



Dramatis Personae of a Policy Initiative in Turkey: Actors on the Stage

Türkiye'de Eğitimde Politika Oluşturma Sürecine Katılan Aktörler

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ÖZET

Politika oluşturma süreci, dekor, senaryo ve aktörler gibi çeşitli öğelerin etkileşimi sonucu şekillendirilen bir sahnede ortaya konulan bir dram olarak tanımlanabilir. Bu dramda rol alan, politika oluşturma sürecine birebir katılmış, senaryoyu birebir şekillendirmiş bu baş aktörler, süreci anlamakta kilit öneme sahiptirler. Bu nedenle bu çalışma Türkiye'deki eğitim politikası oluşturma sürecinde yer alan aktörleri ve bu aktörlerin sürece etkilerini yine politika oluşturma sürecinde etkin rol almış kişilerin bakış açısından ve deneyimlerinden faydalanarak incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma nitel durum analizi şeklinde yapılandırılmıştır ve Öğretmenlik Kariyer Basamaklarında Yükselme Yönetmeliği (ÖKBYY) analiz edilmiştir. Araştırmada özellikle politika basamakları modeli içerisinde, gündem belirleme ve politika oluşturma süreçleri analiz edilmiştir. Durum analizi desenine ve araştırmacının amacına uygun olarak; "veri çeşitlemesi" sağlayabilmek için iki temel veri kaynağı kullanılmıştır: derinlemesine görüşme ve doküman analizi. Araştırma bulguları ÖKBYY'ini oluşturan aktörlerin tamamının kamu kurum ve kuruluşlarından gelen politik ve bürokratik elitler olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. ÖKBYY Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı içerisinde sadece bakanlık personelinin katılımı ile oluşturulmuştur, politika oluşturma süreçlerine öğretmen yetiştiren yükseköğretim kurumlarından, sendikalardan, diğer eğitim örgütlerinden veya sivil toplum kuruluşlarından herhangi bir şekilde katılım olmamasıdır. Demokratik ve katılımcı politika oluşturma süreçleri bakımından böyle bir politikada öğretmenlerin ve diğer eğitim örgütlerinin sürece dâhil edilmemesi önemli bir eksikli olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır.

***Anahtar Sözcükler:** Politika oluşturma, eğitim politikası, yükseköğretim.*

ABSTRACT

Policy formation process can be identified as a drama performed on a stage that is shaped and formed by the interactions of numerous determinants such as setting, scenery, scenario and actors. The principal actors in this drama who are involved in the policy making are crucial to understand the process. Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate those key actors and their relative influence on the formulation process of educational policies in Turkey through the perceptions of key actors in policy making process and other interest groups in education. A qualitative case study design was employed which analyzed the policy initiative "Career Ladders for Teachers" (CLT) [Öğretmenlik Kariyer Basamakları]. This study focused specifically on the agenda setting and policy formation phases of the policy cycle of CLT. Two main sources of data were utilized in the study: interviews with key actors in policy making process and documents and text produced throughout or after the process. Data analysis revealed that number and the variety of policy actors involved in the design process were limited. The whole process was controlled by only the governmental actors; MoNE units and Ministry of Finance and political and bureaucratic elites from these institutions. Furthermore almost none of the stakeholders, teachers, administrators, NGOs, were included.

***Keywords:** Policy-making, educational policy, higher education.*

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Educational policy is a complex, dynamic and multi-tiered concept that is formulated in a diverse sociopolitical system. Understanding the context and the dynamics of educational policy making is required to understand the dynamics of any educational system. As Fowler, (2009) puts forward, along with the increasing complexity of the society and both at the national and international level, education policy arena has already been evolving from being predictable to being unpredictable. Within such political and social context, policy formation process can be identified as a drama performed on a stage that is shaped and formed by the interactions of numerous determinants such as setting, scenery, scenario and actors. The principal actors in this drama who are involved in the policy making are crucial to understand the process. Marshall, Mitchell and Wirt (1985) state that “to understand policy making, the relevant groups and the arrangement of relative influence among those groups must be described” (p. 61). Fowler (2009) defines policy actors as “those who are actively involved in policy process” and “they make up the ‘dramatis personae’ or cast of characters, who play major and minor roles in the ongoing drama of policy development” (p. 140). Actors, however, are not very easy to identify, especially in some cases, as there are few rules on how to act and any number of and any type of actor can join the performance at any time with minor or major roles (Fowler, 2009; Peters, 1999). Especially in the pluralist societies where there exists a wide variety and large numbers of interest groups and mechanisms enabling them to join the process, numbers and types of policy actors involved in the policy formation can be very high. Each policy actor enters the policy stage with packages filled with their personal/institutional culture, ideology, goals and interests and tries to exercise some influence on the policy process.

Within this complexity, due the extensive numbers of policy actors, different categorizations and classifications have been utilized to provide a framework to look at the policy actors. Basic categorization is based on two main groups named differently by different authors: Governmental and nongovernmental (Anderson, 2006; Fowler, 2009) or institutional and noninstitutional actors (Cahn, 1995; Simon, 2007). Distinction is based on the legitimacy and the definition of policy actors by law and constitution. Government actors are formed by legislative, executive and juridical branches (Anderson, 2006; Fowler, 2009). Governmental/formal policy makers are those who occupy positions in the governmental arena which authoritatively assign priorities and commit resources. These may include elected and appointed officials, legislatures, high-level administrators. Harman (1984) lists the governmental actors in a centralized nation state under five groups. This first one, the senior levels of the government, is the Head of the State, Parliament, Prime Minister and the political party or parties in the government. The second group comprises the Minister of Education and senior officials in the Ministry of Education and other Ministries. The third group of policy actors includes other governmental agencies which may be responsible for central examinations or curriculum development. The fourth group comprises agencies out educational domain, yet have role in educational policy making or implementing. Premiers’ departments or public service boards can be examples. The fifth group of actors is intergovernmental agencies such as National Education Councils.

