

Academic Freedom: Perceptions of Academics in Turkey

Akademik Özgürlük: Türkiye'deki Akademisyenlerin Algıları

Aydın BALYER*

Yıldız Technical University

Abstract

This study aimed to discover the perceptions of academics in Turkey in regards to academic freedom. It was conducted qualitatively and 30 academics at public and foundation universities were interviewed. According to the results, academics think that academic freedom was not defined well in the current higher education management system and while defining it, they stressed the "function and constraints of research." Moreover, most academics were not satisfied with implementations and stated that it decreased in this manner. Furthermore, academics revealed that neo-liberal discussions about the role of universities caused a transformation in academic freedom perceptions, and they encountered limitations in accessing financial resources and support while doing research studies. Most academics advised full participation in faculty boards and governing bodies.

Keywords: Academic freedom, higher education management, academics, teaching, research,

Öz

Bu çalışma, Türkiye'deki akademisyenlerin akademik özgürlük algılarının ortaya çıkartılması amacıyla yürütülmüştür. Nitel olarak yürütülen bu çalışma kapsamında, devlet ve vakıf üniversitelerinde çalışan 30 akademisyenle görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırma sonuçlarına göre; akademisyenler, akademik özgürlüğün yükseköğretim yönetim sisteminde iyi tanımlanmadığı ve kendileri tanımlarken "araştırmanın işlevi ve sınırlılıkları" üzerinde durmaktadırlar. Akademisyenlerin büyük bir kısmı, akademik özgürlük uygulamalarından memnun olmadıklarını ve son yıllarda bu anlamda geriye doğru bir gidiş yaşandığını belirtmektedirler. Ayrıca akademisyenler, üniversitenin rollerine dair neoliberal tartışmaların, akademik özgürlük algılarıyla ilgili önemli bir dönüşüme neden olduğunu vurgulamakta ve maddi kaynak, destek konularını araştırma yürütürken en çok sıkıntı yaşadıkları alanlar olarak tanımlamaktadırlar. Çoğu akademisyen geniş katılımının sağlandığı fakülte ve yönetim kurullarını önermektedirler.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Akademik özgürlük, yükseköğretim yönetimi, akademisyen, öğretim, araştırma .

Introduction

In the last decade of the 20th century, many countries encountered economic, political, demographic, technological, and social pressures that made them reappraise the roles of governments and schools (Björkman, 2007; Henkel, 2007; Neave, 2004). These pressures affected policies at higher education institutions especially their research studies and production of theoretical knowledge. This rendered educational environments defenseless and in the process the university had a single power: academic freedom.

Academic Freedom

As a sub-component of university autonomy, academic freedom refers to the freedom of

* Dr. Aydın BALYER, Yıldız Teknik Üniversitesi, YDYO, balyer@yildiz.edu.tr

academics to study, teach, research, and publish the results of their research studies without being interfered. In this context, academic freedom is the most essential value for a university. It is understood that academic freedom enhances the pursuit and application of worthwhile knowledge, and, as such, it is supported by society through funding academics and their institutions. It also embodies an acceptance by academics of the need to encourage openness and flexibility in academic work and of their accountability to each other and society in general (Tight, 1988). Academic freedom, for academics, is generally assumed to include the right to participate in the governance of their institution and its policy-making process. This means they have the right to decide what and how to teach, research topics, travel and communicate with their colleagues (Akerlind & Kayrooz, 2003; Rendel, 1988). Academic freedom at universities is crucial to conduct research, discuss problems, and express conclusions freely in the field of study. It is also essential to be able to lecture without being interfered with by political authorities or administrative officials unless one's work is incompetent or professionally unethical (Borrow, 2009; De George, 2003; Palfreyman, 2007; Tight 1988; Worgul, 1992). It is as essential for teaching as it is for scholarship and research. Academic staff shall not be hindered or impeded in any way by university or faculty officials from exercising their legal rights as citizens, nor shall they suffer any penalties because of the exercise of such legal rights. Members of academic communities are entitled, regardless of prescribed doctrine, to freedom in carrying out research and publishing the results thereof, freedom to teach and discuss, and freedom to criticize the university and the faculty association. Academic freedom does not require neutrality on the part of the individual; rather, it makes commitment possible and requires responsibility as well. Academic freedom for an institution usually includes autonomy or self-governance to determine academic policies such as keeping a balance between teaching and research, preparing staffing ratios, appointing the staff, promoting them, preparing curricula, developing standards, administering examinations, and conferring degrees and diplomas.

