basic education schools;
- (b) training of teachers, school principals and inspectors;
- (c) development of central and provincial implementation capacity to carry out the program;
- (d) creation of a mechanism to monitor and evaluate the outcomes of the program.⁷

BEP1 project made major progress in implementing the Basic Education Program by reducing the class size, improving training teachers, providing school supplies, and

⁷ Document of the World Bank, Implementation Completion Report The Republic of Turkey in Support of the First Phase of the Basic Education Project, June 24, 2004 Report 27696-TU

introducing computer-aided learning.⁸ However, by 2002 there was still about half a million children of basic education school age were out of schools. BEP2 became effective in 2002. Its goal was to support the implementation of Basic Education Law during the three-year period 2002-2005.⁹ Due to many internal and external challenges in the implementation of this project, project was at risk status for a while. Later, results were significant.¹⁰

In 2000, The World Education Forum in Dakar reaffirmed and shifted the target year of EFA to 2015. The six goals include 1) expanding early childhood care; 2) ensuring free and compulsory primary education of good quality by 2015 for all children; meeting the needs of all young people and adults; 4) achieving a 50 percent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015; 5) eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving gender equality in education by 2015; and 6) improving all aspects of education (UNESCO, 2002). In the same year, in 2000, United Nations Millennium Summit set a goal of achieving universal primary education (UPE) by 2015 and reaffirmed the primary school completion of and gender equity in primary and secondary education as Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The World Bank took the initiative of establishing EFA Fast-Track in 2002 to facilitate the effort to achieve UPE by 2015.

Meanwhile, the results of ‘Program for International Student Assessment, PISA 2003 showed that Turkey was the second worst performing country after Mexico (Cinoğlu,

⁸ MONE constructed 106.993 new basic education classrooms during the five years 1998- 2002; and provided annual cycles of in-service training for teachers, school administrators, provincial/sub-provincial staff and basic education inspectors. Accordingly, while the number of teachers, schools and students were respectively 302,982, 45,649 and 9,102,074 in 1997-1998 academic year, today totally 390,275 teachers are working in 35,168 basic education schools with 10,331,619 students. During this period, the number of female students which was 4,085,452 in 1998 has increased to 4,828,276 in 2002-2003 Academic Year. This increase in the enrollments of female students to basic education level simply indicates one of the most important outputs of the Program for the country. On the other hand, totally 10,481 schools were closed during this period, as a result of bussing implementation and terror attacks especially in South Eastern and Eastern parts of Turkey.

⁹ Document of the World Bank, Implementation Completion Results Report The Republic of Second Basic Education Project in support of the second phase of the Basic Education Program, February 29, 2008 Report No:ICR0000651, pp.2,3

¹⁰ Document of the World Bank, Implementation Completion Results Report The Republic of Second Basic Education Project in support of the second phase of the Basic Education Program , February 29, 2008 Report No:ICR0000651, p 13

2009). The author asserted that Turkey should increase the quality of education and the student enrollment rate in order to be a full member in the EU.

The World Bank-funded Secondary Education Project became effective in 2005 and aims for improving the conditions for student learning in secondary education and quality of education among children of low income families in the sub provinces where the enrollment rate is low. The closing date for this project is Dec 31, 2011.¹¹

Lessons Learned from BEP1 and BEP2

For a decade, 1998 to 2008, both BEP1 and BEP2 greatly contributed to the implication of Basic Education Program. The World Bank faced with serious challenges in implementing investment operations in the Turkish education sector.

Other lessons learned and listed below:

- 1) Project design and scope should be appropriate to implementation capacity and significant efforts should be made to keep project design straightforward, simple and realistic.
- 2) A realistic assessment of project duration during the preparatory stage, especially for the projects with large amount of civil works, could help to estimate project deliverables and impact more accurately.
- 3) In the case of repeater or follow-up projects (i.e. APLs) it is important to learn lessons, obtain evidence to evaluate performance and achievements from previous operations before asking the Government to commit resources for next operation.
- 4) It is crucial to ensure that a robust monitoring and evaluation system is in place before the project is launched.
- 5) Roles and responsibilities of Government units and agencies regarding the project should be made clear during project preparation.
- 6) Adequate resources should be allocated to provide appropriate technical and operational support to the education program, considering the volume of lending and the

¹¹ “Turkey Secondary Education Project.”
<http://web.worldbank.org/external/projects/main?pagePK=64283627&piPK=73230&theSitePK=40941&menuPK=228424&Projectid=P066149>. Accessed April 5, 2010.

longstanding relationship with Turkey. This includes appropriate full time technical and operations support in the country.