Public policy making is not the game played only by the governmental policy actors. Despite the fact that nongovernmental actors are not given legal authority to make policies and their mode of participation is not determined by law, they may have serious impact on the policy process (Anderson, 2006; Birkland, 2005). They influence the policy process by interfering with the composition of legislative and executive bodies and policy makers during the process by bargaining, providing information, negotiating, collaborating or opposing (Cahn, 1995). Thus, they also create their own rules and play the game to pursue their own interests. Interest groups are defined as “an association of individuals or organizations ... that, on the basis of one or more shared concerns, attempts to public policy in favor” (Thomas and Hrebendar, 2004, p. 102, in Fowler, 2009, p. 154). These people or groups may include interest groups, unions, business and other constituency groups (Anderson, 2006; Birkland, 2005; Cahn, 1995; Fowler, 2009; Simon, 2007). Each group of policy actor has varying degrees of impact and influence on the policy formation process.

In the case of Turkey, due to its highly centralized structure, policy making power is vested in the hands of governmental/institutional actors. Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) is the main legislative power while the exercise of the executive power is vested in and is used by the President and the Council of Ministers (Toksöz, 2004; UNPAN, 2004). The Council of Ministers (Cabinet) which is politically accountable to the legislature is composed of the Prime Minister and the ministers. In terms of education, Ministry of National Education (MoNE) is the executive agency which is commissioned with the duty of reaching the goals set for Turkish National Education on behalf of the state according to the Unification of Education Law no 430 issued on 06.03.1924 just after the foundation of the Republic (OECD, 2005). Minister of Education has a great influence on the policy process even though the formal authority to administer education policies is delegated to senior officials (Harman, 1984).

Thus, the MoNE is the central decision authority on almost every issue related to education from resource allocation to school renovation and in-service training, from curriculum to course books (World Bank, 2005). OECD’s “Education at a Glance Report” (2012) indicates that 63% of the educational decisions are made at the state level in Turkey. Administrative structure follows a top-down process in which the policies are developed at the center and communicated down to the provincial and local organizations, and to individual schools or teachers, at the lowest level, through a hierarchical communication process. The central organization of the Ministry comprises the Ministerial Office, the Board of Education and Discipline, main service units, advisory and supervisory units, auxiliary units and the Project Coordination Centre established at the approval of the Minister (OECD, 2005). The provincial organization comprises of directorate of national education established in 81 provinces and 892 districts appointed by the center.

Apropos of non-governmental organizations, unions are the most significant interest group in Turkish educational policy making arena. According to 2011 statistics of Ministry of Labor and Social Security, 23 unions are registered in the education sector with 524.484 members in total. This number indicates that only half of the education sector workers in

public education institutions are organized and connected to a union; unfortunately massive organization of teachers has not been achieved yet (Sarpkaya, 2006). According to number of members, the largest three unions are Eğitim-Bir-Sen [Union of Educators Association] with 195.695 members; Türk Eğitim-Sen [Turkish Education Union] with 179.300 members; and Eğitim-Sen [Education Union] with 115.695 members. Sarpkaya (2006) puts forward that each of these large unions represents a different political ideology and political attitude (Eğitim-Bir-Sen-conservative right; Türk Eğitim-Sen- nationalist right; Eğitim-Sen-democratic left) and he argues that different factions based on political ideology is one of the reasons preventing teachers from participating in unions. The impact of unions on educational policy making in Turkey has not been unveiled as only one study has been found through the search of national and international data bases including dissertations.

Top (1999) examined the patterns of union participation in the decisions made by MoNE. She conducted a survey on the views and expectations of ministerial administrators and the teacher union executives on the participation in decision making in education. Results indicated that teachers' unions did not participate in the decisions made at MoNE, furthermore a significant difference was measured between the ministry administrators and union executives' views on the general aims, and basic principles of national education, educational policies, bills, five year development plans, salaries, working conditions, equality of opportunity in education, democratization of structure and processes of educational system. Results also yielded that, ministry administrators prefer teachers' unions to participate in decisions by providing suggestions and supplying information; whereas the teachers' union executives expressed desire to participate in decisions by voting, by suggesting choice, and by contributing to the all levels of decision making. This study is significant to show the limited power of unions in the policy making process at MoNE.

Furthermore, concerning Turkish education policy research, through the literature review conducted up to the point, it has been experienced that there is an absence of academic research in the field. There is no systematic study on public policy making in Turkey and education as a public policy area is no exception. Robins (2009) underlines that lack of empirical and theoretical research leaves "the important policy areas poorly understood" (p. 289). As an example, it has been observed that all of the studies conducted as graduate work (Master's or PhD research) listed in Higher Education Council's database in Turkey deal with either implementation or evaluation of certain educational policies. So, this study may be a contribution to the educational policy literature in Turkey providing a critical look at the educational policy formation practices in the country from the perspectives of key policy actors. It will add to the existing body of literature surrounding the politics of school reforms as well as to help refine and advance theory on state education policymaking. Moreover, it will also provide valuable information about the current situation and dynamics of educational policy arena in Turkey, as analysis of policy making process may help explain why education legislation enacted at the state center fails or succeeds at the school level (Madsen, 1994).

Within this framework, the purpose of this study is to investigate the key actors and their relative influence on the formulation process of educational policies in Turkey through the perceptions of key actors in policy making process and other interest groups in education. Main research questions are: Who are the key actors or decision makers in the development of policy initiative CLT, (2) How do the key actors or decision makers influence the policy formulation in Turkey?

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative case study design to analyze the national policy initiative “Career Ladders for Teachers” (CLT) [Öğretmenlik Kariyer Basamakları]. CLT, which was enacted by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE), was analyzed through the eyes of the key policy makers, focusing specifically on the agenda setting and policy formation phases of the policy cycle. CLT was developed between the years 2002-2005 with the aim to regulate the professional development of teachers and to provide a career path. It covers the promotion criteria and promotion ladders only for the teachers, not for the other school personnel or administrators. The test constructed in line with this regulation was conducted for the first and last time in November 2005. Just after the test, in 2006 winter the regulation was invalidated by the Constitutional Court as the result of the lawsuit filed by the opposition party MPs. Yet, with this first test, more than 90.000 teachers received the title “professional teacher” and more than 2.000 teachers received the title “master teacher.” During the following years, no other tests or initiations have made related to CLT until the beginning of 2012. With the public mandate dated 25.03.2012 issued by MoNE General Directorate of Teacher Education and Training, MoNE released its intent to redesign the CLT. However, no further information is held related to latest situation of CLT. Further information on the policy CLT can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1.

