



Teachers' Perception of 2018 Turkish National Curriculum Change

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Abstract

This research aimed to reveal teachers' perception of 2018 Turkish national curriculum change. The research was designed as a mixed method research. 306 teachers participated in the quantitative phase of the study and eight teachers participated in the qualitative part of the study. The data were collected through a scale and semi-structured interviews in the spring semester of 2019-2020 education year. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the quantitative data, and content analysis was conducted for the analysis of the qualitative data. The research findings indicated teachers' perception regarding curriculum change was at "neutral" level. In addition, it was found that teachers' perception differed significantly in terms of having postgraduate degree and getting in-service training while teachers' age, experience, level of school and faculty graduated did not create a significant difference. Also, it was found teachers viewed all curricula similar after 2005 constructivist curriculum reform and lacked sufficient knowledge and skills as regards to implementation of different dimensions of the 2018 curricula. Thus, providing teachers with quality in-service training may be recommended in order to introduce the fundamentals of new curricula so that teachers may adopt and apply them easier.

Keywords: Curriculum, curriculum development, curriculum change, teachers, perception

Öğretmenlerin Türkiye’deki 2018 Ulusal Eğitim Programı Değişikliğine İlişkin Algıları

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Öz

Bu araştırma, öğretmenlerin Türkiye’deki 2018 ulusal eğitim programı değişikliğine ilişkin algılarını ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamıştır. Araştırma, karma yöntem araştırması olarak tasarlanmıştır. Araştırmanın nicel kısmına 306 öğretmen, nitel kısmına ise sekiz öğretmen katılmıştır. Veriler, 2019-2020 eğitim-öğretim yılı bahar döneminde bir ölçek ve yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme yoluyla toplanmıştır. Nicel verilerin analizinde hem betimleyici hem de yordamsal istatistikler, nitel verilerin analizinde ise içerik analizi uygulanmıştır. Araştırma bulguları, öğretmenlerin eğitim programı değişikliğine ilişkin algılarının “kararsızım” düzeyinde olduğunu göstermiştir. Ayrıca, öğretmenlerin eğitim programı değişikliğine ilişkin algılarının lisansüstü eğitim ve hizmet içi eğitim alma yönünden anlamlı düzeyde farklılaştığı, ancak yaş, deneyim, çalışılan okul düzeyi ve mezun olunan fakülte türünün anlamlı bir fark yaratmadığı bulunmuştur. Ayrıca, öğretmenlerin 2005 yapılandırmacı eğitim programı reformundan sonra tüm eğitim programlarını benzer gördükleri ve programların farklı boyutlarının uygulanmasına ilişkin yeterli bilgi ve beceriye sahip olmadıkları belirlenmiştir. Bu nedenle, öğretmenlere yeni programları daha kolay benimsemeleri ve uygulamaları için programların uygulama esaslarını tanıtan kaliteli hizmet içi eğitim verilmesi önerilebilir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Eğitim programı, eğitim programı geliştirme, eğitim programı değişikliği, öğretmenler, algı

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1. Introduction

Curriculum is defined as “a plan for providing sets of learning opportunities for persons to be educated” (Saylor, Alexander & Lewis, 1981, p.8) and curriculum development may be considered as a tool to provide, order and direct learning experiences to young people (Oliva & Gordon, 2013). Curriculum development is a dynamic field and is affected by modernism and post-modernism, various cognitive theories, continuous studies on brain, new instructional designs and various world and educational philosophies (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2014). Thus, the rise of new changes in these areas has caused curriculum change in order to enhance the quality of education at all levels of school.

Curriculum change is defined by Banning (1954) as a type of social change and involves discovering and applying better procedures to improve learning experiences for students. Curriculum change is needed when the present curriculum fails to meet the needs and current demands of the culture, the society, and the expectations of the population being served (Johnson, 2001). In order to manage curriculum change successfully, some key criteria have to be taken into consideration from careful planning to evaluation. Curriculum change should be dealt with in a five-step process. Firstly, a detailed analysis of the present program and context should be conducted. Secondly, approved objectives by all stakeholders should be expressed in a mission statement. Thirdly, an action plan should be prepared besides prioritizing the resources and development strategies. Design and implementation of the curriculum should be conducted in the fourth stage. Lastly, measurement tools and procedures should be designed and implemented. If the new program requires the use of new methods, then training workshops should be organized for teachers (Lachiver & Tardif, 2002).

