SEEKING SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE EDUCATION REFORMS OF THE JDP: A STUDY ON TRANSITION TO HIGHER EDUCATION IN TURKEY

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ABSTRACT

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This study examines the educational reforms implemented in the JDP period in terms of social justice demand with a specific focus on the transition to higher education policies. It has been claimed that since the beginning of the 2000s, when policy-making practices were reshaped by neoliberalism, the application of populist discourse and an incremental policy-making model together marked the reforms implemented in the field of education in Turkey. The main motivation of the study is to question whether it is possible to achieve social justice in an environment where policy making is incremental and the demand management mechanism is populist. In this context, the education reforms of the AKP are examined under three headings as material compensation policies, political compensation policies, and structural changes. The examination system, which is considered as one of the structural transformations, has been examined in more detail and discussed for the demand for social justice. As a result, as an extension of the neoliberal hegemony project, ensuring social justice in an

environment where populism and incrementalism are applied together; is only possible in the context of the unintended consequences of the reforms, during limited periods and provided that the burden is transferred to the shoulders of the service recipients.

Keywords: Education Policy, Social Justice, Incremental Policymaking, Transition to Higher Education

ÖZ

AKP'NİN EĞİTİM REFORMLARINDA SOSYAL ADALETİ ARAMAK: TÜRKİYE'DE YÜKSEKÖĞRETİME GEÇİŞ ÜZERİNE BİR ÇALIŞMA

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Bu çalışma AKP döneminde uygulanan eğitim reformlarını yükköğretime geçiş politikalarına spesifik bir odakla sosyal adalet talebi açısından incelemektedir. Politika yapma pratiklerinin neoliberalizm ile yeniden şekillendiği 2000'li yılların başından itibaren Türkiye'de eğitim alanında uygulanan reformlara popülist bir söylem ve artırımlı politika yapımı modelinin bir arada uygulanmasının damga vurduğu iddia edilmiştir. Çalışmanın temel motivasyonu politika yapımının artırımlı ve talep yönetimi mekanizmasının popülist olduğu bir ortamda sosyal adaletin sağlanmasının mümkün olup olmadığını sorgulamaktır. Bu bağlamda AKP'nin eğitim reformları mali telafi politikaları, siyasi telafi politikaları ve yapısal değişiklikler olarak üç başlık altında incelenmiştir. Yapısal dönüşümlerden biri olarak ele alınan sınav sistemi daha detaylı irdelenerek, sosyal adalet talebine yönelik olarak tartışılmıştır. Sonuç olarak, neoliberal hegemonya projesinin bir uzantısı olarak popülizm ve artırımcılığın bir arada uygulandığı bir ortamda sosyal adaletin sağlanmasının; ancak reformların

öngörülmemiş sonuçları bağlamında, kısıtlı periyotlar süresince ve yükün hizmet alanların omzuna devredilmesi koşuluyla mümkün olduğu iddia edilmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Eğitim Politikası, Sosyal Adalet, Artırımcı Politika Yapımı, Yükseköğretime Geçiş

In Memory of Garip Çay

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study concentrates on the education reforms of JDP under neoliberalism with a specific focus on policies of transition to higher education. JDP has become the longest carrier of the neoliberal hegemony in Turkey. It came into power in the early 2000s when policymaking practices were adopting a new rationale under the influence of neoliberalism at both the global and national levels. One of the most prevailing outcomes of globalization in policymaking was that the nation-state is not the key determinant anymore (Morçöl, 2015, p. 58). In other words, the decision-making power of the nation-states is transferred to other authorities on different scales (Jessop, 2002, p. 206). Nonetheless, the diffusion of power is not only through the different governmental levels but also non-governmental actors are involved in decision making. The new setting creates an atmosphere where a system of continuous negotiation between the actors takes place (as cited from Marks in Cairney, 2019, p. 156). Eventually, the issue of governing become dispersed over various societal actors whose relationships are constantly altering (as cited from Kooiman in Cairney, 2019, p. 156). When it is considered that the transnational capitalist class and international organizations are also in the game, the act of policymaking appears to comprise new strategies for finding the balance between challenges of the newly emerged multi-actor setting. To put it another way, the policymaking may contain solving problems resulting from diversified interests joining the process. So, the multi-actor networks may require different agendas to cooperate. Hence, it can be argued that policymaking has gained an eclectic dimension (Bayırbağ, 2015b, p. 253). Because, it also contains the endeavor to find harmony between expectations of global organizations and growing inequalities created by the neoliberalism at the national level. So, the policymakers would encounter inconsistencies in such a framework. When the

expactations of the multiplicity of the actors clash, it would be predictable that decisionmakers should take action to prevent blockages arising from the contradictions. Incremental policy solutions seem to be a good fit for solving possible disputes because they allow the interactions between participants of the policy process to be controlled moderately. Additionally, because policymakers are unsure of the long-term repercussions of their policies, incremental decisions tend to lessen the risks and costs of ambiguity (Anyebe, 2018, pp. 14–15).

Yet, since the expectations of the different groups may clash, incremental solutions should be presented in a way to hinder the apparent advantages or disadvantages of one over the other. So, a practical question would be how to harmonize demands and results in a multi-actor setting in the neoliberal era. When we consider in the context of the JDP experience, the answer lies in populism. Because the incremental yet possibly conflicting solutions should be presented precisely to neutralize the disputes. Striking a populist attitude is essential not only to support the incremental changes but also to build a demand management mechanism in an atmosphere where the need for counterbalancing deprivations of market relations is extant. So, under neoliberalism, multiple actors involved in policymaking must find a balance between incrementalism and populism because the act of policy-making has been an oscillating process between the two. To be more specific, in this study, populism under neoliberal hegemony is understood as a demand managing mechanism that serves in reinforcing the power of the capitalist class against labor by expanding representation possibilities of capital in the power bloc. At the same time, populism helps gradual integration of the lowest layers of the working class into the hegemony of the ruling class with policies compatible with neoliberalism (D. Yıldırım, 2009, p. 4).

As a result, within the framework presented so far, this study will use the concepts of incrementalism and populism as inevitably coexisting factors that explain policymaking of JDP under neoliberalism. Because the policymaking cannot be understood as an outcome of the inter-elite struggle. Similarly, it is not possible to

conceptualize the policies simply as a result of the materialization of the public interest. Rather, policymaking is a process that fluctuates in between. So, the focus of the policymaking should be not only the decisions of the governmental and non-governmental actors scaling from national to global but also the demands of the population. Neoliberal hegemony can only be successful in finding balance in between them. The concepts of incrementalism and populism help to explain the rationale behind the policies in such a frame.

On the demand side of the picture, there will be a specific emphasis on the demand for social justice. Because neoliberal hegemony has built a narrative in which the market mechanism results in inescapable transformations. In the face of such changes, the state does not necessarily act democratically (Topal, 2013, pp. 427–428). Nevertheless, it is inevitable to witness rising inequalities where the state's redistributive role is transferred to the market mechanism. Hence, it is not surprising for the demand for social justice to rise. There is a consensus on the literature that neoliberal policies have caused in loss of equity and social justice, and democratic accountability (Hill & Kumar, 2008, p. 12). Education appears to be an area that contains, furthers, and reproduces the inherited discrepancies of neoliberalism. It is a social institution that has been subordinated to the market goals as well as it has the capacity to construct educational practices that legitimizes the market relations (Hill & Kumar, 2008, p. 20). At the same time, it is a marketplace itself operating over the commodity of skill enhancement. So, what people expect from schooling is to have a share in the marketplace. It is inevitable to face the tension between economic rationalism and social justice in the area of education (Grimaldi, 2012, p. 1133). As a result, within the context of this study, social justice demand in the area of education is comprehended as every individual's right to participate in schooling where the better quality of education is the primary goal as a recognized standard.

Focusing on the education policies in the neoliberal era, the main motivation of this study, thus, is to investigate whether it is possible to provide social justice where

demand management mechanism is populist and policymaking is incremental. To be able to answer the question, education reforms of the JDP, which are related to the demand for social justice, will be examined first. Then, the discussion will concentrate on the exam system. Considering the educational reforms throughout the JDP rule, it is clear that incremental policymaking does not pertain to the first years of its rule only. Not only has it been embraced in the post-crisis era, but it also appears to have become a policymaking reflex as a result of crisis management experiences. Piece-meal solutions do not have the capacity to solve the problem; however, they may be effective in postponing it in the short run. As a result, tackling problems in pieces rather than holistically results in the addition of new topics to old ones have the capacity to bring more complications. On the other hand, JDP relied on a hegemony project under which conflicting ideologies may be contained. To be more specific, they address growingly poor and capitalist groups at the same time. The neoliberal policies were to be deepening the power of the capitalist class and vulgarizing privatization. The populist discourse was to compensate for those who were under attack of the inequalities risen with neoliberalism. Indeed, only such a frame could explain the dual existence of particular policies, for example, marketization of the education services and free distribution of the textbooks at the same time.

As it has already mentioned, hegemonic neoliberal influences push for markets in education. Education, on the other hand, inherently serves both private and public interests. It serves private interests by enhancing the capacity of individuals to gain economic and social benefits. It also has public value because more highly educated individuals are likely to carry the progress in science, administration, etc., which benefits all citizens. However, much of the value of educational actions depend on political power relations (Carnoy, 2016, p. 32).

The neoliberal paradigm shift created an environment where the services were traditionally the responsibilities of the state. So, for the cost of education, families are directly charged. Why have families gone under such a burden? For their demand of a

better-quality education. However, education is not the object of desire by itself. It serves what is called “private interest” so long as being a means to get a well-paid and prestigious job. Hence, the marketization of the area of education was a natural development. Indeed, the demand for social justice in the realm of education speaks to the labor market. The emphasis on educational quality has been accompanied and promoted by the spread of the exam system where measurement is completed via testing. At this point, private education institutions are positioned in the middle of the student's life because in the formal education, there is no particular way of training for the test technique. So, meeting the demands of the people in accessing better quality education is formulated as a shared responsibility between the state, private enterprises, and citizens. It should be reminded that the presence of the examination system, hence the demand fır private tutoring institutions was before the neoliberal era. This argument is not to underestimate the deepening dimension of neoliberal policymaking. However, the new paradigm has brought to our discussion the fact that demands for higher-quality education are now louder than ever. Thus, it is crucial to question how JDP compensates for the demolishing effects of neoliberalism in the area of education with a special focus on the examination system. Considering the temporal focus, the demand for social justice will refer to the accessibility of the educational means that allow students to take advantage of the entrance exams within the context of this study.

In summary, the first chapter will represent a further discussion on the analytical framework briefly described above. The second chapter will provide an overview of the education reforms of JDP that will be demonstrated in a way to elaborate on the social justice dimension of the policies. In that regard, it will be beneficial to emphasize the fact that to eliminate the risks of the contradictions, JDP deploys compensation policies in addition to the structural reforms. The education policies hereof will be tried to categorize under three headings, namely material compensations, political compensations, and structural changes. Material compensations will refer to the containment of the fiscal sufferings, whereas political compensations will be representing the categoric victimhoods. It will be tried to demonstrate how both of the

policies of compensation helps JDP to build a populist discourse in spite of the tension with the market relations. On the other hand, some of the education policies of JDP will be categorized as structural changes. On the contrary to the selectivity of the compensation policies, the structural changes will be representing reforms that cover the whole society. Moreover, the structural changes will be argued to build with the incremental adjustments. The most prevailing result of the structural changes will be addressed as creating a more competitive environment and, as an indirect outcome, transferring the burden of compensation to the citizens. Hence, reviewing the education reforms of JDP with the question of social justice in mind, the dominance of the market relations will be discussed in this chapter. One of the most striking structural yet incremental policies in the education area is the examination system, which will require more attention. So, in the last chapter, the transition to higher education policies will be looked closer in order to pay attention to the fact that the examination system is the reason behind the market mechanism to venture by triggering the private tutoring institutions. It will be focused on the structure of the exam system being difficult to get out. It indeed resembles a vicious circle. Under capitalism, education serves as a means of reproducing labor power. From the perspective of society, a higher-quality education is also the path to reach better work opportunities. So, it is natural that the necessity for private tutoring institutions arises in a system where the transition from one stage to another is measured by a test, and the official curriculum departs from the test technique. This chapter will also demonstrate how the examination system can be the most visible area in incremental policymaking. The demand for supplementary tutoring institutions beyond formal schooling arose not just as a result of the existence of an exam but also as a result of individual changes within the examination system. So, the last chapter will be focusing on the system of transition to higher education and private tutoring institutions as an extension of it. In this regard, the private tutoring institutions and exam system as components of the transition to higher education in Turkey will help to illustrate how JDP manages the demand for social justice.

CHAPTER 2

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Neoliberalism brought new methods in policymaking by blending national administration practices with global economic strategies. At the national level, the spirit of the service provision has gone through a change in which the right-based citizens started to be approached as commodified individuals. At the global level, the economy is remodeled in such a way that it is guaranteed to be based on market relations and structurally adjusted for this purpose. The whole process resulted in the concentration of power in the hands of the transnational capitalist class and international organizations. Hence, the nation-state was not the key determinant in policymaking in this new multi-actor setting. As a result, the process of national policymaking gained an eclectic dimension where incrementalism is adopted in policymaking with the assistance of mediums like policy transfer. The experiences so far demonstrated that policymaking under such conditions is inclined to contradictions, even gridlocks. The area of education policymaking was not exempt from those gridlocks. The endeavor to find the equilibrium between meeting the expectations of global organizations and managing the rising inequalities created by neoliberalism at the national level concurrently brings along discrepancies for the policymakers. In addition, the field of education policy, which the study focuses on, embodies further contradiction innate to itself. It is an area in which the implementer is also the bearer of the demand. Moreover, in an atmosphere where the claimer is democratically excluded from raising her demand in traditional channels of policymaking, and market solutions are presented for problems addressed by the society, it is inevitable to witness contradictions. Furthermore, another contradiction innate to education policymaking reveals when those dualities direct policymakers to act outside of the logic of the

market in certain moments, even under neoliberalism. Thus, it is observable that there are two scenarios to prevent possible blockages arising from the contradictions: populism and incrementalism. Under such disparities, the main motivation of this study is to investigate whether it is possible to provide social justice where demand management mechanism is populist and policymaking is incremental. In this chapter, it is attempted to ground the observations presented above. To do so, the answers will be searched for the questions of how neoliberalism reshaped policymaking in the globalized world, how the education policymaking is approached under market relations, what is distinctive for the area of education.

2.1. Neoliberalism and Policymaking

The relationship between public administration and politics has been constantly redefined in the historical development of the capitalist nation-state. Accordingly, the concepts of public and public good, which are the object of public administration, are constantly transforming. For this reason, the content of the work to be done by the public administration, the form of implementation, and the implementers are redefined throughout the political history (Bayırbağ & Göksel, 2013, p. 156). In the 1980s, with the search for a new configuration to replace the social welfare state model, another change in the meaning of the public and public good occurred again. Moreover, the nation-state, free circulation of the capital across the national borders, the efficiency of the state in the economic field, and the place of the public in the market are discussions accompanying the search (Jessop, 2002, pp. 201–207). Hence, the internationalization of capital and globalization has brought along a transformation process that also affects the internal functioning of states. The fusion of national administration practices and economic strategies on a global scale brought a multi-actor process in policymaking. The agents of the new composition are the capitalist class, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, public administrators, and citizens. Within the network among those agents, one of the priorities of the neoliberal strategy is the marketization of the public services through new mechanisms such as privatization,

flexibilization, precarization, deregulation, and subsequent regulation policies, and international agreements. As Güzelsarı emphasizes, with the private sector being considered an efficiency and effectiveness tool in service provision, legal rationality in public administration is replaced by economic-managerial rationality (Güzelsarı, 2004, p. 3). Therefore, the concept of rights-based citizenship has been replaced by commodified individuals who can take on the adjectives such as customers, entrepreneurs, or stakeholders when necessary. Ataay categorizes the new methods that neoliberalism brought to public services at the national level. Accordingly, neoliberalism, which rejects the practice of providing the public service directly through the public organization, hence, which admits their transformation into profit-oriented services, adopts the following ways: public services are provided by the public and, yet, financed by the prices paid by the users; the performance of public services by private bodies; procurement of services by private entities; customization of the citizen and the commodification of public services (Ataay, 2015, pp. 30–36).

Yıldırım conveys the fundamental mission of the governance paradigm as the inclusion of each individual in the process in a way that will expand the process of transnationalization of capital, commodity, and labor (E. Yıldırım, 2018, p. 270). Based on Yıldırım's conceptualization, it would not be misleading to say that not only individuals but also all agencies with the capacity to deepen marketization participate in the process with a similar mission. Indeed, Bayırbağ stresses that with globalization, it is possible to see the proliferation of public authorities established at different spatial scales and in various institutional forms playing a more central role in the public policy processes (Bayırbağ, 2015b, p. 254). Here, it is essential to discuss why the supranational and global public authorities influence the national policymaking processes. In order for global capitalism to reproduce itself and its sustaining partner state's survival, they need to be able to produce new strategies in the face of economic and political crises. According to the approaches that define an autonomy to state in this sense, "the ultimate objective is an economy based on a more market-oriented allocation of the resources, and structurally adjusted to the emerging forces of

globalization" (Yalman, 2009, p. 13). Although this approach makes a sound detection between globalization and resource allocation, as Ercan states, the redefinition of the basic function of the state is not due to the transformations that take place within the state itself as a subject. The change of the state, which is the expression of a social relationship, occurs as a result of the conflict and reconciliation processes of classes against the objective positions revealed by capital accumulation on a world scale (Ercan, 2005, p. 376). In other words, due to the hegemony of the neoliberal accumulation strategy, power in the global system is concentrated in the hands of the transnational capitalist class and transnational organizations. Hence, where the nation-state is not 'the only player in town' and supranational public authorities play a more central role, policymaking is prone to contradictions.