General Features of CLT Policy

Name of the Policy	Career Ladders for Teachers [Öğretmenlik Kariyer Basamakları]
Policy type	Regulation
Issued in	2005
Issued by	Ministry of National Education
Goal(s)	--to increase the social and economic status of teachers --to regulate the professional development of teachers and to provide a career path
Teacher Career Stages	1) Teacher 2) Professional teacher 3) Master teacher [Başöğretmen]
Measures used for licensure and promotion	--A national exam for master and professional teacher stages. --Or having an M.A. degree in educational sciences for Professional Teacher level and a PhD level for Master Teacher level.
Licensure period	Teacher: Tenure Professional teacher: Tenure Master teacher: Tenure

Two main sources of data were utilized in the study: interviews with key actors in policy making process and documents and text produced throughout or after the process. In-depth interviews were conducted with policy actors who actively took part in the formulation process of the CLT in Turkey in order to understand “the lived experience of these people and the meaning they make of that experience” (Seidman, 2006, p. 9). Interviewees who fit the criteria determined based on the purpose of the study criterion sampling were selected through *snowball/chain sampling* method (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002) as the information-rich key informants who had detailed knowledge about the policy making process of CLT.

Four criteria were employed in determining the participants. The first criterion was the involvement in the policy making process of CLT. Informants who were central to the process were sought. Second criterion was diversity of participants. Participants from different institutions who could portray the different sides of the policy making process were tried to be reached in line with the proposition of Allison (1971) that interviews with actors occupying various positions across the policymaking system provide depth and perspective to a case study. The third and fourth criteria were accessibility and willingness to participate; contacted informants agreed to take part in the study, though some were difficult to reach and some were reluctant about the interviews. Through snowball/chain method and following the criteria described above, seven key policy makers were reached and face-to-face interviews were conducted with them between November 2009 and March 2010. Except the union executive, all of the interviews took place in Ankara, in the offices of the informants and lasted one hour on average. The interviewees and their positions during the development of CLT were presented in Table 2.

Table 2.

Interview Participants of CLT and Their Positions

Organization	Position During the Development of CLT
MoNE	--Assistant General Director of Teacher Education and Training Directorate (GDTTE) --General Director of Personnel Directorate --Bureau director in GDTTE, Chair of Committee which developed the policy
Board of National Education	--Head of the Board of National Education --Director of Legislation Bureau --Bureau Director
Union	--Executive of a well-known union

Second source of information for the study came from the documents and archival work. Documents related to CLT were taken from the archives of agency that issued the policy that is MoNE and more specifically General Directorate of Teacher Training and Education (GDTTE). An official written permission was obtained to be able to take the copies of the documents. The researcher went through all of the files and then with the criterion

based sampling method, she selected the information rich documents among the internal and external communications. Official documents received from GDTTE are comprised mainly of written correspondences among the units of MoNE including the reviews and suggestions of those units as well as calls for meetings and commissioning orders. In addition to these, reports of the committee that developed the CLT including the modifications done along with the drafts were copied. Unfortunately, there was no single minute from the meetings held in MoNE. Other documents utilized were legislative records received from Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA), and reports and yearbooks of MoNE reached through their website, party program of Justice and Development Party (JDP), census records taken from Higher Election Council (HEC). A detailed list of the documents that served as data source to CLT is presented in Table 3.

Table 3.

Documents Used as Data Source for CLT

CLT- Turkey
--Records of TGNA Education Committee Meeting
--Law No:5204
--Urgent Action Plan
--Regulation of CLT
--Drafts of CLT
--Correspondences within MoNE units
--Correspondences between MoNE and other governmental units
--Report on work on the Regulation of CLT
--MoNE report Organization of Turkish Education System
--UN: Public Administration Country Profile- Turkey
--OECD. (2005). Basic Education in Turkey: Background Report.
--World Bank Education Sector Report
--UNESCO report “Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers”
--Newsletters from Unions
--National Education Council Reports 11, 12, 15

As a method of data analysis, inductive content analysis was applied to analyze the transcriptions of interviews and policy documents. Interview data were analyzed with NVivo.8, while documents were analyzed with pen and paper. Then results were aggregated and the list of codes, categories and general themes generated from the case was reached.

RESULTS

This section introduces the dramatis personae of CLT through the eyes of the informants and the guidance of the documents by answering the questions as such, who was involved in the process and how, what roles and influences they had on the policy, what was their agenda related to CLT and how was the pattern of interactions among policy actors. All of the actors emerged from the data and their roles are presented as follows.

Types and Roles of Policy Actors

Data analysis yielded a limited number of policy actors mainly from governmental entities, and two non-governmental actors. Figure 1 shows the key policy actors and the interactions between them.