In addition, curriculum change has been categorized into five types which are *substitution, alteration, perturbations, restructuring and value-orientation* depending on its complexity by McNeil (2014). Being the most common and the easiest substitution change refers to change in which substitution of one element for another is realized. A teacher, for instance, may substitute a textbook for another. Alteration change is implemented when new content, items or materials are integrated into existing programs, which can be adopted easily by teachers. Perturbations are changes which could break off a program at first but could be adjusted by teachers to the existing program in a short time, for instance, a principal's adjusting class schedules may affect a teacher's time allocated for teaching. Restructuring refers to changes that modify the whole school system. For example, when a new curriculum is developed, teachers and students may need to adopt new roles or they may face new content. Value-orientation changes occur when teachers adopt the new fundamental philosophies of curriculum since success of a new program largely depends on teachers' willingness to accept the new values, otherwise the changes are likely to be short-lived (McNeil, 2014).

In Turkey, curricula experienced dramatic changes depending on the shift from positivist paradigm and behaviorist learning theory to post-positivist paradigm and constructivist approach in 2005. This change led to alterations in all dimensions of curriculum including aims, content, learning-teaching process and assessment and evaluation process and teacher and student roles (Akpınar & Aydın, 2007).

Furthermore, in 2012-2013 education year curriculum changes that are witnessed have resulted from the need to redesign the existing curriculum as a result of the transition to the 4 + 4 + 4 system with 12 years of compulsory education from the model structured as 8 + 4 with eight years of compulsory education. The new system necessitated a new English curriculum since students started to receive English teaching from the second grade onward instead of fourth grade (Özüdoğru, 2017). Besides, some revisions were made in aims, content, learning-teaching process and assessment and measurement dimensions of various curricula such as science teaching, mathematics and information technologies and software teaching (Deveci, 2018; İlhan & Aslaner, 2019; Karaman & Karaman, 2019).

In 2017, curricula were revised on account of the fact that it was necessary to keep pace with the necessities of era and changing needs of individuals and society (MoNE, 2017a). Values education was addressed in all course curricula (MoNE, 2017b). 2017 curricula were implemented for only a year. After 2017 curricula were revised based on stakeholders' opinions, new curricula started to be implemented in Turkish education system in 2018-2019 education year (MoNE, 2017b).

In 2018 curricula, values education was made more distinct in all course curricula by choosing 10 root values including "justice, friendship, honesty, self-control, patience, respect, love, responsibility, patriotism and helpfulness". Having constructivist approach in common, course curricula brought some changes. For instance, comparing 2013 and 2018 primary and middle school English curricula, it is seen that 2018 curricula copied many sections of the 2013 curricula, and minor revisions have been carried out in the topics, placement of objectives under different titles and assessment and evaluation (Acar, 2019). Besides, Communication Technologies and Software curriculum for primary school 1-4 grades was introduced and this course started to be applied from the first grade on a voluntary basis for the first time (MoNE, 2018). In this curriculum, the concept of computational thinking synthesizing problem solving and coding took place for the first time. In addition, it was reported that Turkish course curricula did not create a distinct difference, yet new curricula were more practical and flexible with the objectives regarding learning areas listed under fewer sub-titles (Bıçak & Alver, 2018; Yazar, 2019).

When Turkish curricula are evaluated in terms of curriculum change types as suggested by McNeil (2014), it can be said that 2005 curricula required *restructuring changes* since the philosophy of the curricula and teacher and student roles altered significantly in these curricula. In addition, all curricula require *value-orientation changes* since teachers need to accept the philosophies and fundamentals of new curriculum.

Although the Turkish curricula are in line with the recent changes in the world as pointed out by Gültekin (2014), that is not sufficient for the curricula to be successful. Teachers' competencies should be developed in order to meet the needs of each new curricula (Akpınar & Aydın, 2007; Yıldırım & Kasapoğlu, 2015). Furthermore, teachers' feelings, thoughts and attitudes towards curriculum must also be taken into consideration (Flores, 2005; Harris & Graham, 2019; Ünsal, Çetin, Korkmaz & Aydemir, 2019) since teachers are the one to implement the curriculum, and if their feelings and perception are ignored, the curriculum cannot be implemented successfully by them. However, as asserted by Yavuz (2016), Turkish curricula are designed centrally, and a rigid program is applied, hence the duty of teachers is to implement this program as it is. Therefore, when new curricula are developed, they should be introduced to teachers through in-service training so that they may enhance a sense of curriculum ownership, which is a psychological state, and thus change may be facilitated. In other words, it can be said that curriculum ownership is a necessary element especially in countries where the curricula are developed centrally, outside of schools (Kennedy, 2010). Furthermore, it was revealed that the curricula are not implemented appropriately by teachers as suggested in the curricula (Dikbayır, 2018; Karabacak, 2018; Turan-Özpolat, 2015). Therefore, it is considered significant to find out teachers' perception of the latest curriculum change so it may be possible to determine if teachers will adopt new curricula or resist.