It would be helpful to include the concept of policy transfer here. Because another concept that globalization has added to policymaking is policy transfer. Akdoğan et al. describe policy transfer as

> *Dealing with the question of how to utilize the different policy formulations and implementations of different geographical entities to solve problems encountered in various stages of public policy analysis* (2015, p. 237).

When the role of national authorities is considered in the context of the multi-actor policy making, it can be described as

> *The determination of public policies following sector-focused solutions and market signals of such solutions designed for policy problems in the global system* (Akdoğan et al., 2015, p. 238).

Starting from this, it can be contested that the consolidation of the neoliberal accumulation strategy by transnational institutions through policy transfer was an effective method during the 2000s. Policy transfer can occur in the direction from the global to the national, or it can move in the opposite. For instance, the Conditional Cash Transfer project was initiated by the collaboration of the World Bank and Turkey.

The project, which was put into effect simultaneously by Brazil and Turkey, became a model for the Municipality of New York (D. Yıldırım, 2009, p. 14). Adapting a solution that is invented in another time for another problem comes as another tool to solve the issue at hand: incrementalism.

To understand what incrementalism is, it is helpful first to convey what it is not. Incrementalism is not a way of adopting large-scale change in the norms and codes of the existing system. Indeed, it was asserted that incrementalism would overcome mistaken attempts used by rational and comprehensive analysis (Hayes, 2017, p. 297). Dahl and Lindblom describe ways of conducting public policy as science, calculated risk, utopianism, and incrementalism. Among the group, incrementalism represents decisions where rational calculation contributes limitedly to the implementation of a certain policy. Likewise, incremental adjustments would help to negotiate with the help of delicate measures in conflicting goals. When there is an unintended outcome, they can more easily be restored through incremental adaptations (Dahl & Lindblom, 2017, pp. 78–86). Hence, incrementalism refers to a pluralistic process of policymaking that incorporates mutual adjustment among multiple actors who may disagree on the goals (Hayes, 2017, p. 287). In this way, it would also be conceivable what Kooiman reveals about complex governance networks that

> *insight the diversity of those participating in social-political interactions can only be gained by involving them in the governing process, considering them necessary sources of information and in doing so, giving them the opportunity to play out their identities* (Kooiman, 1999, p. 76).

Since the inception of the Republic, education policymaking has gone through many transformations. During the early years of the republic, the unification of education under the newly established rule was the primary goal. Comprehensive policy programs accompany the pursuit of national unity in education. When radical political shifts were followed by military interventions and significant policy reforms in the economy, large-scale planning started to be out fashioned gradually. As we discussed

earlier, policy alternatives began to be searched in market solutions since the beginning of the 2000s. Hence, another way of policymaking is adopted, representing "*constant and active state intervention, yet through incremental changes*" (Bayırbağ, 2015a, p. 67). Studying the educational reforms throughout the JDP rule, it would not be surprising to witness that incremental policymaking does not pertain to the first years of its rule only. Not only adopted in the post-crisis era, but also it seems to be settled down as a policymaking reflex as an output of the experiences in crisis management. Indeed, it would not be misleading to argue that incrementalism brings along more incrementalism. Piece-meal solutions do not have the capacity to solve the problem; however, they may be effective in postponing it in the short run. Therefore, solving issues in parts rather than holistically results in adding new topics to the old ones, hence, creating brand-new deadlocks. Similarly, globalization for Bayırbağ, is an eclectic process that could shake the relationship between the state and society. He further argues that *structural/institutional changes in a policy field that take place under the influence of globalization tend to create gridlocks in public policymaking and implementation* (Bayırbağ, 2015b, pp. 253–254).

Education policymaking is not exempt from these gridlocks. The effort of balancing between meeting the expectations of transnational and global organizations and managing the deepening inequalities created by neoliberalism at the national level simultaneously brings along contradictions for the policymakers. It is possible to observe that there are two scenarios to prevent possible blockages arising from these contradictions. The first is to make use of populism to manage the perception of society. The second is the adoption of the incremental policymaking process. The educational reforms of JDP, which will be examined in the next chapter, show a populist and incremental view in policymaking in the discourse that fits the analytical framework drawn above. On the one hand, populism stands as a security blanket against deepening inequalities created by neoliberalism. On the other hand, incrementalism prevails as a dominant mode of policymaking. Under these circumstances, this study aims to

interrogate whether or not it is possible to provide social justice where policymaking is incremental and demand management mechanism is populist.

2.2. Education Policymaking under Neoliberalism

JDP rule has been the longest executor of the hegemony project of the neoliberal accumulation strategy in Turkey. JDP is also the subject of many contradictory processes, as it manages the neoliberal accumulation strategy and populist demand management together. It is useful to remember here:

> *A class establishes hegemony not only by imposing a monolithic conception of the world on the rest of society but to the extent that it can articulate the different ideologies in a way that neutralizes their potential antagonisms. (quoted from Laclau in D. Yıldırım, 2009, p. 10).*

To be more concrete,

> *On the one hand, neoliberalism corresponds to the search for increasing profit rates, reducing labor costs, and increasing the rate of surplus-value from the point of view of the ruling classes. On the other hand, it also provides a solution to the search for depoliticizing the economy and society*. (D. Yıldırım, 2009, p. 10).

Hence, JDP contained the contradiction between "furthering neoliberal policies" and "containing its negative consequences" through populist moves (Bayırbağ, 2015b, p. 274). The policy measures aiming to address social justice-related issues tend to create new inequalities where the market-oriented model is adopted in policymaking, in which eclectic and diverse sets of administrative practices and institutional forms emerge.

In this study, I both examine educational policymaking during JDP rule under marketization and also pursue the demand for social justice that has been formulated along the line. The inequalities deepened by neoliberal policies have paved the way for the quest for social justice in different policy areas to be more evident than ever before. However, it is critical to note that populism means the democratic exclusion of the working classes from politics rather than authoritarian inclusion (D. Yıldırım, 2009, p. 17). Yılmaz-Şener shows how poverty is depoliticized through the Social Risk Mitigation Project, which was put into practice after the 2001 crisis in Turkey (2015, p. 772). In her work on the same subject, Zabcı showed how international organizations contributed to the process. It has been revealed that the project put into practice by the IMF and WB adopts reduction and mitigation methods rather than eliminating poverty. (2003, p. 222). Moreover, the concept of social risk that is located in the title of the project is defined with elements such as crime, regional violence, terrorism, gang actions, domestic conflicts, war, and social uprising. Considering all these, the question that Zabcı asked about 20 years ago remains relevant: *Has the fight against poverty of transnational organizations had a tangible impact so far*? (2003, p. 238).

It is a part of the paradigm shift that the services which were previously a "right" and fulfilled by the state are now transformed into "aid" through transnational projects (Kutlu, 2015, p. 178; Zabcı, 2003, p. 237). As it can be understood, putting the political content of public services into the background and making service provision a technical issue has also spread to the field of social policy. In his study, Özuğurlu examines how social policy has been transformed by breaking away from the traditional paradigm. He argued that the subject of the policy was working-class previously. To whom social policies directed has been replaced by the poor and the structural unemployed who have fallen out of class with the new paradigm. Another change in the field of social policy is the emergence of the self-help mechanism through the development of social capital. The final effect of the paradigm shift is that social integration is replaced by the competition and efficiency strategy of the market (Özuğurlu, 2003, pp. 65–67). Finally, according to Özuğurlu, the meaning of the new social policy defined by

international institutions is not located within the individual rights and modern citizenship institution. On the contrary, it has been defined in line with the principles of economic growth, productivity, and competition targeted by structural adjustments (2003, pp. 72–73). In this respect, education policy and social policy overlap with each other. Education is recognized as a compulsory constitutional right for all citizens without discrimination in Turkey (Anayasa, md.42). Nevertheless, when it comes to access to education on equal terms, the measures to prevent citizens from deprivation of education are not comprehensively handled by the policymakers.

Formulation of social justice is a further object of curiosity in the scope of this study. From the citizen's position, the demand for social justice can be directed from various positions in different periods and can refer to different meanings. The social justice demand in the education field refers to the job market indeed. Education is not the object of desire itself, lying behind the expression of demand. Moreover, for the position of policymakers, one has to admit the fact that social justice is a complex policy goal. Particularly in education policymaking, social justice holds an intertwined position between policy formulation and policy implementation. This is because the implementation of the policy is also the bearers of the demand. Ideally speaking, everyone in the country is a part of the education system as a student. Most of the individuals are the parent of the students at different levels. Last but not least, the street-level bureaucrats take their parts as teachers or academicians in the system. Some portion of these people, indeed, take part in the administrative duties at their schools. Therefore, most of the individuals are directly or indirectly affected by the education policy. In this respect, it is not surprising that individuals are coinciding in a claim for social justice in the processes of access to better quality education and employment as an outcome of the education.

Gök argues that the suppressed culture of protest in the post-1980 period played a critical role in expressing demand. While the necessary channels for insisting on the demand for quality education are blocked, this period is also the period when the

provision of state services acquires a multi-actor character. In this context, responsibility-sharing practices with private initiatives have begun to be presented to society as a solution to the search for better quality education. (Gök, 2004, p. 103). In addition, it is striking to notice that the conventional tools necessary for individuals to express their demands cannot be used. As the demand-rising mechanism is depoliticized, the capacity of services to reflect social justice is reduced.

In this context, it is meaningful to witness the increased share of privatization in education. However, it is not enough to explain the spread of marketization in education as a profit-seeking process only as a result of neoliberal policies. For this reason, let us ask which demand has increased the share of private enterprises in education. The most striking response here is the demand for better-qualified education. A good education is essential to get a job that earns enough income to live in good conditions in the eyes of society. In the Turkish education system, transition to secondary education and transition from secondary education to higher education has been provided by central examination since the 1970s. Previously, independent entrance exams were held at universities. Due to the competitive environment created by the examination system, better-qualified education in the eyes of society is sought in schools that are entered with a high score in the examination. Learning the formal curriculum alone is not enough to enter these schools. In addition, it is necessary to go through exam-oriented training. Private tutoring institutions may be needed if the current school does not provide satisfactory training for this exam. At this point, private education institutions are positioned in the middle of the student's life, claiming to fill a gap. Those most affected by this condition are impoverished parents. Families have to make more sacrifices in their search for better quality education when public schools do not provide what they hope for. (Gök, 2004, p. 104). They apply to private tutoring institutions to find the means they are looking for. As a result of the examination system, public schools have become institutions that provide students with private teaching institutions rather than providing a qualified education to be successful in the university entrance examination. (Gök, 2004, p. 108). As it can be understood from

here, due to the presence of the examination system, demanding private tutoring institutions is a pre-neoliberal fact. This argument is not to underestimate the deepening dimension of neoliberal policymaking. Yet, what the new paradigm brought to our discussion is that demands for better quality education echo more deeply now (Bayırbağ, 2015b, p. 255), which were risen up long before the practices of policymaking under market mechanism.

The search for alternatives to traditional methods in education cannot be explained only by the existence of the examination system. The transformations of the examination system are also factors that reinforce this quest. As we will discuss in the following sections, when the high school curriculum is included among the subjects of the exam, individuals who find the education provided by the public institutions insufficient apply to private tutoring institutions. There are also cases in which exam subjects were not included in the high school curriculum. In cases where the exam is based only on general culture and ability areas, students seek supplementary education due to a lack of practice. As a result, we see that the business of private tutoring has been integrated into our education system thanks to the legal structure prepared by the Regulation on Private Education Institutions in 1965 (Üniversitelere Kayıt ve Giriş İmtihanı Yönetmeliği, 1964a). Therefore, the marketization of education corresponds to a time before the concretization of neoliberalism in Turkey. However, it was possible to spread with neoliberalism. Here, it is useful to add the conservative populism that accompanies marketization and neoliberalization among the factors affecting the expansion of the private teaching school. For the masses who migrated from the village to the city in the 1970s, education was the primary instrument of social mobilization (Yavuz & Balcı, 2018, p. 25). While more secular groups tried to solve this issue through clientelist relations, conservative groups sought a solution within Islamic solidarity. Although this situation seems to have reversed with the change of political balances, the conservative mobilization strategy has an undeniable role in the fact that private tutoring has become a growing market during the 2000s (Eroler, 2019; Yavuz & Balcı, 2018). To sum up, the reasons behind the emergence of private teaching

institutions as a market solution before neoliberalism can be listed as the existence of the examination system, the transformations of the examination system, and the demand for social mobility.

2.3. Specificity of Education

So far, I examined the new forms of policymaking with neoliberalism and briefly sketched how education policy was shaped in Turkey accordingly. Coming thorugh the end of this chapter, it is useful to open a parenthesis on the distinctive character of the field of education. Because discussing the positions of education against capital, state and politics, and culture would help understand its function in society.

For Hill, the field of education can be related to the capital in two senses: the capitalist agenda *for* education and the capitalist agenda *in* education (as cited in Pınar, 2016, p. 7). The former refers to how capital wants to structure the field of education in the spirit of the free market, whereas the latter stands for how capital wants to make profits directly from education (Hill, 2004, p. 506). This conceptualization helps us to understand how the marketization of education leads to a cycle when considered within the scope of neoliberal education policies. On the one hand, a centralized formal education system is for capital by (re)producing labor power, controlling the curriculum, and setting standards for means and expectations of livelihood. For instance, this view explains why the curriculum reform was a bottom line for JDP. Two major curriculum reforms were adopted by JDP, which will be discussed in the next chapter. The divergences of these curriculum reforms did indeed coincide with periods when the JDP took different ideological stances. Briefly, JDP structured the 2004 curriculum reform in a postmodern, pluralistic pursuit. When it comes to 2012 reform, we see the effort to consolidate conservative demands on the contrary (Eroler, 2019; İnal, 2006).

On the other hand, the education system is on the capitalist agenda when related services are privatized and/or commodified. It is also meaningful in terms of the increasing share of the private sector in education that we already discussed above. In this framework, we have the chance to see two potential faces of education. The realm of education is seen as a factory that produces exam results and obedient employees. Under a different hegemony strategy, education can also produce solutions and individuals with the power to transform. Although such a strategy has not yet been experienced at any point in history, it is a fact that education has this potential. However, what should not be forgotten here is that education alone does not have a transformative power independent of historical conditions. At this point, the question posed by Aronowitz and Giroux is relevant: "How does the school function not only to further the interests of the state and the dominant classes but also to contradict and resist the logic of capital?" (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1986, p. 92). By the question, they bring the state in our discussion. So, education reform cannot be understood solely through the lens of capitalist dominance. By all means, state intervention and the political factors that cause it should also be taken into account. Put it in another way, factors other than market logic may also be effective in education policymaking. Indeed, those factors may even contradict the market logic or work independently of it.

I conclude the discussion started with the concept of public good with an evaluation on the marketization of public services and the reflection of this process on education policymaking. Throughout the discussion, what grasps attention is that the scales of the concepts we discuss are changing like matryoshka dolls, but the image of the contradiction it represents remains the same. To reiterate, if we are to record all the changes directing the process in short; deepening of capitalist social relations ends up with commodification of everyday life; increasing use of ideological state apparatuses in the education system reinforces promotion of capitalist social and economic relations; the spread of capitalism results in bussinessification of education; and increasing concentration of wealth and power in the hand of capitalist class brings

increasing inequalities (Hill, 2004, pp. 504–505). However, deepening of the inequalities needed to be compansated in the manner of the hegemony project. Hence, to maintain the balance, policies may overstep the limits of market logic. In the next chapter, the education policies of JDP will be examined to show how a neoliberal policymaking agenda may try to compensate for the damage.

CHAPTER 3

OVERVIEW OF THE EDUCATION REFORMS THROUGHOUT THE 2000S: MANAGING THE TENSION

This chapter will give an outline of JDP's educational reforms. The reforms which are related to social equity are tried to be focused on in order to grasp a chance to emphasize the coexistence of populism and incrementalism as a neoliberal-containment strategy.

To manage the tension between the results of the market relations and populist demand management mechanism, JDP adopts policies that can be categorized under three headings. Particularly, JDP makes use of material compensations, political compensations, and structural changes. Material compensations are observed after examining the instances of Contribution Fee Issue, Conditional Cash Transfer Program, Free Distribution of the Textbooks, and FATIH Project. There are common features of these policies. First, all four of them refer to a populist consideration. Cancellation of the contribution fee, continuing cash aid program, textbooks that are provided free of charge, and a technological breakthrough are policies that have repercussions within the society, helping to improve populist discourse. Second, with direct fiscal benefits, the burden on the citizen, which got heavier due to neoliberalism, seems to have decreased. Finally, all these policies reflect the tension between populism and market mechanism. This is simply because they seem to solve problems at first glance. However, when investigated in detail, it is possible to observe that market relations force those measures to come closer to itself. They will be elaborated in detail, yet, to be more specific, the contribution fee is canceled in legal terms but cannot be abolished in practice. The legislation ensuring the free distribution of textbooks has been canceled very recently. Also, the FATIH project is partially successful with the funds of the private sector. Only cash aid program remains to stand,

only thanks to the contributions of UNICEF. So, material compensations do not dissolve the tension, yet, they create an atmosphere of eliminating negative effects of it.

