

Chapter 15

ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPORTANCE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION: INVESTMENT IN HUMAN AND EMPLOYMENT

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1.INTRODUCTION

As stated in the Tenth Development Plan (2014-2018), rapid changes in the field of science and technology in the world are both opportunities and risks for our country as well as for other developing countries. In addition to the benefits that come from Turkey in the 2000s; it can increase the quality of the workforce and its innovation capacity by using its young population and education and research facilities, and it will increase its competitiveness and growth rate if it provides information-based transformation and productivity increase in the economy (Onuncu Kalkınma Planı (2014-2018)).In order to be successful in technical and vocational education (TVE), students should be oriented according to their abilities in a period from primary school to high school as in the modern countries. As the student is oriented to the fields which they are interested in, school, family and student should be in collaboration. Turkey that wants to take part in the group of developed countries and integrate into them has young and dynamic manpower, which is her, the biggest source. Using this manpower effectively, it is possible to create a competition among the countries (Binici & Arı, 2004:383).

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Education and Vocational Education

Educational activities play an important role in an individual's life. Through educational activities, individuals have the opportunity to increase their personal capacities, renew themselves, adapt to changes more easily and have the opportunity to increase their performance. Human resources development and proper orientation are possible through training activities. Through educational activi-

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ties, individuals can determine their own career paths and create their professional preferences (Yeşil, 2017: 757).

In other words, the emphasis placed on the training and development of human resources is increasing day by day, because organizations are increasingly becoming aware that the path to achieving the goals and objectives is through the training and development of human resources. They are aware that investment in human beings will trigger organizational development and that they realize their vision and missions will be realized with the most efficient use of human resources (Yeşil, 2016).

The purpose of education is not directly material resources. Education provides indirect benefits to society in this way because it is a positive change of human behavior. Education helps to self-discipline, broaden the horizon of thought, open up new opportunities and stimulate initiative. As a result, the society gets richer than before. Education also provides the following key benefits (Tekir, 1997:316; Özsoy, 2007:29):

- It directly improves the efficiency of labor with its working capacity.
- Provides technological development and thus indirectly capital affects efficiency.
- Good education helps to ensure stability and order in job opportunities.
- The ability to adapt to changes in business conditions ensures social position and respect.

In order to make a successful career planning, students should be aware of what they want and they should be able to determine their goals in line with their wishes. For this purpose, centers that will provide career and vocational counseling services in universities should be expanded (Yeşil & Arpat, 2018: 139).

3. THE IMPORTANCE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND INVESTMENT IN HUMAN CAPITAL

The impact of dizzying developments in information and communication technologies is felt in all sectors and in all areas of life, education is one of the most affected areas of change. The importance of vocational and technical education, which exhibits a dynamic structure in parallel with the rapidly changing knowledge, technology, production methods and developments in business life, is gradually increasing all over the world. This dynamic structure necessitates a constantly renewing education system, strengthening of technological infrastructure investments, closely monitoring the developments in the world and close cooperation with the private sector (Türkiye Mesleki ve Teknik Eğitim Strateji Belgesi ve Eylem Planı 2014-2018).

A human capital investment definition helps you understand the importance of investing time and money into education and training opportunities. In business accounting terms, capital refers to the primary goods or borrowed funds that are used to start or operate a business. Capital goods represent a major investment, typically in things like equipment, vehicles or a building, whereas capital debt represents borrowed funds like a business loan or credit card debt. Businesses also invest in human capital, through the hiring of a workforce to produce goods and manage operations. The true asset, however, is the quality of the skills and knowledge held by those employees and how they utilize them for the benefit of the company where they work. Additionally, qualities such as good work habits, punctuality and overall health are important factors in the human capital component (Natter, 2018).

Part of the youth/adult unemployment gap can be explained by the relative lack of work experience and job search skills among young workers. However, research in recent decades suggests that structural problems also affect youth labour market performance. In principle, such problems can be tackled using several levers. One lever is provided by educational policies that help young people to make a better transition from school to work and improve the skills match between young workers and employers. Ultimately, this amounts to policies that cover the full educational cycle. They start with early childhood interventions and continue through the entire period of compulsory schooling until the young people enter the vocational education and training system. A second lever concerns the removal of barriers to the employment of young workers (Kluve,2014:6).