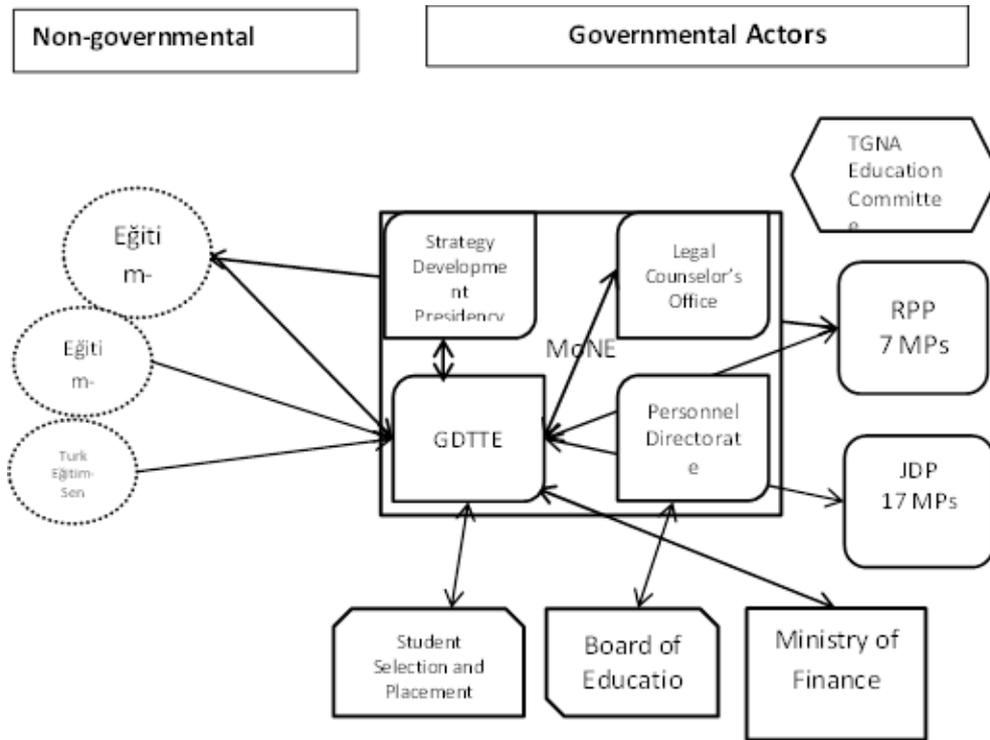


Figure 1. Policy actors in the formation process of CLT in Turkey

Note: Abbreviations TGNA: Turkish Grand National Assembly
 MoNE: Ministry of National Education
 GDTTE: General Directorate of Teacher Training and Education
 JDP: Justice and Development Party
 RPP: Republican People's Party

Governmental Policy Actors

Due to the fact that all of the governmental policy actors that emerged from data, except National Education, Culture, Youth and Sport Committee of Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) are from executive branch, a distinctive categorization of legislative and executive branches is not utilized. Ministry of Education (MoNE) and divisions in MoNE, Board of Education, Ministry of Finance, State Personnel Presidency, Student Selection and Placement Center (SSPC), and National Education, Culture, Youth and Sport Committee emerged as the policy actors that participated in policy development process of CLT. This part attempts to describe the involvement and role of these governmental actors.

Ministry of National Education

Data from interviews and documents revealed that CLT was developed by the units at the central organization, specifically by the main service units, and subsidiary units. This

policy issue was on the agenda of the government in the framework of Urgent Action Plan (UAP) [Acil Eylem Planı] along with many other policy changes and the stakeholders of each policy issue were determined in the UAP. For this policy issue MoNE was commissioned with the task to develop, and institutions to collaborate with were identified as Higher Education Council; Ministry of Finance; and State Planning Agency. MoNE's Strategy Development Presidency worked further on the responsible unit and units/institutions to work with. With the Implementation Program of UAP prepared by Strategy Development Presidency, responsibility to develop the policy was commissioned to General Directorate of Teacher Training and Education (GDTTE) and other actors to cooperate were listed as Board of Education, Strategy Development Presidency, Legal Counselor's Office General Directorate of Higher Education, General Directorate of Personnel, State Planning Agency, Higher Education Council and Ministry of Finance. This responsibility was reported to General Directorate of Teacher Training and Education (GDTTE) with an official letter sent by Strategy Development Presidency on February 04, 2003, one month after the release of UAP in January.

Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the responsible unit to develop the policy and all the other units and institutions to involve in the process were designated by the MoNE through the Strategy Development Presidency within a chain of order.

General Directorate of Teacher Training and Education

Data analysis identified General Directorate of Teacher Training and Education (GDTTE) as the main actor. Being officially responsible for teacher training and professional development, all of the informants stated that GDTTE was the leading unit and also the coordinator of the process. The General Director of GDTTE, who was a Member of Parliament at the time of data collection, was identified as one of the actors by three bureaucrats. Assistant General Director of teacher education and training directorate expressed the support of general director as:

We got a big deal of contribution from our director. He has a successful background as an educator. Moreover, he served as manager in the Ministry of Culture for a long time period. He accelerated the process after it reached GDTTE and helped to form the committee to work on CLT.

After being commissioned with the task to develop the policy issue defined in the UAP, the General Director of GDTTE formed a committee from the units mentioned in the implementation program of UAP sent by Strategy Development Presidency and presented it for approval on December 05, 2003 with an official letter. The committee formed by the general director was approved by Deputy Undersecretary and Undersecretary. The quote of Assistant General Director of GDTTE illustrates the bureaucratic approval process:

Committees can only be formed with the approval of Undersecretary's office. General directorates or other units have to take the approval of higher levels in the bureaucracy to assign personnel to a task or to set up a committee, only with that approval personnel or committee can work.

In terms of CLT, same procedure was followed in the formation of the committee. A member of the committee underlined that everyone was appointed by top-down decision making. All of the members, including me, were appointed. They said, 'here are the members of the committee.' The method they used was not a democratic process letting stakeholders like teachers or administrators choose their representatives. If you respect those people you tell them 'Decide yourself for the representative'. But it was not like this in this case. If you adopt one sided decision making process holding the authority to make decisions, then you appoint people like this, this person from this unit, that person from that unit.

As identified in the letter that was sent to Undersecretary, appointed committee members were Bureau director in General Directorate of Teacher Training and Education (chair); Expert in Board of National Education; Bureau director in Strategy Development Presidency; Legal counselor in Legal Counselors' Office; Bureau director in General Directorate of Higher Education; Department chief in General Directorate of Personnel; Department chief in General Directorate of Teacher Training and Education.

Informants reported that these people were chosen based on their position in the bureaucracy not because of their individual characteristics, except the chair of the committee. Assistant General Director of teacher education and training directorate stated that of course they were appointed due to their positions. So, if the General Director of Primary Education Directorate was chosen, he was chosen due to his position, not because of his name, it is because he is the general director of primary education directorate. Hence, committee members' knowledge, expertise or other professional competencies related to the issue were not taken into account on the point of assigning them to the committee.