Upon the analysis of relevant literature, it has been found there are few studies investigating teachers' perception of curriculum changes (Akpınar & Aydın, 2007; Ünsal et al., 2019; Yıldırım & Kasapoğlu, 2015). Among these studies, Akpınar & Aydın (2007) analyzed how teachers perceived 2005 curriculum changes in education and unearthed elementary teachers considered the changes positively and adopted new teacher roles, student-centered learning and teaching to a great extent. However, teachers found themselves incompetent in the face of changes and stated that they needed in-service training. Similarly, Yıldırım and Kasapoğlu (2015) investigated 2005 constructivist curriculum change and unearthed that classroom teachers'

perception toward curriculum change had significant correlation with their implementation of constructivist teaching and learning activities. In Ünsal et al.'s (2019) study, teachers' general perception towards 2017 curricular changes with regard to some variables and the reasons for change were explored. As a result of the study, it was displayed that teachers' perception was at 'neutral' level, and differed significantly in terms of experience; however, gender, teaching level and educational status variables did not create significant difference in teachers' perception. Despite these research studies, no studies have been found specifically targeting on 2018 Turkish national curriculum change. However, it was reported in various studies that 2018 curricula experienced some important changes in aims, content, learning-teaching process and measurement and assessment dimensions such as increase in competencies and skills in mathematics curricula (İlhan & Aslaner, 2019) or removal of 'applied science' content in science teaching curricula (Başar & Demiral, 2020) and a new primary school curriculum was also developed for Information Technologies and Software course (MoNE, 2018). For these reasons, it is considered necessary to explore teachers' perception of new curricula. This research aimed to reveal teachers' perception of 2018 Turkish national curriculum change. The research questions were proposed as in the following:

- 1) How are teachers' perception of 2018 Turkish national curriculum change?
- 2) Does teachers' perception of 2018 Turkish national curriculum change differ significantly in terms of age, experience, level of school they work in, faculty graduated, having postgraduate degree and getting in-service training?
- 3) What do teachers think about 2018 Turkish national curriculum change?

This research is considered significant in terms of determining teachers' perception with regard to recent curriculum change in Turkey. According to the findings of the present study, teachers' needs for training about 2018 Turkish national curricula may be revealed. Moreover, it is expected that officials and experts working in the Ministry of National Education may benefit from the results of the present study.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

This research used a sequential explanatory design which is one of the designs of mixed-method research involving both quantitative and qualitative method. In sequential explanatory design, quantitative data are collected and analysed in the first phase of the research. Then, qualitative data are collected and analysed in the second phase to build on the results of the initial quantitative results (Creswell, 2009). Thus, in the quantitative part of the study, first a scale was conducted, then semi-structured interviews were carried out with eight willing teachers to find out their in-depth perception about curriculum change.

2.2. Participants

The population of the study consists of 4025 teachers working in primary, middle and high schools in Uşak city (MoNE, 2020). The sample of the study was determined through simple random sampling method. Simple random sampling is used when selecting sample randomly from the population so that every participant has an equal chance to be included in the sample (Büyükoztürk et al., 2019). Thus, schools were selected randomly. Büyükoztürk et al. (2019) state that a sample size of 351 would be enough for populations of 4000 with .05 confidence interval, and in the present study an approximate number of teachers were reached. The sample of the study consisted of 306 teachers working in public primary, middle and high schools in Uşak city. 98 of the teachers were classroom teachers and 208 of the teachers were field teachers. The distribution of teachers according to their field is as in the following: 21 science teaching, 21 mathematics, 20 Turkish language and literature, 20 English, 18 religious culture and moral knowledge, 14 history, 13 Turkish teaching, 11 physical education and sports, 11 information technologies, 9 philosophy, 8 social sciences, 8 biology, 8 school counsellor, 5

physics, 5 geography, 5 musics, 4 Germany, 3 chemistry, 2 visual arts and 2 arts. The demographic properties of teachers can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. The demographic properties of teachers

Variables		N	%
Age	21-29 years	74	24
	30-39 years	103	34
	40-49 years	91	30
	50 and above	38	12
Experience	0-5 years	77	25
	6-10 years	44	15
	11-15 years	53	17
	16-20 years	56	18
	21 and above	76	25
Level of School	Primary School	107	35
	Middle School	82	27
	High School	117	38
Graduation	Faculty of Education	243	79
	Other	63	21
Postgraduate Degree	Yes	81	27
	No	225	73
In-service Training about 2018 Curricula	Yes	131	43
	No	175	57
Total		306	100

In addition, eight teachers, who already took part in the quantitative phase of the study, participated in the qualitative part of the study. Convenience sampling was used for the selection of the teachers. Convenience sampling is the process of including individuals who are available at the time of the research (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2014; Wallen & Fraenkel, 2013). Convenience sampling was preferred in the current study, since it was hard to reach teachers due to school closures resulting from the pandemic. Thus, eight willing teachers were included in the semi-structured interviews. Five of the teachers were male and three of them were female. Three teachers were classroom teachers working in primary school, three teachers were from the fields of information technologies, Turkish and English working in middle school and two of them were mathematics and history teachers working in high school. Besides, four of the teachers had between 15-20 years of experience, the others had 12, 9, 8 and 6 years of experience consecutively. Hence, it can be stated that six of the teachers applied 2005 curricula and after; however, the others applied 2012 curricula and after.