7) It is essential that Bank teams not only carry out dialogue on policy aspects of the education sector, but also pay close attention to the political, social and institutional aspects of education reforms and have consultations with a broad range of stakeholders to improve the relevance and design of projects.

8) During preparation of investment loans, straightforward implementation plans should be developed to indicate clearly all major activities planned for implementation. However, these plans shall leave a reasonable room for changes and adjustments related to details of the implementation. The Bank shall be flexible in responding to objective changes in the Borrower's' needs.¹²

Implementation of BEP1 and BEP2 were relatively slow due to complicated organizational structures and institutional capacity in the Turkish education sector. Regarding lesson # 5, unclear roles and responsibilities of state agencies made the Bank Team stay far behind in the early phases of implementation of the project. The capacity building within the MONE would serve best in the project management.

Part 3: Evaluation of Turkish Education in the ‘Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2010’¹³

The most recent report on EFA released in early January 2010. According to this latest UNESCO ‘Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2010’, Turkey is still far behind to meet the six EFA goals. The report places Turkey at the intermediate position with Education Development Index in order to quantify EFA goals.¹⁴

• According to the Global Monitoring 2010 Report, the major improvements in the Turkish Education are as follows:

¹² Document of the World Bank, Implementation Completion Results Report The Republic of Second Basic Education Project in support of the second phase of the Basic Education Program , February 29, 2008 Report No:ICR0000651, p 24

¹³ Regional Overview, Central and Eastern Europe and Eastern Asia, Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2010, p. 2-19

¹⁴ Regional Overview, Central and Eastern Europe and Eastern Asia, Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2010, p. 8

Enrolment in pre-primary education: Between 1999 and 2007, Turkey doubled its gross enrolment ratio.

Increased adult literacy rate: Turkey reached 89% estimated literacy rate (96% among men and 81% among women). Turkey witnessed an absolute decline in the number of illiteracy rate, by over 1.5 million between 2000-2007. Nearly all countries in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia have achieved gender parity in adult literacy rates.¹⁵

• According to the Global Monitoring 2010 Report, the areas need to improve in the Turkish Education are as follows:

Out-of-school children population: In Turkey, seven out of ten out-of-school children are unlikely ever to enter school.

Gender disparity: The gender parity index (GPI) of the regional GER was 0.98 in both regions in 2007. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Latvia, Tajikistan and Turkey remain below that level, however, with GPIs ranging from 0.93 to 0.96. (Gender parity is considered to be reached when the GPI is between 0.97 and 1.03. According to 2010 report, gender inequality is at the utmost level in the economically disadvantaged areas of Turkey, mainly the southeast region. Between ages 8 and 12, 7% of girls never make it to school, compared with 2% of boys. By age 15, female enrolment is almost twenty percentage points below male enrolment

Inequality in education: Turkey may not achieve the universal primary education by 2015 due to Turkey's education marginalization in the eastern part of the country. One factor could be the low share of national income invested in education: Turkey invested around 4% of gross national product (GNP) in 2004.¹⁶

¹⁵ "Turkey has progressed towards gender parity in adult literacy, though its GPI was still the lowest within the two regions, at 0.84 in 2000–2007. The female adult literacy rate in Turkey increased at a faster rate than that for men, but remained well below the 1985–1994 male rate. The likelihood that a female would be illiterate compared with a male increased during this period, with women 4.9 times as likely as men to be illiterate in 2000–2007, compared with 3.1 times in 1985–1994" p. 5

¹⁶ "But far more has to be done to break down inequalities based on gender, region and wealth. Since 2000, the progress seen during the second half of the 1990s has slowed. Enrolment rates have stagnated at around 90% since 2002 — far below the level predicted on the basis of Turkey's average income. Some 640,000 children of primary school age were out of school in 2007. Around 60% were girls, pointing to deeply entrenched gender inequalities." p.4

Youth unemployment: The economic downturn has effected mostly the youth in Turkey. the youth unemployment rate was more than double the rate for adults. Quality of education

Quality of education: The level of equity within the education system is crucial. According to the 2010 report school differences account for 53% to 70% of the variation in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Turkey. The variety in school-based factors causes achievement gaps.