This committee was defined as the core group that developed the first draft for the law and the regulation as well. It was mentioned that some members were replaced throughout the process and some members joined later on. The chair of the committee appeared one of the key actors through the interviews as well as the documents. He was described to be committed and knowledgeable on the policy issue as he worked on the reform of teaching profession during the late 1990s as well, and supporting an open process for the policy formation. One of the informants who was also a member in the committee defined the committee as trying to do best for the students and being "politically neutral":

In the committee, we developed an understanding that was in equal distance to every political ideology, that was trying to meet the requirements based in the data we had. I mean, we were really over the thoughts like this item will benefit this group, or if this happens like this, this group will say this, etc. Our only concern was how to increase the student quality and fulfill their right to get the best education and what we aim with this policy for the teachers. We really tried to achieve this by staying neutral as much as possible.

Committee meetings took place in the building of GDTTE, and according to informants, they met almost every week for more than one year. GDTTE as the responsible unit coordinated the meetings and provided logistic support. Data from interviews and documents suggested that this core group, the chair of the committee and members representing the MoNE units, worked on the policy for almost 2 years and gave the basic shape of the policy; in this sense, they had the biggest impact on the policy outcome. Moreover, they formed the draft for the law as well as the regulation. Draft to Law was sent to TGNA National Education, Culture, Youth and Sport Committee in May 2004.

National Education, Culture, Youth and Sport Committee

Records from the committee meetings indicated that Committee was comprised of 24 members and the majority of the committee was JDP, while RPP had seven members of parliament (MPs). Committee met two times in June 2004 to discuss the proposed law amendments. Minister of Education, Huseyin Celik, and Undersecretary and General Director of GDTTE and other representatives from MoNE, Finance Ministry and State Personnel Presidency participated in the first meeting to discuss the draft. Some of the committee members of MoNE joined in the second meeting also.

What is important to note in this committee is the opposition of MPs from RPP. According the records of the meetings, seven MPs voted against the law and released a letter explaining their justifications for oppositions. In this letter, they argued that government rushed this proposal to the committee deciding on their own without the policy being discussed in public with the unions and other stakeholders. The proposal was not comprehensive and degraded the professional development into an exam. They also asserted that it would create inequalities and discrimination within the schools and among the teachers due to the fact that teachers' work load would stay the same even if they got the title of master teacher, thus career ladders in other occupations could not be set as an example for teaching.

Despite the RPP's against vote, committee voted for it and it was accepted. Then it went for the normal legislative process through approval of Cabinet and Assembly and then the President respectively and published in the official newspaper on July 08, 2004. As JDP had the majority there, it passed quickly. These two meetings of the TGNA committee and the session it was voted in the assembly were the only times legislators were discussing and reviewing the policy officially. The limits of the regulation were drawn with this law, thus regulation was shaped according to the law.

General Directorates and Units in MoNE

Just after the law, committee in GDTTE accelerated its work and prepared the first draft of the regulation in July 2004. Analysis of intra-organization correspondences of MoNE indicated that this proposal was delivered to 22 units within MoNE via officially written letters. These units are:

- Board of Education
- Board of Inspectors
- Strategy Development Presidency
- Board of Research, Planning and Co-ordination;
- Legal Counselors' Office;
- General Directorate of Personnel;
- Department of In-service training;
- 15 General Directorates

There did not exist any evidence showing meeting with any of these units. However, data showed that many of these units provided written feedback on the draft of the regulation and GDTTE Committee on the policy altered the draft in line with the modifications suggested. They prepared a table showing the suggestions from each unit and action taken on each suggestion. Among these units, few of them came up as key actors through interviews; Board of National Education, General Directorate of Personnel; Strategy Development Presidency; and Legal Counselors' Office. Next part discusses how each of these units participated in the development process of CLT.

Board of National Education

Organizational structure of MoNE shows the Board of National Education being directly affiliated to the Minister as a scientific consultation and decision-making body. It develops visions, undertakes research, develops the education system, educational plans and programs and educational materials. It prepares and submits the decisions of implementation for the approval of the Minister (OECD, 2005). In addition to these tasks, every law, regulation or statute prepared by the units of MoNE has to be reviewed and approved. They can make changes if it is necessary. After the revision of the Board of National Education, they can proceed to the legislative procedure.

Data revealed that in the formation of CLT, it was involved due to this legal responsibility defined in the law. Bureau director in Board of National Education clarified that “it is the decision-making organ of our Ministry. CLT draft reached the Board as a requirement of Law No 3797. All of the drafts prepared by units of MoNE come to us as the last place to get the approval.”

Informants from the Board of National Education stated that policy draft stayed within the board almost a week. Thus, they identified that Board of National Education was not a major actor. Former Head of the Board of National Education's described their role as “being outsider.” He underlined many times that they were not really involved in any other phase of the policy and his quote is significant in picturing their perspective in relation to their role; “We did not see this policy something to increase the efficiency of the system. We saw it as a task to complete which was required in Urgent Action Plan (UAP).” Moreover, he said that policy draft was not sent to board for further review, it only came for final approval. On the contrary to this, it was highlighted in the Report on work on the Regulation of Teachers' Career Ladder that though three different drafts of the policy were sent Board of National

Education, they did not respond until the date the report was prepared in March 2005. They were involved after this time for the final review, and there they were involved.

Although the Board of National Education was described as the decision making body that provides scientific consultation to the MoNE, in this process it did not emerge as one of the key policy actors. No representative was included in the core committee and the Board evaluated the policy in one meeting and then they were not involved in any other way.

General Directorate of Personnel

All of the informants identified General Directorate of Personnel as one of the main actors. It was also represented in the core committee with a department chief, but main role did not originate from there.

Data revealed that GDTTE was the responsible unit from October 2003 until March 2005. They coordinated the process, the committee and developed four drafts of the policy. However, around March, towards the end of the process, after a meeting, the responsibility of CLT was assigned to General Directorate of Personnel with the directive of the Minister. The reason for this sudden change was explained by the former director of personnel directorate: We were outside the process before, except the representative in the committee but it was more like formality. In one of the more comprehensive meetings, it was seen that existing draft was not sufficient. It was then understood that as General Directorate of Personnel would implement it, they should develop and enact the policy. Then the honorable Minister decided to assign it to us. It was totally his decision, he told us ‘you develop this regulation’ and we carried out his instruction and enacted the regulation.