Throughout centuries, higher education policies have differed and, as a result, academic freedom has been defined and implemented differently around the world. After World War II and the economic decline in the 1970s, there was a great need for qualified human power. Therefore, universities were subsidized. The subsequent decline of public funding for universities has led to intense institutional competition, increased neo-liberal discussions, and trends such as industry-university partnerships and the commercialization of research. At the same time, societal and governmental calls for accountability put new stress on universities and their members (Akerlind & Kayrooz, 2003; Hayes, 2009; Kayrooz, 2006; O'Neil, 2009; Palfreyman, 2007). Therefore, academic freedom is at stake, but it should be at the center of academic life at universities as a significant value. However, definitions, perceptions, and implementations differed over time around the world, as in Turkey.

Academic Freedom in Turkey

The Turkish higher education system has employed various practices at different times. There were several reform initiations at universities; in this process, academic freedom was the main concern. However, despite having been protected by laws in each reform phase, the statement, implementation, and perception of it have differed. In this context, the first reform initiative was the 1933 University Reform, which was launched by Atatürk by inviting Malche to examine the higher education structure in Turkey. In that process, he determined some problems, one of which was academic freedom. After examining the system, he suggested a Humboltian university model based on academic freedom (Tekeli, 2003). However, the new model was criticized intensively for having strong ties with the National Educational Ministry (MEB). It was claimed that the university became an organ of the government's (Akyüz, 1994; Alada, 2003; Güler, 1991). At that time, most faculty and staff members were dismissed from universities without considering their qualifications. On the other hand, Hatipoğlu (1999) stated that those who criticized universities in such a manner were not fair because, as he put it, although universities had strong ties with the Ministry (MEB), academic freedom was never interfered by the minister. Approximately ten years

later, in 1946, a new university reform initiation was accepted with Law Article Number 4936, which was also a Humboldt-type model. According to this law, “universities that are composed of faculties, institutes, schools and scientific institutions are higher science, research and teaching entities which have academic freedom and judicial bodies (Tekeli, 2003). As Akyüz (1994) argued, this law gave universities a lot of rights that had not been given before. Teaching was matched with research, which made universities place more importance on research instead of producing abstract knowledge. However, at that time, universities were controlled more strictly by the government. When it was difficult to control universities, academic freedom was limited. As a result, some academics were dismissed from their posts, which harmed academic freedom at universities. According to Tekeli (2003), in 1960, 147 academics were dismissed from their posts, which opposed the establishment philosophy of universities as well (Mutlu, 2000:8; Tekeli, 2003: p. 8). This process was interpreted as creating a populist university model. The new approach also caused some problems related to planning. During that period, each university had its own manpower planning which caused confusion. One criticism against this law was that academics were so silent during the preparation of the new law (Alada, 2003: pp. 26-27). In 1973, another university reform was implemented, giving universities complete autonomy. That law was also criticized for embedding universities strongly under the sovereignty of the Interuniversity Council (ÜAK). Moreover, it was stated that academics were inclined to conduct research studies mostly to get promotions (Arf, 2004:106). Tekeli (2003) stated that the government, which wanted to increase its effect on universities, started this process by changing the constitution, but academic freedom was, again, a further value.