Progress has been made especially on the EU 2020 twofold target on education (i.e. reducing the early leavers and increasing tertiary attainment) and adult participation in lifelong learning (albeit from relatively low levels). To realize its underlying growth potential, Turkey needs to accelerate structural reforms in education and training and employment and improve trust in its institutions. Current focus is on better use of human capital through the pursuit of the education agenda and the deepening and widening of labour market reforms. Targeted training will improve the qualifications of low-skilled workers and female labour force participation stimulated through flexible working conditions. In order to address these challenges, the implementation of strategies to align education and training policies with labour market needs is much needed (European Training Foundation (2019)).

4. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

In order for an employee to become an effective information worker, he / she must have sufficient knowledge and have received the necessary vocational training. Individuals who are educated in their profession and who love their profession are more productive and successful in business life. In order to increase service quality, it is important that higher education institutions meet and motivate students' expectations (Yeşil & Tokbaş, 2018: 939).

Moschidis et al. (2013), according to the results of their study, it was stated that the selection of department in the university is not dependent on the effect of family and local environment and these parameters are insignificant. It is stated that this choice is mainly related to the graduates of a certain department and social recognition for the future career of the related graduates. For this reason, it is emphasized that students' career and future thoughts are important when choosing university department. In addition, the position of the university is stated to be important (Moschidis et al., 2013: 119).

In the Tenth Development Plan (2014-2018) priority transformation programs include Basic and Professional Skills Development Program, Graduation Center for Qualified Manpower Program and Labor Market Activation Program. In addition, targets such as "qualified people - strong society", "continuing quality-oriented transformation based on equal opportunity in education system", "developing a more autonomous higher education system which is more sensitive to the needs of society and economy, interacting with national and international stakeholders", increasing gross schooling rates to 70 percent in pre-school education and 94 percent in higher education" are also included (Onuncu Kalkınma Planı (2014-2018)).

For providing vocational and technical education in accordance with the needs of the labor market, strengthening the relationship between education and employment, implementing effective active labor market policies, increasing the employability of the labor force by eliminating the problem of occupation and developing the capacities of vocational education schools and institutions in some organized industrial zones and expanding the establishment of vocational high schools, Ministry of Science, Industry and Technology and Ministry of National Education signed a protocol. With this protocol, it is aimed to open new vocational high schools in organized industrial zones, to meet the need for qualified personnel by giving incentives per student and to increase employment (Türkiye Mesleki ve Teknik Eğitim Strateji Belgesi ve Eylem Planı 2014-2018).

The ETF has signed a strategic partnership with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), with the aim of increasing the role of the private sector in supporting young people, especially young women, to integrate into the workforce. There are some implementations. Turkey has been receiving substantial funds from the EU since 2001. Human capital development remains high on the agenda of the 2014-20 programming period of EU external assistance to Turkey. The ETF (European Training Foundation) supports the EU delegation's agenda with the following interventions, cooperating with both public and private Turkish institutions (European Training Foundation (2019)):

- promoting work-based learning
- ensuring the quality of VET
- enhancing access to VET including validation
- strengthening key competencies including entrepreneurial learning and initial and continuous professional development of teachers and trainers. Small Business Act (SBA) assessment and related initiatives are part of this cooperation.

Although Turkey's growth prospects are reasonably robust, with an expected 4.7% growth rate for 2018 and the medium term, it faces challenges to moving into high-income status. Turkey's macroeconomic achievements are also being tested by an uncertain outlook. Domestic challenges and a deteriorating geopolitical environment have negatively impacted exports, investment, and growth. Low rates of labour market participation and employment, high informality and precarious and vulnerable employment disproportionately affect young people. Turkey continues to lag behind EU averages, and though economic growth has stimulated job creation, unemployment remains at 10.9% (European Training Foundation (2019)).

In October 2018 the Turkish government presented its Education Vision 2023, providing for a comprehensive roadmap that covers the whole Turkish education system. The EV 2023 aims to guide a holistic reform process that responds to the changes Turkey and the world are undergoing. It should bring the education system in line with international standards so that learners can be equipped with the skills they need in the 21st century. Against this background and with the European Union's, ETF, other EU Member States' support, the Ministry of National Education in Turkey is looking at EU Education and Training 2020 and beyond to gather and share knowledge, and seeks to implement and advance educational policy reforms at national level (European Training Foundation (2019)).