But why suddenly the Minister ordered a reassignment remained unanswered as there was not any other reason brought forward through documents or interviews. It is only the claims of the former director of personnel directorate. He underlined that the draft of the regulation prepared by GDTTE was impossible to implement. He asserted:

During the meeting I told that this version of regulation was not able to be implemented, there would be many problems. As the general director of human resources I stated that it was impossible to implement. Because the responsible unit, GDTTE, was an instruction unit, which means they were not familiar with human resources and personnel management. Furthermore, we also indicated that the exam was not possible to conduct in the version they shaped.

On the other hand, assistant general director of teacher education and training directorate indicated that they also did not understand the reason and reacted on this decision. He explained the process as:

We don’t know where it originated but higher level bureaucrats told us that it should be reassigned to personnel directorate. It was first told orally. But we reacted and questioned this decision as ‘it was assigned to our directorate, why it is being given to personnel now?’ Following this, with an official letter our files and everything about the regulation was

ordered to send to Strategy Development Presidency. Regulation stayed untouched in the Strategy Development Presidency for 10-15 days. Later on, it was sent to personnel directorate -actually personnel directorate volunteered to do it at the beginning, but it was given to us. Personnel directorate did not make many changes on the last version we developed and then it was enacted.

Furthermore, among all of the documents there exists only one letter sent by General Directorate of Personnel to other units of MoNE after the enactment of the regulation for the purpose of forming an exam committee to be able to conduct the exam. So it confirms that CLT was reassigned the General Directorate of Personnel and enacted by them.

In relation to this, the former Head of the Board of National Education criticized that general directorate of personnel enacted this regulation. He stated that: Actually this regulation is indirectly related to personnel. Of course the results of the regulation are in their area but the process should be in the hands of either GDTTE, or directly undersecretary or Board of National Education, as it directly refers to their area of responsibility.

Main key actors within the process believed that it was developed by the wrong unit. Based on the picture drawn above, it is obvious that there was a conflict on the locus of control of the policy process for CLT.

What happened after its reassignment to General Directorate of Personnel? The former director of personnel stated that their legislation bureau worked on it, from March till June. In June it was approved by the Board of National Education and it was promulgated in the official newspaper on August 13, 2005. So, in three months, they did the fine tuning on the regulation on which had been worked for the last 2 years.

Other Ministries and Institutions

While the policy was under the responsibility of GDTTE, upon the revisions from the internal units of MoNE, the new draft was delivered to other ministries and institutions for opinion; Ministry of Finance, Ministry of State, Ministry of National Defense, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, State Personnel Presidency, and Student Selection and Placement Center (SSPC). Among these, Ministry of Finance and SSPC emerged as key actors.

Research data showed that Ministry of Finance joined in the process on the points related to number of new positions for teachers from different career steps and the increase in the salaries of these positions. Informants stated that there happened a tough bargaining between the MoNE and Ministry of Finance, yet MoNE could not receive the planned increase. Following quote from assistant general director of teacher education and training directorate illustrates their disappointment after bargaining with Ministry of Finance:

Back then, we really wanted and tried to provide a higher financial increase and support to teachers. But, according to budget limitations of the Ministry of Finance, only a

very certain amount could be given to professional teachers and master teachers. It is between 80-150 Turkish liras.

In addition to these, written correspondences indicate that ministry of Finance also reviewed the process and sent written feedback. These reviews were considered in the modification of the draft. Yet, the participation of Ministry of Finance was limited to financial issues.

Another governmental actor that emerged from data was Student Selection and Placement Center (SSPC). Their involvement with the CLT was rooted in the national exam that was planned for the recruitment of professional and master teachers. Informants' comments and documents indicated that SSPC was involved in the process almost at the end. The last draft developed by GDTTE was sent to SSPC in January 2005. Upon this, four meetings were conducted with SSPC representatives and the structure of the exam was discussed.

It came up through interviews that the GDDTE and the core committee were against a single exam just measuring the basic knowledge and pedagogical competencies of teachers from very different areas, instead of separate tests measuring the competencies in subject matter areas. However, the SSPC rejected this proposal as it was not feasible to objectively test the subject areas such as arts, physical education, and technical and vocational areas. Moreover, informants from GDTTE also underlined that it was not possible due to high number of different subject matter areas. Assistant General Director of teacher education and training directorate stated that they had a meeting that lasted till 3 am in the morning due to this conflict, yet SSPC did not accept their proposal. With the intervention of the SSPC, single exam including areas as Turkish, legislation, pedagogy and history and citizenship was designed as the measurement of promotion to one of the career steps.

To sum up, governmental policy actors comprises the majority of the actors participated in the policy process of CLT. Both the General Directorate of Teacher Education and Training and the General Directorate of Personnel appeared as the key actors due to a change in the locus of control for the policy. A core committee that was formed with the representatives from related units of MoNE developed the policy drafts and coordinated the reviews from other units and ministries under the authority of GDTTE until CLT was reassigned to the General Directorate of Personnel. The participation of other MoNE units and ministries were limited with written reviews of the CLT except The Board of National Education, Ministry of Finance, and Student Selection and Placement Center. These actors, however, were involved for a short period of time only for the related issues, but did not exist in every step of the process.

Non-Governmental Policy Actors

On the contrary to large number of governmental policy actors, only two main groups of non-governmental actors emerged from data, higher education institutions and unions. Indeed, they were described as excluded stakeholders rather than key policy actors.

Unions

Unions appeared in the data analysis as excluded stakeholders and opponents. Out of more than 20 unions in education sector, only five of them came up during the document analysis, while only three of them were mentioned during the interviews. In terms of document analysis, among all the correspondences with governmental units and institutions, no single correspondence with unions was identified. They were mentioned in a report about the development process of CLT. It was stated in the report that in October 2004 three meetings were held with five unions, Türk Eğitim-Sen, Eğitim-Sen, Eğitim Bir Sen, Tem-Sen and Independent Education Union. It was noted that unions first expressed their oppositions to law in general and then specified their opinions on certain items. It was indicated in the report that unions' opinions were expressed verbally, not written. And only three requested modifications were listed in the report which were all on the technical details such as teachers' being granted leave of absence during the exam day. This is interesting as union representative identified many larger issues as of concern to them. These issues are discussed below.