Another strategy is adopted with the help of political compensation policies. Political compensation can be detected with the instances that Girls Let's Go to School Project, Headscarf Issue, and Coefficient Regulations. What is common among these policies is that they address categoric sufferings. Similar to material compensations, they address individual and selective issues. But, this time through political substances rather than fiscal. Again, the developments in schooling rate, discrimination in the public sphere discussions, and overcoming the problem of coefficiency help JDP to mobilize its political base through populist moves.

Yet another strategy of JDP in managing the tension is the structural changes. 2004 Curriculum Reform, Extension of High School to Four Years and the Common Ninth Grade Curriculum, Transition to 4+4+4 Model, and Changes in the Examination System are the instances of the structural change-based policies. Different from the material and political compensations, structural changes are not selective or individually addressed. In contrast, they appeal to the whole society. However, this brings the most conspicuous aspect of the structural changes that the tension between populist demand meeting and market relations is managed in a way to transfer the responsibility of the compensations on the shoulders of the service recipients. To be more concrete, the curriculum reform aims to reshape the perception of the new generations in compatible with the market relations. While, new high school formation holds a stronger dependence on the examination system, as a consequence, to the private tutoring institutions. On the other hand, the 4+4+4 model was first initiated to make the education system more compatible with the job market. Last but not least, the examination system, the area in which incremental solutions can be observed intensively, has gone under many changes. As a common result of the structural changes, it can be observed that the service recipients are overcharged with growing

dependency on the market relations at every step. This chapter will focus on the above-mentioned policies and reforms, except for the examination system, that requires further attention and is discussed in the next chapter.

Before moving into the details of the policies, it is important to emphasize the selectivity side of the strategies. In the analysis of complex governmental networks, Morçöl labels "*A theoretical and practical problem is who or what controls and/or coordinates the multiple actors of collective action processes*?" (Morçöl, 2015, p. 59). This question can be directed within the context of this study. In that context, Schneider and Ingram depict the conceptualization of the social construction of target populations. It refers to

> *the cultural characterizations or popular images of the persons or groups whose behavior and well-being are affected by public policy. Accordingly, the social construction of target populations has a powerful influence on public officials. Social constructions become embedded in policy as messages that are absorbed by citizens and affect their orientations and participation patterns* (Schneider & Ingram, 1993, p. 334).

As a result of the dynamic interaction between power and social constructions, a particular pattern in the distribution of advantages and costs to various target groups emerges. (Schneider & Ingram, 1993, p. 337). This conceptualization fits into the strategies in managing the tension between populism and market relations because it refers to the political power of the decisionmaker and how the society perceives the process and gives feedback. In the case of strategies, JDP act in accordance with the market rules. They do not demonstrate a strong political power answering all the needs of the citizens. Rather, they pursue strategies in alliance with the market mechanism. When they apply direct solutions via material compensations, it is observable that the target population is highly dependent and needy. Still, as Schneider and Ingram also observed, society perceives that solutions to their problems are searched in common

responsibility with the private sector (Schneider & Ingram, 1993, p. 341). Hence, the experiences resulting from the public policy choices gain meaning during the interaction of the decisionmaker and service recipient. As a result, it can be understood why JDP solved some of the issues by individually addressing the needs of the service recipient, while some other issues in relation to the structural changes with the help of Schneider and Ingram's conceptualization. It also demonstrates how policymaking is affected by market relations and how redistributive politics may be related to populist discourse.

3.1. Material Compensations

3.1.1. Contribution Fee Issue

As stated in Article 42 of the Constitution, "primary education is compulsory for all citizens, male and female, and is free in public schools." However, with a practice developed since the 1990s, it is known that public schools charge fees from parents under the name of "contribution" (Gök, 2004, p. 106; Tomul, 2007, p. 124). This fee is generally requested to contribute to the school-parent union, which is united around the works supporting educational activities. The income items of the union are defined in the Regulation on the Parent-School' Association of the Ministry of National Education. Accordingly, these incomes can be obtained from donations and aids, businesses such as school cafeterias, and extracurricular activities. It is also stated in this article that parent-school associations cannot force parents to donate under any circumstances (MEB, 2012a). However, what is observed in practice is different from the framework drawn here. Contributions are widely requested in the primary and secondary stages of free formal education. The socio-economic status of the environment where the school is located determines the amount of contribution to be collected. This deepens inequality in already unevenly developed regions. In regions where large donations can be collected, the facilities of the schools are relatively improving (Gazete Duvar, 2021; Korkmaz, 2005, p. 432). It is clear that the Ministry

of National Education did not take deterrent measures to prevent the issue, although it is a practice that has been revealed in academic studies and is widely known in society. This situation reveals once again that in this period, when neoliberal economic policies were implemented, there were serious regressions in education in terms of opportunity (Gök, 2004, p. 101).

3.1.2. Conditional Cash Transfer Program

JDP came to power in Turkey concurrently with the materialization of the structural adjustment program initially planned in the 1980s. After a long period intertwined with profound economic and political crises, many projects started to be carried out as a part of the neoliberal agenda supported by the World Bank (WB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) at the beginning of the 2000s. Among them, the Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) program is prominent in the field of education. It has started to be implemented in Turkey in 2003 as a part of the Social Risk Mitigation Project carried out by the World Bank. The project continued until 2008 with the loan granted by WB, then started to be funded by the public budget and supported by UNICEF since 2014 (*Policy Paper on Improving Conditional Cash Transfers Programme in Turkey*, 2014, p. 12). Two significant areas that stand out when considering social welfare are health and education—the Social Risk Mitigation project operated in both areas. However, within the context of this study, we will address the actions related to the educational dimension of the project. In the pursuit of social risk reduction, the project aims to provide monthly cash benefits depending on certain conditions to the families of individuals of educational age. The conditional aspect of the project is to guarantee the attendance of children at school. The target students are aged 6 to 18 coming from families in the poorest 6% of the population (*Turkey - Social Risk Mitigation Loan Project*, n.d., p. 24). Although the outcomes suggested that the CCT program was influential in the advancement of school attendance (*Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis of Impact of Conditional Cash Transfer Program in Turkey*, 2012, p. 66), on the other hand, some criticisms were directed towards the project. Zabcı reveals that a

social security network for the poor aimed to be achieved not because of improving the conditions but mainly because it prevented them from becoming "a risk" for the ones in easier circumstances (Zabcı, 2003, p. 237). Additionally, Vurkun draws attention to the fact that despite noticeable progress in the absentee rate, the project fails to raise awareness of the importance of education on parents (Vurkun, 2019, p. 105).

3.1.3. Free Distribution of the Textbooks

Another notable practice that could serve the purpose of ensuring social justice is the free distribution of textbooks starting from 2003. In these years, the distribution of the free textbooks, with the emphasis on being for the first time in the history of the Republic, became one of the outstanding elements of the JDP's populist discourse (60. Hükümet programı; 2007 Seçim Bildirgesi, p.62). However, in 2021, while the coalition government was struggling with the deepening economic crisis, the Regulation on Textbooks and Educational Tools of the Ministry of National Education was amended (*Resmi Gazete*, 2021). The expression "distributed free of charge" used about textbooks is not included in the new regulation (*Ders kitaplarının ücretle satılmasının önü açıldı*, n.d.). However, such a step back should have no place in a social policy approach where social justice in education is a priority. It is essential to recall that marketization has the power to not only reproduce existing inequalities but create even deeper ones (Apple, 2013, p. 6).

3.1.4. FATIH Project

The 2000s witnessed efforts to integrate information and communication technologies (ICT) into education on a global scale. To illustrate, the “One Laptop per Child” (OLPC) approach has been adopted in nearly 50 countries. Within the scope of the project, starting from 2007, computers and tablets have been distributed to students, and the necessary ICT infrastructure has been provided (Doğan, 2012, p. 6). This period has been similarly defined as the "transition to the information society" period in

Turkey (Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, 2006). The most comprehensive project implemented in this sense is the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (Eğitimde Fırsatları Artırma ve Teknolojiyi İyileştirme Hareketi - FATIH), which started in 2010.

The project aimed to combine technology and education system. In the project narrative, the concept of "21st-century skills" is emphasized, which is the basic motivation behind the education policy discourse of JDP (*22 Temmuz 2007 Genel Seçim Beyannamesi*, n.d., p. 55; *60 Incı Hükümet Programı*, 2007) By the skills, the elements such as technology use, effective communication, analytical thinking, problem-solving, and entrepreneurship are referred. Based on this, we understand that the project also has extracurricular concerns. The project has objectives at school, classroom, teacher, and student scale. While establishing the internet infrastructure for schools is among the targets, interactive whiteboards and internet access are targeted for each classroom. For teachers and students, it was desired to provide an electronic environment and tablet computer for accessing course-related resources and sharing assignments (*Fatih Projesi*, n.d.). The project, which is expected to be completed in 5 years, has still not been completed 11 years later.

In the Court of Accounts report of 2020, it was stated that the condition of being efficient, which is one of the objectives of the project, was moved away. The same report reveals that the access and infrastructure costs of all schools attached to the Ministry of National Education in 2015 are included in the signed financial protocol. However, in 2017, the scope was narrowed with a limited number of schools. With the change made in 2019, the need to organize a new procurement process in order to solve the technical infrastructure problems arose (*Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı 2020 Yılı Sayıştay Denetim Raporu*, 2021, p. 21).

As the report points out, the project cannot be completed, and its cost increases despite the narrowing of its scope. The administration of the project grasps attention with the

piece-meal solutions suggested in an incremental logic. Additionally, the defined success factors for the project, accessibility, efficiency, equal opportunity, measurability, and quality, could not reach the desired levels (*Fatih Projesi*, n.d.). This is not only exhibited with the Court of Account report, but it was also revealed by the studies carried out with the stakeholders of the project; school administrators, teachers, and students (Altın & Kalelioğlu, 2015; Ayvacı et al., 2015; Keleş & Turan, 2015; Kuzu et al., 2013; Yolcu & Arslan, 2016).[1]

In the light of these studies, it can be asserted that the problem of access to quality education cannot be reduced to the criterion of access to technology alone. Moreover, although the starting point of the project is to provide equal opportunities in education, it is seen that the success in implementation differs between geographical regions. To be more concrete, while the rate of interactive board installation in the schools within the scope of the project is highest in Ankara with 70.6%, it is the lowest in Şırnak with 21% (*Fatih Projesi*, n.d.). Furthermore, studies show that the project causes inequality of opportunity even among schools located in the same city. In one study, school administrators were asked to evaluate the outputs of the project. According to the administrators, the schools' fame is increased, the school became popular and favorite among students, and the school was considered privileged when compared to schools, not within the scope of the project (Kuzu et al., 2013, p. 408). For Fırat and Kayacan, it is an important question whether the use of technology in education covers all social strata. Because the spread of technology in education will find a response in a wide market and profit will be pursued. Likewise, schools will be constantly dependent on technological products. Hence, a constant need has been created for both

[1] Common problems identified in these studies are manifested as follows. Internet restrictions on interactive boards and tablet computers, frequent malfunctions of tablet computers, technical service problem that does not provide rapid response to malfunctions, the slowing down of the pace of teaching and interruption of classes due to technical breakdown, infrastructure deficiencies, insufficient technological literacy, lack of in-service training and awareness about the project, insufficient device contents and being not suitable for the age of the students.

software and hardware products as a result of the project (2021, pp. 33, 41). So, when it is a privilege to make use of technology, we cannot speak of the equality of opportunity in education.

Ekici and Yılmaz, who cited the researches on the application of information technology, supported education projects in the Turkish education system, explained why a comprehensive project such as the FATIH project is incompatible with our system. According to the review, the lack of key laws that make up the education policy framework, constant policy changes, partisan education policies, lack of social state understanding, distrust in the state, not providing equal success opportunities for every student were cited as the shortcomings (Ekici & Yilmaz, 2013, pp. 331–332). Indeed, when we evaluate it through the FATIH project, the use of technology in education has gone through a marketization process. As revealed in the Court of Accounts report, planning deficiencies are tried to be covered with either new purchases or setting low limits to the targets. Nonetheless, the route to transforming the technology use in the education system in a way that will increase quality is not with tablets that are suspected to be smart; they must go through reasonable, accountable, and predictable planning moves.

3.2. Political Compensations

3.2.1. Girls! Let's Go To School Campaign

SETA Report explains the reason for the prominence of social aid-based projects in the field of education such that it is seen as the essential tool to break the cycle of poverty (2018, p. 51). Similarly, it would be convenient to argue that the same rule applies to overcoming the gender gap. The right for every citizen to enroll in compulsory education is protected under the law. To be more specific, the Basic Education Law (4306), approved by the parliament in 1997, extended the duration of compulsory schooling from five to eight years in primary education. However, it was not possible

to ensure that all children from different backgrounds to have access to free and compulsory primary education in Turkey. Remarkably, the gender inequality in access to education is strongly linked to the socio-cultural norms and structures (Gümüş & Gümüş, 2013, p. 20). To deal with the gender gap in compulsory schooling, Turkey became a party in an international campaign that involved 26 countries in total. Being a perfect instance for governance trend, Girls! Let's Go to School! The campaign aimed at detecting children out of schooling, convincing the families of these children by experts in the field, and monitoring their school attendance (UNICEF & MEB, n.d., p. 33). In addition, Conditional Cash Transfer aids broadened in a sense to increase the contribution amount by %20 per girl attaining the compulsory education in compliance with the campaign (Akyıldız, 2019, p. 497). It should be noted that although the enrollment rate to school both in primary education and secondary education has increased strikingly since 2005, the gender gap became narrower with a more significant rise in secondary level of education (*Millî Eğitim İstatistikleri Örgün Eğitim 2020-2021*, 2021, p. 18). Nonetheless, it is important to highlight that the increase in the schooling rate is not enough to cope with inequalities in the field and improve the quality of education (Gümüş & Gümüş, 2013, p. 25).

3.2.2. Headscarf Issue

Another issue in the political history of Turkey, whose fire has not been extinguished and whose sparks have been reflected in the field of education, is the ban on wearing the headscarf in public institutions. Among all public institutions, the debate was most intensely focused on educational institutions such as priest-prayer schools and universities. In order to deal with the issue holistically, it is necessary to briefly touch upon the history. Schools that train imams and preachers at the secondary education level in Turkey were first opened in 1924. In these schools, besides religion lessons, science and foreign language lessons were also given. The curriculum and the opportunities created for the schools would not have satisfied the students, as the schools were closed in 1930 as the number of students gradually decreased (Winter,

1984, p. 188). In 1951, it was reopened under the name of Priest-Prayer Schools. Primary school graduates were admitted to these schools. Comprehensive education was given in the school, which lasted four years in the first period and three years in the second period. (Çakır et al., 2004, p. 15). At the higher education level, a Faculty of Theology was established in Istanbul Darulfunun in 1924. The faculty continued its activities for nine years. However, the Faculty of Theology was not included when the darulfunun was restructured as a university in the modern sense in 1933. Studies continued as an institute affiliated with the Faculty of Literature. The institute was closed in 1936 due to the low number of students. The Faculty of Theology, which still exists today, was opened within Ankara University in 1949. (Koştaş, 1990, pp. 5–9).

As a result of these developments, the demand for female students and teachers to attend school with headscarves, both at secondary and higher education levels, led to long-term discussions. Legal arrangements were made in different levels of education and public institutions regarding the headscarf, dress and general appearance (MEB, 1981; Resmi Gazete, 2013).

Discussions of physical appearance in religious schools and in the public sphere remained on the agenda for years as two of the most controversial issues in Turkish political history. While it is beyond the limits of our study to go into the details of these discussions, it is necessary to add the last few important issues related to the private tutoring course debate that we will consider in the next chapters. At the National Security Council meeting held on 28 February 1997, certain policies against the social and economic resources of the Islamic movement were proposed. These regulations can be sorted as follows: The abolition of the secondary school section of priest-prayer schools by increasing compulsory primary education from five years to eight years; strict control of the headscarf ban in universities; conducting Quran courses under the supervision of the Presidency of Religious Affairs (Saraçoğlu, 2019, pp. 831–832).

Although restrictions on religious symbols and clothing continued to be the subject of controversy throughout the JDP's first rule in 2002, a concrete step towards a solution was only taken during its second rule, which began in 2007. The process for headscarf liberalization in public institutions, which started in 2008, has been the subject of a series of debates and lawsuits. It was concluded with the "Regulation Amending the Regulation on the Dress and Dress of the Personnel Working in Public Institutions and Organizations", which entered into force in 2013 (Resmi Gazete, 2013).

3.2.3. Coefficient Regulations

The issue of coefficient should be discussed in the context of vocational and technical secondary education. With the latest regulation on this issue, it is aimed to eliminate the disadvantage of priest-prayer and vocational high school graduates in the university exam. However, this issue has remained on the agenda for many years.