Job creation policies (e.g. growth strategy, private sector development) and the use of labour market policies for targeted groups, such as wage subsidies, apprenticeships and training programmes are needed. Entrepreneurship, self-employ-

ment, cooperatives, public investment programmes, employment intermediation services should be given priority to increase employment opportunities, particularly for the disadvantaged youth groups identified. VET (Vocational Education and Training) Systems have to be made more attractive, better quality and more responsive to the rapidly changing demand for skills in local labour markets. A more diverse offer of VET programmes improved curricula and teachers and extended outreach of VET to the youth are all needed. More emphasis on lifelong learning and soft skills is key to improving youth employability (Bardak,2014:84). Vocational colleges provide qualified individuals for the labor market because education for vocational colleges is very important to support students to be qualified, so the quality of vocational education should be systematically designed to achieve success. In addition, education plays an important role in vocational high schools in order to increase productivity (Yeşil, 2017: 2610).

The last stage of the education that individuals will receive in their preferred occupations is generally carried out by higher education institutions. If higher education institutions correctly guide and educate young individuals in their fields, individuals become more qualified staff and become more motivated to their professions. However, it is not possible to obtain the expected benefit from the education even if the education is taken in higher education institutions with the highest qualification level for those who do not choose the right profession. This situation also leads to attitudes and behaviors such as low productivity, intention to quit, low satisfaction and loyalty to work, which make it difficult to switch to labor markets, increase unemployment, or have employment opportunities (Arpat & Yeşil, 2018: 299).

İKGPO (Human Resources Development Operational Program) 's primary objective is that Turkey has a labor market functioning effectively. Therefore, the priorities of the program are identified as Employment, Education, Lifelong Learning and Social Inclusion. These areas are divided into sections within themselves and thus the intervention areas are clarified. Accordingly, İKGPO increases the employment rates of women and youth, organizes vocational training according to needs, increases the schooling rate of girls, and ensures the participation of disadvantaged persons (disabled people, Roma citizens etc.) to employment and social life, thus contributing to the reduction of unemployment and poverty. Social inclusion is to ensure the participation of individuals or groups (disabled, ex-convicts, etc.) who are exposed to social exclusion to the labor force by eliminating the factors preventing them from taking part in economic and social life (İKGPO, (2007-2013)).

5.CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION

The aim of education is to make individuals productive and productive by harmonizing with their environment. The characteristics expected from the individual in the globalization process are taking responsibility, creative thinking, adaptation to change, problem solving, easy communication, working with the group, being prone to cooperation, and understanding complex technological systems (Binici & Arıcı,2004:384).

It is important to invest in people to improve the economic prosperity in a country, to become a global competitive superior, to use resources more effectively and efficiently, and to have good quality of education system. Determining the strategies and targets for increasing qualifications in vocational and technical education is important for the education of the young population and for them to become qualified workers for the job market in the future. Today, individuals need to be directed to the right professions from the point of basic education in terms of being able to become knowledge workers and become specialists. Nowadays, there is a need for workers who have high communication skills, dynamic, information workers, leadership skills, team work, problem solving. By the technological developments in the recent years, information can be reached in a short time, also the knowledge needs to be assimilated and assessed in a short time. For this, qualified person are needed in organizations (Yeşil,2018:221).

One of the most important problem areas of the labor market in both developed and developing countries is the mismatch between the qualifications demanded by the labor market and the qualifications provided by the education system. This mismatch between supply and demand causes the labor force to remain idle. It is important to save the high young population and labor capacity of our country from becoming idle with efficient employment and education policies. Examples of countries where regular statistical data can be obtained show strong relationships between education and labor force participation rates. When looking at employment rates, if education level increases employment rate increases in Turkey. Education is an important tool in increasing the employability and productivity of labor. This situation is also closely related to the competitiveness of countries. For this purpose, policies that will strengthen the education-employment relationship are essential (UİS (Ulusal İstihdam Stratejisi) 2014 – 2023).

According to Hızlan (1997), the main criterion of effectiveness and efficiency in education is the unity of harmony and purpose between industry and school. Because the main purpose of education is to make individuals happy besides economic, social and cultural development. It is aimed to educate a young, entrepre-

neurial audience with an artistic sensitivity, self-confidence, thinking, researching in education in developed countries (Binici & Arıcı,2004:384).

As a result we can say that the need for qualified manpower is increasing day by day in the globalizing world. It is important to increase the education level and quality in order to increase the economic welfare of the country. There is a need for manpower that can use, absorb, evaluate, produce new information and use technology effectively. Especially, the fact that our country has a young population requires that human capital be directed effectively. It is important to increase the quality of education and to improve its quality as well as quantity.

First of all, the quality of education should be increased. To this end, it is important to raise individuals to meet the needs of the labor market. For this reason, studies should be carried out for the development of schools in terms of technical and educator. In particular, technological issues should be improved and educators should be able to renew themselves. The relationship between education and employment should be strengthened.

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