2.3. Data Collection

The research data were collected in the spring semester of 2019-2020 education year. This study was approved by the Social/Behavioral Institutional Review Board committee of Uşak University (Decision date: 11 June, 2020, Document no: 89784354-050.99-). The quantitative data were collected through Curriculum Change Perception Scale developed by Ünsal et al. (2019). The scale is developed as 5-point Likert-type with one factor and 21-item. In this study, the date 2018 was added to the scale items to indicate 2018 curriculum change. The internal consistency of the scale was .92. Having implemented the scale, the internal consistency was checked again and found .94. The scale was carried out online due to pandemic. For that purpose, the school principals were reached and the scale was shared in schools' online communication tools.

The qualitative data were collected via semi-structured interview form prepared by the researcher. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to unearth teachers' in-depth perception about 2018 Turkish national curriculum change. For that purpose, five questions

regarding their general perception about 2018 Turkish national curriculum change, knowledge and skills about the new curricula, perception about differences and similarities with the previous curricula, introduction process of new curricula and suggestions for effective implementation of the curricula were asked during the interviews. Content validity of the interview form was ensured by consulting two experts from the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. Necessary revisions were implemented after getting feedback. The interviews could not be conducted face to face because of the pandemic, so they were implemented using computer-based video conferencing. They lasted about half an hour and were recorded for transcription.

2.4. Data Analysis

In this research, quantitative data were analyzed through the use of SPSS 23.0 package program. Descriptive data analysis (mean, standard deviation) were implemented. Also, some comments were made for each item in the scale by evaluating the mean scores: between 1.00-1.80 as totally disagree, between 1.81 - 2.60 as "disagree", between 2.61 - 3.40 as "neutral", between 3.41 - 4.20 as "agree" and between 4.21 - 5.00 as "totally agree".

In addition, parametric tests were employed for analysis. As Field (2013) states, with sample size of 200 or more due to the problem of small standard error, any criterion should not be employed to decide on the sample size. Besides, Tabachnick and Fidell (2014) suggest that a sample size of at least 300 could be sufficient for normal distribution. Hence, in the present study normal distribution was assumed and parametric tests were employed.

Independent samples t-test was also conducted to determine if teachers' perception differed significantly in terms of faculty graduated, having postgraduate degree and getting in-service training about 2018 educational curricula. One-way ANOVA was realized to reveal if significant differences between teachers' perception regarding curriculum change and their age, experience and level of school existed or not. Before implementing one-way ANOVA, Levene's test was carried out to check homogeneity of variances and found that age ($p=.91$) and experience ($p=.18$) variables were not significant, showing that the variances were equal. Therefore, Tukey HSD test was carried out in order to find the sources of difference. However, level of school ($p=.01$) variable was found significant which indicated homogeneity of variance were not provided. Thus, Games-Howell test conducted to find sources of difference between teachers' perception and level of school they work.

For the analysis of the qualitative data, content analysis was employed. Content analysis involves simultaneous coding of raw data and the construction of categories that reflect relevant characteristics of content. Content analysis is inductive because categories and variables initially guide the study though other categories are also expected to emerge throughout the study (Merriam, 2009). After raw data were coded by the researcher, an expert working in Curriculum and Instruction checked the coding. Then, inter-coder reliability was calculated using Miles & Huberman's (1994) formula ($\text{reliability} = \frac{\text{agreement}}{\text{agreement} + \text{disagreement}} \times 100$) and reliability between the expert and the researcher was found .84. This value is considered high since Miles & Huberman (1994) point out sufficient reliability for %80 agreement between coders. After reliability was ensured, final themes were reached and presented through direct quotations.

2.5. Limitations

This study was conducted with some limitations. The quantitative part of the study was conducted with 306 teachers. Further research may be conducted by including a larger sample. In addition, the qualitative part of the study was limited to data produced from three classroom teachers, one information technologies teacher, one Turkish language teacher, one English teacher, one mathematics teacher and one history teacher. The study could have been stronger if interviews with teachers from other fields had been conducted.

3. Results

Results were presented in line with the research questions.