While calculating the university entrance score, secondary education GPA was taken into account in addition to the test score. Since 1999, a new application has been introduced for students who graduated from vocational and priest-prayer high schools. Accordingly, if these students do not want to continue in a department that is a continuation of their program during the transition to university, secondary education GPA's contribution to the total score would be less. The mechanism to provide this is coefficient. While, the GPA's of the students who choose programs related to their area is multiplied with a coefficient of 0.5, otherwise with 0.2. With the huge gap, the decision made the transition to higher education difficult for vocational and priest-prayer school students (Çelik, 2015, p. 277; Eroler, 2019, p. 97).

Of course, the coefficient instrument did not only affect vocational high school students. It has been difficult for all students who want to make a choice outside their field. It should not be forgotten that these students are 18-year-old individuals who put their personal development in the background and have been exposed to a rote

education system. In an environment where education is marketed at every stage, and social practices are conservative, economic conditions and the family's decision would be determinative rather than individual wishes during the high school period. Unfortunately, taking the chance of changing the route from the hands of these individuals in the transition to university, unfortunately, did not work other than to cause social injustice.

In 2003, the coefficients were adjusted as 0.3 and 0.8. In 2009, 10 years after the implementation started, YÖK abolished the coefficient regulation. After this move, a series of stay of order and rearrangement traffic started between the Council of State and YÖK. The application took its current form in 2011 and was determined as 0.12 for each student, regardless of the field selection (Çelik, 2015, pp. 278–279; Eroler, 2019, pp. 95–98).

3.3. Structural Changes

3.3.1. 2004 Curriculum Reform

The first comprehensive ideological project of the JDP in the field of education was the revision of the curriculum in 2004. In the first chapter, we have mentioned how the education system has been shaped by globalization. The need to build a new individual has arisen in the transformation process from a rights-based understanding of citizenship to customers who purchase services. In connection with this, the logic for educational change is that globalization calls for a new workforce (İnal, 2012, p. 18). Individuals should be trained to be familiar with concepts such as competition, entrepreneurship, and consumption, which are increased in frequency by neoliberalism. One purpose of this is to transform students into a commodity and human capital, which will ensure that the system reproduces itself (from Apple in İnal, 2012, p. 24).

The presentation of the 2004 curriculum reform by policymakers is seen to be glorified for being the antithesis of traditional education methods. It is heralded to get rid of the old system where there is a rote-based, teacher-dominated environment in which students grow up as passive-obedient citizens. (Gür & Çelik, 2009, p. 32; İnal, 2006, p. 273; Ünder, 2012, p. 36). However, the step is taken to get rid of rote learning, and the logic of the exam waiting for students at the end of every level of education contradict each other. Contradictions are obvious to those who can see the distinction between the formal curriculum and the hidden curriculum. In Inal's words, "education becomes a marketable commodity by being translated into the language of the business world, and the results are reduced to standardized 'performances'" (İnal, 2006, p. 277).

3.3.2. Extension of High School to Four Years and the Common Ninth Grade Curriculum

With the decision taken by the Board of Education in 2005, the secondary education system was restructured to be implemented from the 2006-2007 education period. The first change was to increase the teaching time in high schools from three to four years. The second change was the decision that the first year of this four-year education should be subject to the same curriculum in all high schools. So, the first year of secondary education, corresponding to 9th grade, is designed with a common curriculum understanding. (MEB, 2005). There are two outcomes of this regulation. First, in the university entrance exam, some of the questions were asked regarding this common curriculum. So, a part of the exam topics was assumed to be known to all students who graduated from different high school types. Thus, it was indirectly ensured that the candidates were included in the race on relatively equal terms. Nonetheless, as a result of this decision, the connection between students and the curriculum of the 10th and 11th grades loosened, and the absentee rate is increased specifically at the second term of the last year (Çelik, 2011, p. 58).

The second expected achievement was that students, who were subject to the same curriculum in all secondary education institutions providing different types of education, would have the chance to head to the branch they wanted in the continuation of their secondary education. In addition, a convenience was provided for students who wish to change schools at the end of the 9th grade. This is a significant improvement for the students who would like to choose vocational and technical education. However, a study carried out by the Ministry of National Education 4 years after the reform revealed that students were not able to make an independent choice. At the end of the ninth grade, the students chose the field either by taking into account their grade point average or the wishes of their parents. (MEB EARGED, 2010, p. 60). This result is irrefutably an indication that students and families are driven by career concerns rather than interest and ability in their educational demands. In the same report, it is thought-provoking to witness the solution suggested by the experts so that students can make choices in line with their interests and abilities. Experts suggested developing aptitude tests to identify students' interests. (p. 61). However, young individuals have felt the pressure of the "most vital" test that has been waiting for them for generations. Whichever stage the student is in, the test applied in the transition to the next one becomes the most vital. Individuals are exposed to a test in the transition from primary education to secondary education, from high school to university, and even to the stage of finding a job afterward. On the other hand, due to the seriousness of these tests, families directed their children to study instead of socializing and to get supplementary educational support if necessary on the condition that they have enough resources. Discovering their interests and talents at an early age is an issue that needs to be planned more comprehensively. While the most substantial impetus of the 2004 curriculum reform was to raise free individuals, the fact that the holders of the same approach measures the lives of individuals in all respects through tests and give them no space to flourish presents a contradictory appearance. One more time, although the intention of the reform could be regarded as providing equality in a sense, it is an illusionary moment. So long as the reforms revolve around the exam system, it would be misleading to expect social inclusion in a wide range.

3.3.3. Transition to 4+4+4 Model

As we reported under the Headscarf issue title, the abolition of the secondary school section of priest-prayer schools by increasing compulsory primary education from five years to eight years was a problem to be addressed for JDP in the context of consolidation of conservatism. In 2012, a draft law was proposed that abandons the establishment of primary education as an uninterrupted basic education program (*İlköğretim ve Eğitim Kanunu Ile Bazı Kanunlarda Değişiklik Yapılmasına Dair Kanun Teklifi*, 2012). With this arrangement, primary education was planned to be 4+4 years instead of 5+3 years. In the new practice, instead of basic education, elective courses were offered according to the student's abilities and interests, thus enabling the second level of primary education to be transformed into different school types. In addition, with the arrangement, the starting age for primary education was set one year earlier, compulsory primary education was actually reduced to 4 years with open education alternatives, and a new concept called apprenticeship education was introduced.

As a result of the criticisms directed at the bill, a meeting was held with the Council of Higher Education, Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Finance, education unions, NGOs, and the deans of education faculties of two universities under the provision of the National Education Commission of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. As a result of the meeting, the regulations regarding apprenticeship training were canceled. According to the first bill, apprenticeship training was designed for students completing the first stage of primary education. So, students would continue their apprenticeship training simultaneously in the field required by their profession with the distance education mechanism (Eroler, 2019, p. 134). The cancellation of this offer, which pushes the limits of flexibilization, precariousness, and child labor in the labor market, is an important gain.

The proposal, which is claimed by the education experts to have been designed with ideological rather than pedagogical concerns, was enacted after various discussions and

compromises. Thus, the 4+4+4 education model was recorded as one of the most radical education reforms mentioned with the JDP. In the opinion published by the Middle East Technical University Faculty of Education on the subject, it was stated that the age to start primary education should be 6, the first stage of primary education should be regulated as at least five years, the principle of basic and continuous compulsory education should not be violated with elective courses, and it was appropriate to start vocational education at secondary education level, on pedagogical foundations. In addition, the report emphasized the necessity of eliminating the quality gap between schools (*İlköğretim ve Ortaöğretimin Yeniden Yapılandırılması*, 2012). Similarly, in the opinion of Boğaziçi University on the subject, it is stated that the reduction of the first level of primary education to four years is not based on any scientific basis (*5.1.1961 Tarih ve 222 Sayılı İlköğretim ve Eğitim Kanunu Ile Bazı Kanunlarda Değişiklik Yapılmasına Dair Kanun Teklifi*, 2012).

Another important item stated in the METU Faculty of Education opinion is that the transition to higher education should be rearranged. Accordingly,

Tests applied at the entrance to higher education negatively affect secondary education processes and meaningful learning. Students tend to private teaching institutions with the thought that they will better prepare themselves for the test, and the importance given to the school is decreasing. (...) Structural changes in the education system do not make sense on their own. The changes made in both secondary and higher education entry have made no progress in solving the problem of the test and rote-based education system. Such justifications were put forward before each change was made, and new practices were started by using the problem in the system. However, these changes did not serve any purpose other than being a part of the problem and exacerbating the problem (*İlköğretim ve Ortaöğretimin Yeniden Yapılandırılması*, 2012).

In summary, it is clear that there is a need for qualifications in education. Classrooms, which are the outcome of the examination system, have made rote-based education settled. By emphasizing the incremental dimension of policymaking, it was revealed that a holistic planning approach should be adopted instead of dysfunctional and

piecemeal solutions. Education is a process that should be designed with precision from the first day to the last day. In this context, it is not a coincidence that the text in which educational scientists express their opinions on planning for primary education puts their finger on higher education issues.

At this point, it is meaningful to add that the examination practice in interstage transition is gradually spreading to the early stages. The examination system applied in the transition to secondary education has become an experimental policy-making area, just like in the transition to higher education. Therefore, spreading the logic of competition resulted in the need for private tutoring institutions and private schools to be increased. In that regard, I will discuss the changes in the higher education transition system in the next section. Beforehand, it would be appropriate to briefly mention some of the transformations that the transition to secondary education went through in the 2000s. The high school entrance exam was administered at the end of primary education until 2008. Since 2008, it has been applied as an exam at the end of the 6th, 7th and 8th grades, which are the second level of primary education. This practice was quickly abandoned, and in 2010, the exam was started to be applied again in the last year of primary education. With the system developed in 2013, the new exam practice was started as if students were entering any midterm during the term. (Atilgan, 2018; Berber & Anilan, 2018; Gür & Çelik, 2009; *Ortaöğretime ve Yükseköğretime Geçiş Sistemi*, 2010). In 2017, this practice was abandoned, and a single exam was started again. However, since this date, a significant change has been made, and a mechanism for entering high schools without a central examination has been established. Accordingly, the requirement for all high schools to accept students with a central examination was abolished, and an address-based registration system was created (MEB, 2016). Thus, the exam and address-based system coexist for now.

In this chapter, it was argued that there are three types of compensations targeted via education reforms of JDP. In this context, those reforms were evaluated under the headings of material compensations, political compensations, and structural changes.

Material compensations and political compensations refer to how the tension between populist demands and tension is solved within the market mechanism. Both of the categories address individual and/or selective reforms. While the former is to alleviate the deepening inequalities that resulted in neoliberalism, the latter is to compensate for the categoric suffering related to political statute. So, it can be argued that the results of the reforms under neoliberalism are not necessarily destroying. Still, it is important to keep in mind that both of the reforms are not for the sake of distribution of the resources but compensation of the uneven distribution of them within the market mechanism. The structural reforms, in this context, result in more competitiveness. Hence, those reforms lay the burden on the citizens with incremental yet structural changes. Hence, structural changes addressed at the end of this part embody compensating dimension together with the pro-market adjustments. This chapter also offered that the different positions of the education reforms in the face of individual problems have the capacity to speak for social justice only considered within a certain framework. Therefore, to be able to understand the tension between conflicting strategies yet complementing each other, the education reforms which are related to social justice and/or examination system should be critically assessed.

In conclusion, it is important to notice that those strategies were not created by following a specific timeline. They cannot be expected to follow a timeline when the policies are evaluated within the context of market and populism tension. To compensate for the tension, both individual and incremental or structural changes are possible to observe. Hence, incremental changes do not necessarily evolve following a straight progression line. Rather, what we observe is that incremental policies create the cycles by adding one after another in a circular loop that is very difficult to break. In the next chapter, the exam system is the perfect example of how such a loop is created will be focused on.

CHAPTER 4

TRANSITION TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Education is one of the strongest tools of reproduction of labor power in the capitalist mode of production. For this reason, the continuity of the education system is critical. However, the persistence of the education reforms tends to rupture in order to sustain the vicious circle created by the exam system. In relation to that, the need for private education institutions shows up in education for the demand of access to better quality education, and better jobs in consequence, as a result of the examination system. Although it can be hard to imagine an exam system outside of the market relations directly attributed to neoliberalism, it is crucial to notice the exam system emerged long before the institutionalization of the market relations in Turkey. Nonetheless, it cannot be denied that with the settling of the market logic in policymaking, the marketization of education becomes inevitable at a faster rate. Thus, through the chapter, it will be witnessed, once again, that incremental reforms are useful where populism and market logic converges. Indeed, the examination system can be the most visible area in which policymaking is realized through a series of experiments. Not only the existence of an exam but also the individual changes within the examination system resulted in the demand for beyond formal schooling. In this context, this chapter will be focusing on the exam system and the private teaching institutions as an extension of it.

4.1. The History of the Transition to Higher Education in Turkey

After the establishment of the Republic, a dual higher school system coexisted for a short time. On the one hand, there were traditional madrasas with a long history rooted in the Ottoman period. Typically, all the students who completed the preparatory school before madrasa were registered upon request. The only limitation for admission

to madrasa occurred when the need for shelter did not meet the demand. So, a proficiency exam was held if only the applicant number would exceed the dormitory capacity. Approximately five months after the establishment of the Republic, madrasas were closed on March 1, 1924 (Özgüven, 1972, p. 180).

On the other hand, there were modern universities that were initiated with the proclamation of Tanzimat. Most of the time, the applications were under the capacity of the universities; hence, there was no need for an entrance regulation. Nonetheless, the students were evaluated to have been insufficient for higher education in the first years of the university experience in the Tanzimat era, which resulted in secondary level schools formulating a graduation examination. There are two implications inherited from the invention of this graduation exam to today's university entrance system. First, the decision for determining who is eligible to join higher education is given by other authorities than the university itself. Second, the secondary education curriculum is started to be shaped in compliance with the exam requirements (Özgüven, 1972, pp. 180–181).

The implementation of the high school graduation exam has been revised several times. In 1935, a two-stage exam method was adapted; the completion and the matura. The first one is to graduate from high school, while the second is to be approved for transition to higher education. Following that, two stages of the exam were combined and called State High School Examination in 1955. As Özgüven emphasizes, granting all students the right to take the State High School Exam regardless of their success in the classroom, the "qualifying" exam quality in the dual exam system has disappeared. However, in the previous regulations, those who passed the high school graduation exam took the matura exams (1972, p. 185). Thus, some universities could accept high school graduates without a central selection examination until the 1960s. The faculties that faced a demand that exceeded their quotas carried out the selection process by pursuing one of the following ways: They accepted as many candidates as needed according to the order of application. In some cases, universities accepted the graduates

of the science or literature branches of high schools, taking into account the characteristic of the education provided by the faculty. Yet another method was ranking the applicants according to their high school completion degree and admitting students, respectively (ÖSYM, 2018b). In cases where these methods were insufficient, some universities started to implement independent student selection exams. However, since those exams were generally applied in the essay type, they were inadequate in the sense that they lacked objective evaluation (YÖK, 1997, p. 5). Whereas, some universities applied the test technique as an objective assessment and evaluation instrument to standardize the entrance criteria (Özgüven, 1972, p. 195).

The examination method, which has been exercised in practice, was legally arranged in a broader context in 1964 with the Regulation for Central Registration and Entrance Examination. With the Regulation, each university was granted the authority to organize their selection exam if they deemed necessary. These exams, which are foreseen to be held with the test method, were implemented by various faculties until the number of students applying to higher education goes beyond control (Üniversitelere Kayıt ve Giriş İmtihanı Yönetmeliği, 1964a).

Along with the establishment of Student Selection and Placement Center for Universities (Üniversitelere Öğrenci Seçme ve Yerleştirme Merkezi - ÜSYM) in 1974, the arrangement for selection and placement of the students to the higher education from a central perspective was regulated (Üniversitelere Öğrenci Seçme ve Yerleştirme Merkezi Yönetmeliği, 1974). In such a way, it was ensured that the state monopolized the regulation of entrance to universities. The first central exam was implemented in 1975 with the name of Interuniversity Selection Exam (Üniversitelerarası Seçme Sınavı - ÜSS). The exam consisted of four main sections; General Aptitude, Mathematics and Sciences, Turkish Language and Literature and Social Sciences, and Foreign Language. In the placement of candidates, the quota of the departments in question and the preference list of the candidate based on their score were taken into consideration (1997, p. 5). The first significant change about the central selection

process occurred in 1981 with the reorganization and attachment of ÜSYM to the newly established Higher Education Board, with the name of Assessment, Selection and Placement Centre (Öğrenci Seçme ve Yerleştirme Merkezi – ÖSYM) (Yükseköğretim Kanunu, 1981).

