

Organizational Visions Of The Rectors In Turkish Universities For The New Millennium*

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ABSTRACT

In this study, the organizational phase of the vision development process was performed and the extent of the organizational vision of the university administrators was discussed related with the new and changed roles of the universities and university administrators for the 21st. century. The data were collected from 67 rectors in Turkish universities. The evaluations of the rectors about the strengths, weaknesses, climate, external and internal factors obstructing the success of their universities and the universities in their ideals were determined. The developed visions for the universities of the future are clear and light. The developed visions must be communicated, shared and enriched by the rectors throughout the universities.

Key words: Vision, visions of university administrators, universities of futures,

Yeni Yüz Yıl İçin Türk Üniversitelerindeki Rektörlerin Örgütsel Vizyonları

ÖZET

Bu çalışmada, vizyon geliştirme sürecinin örgütsel aşaması gerçekleştirilmiş ve üniversite yöneticilerinin örgütsel vizyonlarının kapsamı, 21. Yy. 'da üniversitelerin ve üniversite yöneticilerinin yeni değişen rolleriyle ilişkili olarak tartışılmıştır. Veriler Türk üniversitelerindeki 67 rektörden toplanmıştır. Rektörlerinin üniversitelerinin zayıf, güçlü yönleri, iklimi, üniversitelerinin başarılarını engelleyen iç ve dış faktörler konusundaki değerlendirmeleri ile ideallerindeki üniversite belirlenmiştir.

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Geleceğin üniversiteleri için geliştirilen vizyon açık ve aydınlıktır. Bu vizyon rektörler tarafından fakülteler ve bağlı birimlerine iletilmeli, paylaşılmalı ve zenginleştirilmelidir.

INTRODUCTION

In the millennium, the organizations and administrators must be open and clear enough to meet the complexity, they must be ready and flexible enough to adapt to the dynamics, they must be democratic and creative enough to transform variety into richness and they must be the determiners of the ambiguities (Erçetin 1998, Manase 1985, Progoine 1996, Solinann and Heinze 1995, Tuaruberry 1997).

I must emphasize again that vision is an important dimension in the leadership characteristics of the university administrators for the learner-centered universities of the 21st. century in order to meet the above-mentioned demands. In this study, I am going to explain what the organizational visions of the rectors in Turkish universities for the 21st. century are.

Key of Recreating Universities For Future: Vision

The literature in the field provides many definitions of vision. For example, Manesse (1985) regards vision as “the development, transmission and implementation of a desirable future”. Sollman and Heinze (1995) indicate “vision is a concrete future image which is near enough to realize and far enough to raise admiration for a new formation”. In this sense, vision is explained with the following dimensions in terms of university administrators for the 21st. century (Erçetin 1998).

Vision is the dream and design of future: The leader university administrators with vision are people dreaming and designing the futures of their universities. They use their emotional, intellectual and intuitive potentials to create the future which is thought to be necessary and different from the existing situation in their universities. In this meaning, leader university administrators don't only predict the future like the futurists, but they create a new future like science fiction writers, as well. Furthermore, they plan and design how the dreamed future will be realized. Regarding with the subject of this conference, leader university administrators must dream and design the future of their universities by considering the new and changed roles of their universities.

Vision is to balance dreams with realities: The leader university administrators with vision evaluate the present conditions, the situations and the possibilities of their own and their universities. They use these evaluations as a step to realize the dreamed and designed future related to

their universities. Thus, they can provide the acceleration of the needed change and the transformation in reaching from today to future and from dreams to realities. The university administrators must realistically evaluate the present conditions, situations, possibilities of their own and their universities in order to create learner-centered university for the 21st century. They must develop the present positive conditions, situations, possibilities of their own self and their universities. They must change the others.

Vision is to differentiate with values and to integrate them with spiritual power: The leader university administrators with vision perceive the value of human successes and behavior for life, and they evaluate them beyond current measures. They consider everything that is found meaningful by humans to have value and they differentiate their universities with them. Student, faculty, and non-teaching staff integrate with spiritual power in values in the universities managed by them. They create an environment where everybody feels himself as a value.

Vision is to communicate and to share: The leader university administrators with vision communicate their dreams, plans, values to everyone at university from student to all faculty members. In this process, they influence students, faculty members, and non-teaching staff and facilitate their participation and their contribution. In this way, they provide possibility of integration for everybody. They create the democratic and open climate at university. There everybody produces new ideas or methods without being asked and everybody has opportunities to participate in task assignments and vision development.

Vision is to take and to manage risks: The above-mentioned dimensions contain taking and managing risks. Leader university administrators with vision take and manage risks. They are courage enough to encourage others to be courage, they are responsible enough to endure the results of the risks, and they are creative enough to transform risks into success. They are highly sensitive to social patterns. They properly share their authority and power with the others.

Vision Development Process

Vision development expresses a two-phased process, the development of personal and organizational visions (Chance, 1992; Thornberry, 1997). Personal vision development phase contains 1) evaluating self, 2) defining in a clear and understandable way what the leader wants to perform and realize, and 3) bringing up the desires. In this process, the leader university administrators define the self perceptions and personal goals. The dominant elements playing role in personal vision development are the leader university administrators' proficiencies, self-

development fields weaknesses, leadership styles, demands related with professions, and evaluations related with their universities. The organizational vision development phase contains 1) evaluating the organization, and 2) defining the dreamed organization. In this process, the leader university administrators define the evaluations related with their universities and universities in dreams.