3.1. How are teachers' perception of 2018 Turkish national curriculum change?

First of all, descriptive values regarding teachers' 2018 Turkish national curriculum change perception scores were presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive values regarding curriculum change perception

Items	\bar{X}	SD
1. I think teachers' opinions were also taken into consideration during 2018 curriculum change.	2.45	1.09
2. I think the changes in the curriculum will have positive results for the students.	3.24	1.01
3. I think 2018 curriculum change is necessary.	3.78	.98
4. I think the reasons for the changes in the curricula are satisfied.	3.24	1.04
5. I think the changes in the curriculum were prepared in accordance with the scientific principles.	3.00	1.04
6. I think the changes in the curriculum were made in accordance with the requirements of the age.	3.01	.98
7. I think the main purpose of the curriculum change is understood by the teachers.	2.74	1.00
8. I think that teachers will easily adapt to the curriculum changes.	3.03	1.04
9. I do really care about 2018 curriculum change.	3.74	1.01
10. Curriculum change has been prepared to guide the teacher adequately.	2.85	.96
11. I think the teacher can easily implement the new curriculum.	3.20	.95
12. I think the new curriculum is different from the previous one.	3.25	.95
13. The changes in the curriculum attract my attention.	3.40	1.05
14. I think the changes in the curriculum will improve the quality of education.	3.39	1.04
15. I think the changes in the curriculum were made due to the need.	3.57	1.05
16. I think the new curriculum satisfies the need.	2.94	.97
17. I think the basic philosophy of the new curriculum is positive.	3.27	.93
18. I find the changes in the new curriculum positive.	3.19	.92
19. It was very easy for me to adopt the changes made in the curriculum.	3.55	1.07
20. I think the new curriculum compensates for the shortcomings of the previous curricula.	3.01	.97
21. I think the changes in the curriculum provide more convenience to students.	3.19	1.00
Total	3.19	1.01

When teachers' total mean score ($\bar{X}=3.19$) was evaluated, it was determined that teachers were neutral of their perception regarding curriculum change in general. Analyzing the mean scores of teachers, it was found that teachers disagreed with only one item which was "I think teachers' opinions were also taken into consideration during curriculum change". Besides, teachers agreed with four items. They agreed that the curriculum change was necessary, they cared about curriculum change, the changes in the curriculum were made due to the need and it was very easy for them to adopt the changes made in the curriculum. Teachers were neutral about most of the items. For instance, they were neutral about whether the changes in the curriculum would

have positive results for the students, the changes in the curriculum were prepared in accordance with the scientific principles and teachers would easily adapt to the curriculum changes. Teachers were also unsure about whether curriculum change had been prepared to guide the teacher adequately, the new curriculum was different from the previous one, the changes in the curriculum would improve the quality of education and the new curriculum compensated for the shortcomings of the previous curricula.

3.2. Does teachers' perception of 2018 Turkish national curriculum change differ significantly in terms of age, experience, level of school they work in, faculty graduated, having postgraduate degree and getting in-service training about 2018 educational curricula?

Descriptive statistics regarding teachers' age and one-way ANOVA results are shown in Table 3 and Table 4:

Table 3. Descriptive statistics regarding age

Age	N	\bar{X}	SD
21-29 years	74	67.40	15.30
30-39 years	103	66.39	14.39
40-49 years	91	68.07	14.33
50 and above	38	66.28	12.78

Table 4. Results to explore differences between teachers' perception and age

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p^*
Between Groups	169.235	3	56.412	.27	.85
Within Groups	62786.795	302	207.903		
Total	62956.029	305			

* $p>.05$

As can be seen from Table 4, age variable did not create a significant difference in teachers' perception regarding curriculum change ($F(3, 302)=.27, p>.05$). In line with this result, it may be stated that teachers' perception of curriculum change did not vary in terms of age. Descriptive statistics regarding teachers' experience and one-way ANOVA results are shown in Table 5 and 6:

Table 5. Descriptive statistics regarding experience

Experience	N	\bar{X}	SD
0-5 years	77	66.27	16.34
6-10 years	44	66.61	11.03
11-15 years	53	66.83	14.55
16-20 years	56	68.60	13.65
21 and above	76	67.40	14.58

Table 6. Results regarding differences between teachers' perception and experience

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p^*
Between Groups	201.141	4	50.285	.24	.91
Within Groups	62754.889	301	208.488		
Total	62956.029	305			

* $p>.05$

As it was found in Table 6, no significant differences were found between teachers' experience and their perception regarding curriculum change ($F(4, 301)=.24, p>.05$). Hence, it may be

reported that teachers' perception of curriculum change did not differ in terms of experience. Descriptive statistics regarding level of school and ANOVA results are shown in Table 7 and 8:

Table 7. Descriptive statistics regarding level of school

Level of School	N	\bar{X}	SD
Primary School	107	68.16	15.52
Middle School	82	67.69	10.91
High School	117	65.77	15.36

Table 8. Results regarding differences between teachers' perception and level of school