Table 1. Changes in the exam system through years

Years	**Name of the Exam**	**Procedure**
1926-1934	No central exam	High School Graduation Exam
1935-1954	No central exam	Two-stage exams to graduate from high school
1955-1963	No central exam	One-stage exam to graduate from high school
1964-1974	No central exam	Authority to universities to regulate matriculation
1975-1980	ÜSS	Same day - one session centralized exam
1981-1986	ÖSYS	Two-stage centralized exam
1987-1998	ÖSS&ÖYS	Two-stage centralized exam with smooth changes
1999-2005	ÖSS	One-stage centralized exam in which high school GPA's weight increased
2006-2009	ÖSS	One-stage centralized exam with changes in the curriculum
2010-2017	YGS&LYS	Two-stage centralized exam
2018-still	YKS	Two-stage centralized exam

With the establishment of ÖSYM, the changes in the examination system are accelerated. The central examination, which has been implemented in a single-stage

since 1964, was started to be applied as two separate exams in 1982. The new system was named as Student Selection and Placement System (Öğrenci Seçme ve Yerleştirme Sistemi - ÖSYS). The first stage, Student Selection Examination (Öğrenci Seçme Sınavı - ÖSS), was to measure eligibility for having the second stage and covering only the 9th-grade curriculum that was common in between all types of high schools (*Türkiye'nin Yükseköğretim Stratejisi*, 2007, p. 74). Also, it was composed of two parts addressing quantitative and verbal reasoning. The second stage, Student Placement Examination (Öğrenci Yerleştirme Sınavı - ÖYS), followed the structure of the former exam ÜSS. The results of the second stage were the base score for placement. Nonetheless, there was a new contributing factor in the calculation of the placement point: secondary education GPA (1997, p. 11). So, students had to be successful in both school courses and to be prepared for the exam topics at the same time. Hence, the changes in the examination system created the demand for private tutoring courses, where formal education is deemed to be insufficient, more than before. The table shows the numbers of the private tutoring institutions after a centralized exam practice was adopted.

Table 2. Number of Private Tutoring Institutions Through Years

Years	Number of Private Tutoring Institutions
1975-1976	157
1980-1981	174
1990-1991	762
1995-1996	1292

(Tansel & Bircan, 2007, p. 29)

The system underwent a change in 1987. The preliminary exam ÖSS is also considered valid for the replacement to some higher education programs. Another change appeared when the second stage of the exam was canceled between 1999 and 2005. In this way, general aptitude grounded ÖSS become the basis of university admission. Additionally, together with the cancellation of ÖYS, secondary education GPA's weight has

increased in calculating the total score. However, as YÖK stated in their internal supervision report, this system aimed to bring equality among students in different high school types with various curricula. The application of different curriculums in different school types creates a hierarchy among the schools (Bayırbağ, 2015a, p. 64). In an environment where the students from different schools are competing in the same exam, it could have been a positive improvement to commonize at least one part of the curricula. Still, the expected result could not be achieved in practice to eliminate inequality risen from multiple curricula applications. The same report asserts that since the success of schools and teachers began to be measured by the number of students entering the university, the studies in the lessons become exam-oriented, instead of focusing on the subjects in the 2nd and 3rd-grade high school curriculum. Hence, the secondary education curriculum is started to be shaped in compliance with the exam requirements (2007, p. 74). This situation caused significant weakness in high school education and led students to come to the university without fundamental high school knowledge (Eşme, 2014, p. 149). Furthermore, because the GPA has a more significant impact on the exam score, it is conspicuous to ask whether the grades were assigned on merit or not. In the face of this situation, another change was made in the examination system in 2005, and the entire high school curriculum was included in the exam.

In the aforementioned YÖK Report, in which the subject of ÖSS is discussed in a bold language that we are not accustomed to seeing in recent years, the objectives that were tried to be achieved with the exam but could not be accomplished were discussed. Although it is declared that a central exam based on multiple-choice questions has been chosen in order to be able to conduct an exam that will not cause confidence problems due to a large number of students, the report acknowledges that using the results of only one exam and the secondary education GPA score as a criterion causes the other qualifications of the students to be ignored. It is also conceded that it becomes challenging to measure students' ability to analyze, synthesize and evaluate with multiple-choice questions. The report further accepts that a selection and placement

system based on test-solving knowledge and high school grades reveals results that contradict the principle of disseminating education. Last but not least, it is confirmed in the report that if secondary education cannot be provided homogeneously and successfully, it is not surprising to observe the expansion of the private tutoring sector to close the gaps in education (YÖK, 2007, pp. 74–78). Under these circumstances, private tutoring institutions gain a peculiar position in the education system with questions of better quality in education and unevenness in accessing it in mind.

ÖSS, which gained its new form with the inclusion of the high school curriculum in exam subjects, was implemented until 2009. Meanwhile, the search for a new system for university entrance continued. In 2010, a two-step examination system was introduced again: Higher Education Entrance Exam and Undergraduate Placement Exam (Yükseköğretime Geçiş Sınavı – YGS and Lisans Yerleştirme Sınavı – LYS). The first step exam, YGS, covered the subjects of the common first-year curricula of high schools. This exam was administered in March of each year, and the next exam was held three months later. LYS, the second step of the exam held in June, aimed to give students the chance to take the exam in the fields they are interested in. Turkish Language-Literature-Social Sciences, Mathematics, Science, History-Geography-Philosophy-Religious Culture and Ethics, and English tests were held in five different sessions within the scope of LYS. According to Eşme, the main reason for this change was to keep the number of those who took the exams low and thus to include open-ended questions. However, open-ended questions could never be implemented due to their high cost (2014, p. 150). Announcement of the intention to switch to open-ended question practice proves that conducting the exam with the test method is accepted as a deficiency in the field of measurement and evaluation. Aside from the search for a more equitable measurement method, this exam became the subject of various speculations in 2011. The first of these is the preparation of a special test booklet for the candidates who take the exam. Accordingly, provided that the questions in the booklets are exactly the same, the order of the questions, the order of the options, and the location of the correct answer option will vary. Therefore, each candidate's answer

key will be different. (*ÖSYM*, 2011). Experts stated that measurement and evaluation is a process that should be guided by scientific truths. In addition, it was emphasized that these test booklets mean spending money, effort, and time on an unreliable method. (*2011 YGS Sınavı Ile İlgili Fakülte Görüşü*, 2011). Last but not least, In the exam, it was claimed that students were given hints through the options of the questions (*YGS'de şifre skandalı!*, 2011). Moreover, the validity of this claim has been proven by a study conducted by Doğan (2012, p. 217). The emergence of such a scandal in such a critical exam that shapes the future of more than one million young people has been an event that left a mark on the conscience of society. In an environment where the credibility of the institution organizing this exam is questioned, it would be misleading to expect the demand for social justice to be met.

The university entrance system was changed for the last time in 2018. The name of the new exam was Higher Education Institutions Exam (Yükseköğretim Kurumları Sınavı – YKS), and it was administered in two sessions held on the same day. Similar to the previous exam, while basic high school knowledge was measured in the first session, in the second session, the students solved the tests on the subjects of their interest. In YKS, the number of questions and, therefore, the duration of the exam has been reduced compared to the previous exam. In addition, it was thought that the lack of time for months between the first and second level exams would reduce the pressure on students. It has been claimed that with this new exam, the "transition from rote-based exam system to an exam system based on reasoning and using knowledge" will be achieved. (*YKS SSS*, 2018, p. 2). Unfortunately, the students who will take this exam have been educated with rote-based logic for years. Although the logic of rote learning is wanted to be destroyed with the 2004 Curriculum Reform, the existence of exams prevents this situation. So much so that they learned test-solving techniques in private teaching institutions in order to cope with the exams that they frequently encountered in their education life. With a sudden change, it would be unfair to young people who do not have a steady infrastructure to prepare for an exam in which reasoning skills come to the fore, not memorization knowledge. In addition, it has been admitted once

again that the tests that have been applied for years analyze the knowledge based on rote.

In 2016, ÖSYM launched a new practice. The lowest ranking threshold was determined for applying to Law, Engineering, Architecture, and Medicine programs. Respectively, the candidates admitted to these programs had to have achieved a certain success rate according to the university exam results (ÖSYM, 2016, p. 13). Since 2017, teaching programs have been included in these fields (ÖSYM, 2017, p. 11). These success rankings were expanded in 2018 (ÖSYM, 2018a, p. 11). In 2019, in the Eleventh Development Plan, the goal of "expanding the minimum achievement score requirement in higher education programs that give direct professional execution authority after graduation" was specified (2019, p. 140). As a result, in 2020, Pharmacy and Dentistry programs started not accepting students below a certain threshold (ÖSYM, 2020, p. 12). The application was preserved unchanged in 2021 without any change (ÖSYM, 2021, p. 12). The President of YÖK made an evaluation on the application of the success ranking threshold in 2019. He stated that the fact that students with different success rankings are in the same class affects the educational environment negatively. He also emphasized that unfair treatment of students with high scores, which he defined as being well-equipped, is prevented. (Saraç, 2019). In this application, we see the imbalance created by test-solving ability and measuring success. Thus, while there is no curriculum that pushes individuals to improve, the success measured by the test directs the careers of individuals in a narrower way. As a result of this practice, the quotas of some faculties are left empty and the supply-demand balance in education is deteriorated (M. Aydın & Özcan, 2019, p. 51).

The only thing that does not change is the existence of a test in the Turkish education system. Selection exams are applied to almost all levels of education. These exams alone are not perceived as targets to be exceeded. Beyond that, they are long-running and interconnected processes that direct young people's lives. The widespread acceptance in society is that a student who cannot enter a good high school cannot get

a quality university education. This is an obstacle to having a "valid" profession in the eyes of society. However, there is a contradiction shared by those who have been in this system for many years as exam candidates and/or have observed the system closely. Graduating from a good university is often not enough to acquire the targeted "valid" professions. A new exam comes up in the process of finding a job. The graduates who want to work in the public sector must take the Public Personnel Selection Examination. Bora states that individuals of similar ages share a common social experience through their exam practices. Accordingly, the stress experienced by young people during the university selection exam process has the potential to resurface with a regression effect in the KPSS period (2017, p. 259). KPSS creates the illusion that everyone has an equal opportunity to enter public institutions, regardless of which university they graduated from. Here, it is possible to identify three fundamental problems regarding equity. First of all, reducing the job search process to a selection exam creates a contradiction. After years of hard work on the way to entering a top-level university, it loses the meaning of which university you graduated from. In order for the exam to measure professional competence, it should ask questions focusing on areas of expertise. However, the exam consists of general questions that are not sufficient to evaluate different areas of expertise (*2020 Kamu Personel Seçme Sınavı Lisans Kılavuzu*, 2020, p. 16). It has been revealed in studies on KPSS that this situation negatively affects the sense of justice of young people (Odabaş, 2010; Yilmaz & Yaşar, 2016). Yet another problem is that the preparation process of KPSS, which is conducted with a test method similar to other selection exams, passes through private tutoring institutions.

Unfortunately, this situation causes university graduates to become indebted to their own future or to their families. The candidate who cannot pay the tuition fee because she has not found a job yet has to take the risk of going to the course either by working in temporary employment or by borrowing money. Moreover, although KPSS held annually, public institutions may not need personnel on a regular basis every year. In other words, in a possible scenario, after graduating, our candidate may wait for one

year to go to a supplementary course to prepare for the exam and another year to apply for postings and complete the interview processes after the exam. This whole process will take two years if luck is on her side.

Last but not least, another situation that shakes the sense of justice is the risk that public institutions do not subject candidates to objective evaluation (Özel, 2021). The widespread use of employment practices as a result of clientelist relations has caused the examination to lose its legitimacy in the eyes of society. However, the anxiety of precarious work outweighs the sense of social injustice, and candidates continue to apply for KPSS (A. Aydın et al., 2014, p. 403).

KPSS is an exam which also decisive in employing teachers in the public sector. They hold a paradoxical position in that regard.[2] Hill argues that

teachers are dangerous because they are intimately connected with the social production of labor power, equipping students with skills, competences, abilities, knowledge, and the attitudes and personal qualities that can be expressed and expended in the capitalist labor process (Hill, 2004, p. 510).

4.2. Story of Private Tutoring Institutions and Basic High Schools

The existence of the examination system is the main reason for the need for private teaching institutions. The aim of the course is to eliminate the student's knowledge deficiencies and to gain quick question-solving skills. In this sense, private tutoring is not an institution where the demand for qualified education is directed. On the contrary, better quality education is demanded from public or private schools. The primary

[2] In this sense, we can say that it is possible to attribute a transformative meaning to teachers, at least in theory. However, in another aspect, "the education system is not an information production process, but a "human production" process (Keskin Demirer, 2011, p. 6). We have a market environment where knowledge is a commodity, student is the customer, the lever that determines the fee mechanism is test success. In this environment, while teachers are both the executor and seller of the system, they are also subjects who live under conditions such as job anxiety, insecure and flexible working.

purpose of this request is to gain skills in order to stand out in the competitive environment in the transitional exams between levels. When public schools fail to meet the demand, private tutoring institutions are included in the picture. Tansel describes the need for tutoring emerges "*where there is a great demand for higher education but access is limited by entrance examinations*" (Tansel, 2013a, p. 177). Likewise, Altınyelken states that "*private tutoring is responding to a market niche driven by entrance examinations to universities and prestigious secondary schools*" (Altınyelken, 2013, p. 187).

In the table, we see the gap between the number of candidates who applied for the university entrance exam and were placed in undergraduate programs between 2017-2020. In addition, the difference between the number of candidates applying for the exam and the number of offered quotas also reveals the competitive dimension of the exam system. The increasing demand for private tutoring institutions lies behind the numbers.

Table 3. Demand for the Universities

Years	2017	2018	2019	2020
Number of the Candidates	2.265.844	2.381.412	2.528.031	2.436.958
Total Capacity of the Universities	910.671	839.49	824.694	838.221
Total Students Placed in Univeristy	696.288	710.982	753.461	781.165

(*2020 Yılı Yükseköğretim Kurumları Sınavı Yerleştirme Sonuç Raporu*, 2020)

Gök argues that the reason behind private courses is increasingly considered indispensable is that the central examination practices turned into a ''measuring fetishism'' and become a mechanism for deepening already existing inequalities (Gök, 2010, p. 127). It can be contested that there is a consensus in society for the need for

private tutoring courses. In the research conducted by the Türk Eğitim Derneği among the secondary school senior students, 57.6% of the students stated that it would not be possible or very difficult to be successful in the university exam without going to private teaching institutions. (TED, 2005, p. 116). The most affected by this situation are the children of poor families. As public schools become overcrowded with children from deprived families, private education institutions become institutions that provide “better quality" education to those who can afford it. The children of poor families do not have the necessary financial means to receive education in these schools, which are also variable in quality. In this sense, the real race takes place between middle- and high-income families. (Gök, 2004, pp. 104–106). So, it should be remembered once again that marketization in education has the function of reproducing this cycle rather than helping to break the cycle of poverty.

Due to the organization of education, private tutoring institutions continue to exist by being articulated with formal education. Apart from school hours, it occupies most of the time of young individuals, operating in the evenings on weekdays and on weekends. 88% of the students who participated in the research of the Turkish Education Association agree that preparing for the university exam is overwhelming, tiring, and boring (TED, 2005, p. 110). However, as we mentioned above, private tutoring has taken an indispensable position. For this reason, the method of attending two types of educational institutions at the same time has been adopted. However, it has become a common practice for students preparing for the University exam to use their absentee right to go to private teaching institutions instead of school in the spring term, when the exam time is approaching. Some of the students find a "solution" to this situation by getting a health report (Tansel, 2013b, p. 16; TED, 2005, p. 111).

The president of one of the associations of private courses stated that “*There is demand for our services because we are effective in helping students achieve their desired goals*” (as cited in Tansel & Bircan, 2007, p. 22). So, it would be useful to examine the structure of private teaching institutions for the reasons behind this claim. In Turkey,

private tutoring institutions share common formalities. Among those are being profit-oriented, organized in smaller classes, and employing qualified teachers who are not in the public sector. The teaching material is determined by the content of the interstage exams, and if necessary, intensive courses can be offered to cover the subjects of the national examinations (Altınyelken, 2013, pp. 188–189). Private tutoring institutions are also distinctive in terms of providing recitation hours for students to focus on missing knowledge required for the exam. Additionally, practicing is considered to be the most efficient way of preparation for the test type of assessment. So, trial tests are often organized in private courses. Although practicing for the exam is an important achievement, the dominance of rote learning is becoming more permanent due to the exams.

One of the distinctive characters of private tutoring institutions is the provision of guidance and counseling services in a more effective setting than formal education. In the research of the TED, interviewees are asked to compare the guidance service provided in the private teaching institution and the guidance given in their schools. In terms of vocational orientation and promotion of universities, 49.1% of the students consider the guidance given in the private teaching institution useful. On the other hand, only 4.9% find the guidance given at school helpful (TED, 2005, p. 122). The scope of this guidance is in a wide range from technical issues such as choosing a profession, choosing a university to give advice on coping with exam tension. As a de facto acknowledgment of the stress that the exam has caused on young people, guidance services paradoxically see students as commodities that can compete with other institutions. A private tutoring brochure describing the tactics of effective study to its students is advising students to rest in order to study again (*Verimli Ders Çalışma*, 2007). However, leisure times should mean more than times when young individuals need to gather strength to be able to continue studying.

So far, we have discussed how vital private tutoring institutions are to an exam-based education system. And the indicators also show the increasing numbers in private

courses. Nevertheless, political developments took place in 2014 that would undermine the position of these institutions that we have claimed so far. With the law numbered 6258 and dated 1.3.2014, the closure of private teaching institutions came to the agenda. Accordingly, the "opportunity" to turn into private schools was offered to private teaching institutions until September 1, 2015. It has been reported that those who do not fulfill the requirements for transformation and cannot complete the process will be closed. Upon the application of the main opposition party, the Constitutional Court evaluated the law. It annulled some provisions of the said law, claiming that rights and freedoms such as the right to education and the right to entrepreneurship were restricted. Thereupon, innovations were made in the regulation, and it was brought to the agenda again. Then, private teaching institutions were not closed completely, but most of them were closed or turned into private schools. Private education institutions can still operate today on the condition that their courses are focused on certain areas of knowledge (Eroler, 2019, pp. 114–115). However, it should be noted as a footnote that this situation is open to informal work relations. From the table, the increasing numbers of the private tutoring institutions can be observed.