Student/teacher ratio: In pre-primary education, the pre-primary student/teacher ration in 2007 was at least 25:1, much higher than the regional averages (9:1 in Central and Eastern Europe and 11:1 in Central Asia)

Marginalization in education: According to Deprivation and Marginalization in Education data by UNESCO ¹⁷, Turkey is facing with education marginalization despite of its average income. The distribution of this marginalization varies across the country. Turkey's official language is Turkish, and education disparity occurs with the Kurdish population, which is the minority group makes up less than one-fifth of the population.¹⁸

¹⁷ "Depravation and Marginalization in Education (DME)." <http://www.unesco.org/en/efareport/dme>

¹⁸ "In most regions, 2% to 7% of those aged 17 to 22 have fewer than four years of education, but in the eastern region the figure rises to 21%. Having Kurdish as a home language in Turkey carries a 30% risk of having fewer than four years of schooling, compared with less than 5% for those speaking Turkish, the official language of instruction. Young women speaking a non-Turkish home language — predominantly Kurdish — are among the most educationally marginalized: they average just three years of education. Adding poverty to those factors further increases the likelihood of extreme education poverty: around 43% of poor Kurdish-speaking girls aged 17 to 22 have fewer than two years of education, while the national average is 6%." p. 9

Table 5 Important events for Turkish Education and Economy

1987	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turkey's EU application date for full membership • World Bank Vocational Training Project
1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jom Tien conference for Education for All • World Bank National Education Development Project
1997	Turkey's Law 4306 Eight-year Basic Education Program launched
1998	World Bank Basic Education Project 1
2000	World Education Forum in Dakar
2001	Economic Crisis
2002	World Bank Basic Education Project 2
2004	Turkey Primary Education Curriculum Reform for Social Studies All Girls to School Campaign launched
2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turkey's negotiations for full EU membership • World Bank Secondary Education Project
2007	Tenth anniversary of Law 4306 Eight-year Basic Education Program

Source: Author

The formation of Turkey's modernization character began with the establishment of the Republic. Ataturk gave priority to education and culture to achieve social change towards modernization. Turkey's transition from traditional state to modern state today still continues despite of its secular and democratic structure. To become globally competitive Turkey relies on the economies of its neighboring countries in Europe. Turkey as part of Europe requested accession to European Union (EU) in late 1980s. It took almost twenty years for EU to invite Turkey to begin negotiations for full membership. Meanwhile, Turkish Parliament has already decided to reexamine its education system. A remarkable progress was observed with Ministry of National Education's endorsement of eight-year of schooling. Between 1997 and 2002, enrollment increased to 1,100,000 to grades one through eight, through which 104,000 classrooms were built and 70,000 new primary school teachers recruited (Dülger, 2004). Further, a government initiative with UNICEF,

Let's Go To School, Girls, in 2004 resulted a significant decrease in gender disparities in not all but some provinces (Büyüköztürk, 2005).

Turkey has had close relations with both Europe and the United States since its establishment since its establishment as a nation in the framework of its modernization prospect. In fact, John Dewey was invited to Turkey in 1924 for his insights in the structure, vision, and general characteristics of education (Dewey, 1939). It bears emphasizing that the formation of Turkey's education policies was greatly influenced by the projects of the World Bank and the harmonization and standardization process to the EU since late 1980s. See table 4. It is also important to note that any kind of positive or negative outcome, success or failure of World Bank-funded projects owes as much to the actions of the bank as to those of its borrowers.

Concluding remarks:

Despite the substantial developments in education since 1997, Turkish education sector should immediately set clear education strategies not to fall short of achieving the EFA goals by 2015.