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p*
Between Groups	355.457	2	177.729	.86	.42
Within Groups	62600.572	303	206.603		
Total	62956.029	305			

* $p > .05$

Table 8 indicated that working in primary, middle or high school did not create a statistically significant difference in teachers' perception regarding curriculum change ($F(2, 303) = .86$, $p > .05$). Thus, it may be stated that teachers' perception of curriculum change did not differ in terms of level of school they work at. In Table 9, results regarding differences between teachers' perception and faculty graduated are indicated:

Table 9. Results regarding differences between teachers' perception and faculty graduated

Graduation	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	t	p*
Education Faculty	243	67.22	14.54	304	.22	.82
Pedagogical Formation	63	66.76	13.74			

* $p > .05$

Independent samples t-test results unearthed that there were no statistically significant differences teachers' perception of curriculum change and faculty graduated. In other words, teachers' perception regarding curriculum change did not change in terms of graduating from education faculty or being a teacher through pedagogical formation ($p > .05$). In Table 10, results regarding differences between teachers' perception and having postgraduate degree are presented:

Table 10. Results regarding differences between teachers' perception and having postgraduate degree

Postgraduate Degree	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	t	p*
Yes	81	63.90	14.62	304	2.37	.01*
No	225	68.28	14.12			

* $p < .05$

As it can be seen from Table 10, teachers' perception regarding curriculum change differed significantly in terms of having postgraduate degree ($p < .05$). Teachers having postgraduate degree had significantly much more negative perception than those who did not have postgraduate education. Thus, it may be stated that teachers' perception of curriculum change were influenced by having postgraduate degree or not. Table 11 presents results regarding differences between teachers' perception and getting in-service training:

Table 11. Results regarding differences between teachers' perception and getting in-service training

In-service training	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	t	p*
Yes	131	70.08	15.11	304	3.16	.00*
No	175	64.91	13.40			

*p<.05

Table 11 showed that statistically significant changes were found in teachers' perception in terms of getting in-service training (p<.05). Teachers having been provided with in-service training about 2018 curricula had significantly much more positive perception than teachers who did not get in-service training. Hence, it may be stated that teachers' perception of curriculum change differed with regards to getting in-service training.

3.3. What do teachers think about 2018 Turkish national curriculum change?

Teachers' perception of 2018 Turkish national curriculum change was categorized under five themes which were "General perception about 2018 curriculum change", "Implementation of 2018 Turkish national curriculum", "Perception of differences and similarities with the previous curriculum", "Introduction process of new curriculum to teachers" and "Suggestions for effective implementation of the 2018 curriculum".

General perception about 2018 Turkish national curriculum change

Teachers had mixed perception regarding 2018 curriculum change. It was revealed that two teachers were supportive of curriculum change due to the improvements in technology and society. One teacher illustrated this:

It is compulsory to make changes because world is changing...It is also necessary to keep pace with technological changes...There should be changes in education and the curricula along with technological changes...Competencies related to technology usage are stressed more in new curriculum. (Mathematics teacher)

It was also unearthed that three teachers were neutral about if 2018 curriculum change was really necessary. The following quotations are evidence of what has been said:

The 2005 constructivist curriculum change was really necessary because constructivist curriculum requires students to be active in learning process...Before that, students used to memorize history, now they are trying to construct their own learning...However, I am not sure if 2018 curriculum change was really necessary. Will it change things much? Maybe it will, maybe it will not. (History teacher)

The English curricula changed in 2012 after education system was reorganized as 4+4+4, which required English teaching to start from second grade. Thus, all English curricula had to be changed...Then, we applied another curriculum in 2017 and now we are implementing 2018 curriculum. I do not understand why curricula have been changed continuously. (English teacher)

In addition, it was unearthed that three teachers were not supportive of 2018 curriculum change.

The following quotation of a teacher who did not support the change reveals this:

Curricula change frequently in Turkey and it is not easy for us to adapt to new curriculum which changes almost each year...Actually, I do not think that the new curricula will produce positive consequences for students, either. (Classroom teacher-2)

Implementation of 2018 Turkish national curriculum

It was displayed that all teachers lacked sufficient knowledge and skills as regards to implementation of different dimensions of the curriculum. Three teachers experienced problems in applying student-centered methods, three teachers had problems in using alternative measurement-evaluation techniques. Moreover, four teachers reported having problems in time management since they had to cover all topics and loaded activities. The following quotations can be given as examples:

It is hard for me to implement student-centered methods in class...There are more than 25 small kids in class. It causes a lot of noise when I use active learning methods. Sometimes it is harder to prepare such activities for each topic, which takes more time. (Classroom teacher-3)

We are suggested to measure students' each language skill through alternative measurement techniques. However, it is not easy to prepare measurement tools for speaking skill. (English teacher)