The final reform initiative was the current Higher Education Law, which was implemented in 1981. According to this law, “universities are judicial structures which are managed and supervised by the organs selected among them. University organs, academics and teaching assistants cannot be removed from their posts for no reason by authorities outside the university” (YÖK 2007). Under this law, the Higher Education Council (YÖK) was established to plan and coordinate studies at universities. Since its establishment, YÖK has been criticized. One criticism was that YÖK dramatically changed the acquired rights provided by previous reforms. Hatipoğlu (2000) and Çavdar (1995) stated that the positive improvements that had enlarged freedom between 1933 and 1981 were changed by YÖK. According to Tekeli (2003), freedom was sustained at universities by YÖK. Gürüz (1994; 1995; 2002) claimed that new universities were different from the Humbolt-type. However, Güneş and Demirtaş (2002) defined universities as places where academics could work freely and priorities should be science and scientific studies. They should also be centers of democratic and free thought, not commercial institutions. As far as academic freedom is concerned, the current situation is hopeless. Another issue was that YÖK offered “social demand approach” in planning which meant mass education at universities and it prevented academics from finding time to do research under heavy workload. This system allowed external pressures to organize academic life at universities, in which academic freedom was the lowest value (Barblan, 2006). Therefore, under this authority, academics are not academically and scientifically free (Alada, 2003: pp. 29-30; Ercan, 2006: p. 22). Tekeli (2003) stated that some academics were dismissed from universities under article 1402 to control universities. It was seen that little at university because, in 2007, when YÖK prepared “The Higher Education Strategy of Turkey Document” (YÖK, 2007) to reshape universities for the future, academic freedom was defined in commercial terms by referring to the Bologna process which enables free circulation of teaching staff, students, and administrative staff. In reference to the Bologna and Lisbon declarations, both The Higher Education Strategy of Turkey Document and Turkish Industrialists’ and Businessmen’ s Association (TUSIAD) reports aimed to establish a higher education area to transform universities into commercial structures. The new role of universities in this report was to pursue research-development (AR-GE) issues (TUSIAD, 2008). In TUSIAD’s (2008) report, the main concept was “academic freedom” based on “financial autonomy” and “political autonomy” of universities. In this sense, freedom was a cost-benefit analysis concern transformed universities into bigger corporations subsidized widely by external funds. Financers

are more involved in the decision-making processes in academic life, and scientific knowledge production is under the influence of financial corporations. Therefore, academic freedom might become a utopia. What's more, the Academic Evaluation and Quality Development at Higher Education Institutions (ADEK-YÖDEK) legislation also affected academics at universities as well. As a result, both the Common Framework for European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the ADEK-YÖDEK led universities consider evaluation and quality issues primarily as basic concerns. This legislation, along with the Law of State Financial Management and Control (REGA, 2003: p. 5018), was intended to make universities business-like corporations and allowed exterior powers to regulate academic life (Durman, 2007: p. 24; YÖK, 2005: pp. 1-4). Thus, academic freedom was considered to be a problematic area in the higher education management system in Turkey. Therefore, the basic purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of academic freedom among academics in Turkey.

Method

This study was carried out qualitatively. These types of research studies are used to gain in-depth knowledge in a study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). More specifically, the study employed an ethnographic research design in collecting data. Ethnographic designs, as Creswell (2002) described them, "are qualitative research procedures for describing, analyzing, and interpreting a culture-sharing group's shared patterns of behavior, beliefs, and language that develop over time" (p.481). As such, by using this research design and utilizing in-depth interviews, the study explored "culture-sharing" behaviors, beliefs, and language among academicians in Turkey. Academics' views were obtained through interviews with semi-structured questions, as recommended by Bogdan and Biklen (1998), to "get the subjects to freely express their thoughts around particular topics" (p.3). The research has mainly sought answer to the following question: "What is academic freedom for you?"

Population and sample

The participants of this study were 30 academics at various development-level public and foundation universities in the 2009/2010 academic year in Turkey. They were selected using a purposive sampling method, and the data were collected using the "repertory grid" technique, which is a constructed interviewed method. The repertory grid technique procedure can best be characterized as a semi-structured interview (face-to-face, computerized, or phone interview) in which the respondent is confronted with a triad of elements and then asked to specify some important way in which two of the elements are alike and, thereby, different from the third (Kerkhof, 2006). The sampling was conducted as follows.

Table 1.

Demographic Variations of the Academics

	Demographic Variations				
Title	Prof. Dr. (4)	Assist. Prof (9)	Assoc. Prof. (10)	Instructor (4)	Res. Assist. (3)
Discipline	Social Sciences (24)	Sciences (5)	Arts (1)	Health (-)	Other (-)
Length of Service	1- 5 years (8)	6-10 years(7)	11- 15 years (7)	16- 20 years(4)	21 + over (4)
Institution	State (25)			Private (5)	
Doctoral Degree	Yes (26)			No (4)	
Source of the Degree	Turkey (20)			Abroad (6)	