Table 4. Number of Private Tutoring Institutions Through Years

Years	Number of Private Tutoring Institutions
2000-2001	1 864
2001-2002	2 002
2002-2003	2 122
2003-2004	2 568
2004-2005	2 984
2005-2006	3 570
2006-2007	3 986
2007-2008	4 031
2008-2009	4 262
2009-2010	4 193

Table 4. Number of Private Tutoring Institutions Through Years (continued)

2010-2011	4 099
2011-2012	3 961
2012-2013	3 858
2013-2014	3 579

First of all, it is necessary to examine the background of this sudden, top-down policy change. Then, we will discuss the process of these metamorphose of the private tutoring institutions and, then we will ask why they are popular. Yavuz and Balcı describe the historical background that provides the basis for this process as follows:

> *In the 1970s, Turkish society was in the middle of major urbanization and industrialization processes that entailed significant social problems. During this period, education was the primary instrument of social mobility, and there was a significant population shift from rural areas to urban centers. Trade unions, universities, and shantytowns were hotbeds of the socialist movement. The rural immigrants wanted to protect their children from "alien ideologies" and were concerned about their moral education. Islam became a surrogate identity against the leftist movements, and religious education was regarded as the best way to keep the younger generation moral and patriotic. Gülen's networks offered the best possible opportunity to newly urbanized families to educate their children as conservative, Muslim, and patriotic* (Yavuz & Balci, 2018, p. 25).

Having come from similar yet different backgrounds, the Gülen movement and JDP combined their political agenda to challenge the establishment of the secular-Kemalist bureaucracy. So, the educational investments of the Gülen movement were important for JDP rule in providing intellectual workforce in the public administration. Nonetheless, it is no coincidence that what combined these two agendas in political action is also what separates them. When the Gülen movement’s presence started to be weighed significantly in bureaucratic cadres, JDP searched for ways to discharge the members of the movement from decision-making positions. This crossroads resonated

with the public as the movement's counterattack launched an investigation into bribery (Eroler, 2019, pp. 178–181). The government's decision in 2014 to close private tutoring institutions, the main source of funds for the movement and a prime recruiting ground, furthered the dispute (Yavuz & Balcı, 2018, p. 84). If we reconsider in terms of the main arguments of this study, in addition to giving incremental answers to populist demands, this situation reveals the reproductive ideological function of educational institutions. (Acar & Ayata, 2002, p. 90) In addition to this quality, it points to the capacity to produce cultural norms and the potential to construct identity (Eroler, 2019; Gök, 2004, p. 96).

In such an atmosphere, the transformation process of private tutoring institutions has started. To the basic high schools that entered the transformation process to gain private school status, compared to those who started out with the intention of establishing a private school from scratch, a number of conveniences were provided. To be more concrete, these schools do not have to have an independent building. Flexibility has been provided to the schools that would like to convert. For example, the dimensions of areas such as the library, physical education hall may be smaller on a square meter basis when compared to the existing private schools (MEB, 2012b). It should be emphasized here that the schools that entered the transformation process were not connected to the ministry only through some physical conditions. The flexibility of physical conditions is not of great importance; however, the transformation brought about by being a private enterprise in the administrative sense and being an institution affiliated to the ministry should be taken into consideration. As we mentioned above, the main aim of the transformation is to keep the ideological reproduction function of education under control.

Of course, this regulation is not independent of market conditions. So much so that the transformation process of these institutions into private schools did not decrease their performance in preparing their students for the exam. Because this transformation is not the result of a social demand; it is a top-down policy move. Therefore, there has

been no change in the search for an alternative environment in preparation for the exam by students and families. In this context, basic high schools continued to implement the secondary education program and the exam preparation curriculum together (Yıldırım Taştı, 2019, p.358). Although the name of the institutions and the regulation they are subject to have changed, their qualifications in terms of the demand they serve have remained the same. Even if the name of the institution has largely disappeared from the signboards, it maintains its place in the education market as alive as ever with its logic and the demand behind it.

In fact, it would not be misleading to claim that the existence of basic high schools relieves parents and students to some extent. Since these schools are not as expensive as private schools, they were attractive in terms of providing the opportunity to save for parents. In other words, basic high schools responded to the social mobilization needs of families at more accessible prices within the market mechanism. It has attracted the attention of students in terms of saving time since it contains requirements of both formal education and training for the exam. Nurcan conducted a study in which she compiled the opinions of parents and students about basic high school. In this study, a parent gave an opinion pointing to the picture we drew above. When asked whether the basic high school met her expectations, she stated that she saved. In addition, the parent expressed that if their child goes to public school, they will lose time with classes such as physical education and music. Instead, she is pleased with the fact that the basic high school is completely exam-oriented. Another participant in the study, this time a student, regrets that basic high school is a temporary project. He stated that the basic high school was successful, and it would be beneficial to continue (Nurcan, 2019, pp. 47–51). On the other hand, it is not that hard to develop empathy for students who spend all their time in the classroom-school-home triangle. The coexistence of the classroom and the school is pleasing in terms of gaining time (Garipağaoğlu, 2016, p. 149). Still, find myself thinking, whether the students fill their remaining time by preparing for the exam or with other activities to support self-improvement in the areas like arts or sports. In light of these standpoints, it is surprising to notice that an

unintended outcome of the basic high school project is fulfilling the demand for social justice in an indirect and distorted way.

From this point of view, we can clearly state that the expectations from secondary education are not issues such as school culture, the physical environment, and gaining social skills. The expectation is for the realization of the exam preparation training. In addition to the formal curriculum, basic high schools also offer the reflexes of the classrooms from the days of business administration to meet this expectation via means of recitation hours and administration of trial tests. In addition, basic high schools are eligible for acting as a tutoring institution outside of the formal school hours (ERG, 2018). In this sense, they neither fully qualify as a private school nor continue as a private tutoring institution. Here it can be beneficial to mention what is specific about private schools that are not basic high schools, in parenthesis. Acar ve Ayata, detect qualifications innate to private schools as a strong school tradition and culture; we feeling among the students, teachers, and officials; long years of employment; emphasis on the teamwork; competing other schools in extracurricular activities as well as the curricular activity; strong interpersonal relationships (Acar & Ayata, 2002, pp. 99–107). Among those that can be seen as close to common between basic high schools and private schools is the competition over the curricular activity. Still, the private schools may employ the feeling of competition in areas different than the university exam like knowledge competition, national and international science and math competitions, etc (Acar & Ayata, 2002, p. 100).

What is more debatable is the comparison of the basic high school and public schools in the sense that the basic high schools have the privilege of deciding whether they would arrange elective courses on a face-to-face basis or via distance education (MEB, 2015). This created an opportunity for basic high school students to have more time to prepare for the exams. It is not very hard to imagine how the elective courses are organized when it is considered that basic high schools operate as private tutoring institutions. In a similar context, it is also known that basic high schools are condemned

to administrative fines for injustices in the grading system (ERG, 2018). So, it can be contended that for their own students, basic high schools may seem to be answering a demand; however, when we consider that the secondary level GPA contributes to the university placement score, they are obviously spoiling the game for the outsiders. Another unbalancing finding is that 12th-grade basic high school students are subject to shorter hours of weekly coursed compared to the other schools (ERG, 2018). Again, this implies having more time to prepare for the exam besides other advantageous situations.

The Ministry of National Education is not unaware of the problematic picture we have drawn here. They recommend increasing the supervision of basic high schools in order to deal with problems such as grade distribution. In addition, the Ministry of National Education, which aims to prevent the transition to basic high schools, planned to include support and training courses in schools. Acknowledging that basic high schools work with the logic of private teaching institutions, the Ministry of National Education claims that students will close the gap by solving plenty of questions (Elçi et al., 2016, p. 94). It is meaningful that the Ministry of National Education takes measures for an institution attached to itself by transforming itself, not the institution. In this contradictory picture, we see once again that this top-down reform is not the product of long-term planning. It is a deliberate maneuver to save the current situation and delay some political problems. In this sense, it cannot be expected to respond to the demand for social justice. With this reform, two significant gains in the eyes of the government are the control of the ideological reproduction capacity of education by a populist movement and the increase in the share of private schools in education in a way that will contribute to the neoliberal project. Hence, it can be concluded that the basic high school is a middle-class project in the context of populism favored. When the exam system, and private tutoring courses, as the major consequence, are reconsidered in this context, it would not be misleading to argue that experimentation policy-making is increased with incremental changes at a faster phase in the neoliberal era. Nevertheless,

it should also be highlighted once again that the demand for private institutions in education is a pre-neoliberal fact.

It is possible to say that there is a concern of 'exam economy' in the process of transforming private tutoring institutions into private schools (Büyükcan, 2015). Students who take the exam undertake all the material and moral burden of the exam. It was discussed how the examination system and its structural transformations put the compensation burden on the service recipient. Indeed, the examination system carries this burden secretly. The fact that measuring the students' cognitive abilities with the same exam can create the illusion that the exam system is egalitarian. However, this misconception hides the socioeconomic background that affects students' success and the mechanism that reproduces social inequalities (Çelik & Özdemir, 2017, p. 9).

As the outputs of the examination system, private education institutions, and private schools, as an alternative to public schools, differ, even though they come together on a common denominator with their contribution to the exam economy. According to Çelik and Özdemir, the increase in private institutions in education should be evaluated in two dimensions. First, the differences between private and public schools, and secondly, the differences between public schools should be addressed. The higher quality education opportunities provided in private schools enable the children of parents with sufficient economic capital to prepare for the exam more strongly. Some private schools follow a training program directly and exclusively for preparation for the high school entrance exam (Çelik & Özdemir, 2017, p. 10). On the other hand, another story stands out in public schools. Where the state is more and more withdrawing from the expenses such as cleaning, security, health, and food provided at the school, and the meeting of these expenses depends on the dues collected from the parents. When the resources of the school are largely based on the opportunities of the parents through privatizations, the address-based system widens the gap between the opportunities of schools in neighborhoods with poor families and those of schools in high-income districts (Çelik & Özdemir, 2017, p. 11).

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This study examined the education reforms of JDP with a specific emphasis on the policies of transition to higher education. It was argued that in a multi-actor setting under neoliberalism, JDP has the role of cooperating among different agendas. This process brought contradictions to the processes of policymaking. In a multi-actor environment, education policymaking holds the effort the balance between meeting the expectations of global agents and deepening inequalities as a result of economy-based market relations. In order to keep the balance, policymakers needed to take measures that sometimes seem to be challenging the logic of the free market. Indeed, it was likely to observe that neoliberalism cannot work properly without the dual existence of populism and incrementalism in the Turkish case. Thus, policymaking under market relations should be considered in the context of furthering neoliberal policies and containing its negative effects at the same time. So, the effort of neutralizing potential antagonisms may result in reforms that do not exactly correspond to the market mechanism. In that regard, the main motivation behind the study was to answer whether it is possible to sustain social justice where policymaking is incremental and demand management mechanism is populist.

Within this framework, the JDP rule managed the contradiction with material and political compensations as well as the structural changes. Keeping the unintended results apart, cancellation of the contribution fee, initiation of the Conditional Cash Transfer Program, and FATIH project are examples of material compensations. Whereas Girl's Let's Go to School campaign, headscarf issue, and coefficient regulations were devoted to political compensations. There are also other reforms investigated in the study, which are considered to be structural changes, namely 2004

curriculum reform, the extension of the high schools to four years and adopting a common ninth-grade curriculum understanding, transition to the 4+4+4 model. Those reforms were evaluated within the context of the search for social justice.

The problem of social justice within the context of this study is also conceptualized as every individual's right to participate in schooling where the better quality of education is the primary goal as a recognized standard. Nonetheless, the education system is strictly bound into the examinations. So, it has been argued that the roots of the examination system are the main reason behind the existence of private tutoring institutions. Hence, private institutions were demanded in the education market long before the institutionalization of free-market relations with neoliberalism. Nevertheless, the settlement of neoliberalism as a policy agenda accelerated the contribution of the private sector at a faster phase. Hence, the search for social justice in the education market was conducted at private tutoring institutions.

Thus, the quest for social justice is discussed around the examination system in transition to higher education. It was contended that the existence of a test at the end of the school changes the meaning attributed to secondary level education. Individuals perceived education as an instrument of finding a location at the job market. Hence, the search for better quality education leaves its place to search for higher scores in the exams. Promising specialization over the examination system, private tutoring institutions filled the gap, whose share in the education is progressing further with the initiation of the market relations in the education. Finally, private tutoring institutions transformed into private schools. During the transition, those institutions hold different statuses in the education system. Investigating this intermediate form, basic high schools, it was possible to observe the claims of this study in terms of unintended outcomes of the policymaking process. Basic high schools, although turned into private schools in the short term, meet the demand of parents within the market mechanism. In consequence, it would not be deceptive to argue it is possible to provide social justice

only within the context of unintended outcomes of the reforms, for the temporal terms and under the condition of making the service recipients carry the burden.

5.1. Notes on the Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic

This study was conducted when the world was experiencing the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the main focus of the study is out of the consequences of the pandemic, it would be supplementary to refer to how the process made inequalities in the area of education appear more severe. The declaration of the COVID-19 as a pandemic by the World Health Organization corresponds to the spread of the virus to Turkey. During March 2020, when the first case was announced in Turkey, the number of the students registered to compulsory formal education was 18 085 943 (Deutsche Welle, 2020; *Millî Eğitim İstatistikleri Örgün Eğitim 2020-2021*, 2021; *WHO Director-General's Opening Remarks at the Media Briefing on COVID-19*, 2020).

By the announcement, the actions started to be taken in a way to organize distance education. Thanks to the FATIH project, there was an infrastructure for education to be transported into the online environment (ERG, 2020a). Nonetheless, there was a huge gap between the children whose material conditions are adequate or not for accession to distance education (TÜİK, 2021). So, there was a need for comprehensive planning action. Indeed, Education Reform Initiative (Eğitim Reformu Girişimi -ERG) took attention to the fact that the material of distance education should have been compelling to the universally accepted rights of the children and the child development principles. Also, the documents of the online learning environment should be prepared in pluralistic and inclusive for the children with specific needs. Since the physical conditions were not appropriate for accessing all the children, the discussions of the conformity to the right-based standards seem to become of secondary importance (Yılmaz et al., 2021, p. xiii). Although the infrastructure called Educational Information Network (Eğitim Bilişim Ağı – EBA) included a module for the children

with disabilities and a course for teaching Turkish to the refugees, the contents were inadequate for the children with hearing and sight disabilities (ERG, 2020b).

ERG conducted a series of studies to evaluate the process of distance education in the eyes of partners of the process (ERG, 2020b). The teachers, to begin with, emphasized that there was no standardization in teaching practices. It is mostly left to the discretion of the teacher to decide how to establish communication with students and how to continue teaching practices. Some of them were choosing to make benefit from the asynchronous or synchronous methods of instruction. One of the major reasons behind the lack of standardization was on the student's side. Upon the claims of the teachers, it can be observed that there are three factors affecting the participation of the pupils in distance education practices. First, because of the conditions of the pandemic, students had anxiety about the atmosphere of uncertainty. Teachers argued that the feeling of continuity and the persistency of the routines are the most important components of the teaching practice (ERG, 2020b). However, the unstable atmosphere created by the pandemic made children lose the image of the perpetuation of the school. Second, the conditions for every student to access information technologies are not identical. Unfortunately, access to information communication devices is not on an equal basis in each household (ERG, 2020c). ERG emphasized what distinguishes the digital divide from other existing inequalities is its potential to deepen inequalities (ERG, 2020c). The survey by the Turkish Statistical Institution (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu – TUIK) on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Usage in Households revealed that the proportion of availability of ICT devices in households is at low levels. The device usage in households in percentages can be seen by the table between 2016 – 2021.