In addition to these five unions reported, the largest three unions Eğitim-Bir-Sen (Union of Educators Association) Türk Eğitim-Sen (Turkish Education Union), and Eğitim-Sen emerged from the interviews with key policy actors. The political ideology of the unions juxtaposed with Sarpkaya's (2006) classification; Eğitim-Bir-Sen was defined as conservative right; Türk Eğitim-Sen was defined as Nationalist right, and Eğitim-Sen was identified to be left by the informants.

Eğitim-Bir-Sen, the largest union of the education sector was identified to be the henchman of the government. Two informants stated that it was the only union that supported the policy and the exam and even they started up special courses for its members to prepare for the exam.

Türk Eğitim Sen, the second largest and the nationalist right union, was reported by one interviewee to have stayed as abstainer especially in the beginning, neither opposed nor supported, but at the end of the process they supported the policy. This support was also indicated by the documents on their website.

The last union, Eğitim-Sen was identified to be the opposition throughout the whole process by the informants both bureaucrats and non-bureaucrats. Eğitim-Sen also came up as the most active union in terms of opposition. Interviews revealed that they tried lobbying against CLT and collaborated with opposition party especially during the legislation of the Law 5204. They utilized media; appeared on TV or talked to the newspapers, to deliver the facts about the policy and their arguments against it. Furthermore, they held street protests, of which one held in front of the MoNE building. They also tried to get organized in schools to inform the members about the policy. Union executive explained this process as:

Eğitim-Sen organized various and serious actions at that time. First it tried to inform members about the damage it would give to education, about the destructive effect for the

teachers' relationships. In addition in terms of street level reactions, it organized very serious protests.

Regarding Eđitim-Sen's arguments against the policy, four main themes emerged from data. First of all, it was reported by four informants that hierarchical order brought by the career ladders was the biggest concern. Eđitim-Sen defined this categorization as giving ranks to teachers and referred to it as "epaulette system" utilizing the analogy from military. Second argument was that the policy was against equality principle. They emphasized that teachers would still have the same job and same amount of work, but just because of the exam scores, some of them would get higher salaries. They argued that there had to be equal payment for equal work, and economic conditions of all teachers had to be improved.

The third concern expressed by Eđitim-Sen was related to teachers' professional relations. They asserted that categorization and ranking would destruct the relationship among the teachers. There could emerge factions among teachers or higher ranking teacher could look down on the lower ranking teacher. Moreover, they were concerned about the parents' approach as they might have forced schools to place their kids into the class of a higher ranking teacher.

The last argument was the on scope of the policy. They underlined that CLT was facile, and designed only for ad hoc solutions. It did not bring about any improvement to teachers neither in the professional nor financial aspects. The Union president stated that while there existed many other problems in the education system such as geographical and gender inequalities, limited physical structures and financial issues, that policy was just to show off, and did not bring any positive contribution to education; in short they argued that it was proposed just for political gain.

From the other side, the perspective of bureaucrats, they perceived the attitude of Eđitim-Sen as "ignorant" and "destructive." One of the core committee members identified that unions were not seriously aware about what MoNE wanted to do. The former general director of personnel directorate's comments illustrates the view toward Eđitim-Sen:

I really could not understand up to now whether this union is for the teachers or against the teachers.... They were far from being constructive but more destructive. Unfortunately, they wanted to bring down a working system. Maybe they looked at this politically and ideologically but in the end, they just damaged the teaching profession.

Another interesting finding related to bureaucrats' perspective related to unions that none of them gave a specific union name. They used phrases as "one union," "one of the unions" or "that union." I had to ask several times which union they meant and I could get a name from only one informant.

The last example related to how bureaucrats perceived unions came from the committee member. He explained that aforementioned meetings with the unions were not welcomed in the GDTTE and he expressed the reactions he got from his superordinates:

In 2003, when we organized the meetings with unions, at the day of the meeting, my superordinates called me and asked what they were doing there. He said ‘let them go and do not work with them’. But I said, they are the representatives of unions, they represent teachers, instead of getting their opposition later on, let’s hear them now so that we can have less obstacles in the future’. I insisted so much but he talked to me three times about not to work with them. However, later on the same superordinate could say ‘we worked with unions three days and received their opinions’ holding on the slogan that stakeholders should be part of the decision making process.

In the same vein, assistant general director of teacher training and education directorate emphasized three times that they worked with the unions as social stakeholders and they found a middle way. Moreover, three informants from MoNE had the perception that there was no opposition from unions as they understood and agreed on the policy. However, research data did not yield any evidence related to collaboration or working together to reach consensus on CLT.

Results related to unions suggested that they were not actively participating in the development process except three meetings held by the core committee. Document analysis and the informants’ expressions showed that unions were excluded stakeholders and mainly outsiders to development of CLT. In terms of their approach to CLT, one union that was close to government supported it from the beginning and one was totally against and reacted on it through media or street protests. Yet, MoNE bureaucrats did not take Eđitim-Sen’s opposition serious and even argued that they also supported later on the contrary to the comments of president of Eđitim-Sen which indicated their opposition and stand point very clearly. Their protests, meetings and public releases on CLT did not have any effect neither on the process nor on the policy outcome.

Higher Education Institutions

According to statistics of Higher Education Council there existed 51 Education Faculties in 1999 (YÖK, 1999). Yet, none of these faculties emerged as actor in the development of CLT. Furthermore, five informants described them as excluded stakeholders. One of the core committee members disclosed that, “We did not write to any of the Education Faculties and ask them ‘what do you think about, what are your opinions on this? Or send your reviews until this date.’ It did not happen. Would it be allowed to do so? That’s another question.”

From another perspective, former general director of personnel directorate underlined that it was an administrative issue and opinions of the academia was not necessary. He stated that “This was an administrative regulation; it was more related to administrative operation within MoNE. We did not get support or opinion from academia because it did not require the opinions of the academia.”

Clearly, higher education institutions were not involved in the process by the MoNE, however, higher education institutions did not show any reaction to this policy. The Former

Head of the Board of National Education indicated that there was not any kind of action from the universities; “Nothing, nothing” he highlighted.