Data Collection and Analysis

In the present study, the data were collected using the following procedure. First, in an e-mail, some academics were informed about the purpose of the study, and they were asked if they could participate in this research voluntarily. Those who were invited to take part in the research consented after being assured of the confidentiality of the data to be gathered from them. It was promised that their identities would be kept in secret and their names would not be mentioned in any part of the study or shared with anyone else. Second, an interview was planned on an agreed-upon day with those who accepted the invitation, and the participants were visited on that date. The interviews were both recorded and noted with their permission and each took approximately 60 minutes. To analyze the gathered data, the "content analysis" technique was used. This type of analysis usually aims to gather similar data on a topic and comment on it (Büyüköztürk et al., 2008; Mayring, 2000; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2000). The first step taken in the analysis of the data was the data organization procedures recommended by Bogdan and Biklen (1998). In organizing the data, the researcher revisited each interviewer and listened to each audiotape while reviewing the transcripts to ensure the accuracy of the data. Each participant's interview transcript was later analyzed according to the data analysis procedures described by Bogdan and Biklen (1998), which call for development of coding categories, mechanical sorting of the data, and analysis of the data within each coding category. Each participant's interview was coded separately according to the participant's views on academic freedom as well as on various emerging themes and, later, on repeated themes among the interviews was grouped into coding categories. It was done in three steps: category definition, exemplification, and codification regulation. First, the answers to each question were separated into meaningful categories, named, and coded. For example, the following questions were conceptualized and named with four separate statements as academic freedom, research, teaching, and components of academic freedom: *"Is academic freedom a well-defined term in the current higher education system? What do you understand by academic freedom personally? How relevant/important is academic freedom to you in your teaching and research process? What are the components of academic freedom"* In the second step, the conceptualized statements were brought together. In the third step, it was intended to avoid repetition. In the last phase, the identified results were explained and related to each other. It was also intended to build a cause-and-effect relationship among the separate parts. The views of academics on academic freedom were coded as Interviewer Public University (GD1, GD2, GD3...) for those who work for public universities and Interviewer Foundation University (GV1, GV2, GV3...) for those who work for foundation universities. The constant comparative approach (Glaser, 1992) was used in the process of organizing and analyzing the data. The use of the constant comparative method results in the saturation of categories and the emergence of theory. Theory emerges through continual analysis and doubling back for more data collection and coding (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Glaser, 1992). In this method, each set of data collected (interview transcripts) were reviewed in search of key issues, recurrent events, or activities in the data that became categories of focus. The data for each participant were reviewed multiple times for confirmatory and contradictory statements until the data were organized into satisfactory categories and sub-codes to address the research question. The research was conducted mainly with the following semi-structured questions:

- Is academic freedom a well-defined term in the current higher education system? What do you understand by academic freedom personally? How relevant/important is academic freedom to you in your teaching and research process? What are the components of academic freedom?
- Are you satisfied with academic freedom in the higher education system today? Are there any fields in which you feel constrained in your teaching and research process? If so, can you tell me what they are?
- How much has the value of academic freedom been affected by university structures and processes of decision-making? How much do these affect your teaching, research, and motivation? Has academic freedom increased or decreased in your institution in the last four years?

- How important is academic freedom to you? Have you had any difficulties with academic freedom in the process of carrying out your responsibilities? How does it affect you personally?
- Have recent neo-liberal discussions and trends related to higher education institutions in the path to globalization, mass education, and university-industry relationships changed your thoughts about academic freedom? Have these discussions and trends changed the perceptions of academic freedom in general? If so, do you think it is necessary to review the definition of academic freedom in light of these discussions and trends?
- What kind of personal strategies and university structures can help you sustain academic freedom? Examples may include participating in decision-making mechanisms such as university governing bodies, faculty boards, commissions, and so on.
- As far as academic freedom is concerned, in which field do you have the most difficulty? Examples may include products and facilities such as copyright, research funding, academic support, and research studies.