Table 5. ICT Devices in the Households

	Year					(%)
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Desktop computer	22.9	20.3	19.2	17.6	16.7	16.8
Portable computer	36.4	36.7	37.9	37.9	36.4	38.3
Tablet computer	29.6	29.7	28.4	26.7	22	26.3
Mobile phone	96.9	97.8	98.7	98.7	99.4	99.3

(TÜİK, 2021)

So, the numbers show that where the courses are continued with the help of ICTs, there is no homogeneity in the access to the devices. This situation even goes further when there are multiple students in the house and a limited number of technological devices. Teachers delivered that some of the students have access to the ICTs only after their parents come back from work (ERG, 2020d). Third, teachers observed that there are moral and material reasons distracting students from participating in online education. While some students live in conditions where there is a lack of serenity in the family, some others need to work in the school hours for breadwinning (ERG, 2020b). So, it can be concluded that the conditions of the students are inconsistent because of the uncertainties brought by the pandemic, the fact of the digital divide, and the unstable family environment. The other reason why the teaching practices were unstandardized lies behind the heterogeneity of the schools. The teachers remarked that there was a gap between the practices of the private schools and the public schools on the basis that

the private schools were more organized (ERG, 2020b)[3]. So, one of the common problems was that the courses did not go through a design process. Heterogeneity of the schools also led to difficulty in deciding when to reopen the schools. For instance, the class size is a critical parameter for the reopening of schools (Schleicher, 2020, p. 21). Based on data by the Ministry of National Education, with a rough calculation, the number of students per classroom in the formal education is 26 in the public institutions whereas it is 9 in the private education institutions (*Millî Eğitim İstatistikleri Örgün Eğitim 2020-2021*, 2021). Yet another reason behind unstandardized teaching practices was obviously the socioeconomic inequalities. This study already took attention to the heterogeneity of the schools in Turkey. There is also an irrefutable gap between private and public schools. To illustrate, the students at the public schools were not active involved in distance education practices. However, private schools make use of alternative online learning tools by which students can participate in the courses in real-time (Emin & Altunel, 2021, p. 28). In addition, the private schools were granted a right to organize face-to-face summer schools to compensate for the loss of education (MEB, 2020). So, the private schools are highly adoptable in the face of environmental factors. Thus, existing inequalities become deepened under the conditions of the pandemic. Various studies revealed that the deprivation of learning would be inevitable in the pandemic; however, children of low-income families would be affected more severely (Emin & Altunel, 2021, p. 16). Along with the income gap, family expenditure on education is at the low levels in Turkey. According to the data on the distribution of household consumption expenditures, the educational services hold 2.5 % among the various household expenditures (TÜİK, 2020). Under such circumstances, distance education tried to be continued until the initiation of vaccination in Turkey; however, the status of the schools in terms of face-to-face or online was changed many times in accordance with the density of the COVID-19 cases. The table shows the timeline of the conduct of education in Turkey during the pandemic.

[3] However, the same interview revealed that the working hours of the teachers in private schools were expanded unfairly.

Table 6. Situation of the Schools During the Pandemic

10.03.2020	First case recorded
16.03.2020	One-week compulsory break
26.03.2020	Transition to distance education
15.08.2020	Face-to face compensation hours for private education institutions
21.09.2020	Combined education for preschool and the first grade
12.10.2020	Combined education for grades 2,3,4,8,12
20.11.2020	Transition to distance education
15.02.2021	Combined education in preschool and village schools
01.03.2021	Combined education for all grades
06.09.2021	Face-to-face education in all grades

A UN policy brief remarked that closure of the schools not only resulted in deepening the inequalities in accessing education but also had an 'a ripple effect beyond education' such as extending food insecurity, economic instability, and violence against women and girls. The children fell outside of the school feeding programs, the ability of parents to work has been affected because of the childcare problem, and women and girls become more vulnerable to multiple types of abuse (United Nations Sustainable Development Group, 2020, p. 10). Moreover, the absence of students from school meant that teachers had fewer opportunities to monitor student well-being. With the closure of schools, the services provided by the school through psychological counseling and guidance were also interrupted (Yılmaz et al., 2021, p. 34). To conclude, the COVID-19 pandemic not only brought existing inequalities to the surface but also had a deepening effect on them. It has resulted in the requirement for developing new practices for all constituents of the education system. The teachers tried to invent new means to reach children via online tools while students sought ways to adopt new rituals. The process has not ended yet; however, it is not challenging to predict that the repercussions of the pandemic would be long-termed.

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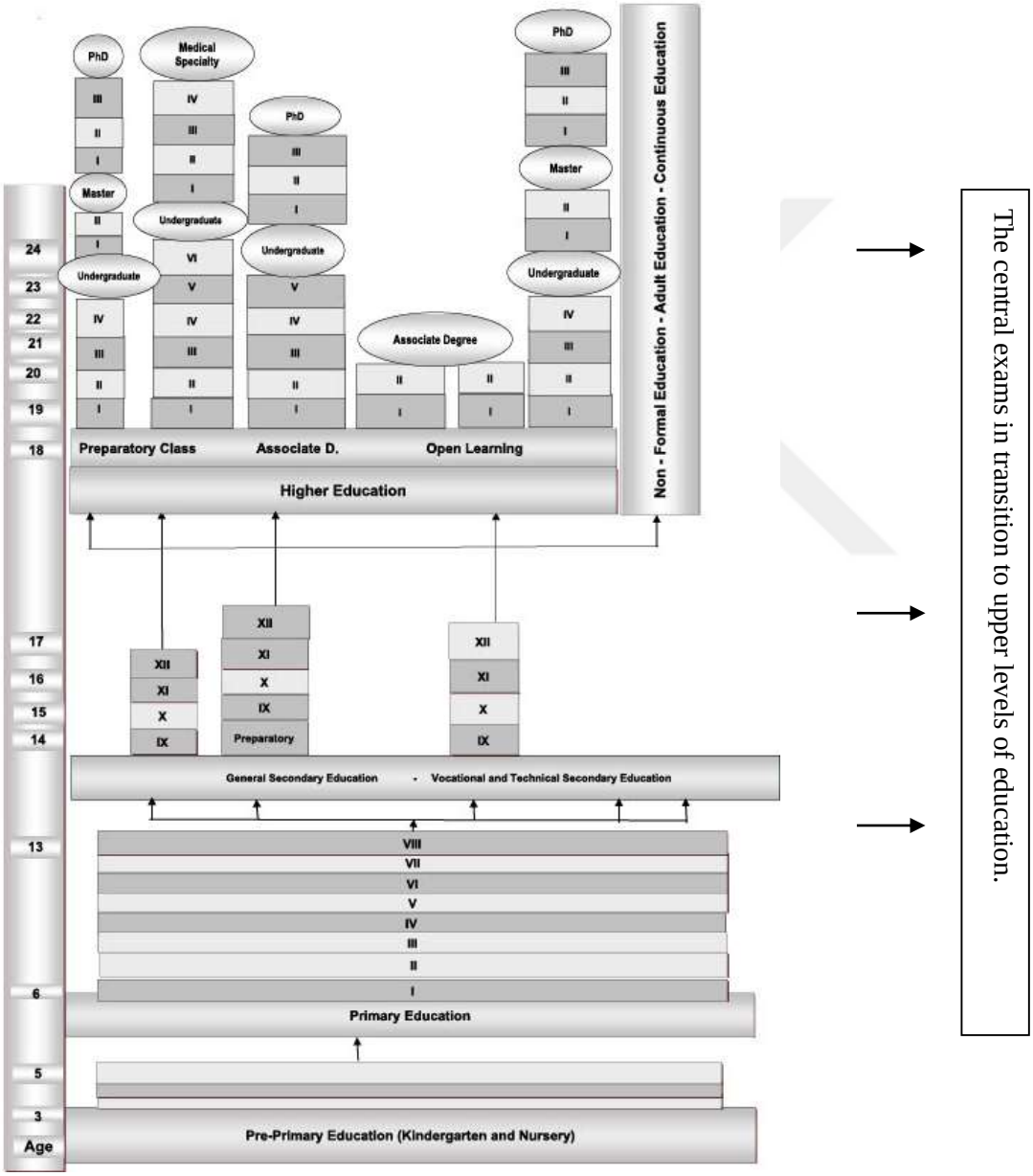
APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. TURKISH NATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM AND CENTRAL EXAMS



(*Millî Eğitim İstatistikleri Örgün Eğitim 2020-2021*, 2021)

APPENDIX B. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Bu çalışmada, yükseköğretime geçiş politikalarına özel olarak odaklanarak, AKP döneminde uygulanan eğitim reformlarını incelenmiştir. AKP, 2000'li yılların başında politika yapma pratiklerinin hem küresel hem de ulusal düzeyde neoliberalizmin etkisi altında yeniden şekillendiği bir dönemde iktidara geldi. Küreselleşmenin en yaygın sonuçlarından biri, artık ulus-devletin politika yapımında tek belirleyici olmamasıydı. Devletlerin karar verme yetkisi farklı ölçeklerde diğer otoritelere devredilmekte, bununla birlikte, gücün dağılımı sadece farklı hükümet seviyeleri aracılığıyla değil, aynı zamanda hükümet dışı aktörlerin de karar alma sürecine dahil olmasıyla sürdürülmektedir. Bu yeni düzen, oyuncular arasında sürekli bir müzakere sisteminin yer aldığı bir atmosfer yaratır. Ulusötesi kapitalist sınıfın ve uluslararası örgütlerin de oyunun içinde olduğu düşünüldüğünde, politika yapma eylemi, yeni ortaya çıkan çok aktörlü ortamın müzakerelerinde dengeyi bulmak için yeni stratejiler içermelidir. Dolayısıyla politika oluşturma süreci eklektik bir boyut kazanmıştır. Çünkü bu süreç artık küresel düzeyde örgütlerin piyasadan beklentileri ile ulusal düzeyde neoliberalizmin yarattığı artan eşitsizlikler arasında uyum bulma çabasını da içermektedir. Bu sebeple politika yapıcıların böyle bir çerçevede tutarsızlıklarla karşılaşması olasıdır. Karar vericilerin, politika yapımı sürecinde karşılaşılacak çelişkilerden kaynaklanan tıkanıklıkları önlemek için harekete geçmeleri gerekmiştir. Artırımlı politika çözümleri, politika sürecinin çok aktörlü katılımcıları arasındaki etkileşimlerin ılımlı bir şekilde kontrol edilmesine izin verdiği ölçüde olası anlaşmazlıkların çözülmesi için iyi bir araç gibi görünmektedir. Ek olarak, politika yapıcılar politikalarının uzun vadeli yansımalarından emin olmadıklarından, artırımlı kararlar ile belirsizliğin risklerini ve maliyetlerini azaltma eğilimindedir.

Ancak, farklı grupların beklentileri çatışabileceğinden, artırımlı çözümler, bir grubun diğerine göre olası avantaj veya dezavantajlarını engelleyecek şekilde sunulmalıdır. Dolayısıyla, neoliberal çağda çok aktörlü bir ortamda politika yapımında taleplerin ve

sonuçların nasıl uyumlu hale getirileceği pratik bir soru olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. AKP deneyimi bağlamında ele aldığımızda, yanıt popülizmde yatmaktadır. Çünkü artırımlı ancak muhtemelen çelişkili politika çözümlerinin yaratacağı olası anlaşmazlıkları nötralize etmek için popülizmin iş birliği işlevseldir. Popülist bir tavır takınmak, yalnızca kademeli değişimlerin birbiriyle çelişkili söylemlerini dengelemek için değil, aynı zamanda piyasa ilişkilerindeki yoksunlukları dengeleme ihtiyacının devam ettiği bir ortamda bir talep yönetimi mekanizması kurmak için de gereklidir. Dolayısıyla, neoliberal dönemde politika oluşturma sürecine dahil olan birden fazla aktör, artırımcılık ve popülizm arasında bir denge bulmalıdır. AKP döneminde politika yapımı, artırımcılık ile popülizm arasında gidip gelen bir süreç olmuştur. Bu çalışmada neoliberal hegemonya altında popülizm, sermayenin iktidar bloğundaki temsil olanaklarını genişleterek kapitalist sınıfın emeğe karşı gücünü güçlendirmeye hizmet eden bir talep yönetim mekanizması olarak anlaşılmaktadır. Yani bu çalışma, neoliberal dönemde AKP'nin politika yapımını kaçınılmaz olarak bir arada var olan faktörler olarak artırımcılık ve popülizm kavramlarıuyla açıklamaktadır. Bu nedenle, politika yaapımınn odak noktası, yalnızca ulusaldan küresele ölçeklenen hükümet ve sivil toplum aktörlerinin kararları değil, aynı zamanda nüfusun talepleri olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Neoliberal hegemonya talepler ve çıkarlar arasındaki dengeyi bulmaya çalıştığı ölçüde başarılı olabilir.

Burada çizilen çerçevenin talep tarafında, sosyal adalet talebine özel bir vurgu yapılacaktır. Çünkü neoliberal hegemonya, piyasa mekanizmasının kaçınılmaz dönüşümlerle sonuçlandığı bir düzen inşa etmiştir. Bu tür değişiklikler karşısında devletin yeniden dağıtma rolünün piyasa mekanizmasına devredildiği durumlarda artan eşitsizliklere tanık olmak kaçınılmazdır. Dolayısıyla sosyal adalet talebinin artması şaşırtıcı değildir. Neoliberal politikaların eşitlik, sosyal adalet ve demokratik hesap verebilirlik kaybına neden olduğu konusunda literatürde bir fikir birliği vardır. Eğitim politikaları da bu kayıplardan muaf değildir. Hatta eğitim alanı neoliberalizmin yarattığı söz konusu kayıpları içeren, ilerleten ve yeniden üreten bir alan olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Öyle ki günüdmüzdeki uygulanma biçimiyle eğitim, piyasa

hedeflerine tabi kılınmış sosyal bir kurumdur ve piyasa ilişkilerini meşrulaştıran eğitim uygulamalarını yeniden üretme kapasitesine sahiptir. Aynı zamanda eğitim, beceri kazanma metaları üzerinden faaliyet gösteren bir pazar yeridir. Yani, eğitim doğası gereği hem özel hem de kamusal çıkarlara hizmet eden bir alandır. Bireylerin ekonomik ve sosyal faydalar elde etme kapasitelerini artırarak özel çıkarlara hizmet ettiği kadar kamusal fayda üretme sürecine de katkı sağlamaktadır. Dolayısıyla insanların eğitimden beklediği şey pazarda pay sahibi olmaktır. Bu sebeple eğitim alanında ekonomik rasyonalizm ile sosyal adalet arasındaki gerilimle yüzleşmek kaçınılmazdır. Sonuç olarak, bu çalışma kapsamında eğitim alanındaki sosyal adalet talebi daha kaliteli eğitimin birincil hedef olduğu eğitime katılmanın her bireyin hakkı olarak anlaşılmıştır.

Neoliberal dönemde eğitim politikalarına odaklanan bu çalışmanın temel motivasyonu, talep yönetimi mekanizmasının popülist ve politika oluşturmanın artırımlı olduğu bir ortamda sosyal adaletin sağlanmasının mümkün olup olmadığını araştırmaktır. Bu soruya cevap verebilmek için öncelikle AKP'nin sosyal adalet talebine yanıt verme niteliği taşıyan eğitim reformları incelenmiştir. Ardından, tartışma sınav sistemi üzerinde yoğunlaşmıştır. Sınav sistemindeki değişiklikler ile beraber AKP iktidarı boyunca gerçekleştirilen eğitim reformları dikkate alındığında, artırımlı politika yapımının AKP iktidarının sadece ilk yıllarına ait olmadığı ortaya konulmuştur. Artırımlı karar alma modeli sadece iktidarın ilk yıllarına denk gelen kriz sonrası dönemde benimsenmekle kalmamış, aynı zamanda bir politika yapma refleksi haline geldiği görülmektedir. Burada hatırlanması gereken şudur; parça parça uygulanan çözümlerin sorunu çözme kapasitesi düşüktür. Bu çözümler ancak kısa vadede sorunu ertelemede etkili olabilir. Sorunları bütünsel olarak değil parça parça ele almak, eski konulara yeni sorunların eklenmesiyle daha fazla karmaşıklık yaratma kapasitesine sahiptir. Öte yandan AKP bu tarz bir karar verme modeli benimserken, çatışan ideolojilerin içerilebileceği bir hegemonya projesine güveniyordu. Daha spesifik olmak gerekirse, politikalar aynı anda hem giderek yoksullaşan gruplara ve hem de çıkarlarını korumanın peşindeki kapitalist gruplara hitap etmekteydi. Tam bu noktada popülist

söylem, neoliberalizmle birlikte ortaya çıkan eşitsizliklerin saldırısına uğrayanların kayıplarını telafi edici bir boyut içermektedir. Bu çalışmanın iddiası yalnızca böyle bir çerçevennin belirli politikaların çelişkili bir biçimde bir arada olmasını açıklayabileceği yönündedir. Ders kitaplarınınn ücretsiz dağıtılmaya başlanması sırasında eğitimin piyasalaşmasının arttığının gözlemlenmesi tam da böyle bir biradalığa işaret etmektedir.

Neoliberal paradigma değişimi, hizmetlerin geleneksel olarak doğrudan devletin sorumluluğunda olduğu ortamı ortadan kaldırdı. Dolayısıyla eğitimin maliyeti ailelere ait olmaya başladı. Aileler, daha nitelikli bir eğitim talep ettikleri için bu yükün altına girdilerve nitelikli eğitim taleplerine cevabı piyasada aradılar. Nitelikli eğitim talebine eşlik eden sürece, ölçme ve değerlendirmenin test yoluyla gerçekleştirildiği sınav sisteminin yaygınlaşması eşlik etmiştir. Bu noktada özel eğitim kurumları öğrencinin hayatının ortasında konumlandırılmaktadır. Çünkü örgün eğitimde test tekniği için bir yönlendirme bulunmamaktadır. Bu nedenle, daha kaliteli eğitime erişimde halkın taleplerinin karşılanması, devlet, özel sektör ve vatandaşlar arasında ortak bir sorumluluk olarak formüle edilmiştir. Burada sınav sisteminin varlığı ile dershanelere olan talebin neoliberal dönemden önce bir arada bulunduğuna dikkat çekmek faydalıdır. Bu argüman, neoliberal politika yapımının derinleşen boyutunu küçümseme gayesi taşımamaktadır. Bununla birlikte, yeni paradigma, daha kaliteli eğitim taleplerinin artık her zamankinden daha yüksek olduğu gerçeğini tartışmamıza getirmiştir. Bu talebe karşılık veren piyasa çözümlerinin yaygınlaştığını ve giderek eğitim alanında piyasaya bağlılığın derinleştirğini gözlemlemek mümkündür. Bu nedenle, AKP'nin eğitim alanında neoliberalizmin yıkıcı etkilerini nasıl telafi ettiğini sınav sistemi özelinde sorgulamak önemlidir. Zamansal odak dikkate alındığında, sosyal adalet talebi, bu çalışma kapsamında öğrencilerin giriş sınavlarından yararlanmalarını sağlayan eğitim kurumlarının erişilebilirliğine atıfta bulunmuştur.