We have to cover many topics and there are many activities to be done. However, time is not generally enough to finish everything in the curriculum. (Turkish teacher)

Perception of differences and similarities with the previous curriculum

It was found that teachers viewed 2018 curricula as a later version of 2005 constructivist curriculum. One teacher illustrated this:

2005 curriculum brought lots of changes, which were very good for our education system. After this, high school history curricula have been changed several times and in different years so far. They were similar to each other because they were like 2005 curriculum they were all constructivist. (History teacher)

In addition, it was unearthed that teachers did not see much difference between 2018 curricula and the previous curricula. The following quotations can be seen as an illustration of teachers' perception:

The general aims are very similar with the previous curriculum (2015 curriculum) but attainments related to learning areas are grouped under more different and fewer titles in the new curriculum...The curriculum is now more simple...The learning-teaching approach is based on constructivism again and the evaluation part suggests alternative techniques like the previous curricula...It is not too much different from the previous curricula. (Turkish teacher)

I actually do not see much difference between 2018 curriculum and the previous curriculum in most primary school curricula. For instance, in life knowledge lesson we have similar values to be addressed, we have family values, environmental sensitivity and moral values...They are very similar. (Classroom teacher-2)

Before this, we were implementing 2013 curriculum...I can say that they are very similar. The skills, general aims, methods and materials suggested to be used in English classes are same. Weekly hours have changed. Also, exam techniques suggested to measure language skills have been added in the new curricula. As you see, nothing much changed. (English teacher)

Introduction process of new curriculum to teachers

All teachers but one stated that the new curricula were not introduced to them through in-service training programs. One teacher explained this situation:

In May 2018, new curricula were announced and we started applying them soon after...However, we were not provided with any seminar or training about the new curriculum...The fundamentals of the new curriculum should have been introduced to us. (Computer technologies teacher)

The only teacher who attended training program spoke of the insufficiency of the training program by stating "...classroom atmosphere was not reflected well. We could not get enough answers to 'why' questions." (Classroom teacher-1)

Suggestions for effective implementation of the 2018 curriculum

Teachers suggested that they should be provided with seminars about 2018 curricula so that they could apply the curricula more effectively. The following quotations illustrate this view:

I did not get any training or attend a seminar about the new curriculum. Hence, getting effective and frequent training about new curriculum would be better for us. (Computer technologies teacher)

Testing techniques are suggested in the curriculum for each language skill. We can be trained about them through seminars. (English teacher)

Also, a teacher wanted equal opportunities for all schools in terms of materials and technological infrastructure. This teacher stated:

"We are asked to apply the same curricula in every school but each school is not similar in terms of facilities. We don't have internet access in classes...I need software and internet tools to make math easier...Also, in the curriculum technology competency is stressed...How can we enhance students' technology competency without technology?. (Mathematics teacher)

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The research findings indicated that teachers' perception about the curriculum change was at the level of "neutral". This finding is parallel with the findings of the study realized by Harris and Graham (2019), Rahimi and Alavi (2017) and Ünsal et al. (2019). This may be owing to the fact that teachers may not know the fundamentals of new curricula or the reasons for change, and accordingly may not have adopted the philosophies of the curricula. This result may also be associated with another result of the study which was teachers believed their opinions were not taken into consideration during curriculum change. As also Koşar-Altınyelken and Sözeri (2017) and Saracaloğlu et al. (2010) found, teachers' needs and voices were not considered sufficiently in the curriculum development process and teachers felt disappointed to see that their feedback were hardly reflected in curriculum change and their views had little impact on the process. Thus, it is suggested that teachers' opinions should be sought during curriculum development and curriculum change processes since problems may arise if teachers are disregarded.

Sulaiman, Ayub & Sulaiman (2015) point out that curriculum changes require teachers not only to change their knowledge, attitudes and instructional practices but also to incorporate higher order thinking skills in the content, learning-teaching and assessment-evaluation process. Considering that each new curriculum brings some changes and innovations, it may be suggested that teachers are involved in curriculum change processes and introduced with changes through practice-based training programs.

In addition, the current study found that teachers' perception differed significantly in terms of having postgraduate degree. Teachers with a postgraduate degree had much more negative perception of curriculum change than teachers who did not. Having postgraduate education may have resulted in teachers to question the curriculum change more. Unlike this study, statistically significant differences were not found in teachers' perception in terms of having postgraduate degree in the studies conducted by Keskin (2019) and Ünsal et al. (2019).

It was also revealed in the present study that teachers who got in-service training about 2018 curricula had significantly much more positive perception than teachers who did not. This finding is important in that it showed effective in-service training activities assisted teachers to comprehend the essentials of new curricula better and adopt it. The qualitative findings also displayed teachers' needs for in-service training.