Reliability and Validity

Here, the interviewer played the role of facilitator and listener by asking questions and recording the answers without leading the participants. They were interviewed with semi-structured questions developed by the researcher himself. Interviews have been widely used lately as they provide in-depth answers. The questions were reviewed by six field experts to ensure content validity. The latest forms of the questions were developed with these experts' suggestions. In addition, the academics were content enough with the confidentiality of the research to get in-depth answers without any hesitation. The locations were chosen to avoid being affected by power relations. The results are limited to this group of academicians and caution should be exercised when attempting to make inferences about any of the results with regard to other populations. There are several limitations of this research. First, the sample was one of volunteers. These individuals are not necessarily representative of other academics within their broad disciplines, sub-disciplines, or specialty areas. Therefore, the results are limited to this group of academicians and caution should be exercised when attempting to infer about any of the results with regard to other populations. Secondly, the researcher was the main instrument of data analysis. The analyses and results are a product of the researcher's interpretation of the data. The interpretation was based on the researcher's knowledge in the area and his social location. Therefore, the theory-laden nature of the investigation is a recognized limitation as well as its strength. Additionally, the detailed and generous use of quotations and associated discussions of the results expose the researcher's rationale. This information may help the reader assess the validity of the findings for themselves. An exploratory study is the product of the researcher's perspective, and it is recognized that a different researcher may identify different features of importance within the same data sets (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Creswell, 2002). Finally, although the researcher tried to look for equal gender representation in this study, it was impossible because of the lack of women instructors teaching in the higher education institutions chosen for this study. Another study with purposeful selection of equal gender and race representations could be helpful in providing more insightful representations of views between the genders.

Results

Definition, Importance, and Components of Academic Freedom

According to the analyzed data, most academics stated that, "academic freedom is not impeded in my work, teaching and publication." To them, if an academic is not free, the quality of his/her work may decrease. They said, "Academics need a creative and questioning atmosphere to carry out their research studies and explain the results freely". In addition, an academic stated, "we have limited freedom. Therefore, we cannot define it as freedom; it is borders. In fact, an

independent individual can produce something; we have coded brains" (GD22). Two academics reveal, "academic freedom means conducting research and explaining the results of any subject matter freely without considering the sensitive bases and structures of a country." They also stated they should not disturb others, and the term "others" is important here (GD21/GD25). Some academics claimed academic freedom was not defined well. Most academics indicated academic freedom was vital in their teaching and studies, and they focused widely on the "function and external constraints" of the research. Of the academics, only six could define the components of academic freedom. For them, the components of academic freedom are remaining in the borders of the system, accessing data and finding financial support, independence, and autonomy, producing and sharing a knowledge mechanism free from hierarchical, bureaucratic, and governmental pressure. Furthermore, it is the ability to act free from censorship and intervention; daily worries are important here. Having no limitations in the fields of decision-making, conducting research, and administrative and financial matters are also crucial. In addition, criticizing, making mistakes, having your own opinions, accessing necessary resources for a research study, and knowing the difference between ethical moral and disciplinary military moral values are also significant.

Satisfaction with Academic Freedom and Constraints of Academics

Most academics conveyed they were not satisfied with academic freedom in the current system. One academic stated, "I am not satisfied with the academic freedom in our system" (GD21). Only two academics claimed they were completely satisfied with academic freedom in the higher education system (GD9/GV5). Some academics stated they were limited in teaching and doing research while some others are constrained only in writing freely. Some state, "We cannot do research outside of the boundaries that have been drawn." Two academics claimed they had never been limited (GD12/GV5).

Effects of Decision-Making Processes on Academic Freedom

Some academics stated academic freedom was affected deeply by the decision-making process. In addition, one academic confessed, "Decisions are made in small groups and this process is dysfunctional" (GD11). Moreover, some academics stated, "YÖK is completely opposed to academic freedom, the current situation affects academics, and YÖK supports this system" (GD25/GD15). The same academics remarked that foundation universities were different from public universities and added, "those who work for public universities have been affected positively." They conveyed, "Universities are not performing well in this respect lately and some academics" (GV1/GV2). Some academics said these negative attitudes discouraged academics' work and made them feel angry. Some others stated the situation got worse in the last four years. They indicated, "If an academic talks about political subjects, his contract is not renewed" (GV1/GV2). As one academic put it, "YÖK wants to transform academics into civil servants" (GD24). Only three academics claimed academic freedom improved with YÖK.