Bu kapsamda, birinci bölümde yukarıda kısaca açıklanan analitik çerçeve hakkında ileri bir tartışma sunulmuştur. İkinci bölüm ise politikaların sosyal adalet boyutunu

detaylandıracak şekilde AKP'nin eğitim reformlarına genel bir bakış sunmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, AKP'nin yapısal reformların yanı sıra çelişkilerin yarattığı riskleri ortadan kaldırmak için telafi politikalarına başvurduğunun altını çizmekte fayda vardır. Eğitim alanında uygulanan reformlar, maddi telafiler, siyasi telafiler ve yapısal değişiklikler olmak üzere üç başlık altında toplanmıştır. Maddi telafiler, mali sıkıntıların kontrol altına alınması anlamına gelirken; siyasi telafiler kategorik mağduriyetleri temsil etmektedir. Her iki tazminat politikasının da piyasa ilişkileriyle olan gerginliğe rağmen AKP'nin popülist bir söylem inşa etmesine nasıl yardımcı olduğu gösterilmeye çalışılmıştır. Öte yandan, AKP'nin eğitim politikalarının bir kısmı ise yapısal değişiklikler olarak sınıflandırılmıştır. Telafi politikalarının seçiciliğinin aksine, yapısal değişiklikler tüm toplumu kapsayan reformları temsil etmektedir. Ayrıca, yapısal değişikliklerin artırımlı çözümler ile oluşturulmasının değerlendirmesi yapılmıştır. Söz konusu yapısal değişikliklerin en belirgin sonucu, daha rekabetçi bir ortamın yaratılması ve dolaylı olarak tazminat yükünün vatandaşlara devredilmesi olarak ele alınmıştır. Dolayısıyla, bu bölümde AKP'nin eğitim reformlarında sosyal adalet sorunu göz önünde bulundurularak, piyasa ilişkilerinin egemenliği bağlamında ele alınmıştır. Eğitim alanında en dikkat çekici yapısal ancak artırımcı politikalardan birisi, özel bir incelemeyi gerektiren sınav sistemidir. Son bölümde, sınav sisteminin dershaneleri tetikleyerek piyasa mekanizmasının harekete geçmesinin nedeni olduğuna dikkat çekmek için yükseköğretime geçiş politikalarına daha yakından bakılmıştır. Bu kapsamda vazgeçilmesi neredeyse imkansız olan sınav sisteminin yapısına odaklanılarak, sınav sisteminin varlığının bir kısır döngü ürettiği iddia edilmiştir. Kapitalizmde eğitim, emek gücünü yeniden üretmenin bir aracıdır. Toplum açısından bakıldığında, daha kaliteli bir eğitim, daha iyi iş fırsatlarına ulaşmanın da yoludur. Dolayısıyla bir aşamadan diğerine geçişin testle ölçüldüğü ve resmi müfredatın test tekniğinden ayrıldığı bir sistemde dershane ihtiyacının doğması doğaldır. Son bölümde ayrıca yükseköğretime geçiş sistemi ve bunun bir uzantısı olarak özel dershaneler üzerinde durulmuştur. Bu bağlamda, Türkiye'de yükseköğretime geçişin bileşenleri olarak dershaneler ve sınav sistemi, AKP'nin sosyal adalet talebini nasıl yönettiğini göstermeye yardımcı olmaktadır.

Ulusötesi ve küresel örgütlerin beklentilerinin karşılanması ile neoliberalizmin yarattığı derinleşen eşitsizliklerin ulusal düzeyde yönetilmesi arasında bir denge kurma çabası, eş zamanlı olarak politika yapıcılar açısından çelişkileri de beraberinde getirmektedir. Bu çelişkilerden kaynaklanan olası tıkanıklıkları önlemek için iki senaryo olduğunu gözlemlemek mümkündür. Birincisi, toplum algısını yönetmek için popülizmden yararlanmaktır. İkincisi, artırımlı politika oluşturma sürecinin benimsenmesidir. Popülizm, bir yandan neoliberalizmin yarattığı derinleşen eşitsizliklere karşı bir güvenlik örtüsü görevi görmektedir. Öte yandan, artırımcılık baskın bir politika oluşturma modeli olarak varlığını sürdürmektedir. Bu koşullar altında bu çalışma, politika oluşturmanın artırımlı ve talep yönetimi mekanizmasının popülist olduğu bir ortamda sosyal adaletin sağlanmasının mümkün olup olmadığını sorgulamayı amaçlamaktadır.

Eğitimde piyasalaşmanın yaygınlaşmasını sadece neoliberal politikaların sonucunda kar gütme motivasyonu ile ilerleyen bir süreç olarak açıklamak yeterli değildir. Bu nedenle özel girişimlerin eğitimdeki payını hangi talebin artırdığını sormak gerekmektedir. Buradaki en çarpıcı yanıt, daha nitelikli eğitim talebidir. Toplumun gözünde iyi koşullarda yaşamaya yetecek kadar gelir getiren bir işe girmek için iyi bir eğitim şarttır. Türk eğitim sisteminde ortaöğretime geçiş ve ortaöğretimden yükseköğretime geçiş 1970'lerden itibaren merkezi sınavla sağlanmaktadır. Daha önce üniversitelerde bağımsız giriş sınavları yapılırken, okullara talebin artması ile merkezi sınavlar uygulanmaya başlandı. Sınav sisteminin yarattığı rekabet ortamı nedeniyle, sınavda yüksek puanla girilen okullar toplum gözünde daha nitelikli eğitimi temsil eden kurumlar haline geldi. Ne yazık ki, bu okullara girmek için resmi müfredatı öğrenmek tek başına yeterli değildir; sınav odaklı bir eğitimden geçmek de gerekir. Mevcut okul bu sınav için yeterli eğitim vermiyorsa özel ders kurumlarına ihtiyaç duyulabilir. Bu noktada özel eğitim kurumları, bir boşluğu doldurma iddiasıyla öğrencinin hayatının tam ortasında konumlandırılmaktadır. Yani neoliberalizm öncesinden itibaren dershanelerin piyasa çözümü olarak ortaya çıkmasının nedenleri sınav sisteminin

varlığı, sınav sisteminin dönüşümleri ve toplumsal hareketlilik talebi olarak sıralanabilir.

AKP'nin sosyal adalet talebine yönelik eğitim reformlarının bir özetini vermek, popülizm ve artırımcılığın bir neoliberal-kapsayıcı strateji olarak bir arada varolduğunu vurgulama şansını yakalamak için kritiktir. AKP, piyasa ilişkilerinin sonuçları ile popülist talep yönetimi mekanizması arasındaki gerilimi yönetmek için üç başlık altında toplanabilecek politikalar benimsemektedir. Bu başlıklar maddi telafi politikaları, siyasi telafi politikaları ve yapısal değişikliklerdir. Katkı Payı Sorunu, Şartlı Nakit Transfer Programı, Ders Kitaplarının Ücretsiz Dağıtımı ve FATİH Projesi örnekleri incelenerek maddi telafiler göz önüne konulmaktadır. Bu politikaların ortak özelliklerini sıralamakta fayda vardır. İlk olarak, dördü de popülist bir değerlendirmeye atıfta bulunmaktadır. Katkı payının iptali, nakdi yardım programının devam etmesi, ücretsiz verilen ders kitapları ve teknolojiden faydalanarak bir proje üretilmesi, toplumda yankı uyandırarak popülist söylemin gelişmesine destek olan politikalardır. İkincisi, doğrudan mali faydalarla, neoliberalizm nedeniyle yurttaşın üzerindeki ağırlaşan yük azalmış gibi görünmektedir. Son olarak, tüm bu politikalar popülizm ile piyasa mekanizması arasındaki gerilimi yansıtmaktadır. Bunun nedeni, ilk bakışta sorunları maddi telafiler aracılığıyla çözüyor gibi görünmekle beraber detaylı olarak incelendiğinde, bu politikalar sonucunda piyasa ilişkilerinin derinleştiğini gözlemlemek mümkündür. Bunlar ayrıntılı olarak ele alınmıştır. Özetle ifade etmek gerekirse, katkı payı yasal olarak iptal edilir, ancak pratikte kaldırılamaz. Ders kitaplarının ücretsiz dağıtımını sağlayan mevzuat çok yakın bir zamanda iptal edildi. Ayrıca FATİH projesi özel sektör fonlarıyla kısmen başarılıdır. UNICEF'in katkıları sayesinde sadece nakdi yardım programı ayakta duruyor. Dolayısıyla maddi telafiler gerilimi çözmez, yalnızca bunun olumsuz etkilerini görünüde ortadan kaldıran bir atmosfer yaratırlar. Politik tazminat politikalarının da yardımıyla ise bir başka strateji benimsenmiştir. Haydi Kızlar Okula Projesi, Başörtüsü Sorunu ve Katsayı Yönetmeliği ile siyasi telafi politikaları tespit edilebilir. Bu politikalar arasında ortak olan şey, kategorik acıları ele almalarıdır. Maddi tazminatlara benzer şekilde, bireysel ve seçici

konuları ele alırlar. Ama bu sefer telafi süreci mali değil, siyasi esaslar üzerinden anlamlandırılmaktadır. Yine okullaşma oranındaki gelişmeler, kamusal alanda ayrımcılık tartışmaları ve katsayı sorununun aşılması AKP'nin siyasi tabanını popülist hamlelerle harekete geçirmesine yardımcı olmaktadır.

AKP'nin piyasa ve halkın talepleri arasındaki gerilimi yönetmedeki bir diğer stratejisi de yapısal değişikliklerdir. 2004 Müfredat Reformu, Lisenin Dört Yıla Uzatılması ve Ortak Dokuzuncu Sınıf Müfredatı, 4+4+4 Modeline Geçiş ve Sınav Sistemindeki Değişiklikler yapısal değişime dayalı politikalara örnektir. Maddi ve politik tazminatlardan farklı olarak, yapısal değişiklikler seçici veya bireysel olarak ele alınmamaktadır. Aksine, tüm topluma hitap ederler. Popülist taleplerin karşılanması ile piyasa ilişkileri arasındaki gerilimin, telafilerin sorumluluğunu hizmet sunucudan hizmet alanların omuzlarına aktaracak şekilde yönetilmesi yapısal değişikliklerin en göze çarpan yönüdür. Daha somut olmak gerekirse, müfredat reformu yeni nesillerin algısını piyasa ilişkilerine uygun olarak yeniden şekillendirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Liselerin eğitim süresi ve içeriğine ilişkin yeni uygulamalar dershaneye olan ihtiyacı daha da körüklemektedir. 4+4+4 modeli ise ilk olarak eğitim sisteminin iş piyasasına daha uyumlu hale getirilmesi için başlatılmıştır. Son olarak, artırımlı çözümlerin yoğun olarak gözlemlendiği sınav sistemi de birçok değişikliğe uğramıştır. Yapısal değişikliklerin ortak bir sonucu olarak, hizmet alıcıların her adımda artan piyasa ilişkilerine aşırı bağımlı hale geldikleri görülmektedir.

Sınav sisteminin incelendiği bölümde artırımlı reformların popülizm ve piyasa mantığının kesiştiği yerlerde faydalı olduğuna bir kez daha tanık olunacaktır. Gerçekten de sınav sistemi, politika oluşturmanın bir dizi deney yoluyla gerçekleştirildiği en görünür alan olabilir. Sadece bir sınavın varlığı değil, sınav sistemindeki bireysel değişiklikler de örgün eğitimin ötesinde talebi doğurmuştur. Bu bağlamda, üçüncü bölümde sınav sistemi ve bunun bir uzantısı olarak dershaneler üzerinde durulmuştur. Yıllara içinde sınav sisteminin geçirdiği değişiklikler artırımlı politika yapımına işaret etmektedir. Sınav sisteminin varlığı dershanelere ihtiyaç

duyulmasının temel nedenidir. Dersanenin amacı öğrencinin bilgi eksikliklerini gidermek ve ona hızlı soru çözme becerisi kazandırmaktır. Bu anlamda dershane, nitelikli eğitim talebinin yönlendirildiği bir kurum değildir. Aksine devlet okullarından ya da özel okullardan daha kaliteli eğitim talep edilmektedir. Bu isteğin temel amacı, seviyeler arası geçiş sınavlarında rekabet ortamında öne çıkmak için beceriler kazandırmaktır. Devlet okulları söz konusu talebi karşılayamadığında özel ders veren kurumlar açığı doldurmakta bir piyasa çözümü olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Türkiye'de özel ders veren kurumların pek çok ortal özelliği vardır. Bunlar arasında kâr odaklı olmak, daha küçük sınıflarda örgütlenmek ve kamuda olmayan nitelikli öğretmenleri istihdam etmek sayılabilir. Bu kurumlarda öğretim materyali, aşamalar arasında uygulanan sınavların içeriğine göre belirlenir ve gerekirse merkezi sınav konularını kapsayacak şekilde yoğun dersler verilir. Dershaneler, deneme testleri düzenleyerek öğrencilerin sınav için gerekli olan antrenmanı yapmasına da olanak sağlar. Özel dershanelerin ayırt edici özelliklerinden biri de rehberlik ve danışmanlık hizmetlerinin örgün eğitime göre daha etkin bir ortamda sunulmasıdır.

Dershanelerin sayısı yukarıda sıralanan ihtiyaç çerçevesinde artmaya devam ederken, 2014 yılında pozisyonlarını sarsacak siyasi gelişmeler yaşandı. Dershanelerin kapatılması gündeme gelerek kimi dershanelere özel okula dönüşme imkanı sunuldu. Siyasi sebeplerden ötürü bu kararın verildiği çalışmada kısaca açıklanmıştır. Ancak, elbette bu düzenleme piyasa koşullarından bağımsız düşünülemez. Öyle ki bu kurumların özel okullara dönüşme süreci öğrencilerin merkezi sınava hazırlama yolunda dershaneye olan talebi azaltmadı. Çünkü bu dönüşüm toplumsal bir talebin sonucu değildi; yukarıdan aşağıya bir politika hareketiydi. Sınav sisteminde de bir değişiklik olmadığı göz önüne alındığında öğrenci ve ailelerin sınava hazırlanırken alternatif ortam arayışlarında herhangi bir değişiklik olmaması şaşırtıcı değildir. Bu kapsamda, temel liseler dershanelerin yerini alarak, ortaöğretim programı ile sınava hazırlık müfredatını birlikte uygulamaya devam etmiştir. Bu kurumların adı ve tabi oldukları yönetmelikler değişse de karşıladıkları talep açısından nitelikleri aynı kalmıştır.

Sonuç olarak bu çalışma kapsamında sosyal adalet sorunu her bireyin daha kaliteli eğitimin verildiği eğitime katılma hakkı olarak kavramsallaştırılmaktadır. Bununla birlikte, eğitim sisteminin sınavlara bağlı olduğu bir düzende sosyal adaletin karşılanması özel bir inceleme gerektirmektedir. Böylece yükseköğretime geçişte sosyal adalet arayışı sınav sistemi etrafında tartışılmaktadır. Okulların bitiminde test şeklinde bir sınavın bulunması ortaöğretime yüklenen anlamı değiştirmektedir. Bireyler, eğitimi iş piyasasında yer bulmanın bir aracı olarak algılamakta, dolayısıyla daha kaliteli eğitim arayışı yerini sınavlarda daha yüksek puan arayışına bırakmıştır. Sınav sisteminde uzmanlaşma vaad eden dershaneler, eğitimde piyasa ilişkilerinin derinleşmesiyle birlikte eğitim sistemindeki bir eksikliğe cevap veren kurumlar haline gelmiştir. Derhanelerin özel okullara dönüşme sürecinde dershane olgusuna olan ihtiyacın ortadan kalkmaması bu çalışmanın ortaya koyduğu çelişkilerle dolu politika yapım sürecini destekler niteliktedir. Sonuç olarak, sosyal adaletin ancak reformların öngörülemeyen sonuçları bağlamında, kısıtlı periyotlar süresince ve yükü hizmet alanların omzuna devredilmesi koşuluyla sağlanmasının mümkün olduğunu söylemek yanıltıcı olmayacaktır.

APPENDIX C. TEZ İZİN FORMU / THESIS PERMISSION FORM

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Bölümü / Department : Siyaset Bilimi ve Kamu Yönetimi / Political Science and Public Administration

TEZİN ADI / TITLE OF THE THESIS (**İngilizce** / English):

SEEKING SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE EDUCATION REFORMS OF THE JDP: A STUDY ON TRANSITION TO HIGHER EDUCATION IN TURKEY

TEZİN TÜRÜ / DEGREE: **Yüksek Lisans** / Master ☒ **Doktora** / PhD ☐

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