He basic functions of the universities are to be leaders and raise leaders in every field to meet the demands of the 21st. century. Achieving these basic functions depends on visionary leaders in the university administration. In this phase, I must emphasize that we regard this conference as a very important international platform to develop the global vision for the 21st. century and to prepare for the next millennium.

Our knowledge about the extent of the university administrators' vision at present is insufficient. In this study, the personal phase of vision development process was performed and the extent of the personal vision of the university administrators was discussed related with the new and changed roles of the universities and the university administrators for the 21st. century. As a result, in this study, we are going to explain what the personal visions of the rectors in Turkish universities for the 21st. century are.

Methodology

This study was designed in the survey model. The data were collected from the same population. We used the questionnaire developed by Edward W. chance (1996). The questionnaire contains six open-ended questions related with the organizational vision development phase. The questions are as follows.

1. What are five greatest strengths of your university?
2. What are five greatest weaknesses of your university?
3. How do you describe the climate of your university?
4. What are three greatest internal factors obstructing the success of your university?
5. What are three greatest external factors obstructing the success of your university?
6. What does your ideal university look like?

In analyzing the data, we considered that all of these 67 rectors would give the maximum response for every item. The total number of questions was considered and this number was multiplied with the probable response number of the responses. For example, for interns 4 and 5 the expected total number of the would be $67 \times 5 = 335$. Similar responses were

grouped and frequencies were computed. The rates of the items were put into order from high to low. The same process was applied for items 1,2 and 6.

Findings

The Strengths and Weaknesses of Their Universities

The rectors identified 43 different strengths and 40 different weaknesses related to their universities. The first five were included in 69% of the rectors' markings related with strengths and 59% of those related with weaknesses (Table I.).

Table I.
The Strengths and Weaknesses of Their Universities

Strengths 67x5=335	f	%	Weaknesses 67x5=335	f	%
The effective communication	68	20	The insufficient financial resources	45	13
Dynamic, developing	52	16	The insufficient scientific studies	43	13
The physical and natural conditions	47	14	The insufficient substructure, the physical conditions and the new technology	40	12
Scientific studies	35	10	The broken relations between the departments, clicks and politicization	310	14
Democratic	29	9	Organizational structure	32	10
Total	231	69	Total	198	59

The rectors' identifications related with the strengths and weaknesses of their universities seem to be in contradiction with each other. The rectors identified the natural and physical conditions and the effective communication as the strengths of their universities and at the same time they identified the substructure, the physical conditions, the technology and the broken relations between the departments, the clicks and the politicization as the weaknesses of their universities. This contradictory identification can be interpreted that the rectors wanted to improve the strengths of their universities or the rectors defended own their positions and their universities.

The findings indicated that the rectors perceived the insufficient financial resources as the most important weaknesses of their universities. increasing cost of the investments in higher education sector and rapid participation rates at higher education level may be considered as reasons for insufficient financial resources.

The broken relations between the departments, clicks and politicization in their universities indicated the existence of the traditional working conditions. The findings can be interpreted that the interdisciplinary approaches and the studies haven't been appropriated by the academic personnel in the different departments of the universities yet.

The Climate of Their universities

The rectors defined climate of their university as "dynamic" and "developing". The findings indicated that the universities have the same atmosphere in changing and developing Turkey.

The internal and External Factors obstructing The Success of Their Universities

The rectors defined 34 different internal and 30 different external factors obstructing the success of their universities. The first three were included in 63% of the rectors' markings related with internal factors and 94% of those related with external factors (Table II).

Table II.
The internal and External Factors Obstructing The Success of Their Universities

Internal Factors 67x3=201	f	%	External Factors 67x3=201	f	%
Insufficient physical conditions	49	24	Independent in finance	84	42
Clicks, politicization	40	20	Insufficient payments	56	28
Insufficient budget	38	19	Bureaucracy	49	24
Total	127	63	Total	189	94

The findings indicated that the rectors perceived the weaknesses of the universities as factors obstructing the success of their universities. It was understood the rectors perceived the bureaucracy being different from these factors as an important barrier for the universities in their ideals. In fact, bureaucracy as an important barrier for the learner-centered, dynamic, and flexible universities of the 21st. century can be evaluated.

The Universities in Their Ideals

The rectors defined 32 different features for universities in their ideals. The first five were included in 93% of the rectors' markings related with the features (Table III).

Table III.
The Universities in Their Ideals

Features 67x5=335	f	%
Completed education integreted with the world	64	19
Learner-centered	64	19
The highest scientific studies and researches performed	58	17
Financial, administrative and academic autonomy	45	13
Learning, developing, dynamic	31	9
The qualified and motivated academic and nonacademic personnel	12	4
Leader in community	12	4
International Relations	12	4
The completed substructure and physical conditions	12	4
Total	310	93

When the above-given features were evaluated, the universities with these features aren't difficult to define as the learner-centered and learning universities of the 21st. century.

Results

As a result, Rectors as a leaders have a potential to prepare the next century. Leaders who are the managers of the superior systems must motivate the rectors and they must provide managerial necessities for them. At the same time, the rectors must also communicate, share and enrich their visions with all the university including from the students to the university members.

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