Importance and Effects of Academic Freedom in Carrying out Responsibilities

One academic alleged that, "We must be free in every subject field. We must not be forced to obey. We should be accepted as we are because if we feel valuable, we can be successful. Academic freedom is important in this sense otherwise it is impossible to do research in such an atmosphere" (GD1). To some academics, it is important for creative ideas because as they revealed, "how an academic can be productive behind the iron bars, so thought must be free" (GD3/GD4). According to another academic, there is academic freedom which serves current politics; if you work without disturbing others, you will have no trouble (GD8). Some academics affirmed that, "If an academic is forced to work in an atmosphere where fear is high, he tends to do risk-free research" Another academic expressed, "It is affected more by external pressures. (GD6). One academic put it, "Personally, it is important but not sufficient; others must mean the same." Another claimed, "I am furious about the social and administrative limits and I question myself. Finally, I start to lose respect for myself and my work" (GD20).

Neo-liberal Discussions, Trends, and Their Effects on Academic Freedom

One academic claimed that, "As far as sponsorship is concerned, objectivity is discussed. The private sector is interested in economically valuable fields. It affects the system and, as a result, education is perceived as a good that can be bought and sold in this sense. This makes science more dependent on money" (GD10). As another academic put it, "These discussions have continued for a long time and they have progressed so much in this respect. The genie has gotten out of the bottle and neither universities nor academics are the same. Research-development (ARGE) discourses became more distinctive and academics are following either projects or money" (GV4).

On the other hand, one academic specified these discussions helped universities to broaden freedom as well. To him, university-industry partnership is important, and they can work collaboratively. He also claimed, "There is a negative correlation between these initiations and academic freedom and these concepts have some limitations, but they also affect universities positively internationally" (GV2). Some academics stated that, "Discussions about academic freedom made positive contributions. Our country was not affected by these discussions, and universities are behind industry. In the west, they work together but, in our country; the private sector is trying to do this by establishing their own universities" (GD20/GV5). Some academics explained that, "These discussions have not changed my perception, but the definition of academic freedom should be reviewed because people's perceptions have changed. Researchers have started to change their direction; they are now unprotected against attacks. Despite everything, academic freedom must be protected" (GD9/GD22) According to some academics, neo-liberal discussions and trends such as globalization and mass education has changed the meaning of academic freedom."

Personal Strategies and Governing Structures that Help Academic Freedom

Some academics considered school boards as important bodies to promote academic freedom. However, to function effectively, administrators, academics, teaching assistants, students, and even democratic organizations and trade unions should participate in these structures. According to two academics, "YÖK and its bodies prevent these groups from participating and without the abolition of these dysfunctional boards, it won't work. For example, only professors, assistant professors, and associate professors are participating in these committees. Instructors, research assistants, and students cannot be presented there and they have no right to speak" (GV2 /GV5).

Constraints Related to Academic Freedom and Products and Activities

Almost all the academics declared that they had problems accessing financial resources and seeking support. They also added, "We are free as much as our salaries. We cannot find time and money to do research because we need to work to provide our basic needs" (GD11/GD18). On the other hand, two academics stated that "We don't have any problems in this field and these kinds of things are deliberate discourses" (GD15/GV5).

Conclusion and Discussion

Perceptions of academic freedom among academics in Turkey were evaluated in this study, and a number of results were obtained. According to the results, academic freedom was not defined well in the system. This situation may stem from frequent changes in higher education system due to some economic and political reasons. Another result revealed that, while the academics were asked to define academic freedom, they focused heavily on the "function and constraints of research." This result was parallel to those of Björkman's (2007) qualitative in-depth study conducted with 17 academics in Sweden. In that study, academics also attached great importance to the functions and limitations of research studies. It was also parallel to a study carried out in Australia by Akerlind and Kayrooz (2003), who stated that "being engaged with

my work without having pressure and intervention is important in academic freedom." Such a result gave the impression that academics that were interfered with and limited in their studies and teaching process changed their perceptions of academic freedom. A further result showed that most academics weren't satisfied with the current situation of academic freedom and also claimed that it decreased in recent years. This result is supported by Björkman's (2007) study, conducted to investigate the satisfaction of Swedish academics. In that study, it was found that academics were "partly satisfied with the situation, stating that they could say both yes and no." This result may be because of pressure placed on both themselves and their colleagues in regard to academic freedom. However, it was found that academics hoped to work freely. According to another result, most academics attached importance to boards and governing bodies with the participation of all partners, even unions, civil society organizations, and students. Academics thought that decisions were made in limited groups that they weren't asked to participate in. This might cause many problems in the system, as they showed not willingness to implement decisions in which they hadn't taken part, which might affect the quality of the decisions as well. It was also found that academics might be waiting to be asked to participate in such groups.