To reiterate:

The six goals include 1) expanding early childhood care; 2) ensuring free and compulsory primary education of good quality by 2015 for all children; meeting the needs of all young people and adults; 4) achieving a 50 percent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015; 5) eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving gender equality in education by 2015; and 6) improving all aspects of education (UNESCO, 2002).

Yet, these six EFA goals do not mention teachers, as it well-known that all these children need to be educated by well-trained teachers. As for Turkey, Turkey has the most centralized education system in the region (World Bank, 2005, Gershberg, 2005). Clearly, equity and quality are the major challenges in Turkish education system. More specifically, there are major educational disparities according to gender, region, and socio-economic status in Turkey, mainly in the southeastern part of Turkey (World Bank

2005). Many education reform initiatives have been undertaken since 1997: however, the quality of teacher, and the efficiency and effectiveness of teacher programs have never been specifically examined by MONE in the last decade. The World Bank-funded National Education Development Project (NEDP) included a pre-service teacher education component with a US \$177.2 million loan. Selected faculty and research fellow were sent abroad to obtain master's, PhD and post doctoral degrees. The project included the objectives of revising and improving pre-service teacher training curricula, textbooks, pedagogical material and administered between 1994 and 1999 by the Higher Education Council (HEC). The goal of this reform was to improve quality of primary and secondary education to reach OECD levels. Since then, teachers in Turkey are not specifically pointed as one of the primary components of the system for the betterment of education system.

The major structural changes in Turkey's education system were intended to meet the challenges of European integration and globalization and to bring higher quality to Turkish education and to bring better educational and employment opportunities for all students in Turkey by the World Bank representatives.¹⁹ However, it is worth mentioning that teachers, "quality of teachers" cannot be taken out of the equation. In simple terms, better teachers mean better students, better skills and better employment.

MONE is in charge of training all teachers in the country. In order for Turkey to compete in the fast changing global market, MONE and international globalization bodies need to emphasize teacher quality increase as well as the quality of education. Initial teacher education needs to be redesigned to support the new expectations and requirements of teachers. However; initial teacher education is one area over which the MONE has very little influence. Interestingly, while MONE has comprehensive authority over most of the determinants of teaching and learning (i.e., curriculum, educational materials, teacher assignment, school facilities, equipment, and oversight), but it does not control the most

¹⁹ World Bank. 2005. Secondary Education Project, (Turkey) Project Information Document Concepts Stage, Washington DC

critical input in the system: human resources.²⁰ Specifically, MONE does not control the selection of preservice teachers into teacher education programs at the university (the OSYM Student Selection and Placement Center does), their academic preparation (YOK/HEC and the university does), or their entrance into the profession (the Civil Service examination does). This is another example of cumbersome institutional structure of Turkish education sector.

Given the fact that in the last decade, Turkey has made substantial progress in its educational goals via World Bank projects, there is more work to be done to in school quality. Like any (upper) middle income country Turkey faces the global challenge of creating a stronger education system which produces higher skills among graduates who can function in an increasingly complex and competitive labor market. Student assessments have been defined by international organizations/assessment agencies (TIMMS, PISA etc.). Additionally, standards for teacher quality need to be identical to those in OECD countries as stated in the in NEDP. On the other hand, it is still important to note if Turkey's desire to compete in the European and global economy, then, it is essential to create teacher professionalism under the directions of international globalization bodies such as EU, OECD, and the World Bank along with national, regional, and local needs of the country. Specifically, aligning teacher training with national goals needs to be encouraged through some radical teacher education reforms.

The final thoughts of this paper are tied to World Bank statements in the beginning of this paper.

“If Turkey wants to ensure that its citizens do not become the low-paid service workers of Europe, it must provide a high-quality education to all of its young people.”
(World Bank, 2005)

“The most critical area for education policy improvement in Turkey is teacher quality.”
(World Bank, 2005)

²⁰ Welcoming Remarks by Mr. Vorkink, Director for World Bank Turkey at the Seminar on “Administrative Structures Adopted to Manage EU Negotiations” on 28 March 2006, Ankara, <http://go.worldbank.org/CAUHVUEEQ0>

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