Furthermore, in the present study, no significant changes were found in teachers' perception in terms of age and experience. Similarly, in Yıldırım-Yanmaz's (2009) study, significant differences between teachers' perceptions were not found in terms of experience. Contrary to the present study, Ünsal et al.'s (2019) study found significant differences in terms of experience. Teachers with 21 years and over experience had more negative perception of curriculum change than those with 0-5 years, 11-15 years and 16-20 years of experience. Besides, Rahimi and Alavi (2017) found in their study that experienced teachers had more negative perceptions than novice teachers regarding implementation of the curriculum and administrator support. In Tuncel and Kuzu's (2019) study, high school mathematics teachers having 16-20 years of experience were found indecisive about adopting measurement and evaluation dimension of the mathematics curriculum. The findings related to experience may have stemmed from the fact that experienced teachers in these contexts may not want to change their deeply rooted views and practices they have developed over the years so they may resist change and have negative perception. It is assumed that new curricula require the inclusion of educational technologies and up-to-date methods and materials so less experienced teachers may adopt new curricula more easily than more experienced teachers. However, in the current study experience did not have an impact on teachers' perception. It is considered that a change in the curriculum just after a year might have led less experienced teachers to be neutral about the new curricula, since they may not understand the philosophy and logic of the curriculum change well. As also stated by Susam and Demir (2020), teachers complain about frequent curriculum changes. This might also have caused all teachers regardless of experience to be neutral about the curriculum change. The difference of the result might also be due to research sample since this study was conducted in a different context than the above mentioned studies.

In this study, another variable that did not create a significant difference was level of school teachers work. This may be due to the fact that teachers at all school levels started experiencing 2018 curriculum change at the same education year, so their adaptation duration to the new curricula was similar. As also shown in Tuncer and Berkant's (2012) study, it takes time for teachers to adapt to new curricula, and teachers have more positive views towards new curricula when they spend more time with new curricula. Similarly, Ünsal et al.'s (2019) study did not find significant changes in teachers' perception in terms of level of school. Moreover, in this study no significant differences were found between teachers' perception in terms of faculty graduated. In a study conducted by Ayhan (2006), it was revealed that teachers with pedagogical formation certificate faced more problems in teaching profession than teachers who graduated from an education faculty. This situation might have led these teachers to try harder to compensate for their shortcomings, which may account for the similarity between both groups of teachers. Similar to the current study, in Yıldırım-Yanmaz's (2009) study, significant differences between teachers' perceptions were not found in terms of faculty graduated. Contrary to these studies, Keskin (2019) found significant difference in teachers' perception regarding updated secondary school mathematics curriculum on behalf of teachers having graduated from education faculty.

The qualitative data supported quantitative data findings. It was revealed that teachers had mixed perception regarding 2018 curriculum change and had insufficient implementation knowledge and skills about different dimensions of the curriculum. That teachers view curriculum change in different ways and have insufficient knowledge and skills for implementation may be due to the fact that teachers may not have been provided with in-service training about new curricula. As Ülker (2009) reports, in-service training contributes to teachers' professional and personal development as well as implementation of new curricula. Hence, it is considered necessary to provide teachers with in-service training about new curricula so that they may welcome curriculum change more easily and improve their competencies to keep up with the requirements of new curricula. The finding in the present study is supported through the findings of other studies. Sayın (2019) revealed that middle school mathematics teachers' knowledge about the revisions made and content of the program was insufficient. Also, Kahramanoğlu (2019) found that teachers' curriculum literacy was at medium level. It was also unearthed that teachers were not provided with training and seminars about the new curriculum, hence they needed training. Similarly, in Dikbayır (2018) and Karabacak's (2018) studies, it was found that teachers did not receive sufficient in-service training about new curricula. As noted by MoNE (2008), in-service training organized by taking the fundamentals of new curricula into consideration is needed continuously to enhance teacher competencies.

What was also interesting to find was teachers did not view great differences between 2018 curriculum and the previous curriculum since they viewed all curricula very similar after 2005 constructivist curriculum change. This can be due to their lack of knowledge about new curricula or as also pointed out by Yazar (2019), the changes in the curricula after 2005 curricula do not create a distinct difference in essence within the framework of the constructivist learning-teaching approach.

This study not only reflected how teachers perceived curriculum change but also displayed how teachers evaluated the new curricula in different aspects such as their knowledge and skills about them and their perception toward new curricula compared to the prior curricula. Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendation may be suggested:

- Detailed needs analysis should be conducted to find out what teachers need in order to carry out the curriculum successfully.
- Teachers' opinions should be sought for curriculum renewal.
- New curricula should be introduced to teachers through practice-based in-service training activities to build a sense of ownership and clarify and change their deeply rooted opinions so that change can be facilitated.

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