Furthermore, it was also found that recent neo-liberal discussions caused a dramatic transformation and deterioration of the perception of academic freedom among academics in Turkey. This result is supported by Kayrooz, Kinnear, and Preston's (2001), Akerlind and Kayrooz's (2003), and Kayrooz's (2006) studies stating that these discussions not only changed the academics' perceptions but also transformed perceptions of academic freedom. It was also parallel to the results of the study that Akerlind and Kayrooz (2003) conducted in Australia. In that study, the authors stated that intensive institutional competitive pressures on higher education institutions and pressures on university-industry partnerships caused the commercialization of research studies. This may stem from the worries of academics about discourses regarding market-oriented terms that transformed academic life. It was claimed that defining everything in economic terms and ignoring scientific and social responsibilities of universities may have created concerns among academics. The final result was that almost all academics identified accessing financial resources and having support as important constraints in the process of conducting research. This may be derived from the economic and administrative difficulties of universities and because of the economic concerns that are placed ahead of academic freedom and issues. The recommendations reached through the results obtained in this study are below:

- It was found out that a significant number of academics were not satisfied with academic freedom in Turkey. It could be improved with a complete autonomy at universities.
- Decision making mechanisms like faculty boards and governing bodies are significant for academic freedom. Composition and process of them should be reviewed and improved for a democratic representation of all parties.
- Such a study can be carried out comparatively to find out perceptions of academics in other countries.

References

- Akerlind, S. G., & Kayrooz, C. (2003). Understanding academic freedom: The views of social scientists. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 22(3), 327- 343.
- Akyüz, Y. (1994). *Türk Eğitim Tarihi (Başlangıçtan 1933'e)*, Kültür Koleji Yayınları, İstanbul.
- Alada, A.B. (2003).Türkiye'de Üniversite Üzerine: Tartışmalar, Arayışlar. *Eğitim, Bilim ve Toplum*, 1(4), 24-31.
- Arf, C. (2004).Üniversite Yasası Nedir ve Ne Olmalıdır? *Eğitim,Bilim ve Toplum*, 2(6), 267-273.
- Barblan, A. (2006). A new vision of higher education in Turkey, *Sabancı Üniversitesi*, Geneva, 1-13.
- Björkman, L. B. (2007). Has academic freedom survived? An interview study of the conditions for

- researchers in an era of paradigmatic change. *Higher Education Quarterly*, 61(3), 334- 361.
- Bogdan, R.C., & Biklen, S.K. (1998). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods*, 3rd edition, Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Büyüköztürk, Ş., Çakmak, K.E., Akgün E. Ö. Karadeniz, Ş., & Demirel F.(2008). *Bilimsel Araştırma Yöntemleri*, Pegem Akademi Yayınevi, Ankara.
- Creswell, J.W. (2002). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey:Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Çavdar, A. (1995). Türkiye’de ve Dünya’da Yükseköğretim, Bilim ve Teknoloji Raporu Üzerine Görüşler, *TÜSİAD Yayınları*, İstanbul, 95(3- 175), 23–29.
- De George, R.T. (2003). Ethics, academic freedom and academic tenure. *Journal of Academic Ethics*, 1, 11- 25.
- Denzin, N.K., &Lincoln, Y.S. (2005). *The sage handbook of qualitative research*, Third Edition, Sage, Thousand Oaks.
- Durman, M. (2007). Eğitim Bilimleri Bakış Açısıyla Eğitim Fakülteleri ve Akreditasyon, *Ankara Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Fakültesi Yayınları Yayın 204*, Kargın, T ve Bıkmaz, F (Ed.), Ankara.
- Ercan, F. (2006). Orwell’in Dikey Denetleyici Dünyasından Huxley’in Yatay Denetleyici Dünyasına Geçiş Sürecinde Eğitim ve Üniversiteler. *Refleks Popüler Muhalif Dergi*, 2, 20–22.
- Glaser, B. (1992). *Theoretical sensitivity: Advances in the methodology of grounded theory*. Mill Valley, CA.: Sociology Press.
- Güler, A. (1991). Cumhuriyet Dönemi Üniversite Reformlarında Üniversitenin Amaç ve Fonksiyonları Üzerine Mukayeseli Bir İnceleme, *İzmir 1. Eğitim Kongre Bildirileri*, Buca Eğitim Fakültesi Yayınları, İzmir, 1(2), 295- 303.
- Güneş, H., & Demirtaş, H. (2002). Üçüncü Bin Yılda Üniversiteler ve Toplumsal Kalkınma. *Eğitim Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 7, 33–44.
- Gürüz, K., Şuhubi, E., Şengör, A. M. C., Türker, K., & Yurtsever, E. (1994). *Türkiye’de ve Dünya’da Yükseköğretim, Bilim ve Teknoloji*, TÜSİAD Yayınları, 94, 6- 167, İstanbul.
- Gürüz, K. (1995). Türkiye’de ve Dünya’da Yükseköğretim, Bilim ve Teknoloji Raporu Üzerine Görüşler, *TÜSİAD Yayınları*, 95, 3-175, 33-36.
- (2002). Yükseköğretimde Bilim ve Eğitim, *TÜBA Bilimsel ve Toplumsal Serisi*, 2, 96- 103.
- Hatipoğlu, M. T. (1999). Demokratik Üniversite, *Devrimci Cumhuriyetin Eğitim Politikaları*, Analiz Basım Yayım Aş., İstanbul, 257, 273–279.
- Hatipoğlu, M. T. (2000). Yükseköğretim Kurulu Nedir? *Abece Eğitim ve Ekin Dergisi*, 168, 8–9.
- Hayes, D. (2009). Academic freedom and the diminished subject. *British Journal of Educational Sciences*, 57(2), 127- 145.
- Henkel, M. (2007). Can academic autonomy survive in the knowledge society? A Perspective from Britain, *Higher Education and Development*, 26(1), 87- 99.
- Kayrooz, C., Kinnear, P. & Preston P. (2001).Academic freedom and commercialization of australian universities: perceptions and experiences of social scientists”, *The Australia Institute*, 37,1-69.
- Kayrooz, C. (2006). The role of autonomy in social sciences research the view from UK and Australian universities, *UNESCO*, 1- 12.
- Kerkhof, van de M. (2006). Repertory grid technique (RGT) *integrated assessment*, 6(4), 7-34.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, B.G. (2006). *Designing qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publication, 4th edition.

- Mayring, P. (2000). Qualitative content analysis, *Forum: Online Journal Qualitative Social Research*, 1(2),1-10.
- Mutlu, L. (2000). *Yükseköğretimin Finansmanı: Yasal Düzenleme İçin Öneriler*, TÜSİAD Yayın No T/2000-10-287, İstanbul.
- Neave, G. (2004) The Bologna process and the evaluative state: a viticultural parable. In Kogan,M. (Ed.) *Managerialism and evaluation in higher education*. UNESCO Forum Occasional Paper Series. Paper no. 7. Paris: UNESCO
- O'Neil, M. R. (2009). Academic freedom as a canonical value, *Social Research*, 76(2), 437- 450.
- Palfreyman, D. (2007). Is academic freedom under threat in UK and US higher education? *Education and Law*, 19(1), 19-40.
- REGA (2003). Kamu Malî Yönetimi ve Kontrol Kanunu, *Resmi Gazete*, Sayı: 25326, Tarih,24.12.2003.
- Rendel, M. (1988). Human rights and academic freedom. In M. Tight (Ed.), *Academic freedom and responsibility*, Buckingham, UK: SRHE & OU Press, pp. 74-87.
- Tekeli, İ. (2003). Eğitim Üzerine Düşünmek, *TÜBA*, 5, 53- 89.
- Tight, M. (1988). So what is academic freedom? In M. Tight (Ed.), *Academic freedom and responsibility*, Philadelphia, Society For Research Into Higher Education & Open University Press.
- Worgul, G.S. (1992). *Issues in Academic Freedom*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press.
- Yıldırım, A., & Şimşek, H. (2000). *Sosyal Bilimlerde Nitel Araştırma Yöntemleri*, Seçkin Yayınları, Ankara.
- YÖK (2007). Türkiye'nin Yükseköğretim Stratejisi, *Yükseköğretim Kurulu Başkanlığı*, Ankara, 1-236.