Inclusiveness of the Formation Process

Data analysis revealed that number and the variety of policy actors involved in the design process were limited. The whole process was controlled by only the governmental actors; MoNE units and Ministry of Finance. Especially after its transference to general directorate of personnel, the committee was dismissed and the bureaucrats within the directorate completed the enactment. Furthermore almost none of the stakeholders, teachers, administrators, NGOs, were included. Nothing was asked to them, nor were they informed about the policy. Only attempt to include unions was taken when five of the unions were invited for meetings, nevertheless, their concerns, oppositions and argument were not taken into account, and not even written in the report listing all of the changes done according to suggestions of other units. Moreover, Faculties of Education were held totally out of the process or from another perspective they stayed outside by not reacting on the policy.

Having said these, it is not possible to talk about an inclusive formation process in the development of CLT case where most of the stakeholders participated and created an impact. It can be concluded that dramatis personae of CLT included the roles that were played mainly by the government institutions and units and unions showed up on the stage one minute and was pushed back before they finished their lines.

DISCUSSION

Based on the findings of this study two general conclusions can be drawn on the dramatis persona of CLT in Turkey; first, policy stage was filled with mainly governmental institutions and political and bureaucratic elites emerged as the only group of policy actors taking part in the active formation process, and second, no non-governmental organizations, educational interest group or civil society organization participated in the formulation process of CLT.

At the institutional level, CLT was designed within the setting of bureaucratic institutions of the state led by MoNE. This is not surprising as MoNE and its bureaucracy is the apparatus of the state to develop and implement educational policies. Being a strong state country, Turkey, has a “bureaucracy that enjoys an exalted status in government and society” (Howlett & Ramesh, 1995, p. 64). Despite the fact that “the norms of democracy grant policy-making legitimacy to electoral institutions, not to bureaucracy” (Meier, 1997, p. 195), Turkey is an example of delegation of policy making power to administrators and bureaucrats even though agendas are defined and constructed by the political elite on the contrary to general claim that political elites and leaders make policy and bureaucrats implement it (Lindblom & Woodhouse, 1993). Thus, bureaucracy, in Turkey, is at the very heart of educational policy making process and decision making power is concentrated in the hands of small number of

people which constituted a homogenous elite group. Bureaucratic elite can be defined as “those individuals who occupy formal positions of authority in the major civilian and military bureaucracies of the national government” (Dye & Pickering, 1974, p. 902).

At the individual level, in the case of CLT, bureaucratic elites are individuals who occupied high level positions such as general director, bureau director, department chief and expert in the central units of MoNE, namely, GDTTE, General Directorate of Personnel, Strategy Development Presidency, General Directorate of Higher Education and Board of National Education and other ministries and institutions involved in the process. These bureaucrats were involved in the process due to their positions and not their expertise, and their participation depended on not voluntary but obligatory basis as they were chosen and assigned by higher level bureaucrats through top-down decision making. Hierarchy was of central importance (Anderson, 2006) and even though the lower level bureaucrats worked on the text and the scope of the policy, higher level bureaucrats like, according to ranking, general directors, vice deputy, deputy and the minister had the final decisions on CLT. The Committee had to get approval for everything they did from those higher level bureaucratic elites, even though committee members had extensive experience and qualification on the issue at hand. Other than the core committee, there did not exist any individual participation from other units of MoNE and governmental institutions. Their inclusion was provided through written communication. The relationship network was not complicated and followed bureaucratic internal and external communication procedures with other institutions and units involved, except a few meetings held.

Regarding the roles and influence of these elites both at the institutional and individual level, should we apply the model of Marshall et al. (1989) to CLT policy actors, perceived impact of each actor can be seen Table 4. The ranking within each cluster is not strict as this study did not apply the same method by Marshall et al. (1989), yet adopted their classification system to explain the impact of policy actors as perceived by the informants and as revealed by the documents. It can be seen that at the institutional level, two central MoNE units, GDTTE and General Directorate of Personnel had the greatest impact on the design of CLT, while other units had a slight influence. Especially the outsider role of Board of Education is significant as it was defined as the consultation and decision making body. This was attributed to scope and the nature of the CLT because it targeted teachers and it was formulated as an obligation for all units. Another significant issue evident from the table is the forgotten player which takes us to the second conclusion that non-governmental organizations, educational interest groups or civil society organizations were not involved with the policy formulation process of CLT.

Table 4.
Policy Actor Influence Clusters of CLT in Turkey

<i>Cluster</i>	<i>Policy Actors</i>
Insiders	MoNE GDDTE General Directorate of Personnel Core Committee (Individual level)
Near Circle	Strategy Development Presidency Legal Counsel Office
Far Circle	Board of National Education Other MoNE Units Ministry of Finance State Personnel Presidency
Sometime Players	Student Selection and Placement Center Other Ministries
Forgotten Players	Unions Educational Associations Higher Education Institutions Civil Society Organizations

One of the most striking findings of this study is the lack of participation and involvement from educational interests groups such as unions, associations and higher education institutions; borrowing from Marshall et al. (1989), they are the forgotten players, specifically the higher education institutions. Even though unions became part of the process at one point, higher education institutions that train teachers were excluded from the formation process of a policy related to professional development of teachers. The missing link between MoNE and higher education institutions is not a recent issue (World Bank, 2005), thus, it is not surprising that higher education institutions were outside the process.

Regarding unions, findings indicated that they were told to be included once through a meeting by the bureaucrats but none of their opinions were taken into consideration. Unions in education sector are characterized by fragmentation and low rate of membership. Despite the high number of unions representing different ideologies, they are far from protecting the interest of teachers in Turkey. In this case, five different unions reacted differently to the policy process and Heper and Yıldırım's (2011) argument considering the general civil society in Turkey applies to unions in education: "rather than forming horizontal relations with others and trying to oblige the state to act in a responsive manner to their group interests, they have attempted to oblige the state pay attention to their specific interests" (p. 35). In the case of CLT, one of the unions, Eğitim-Sen [Education Union] wanted to play the role of a pressure group. It was actively engaged in trials to influence the process. They conducted protests against the policy proposal and tried to increase the visibility of the policy and raise awareness through the use of media and other public sources, and they even tried to form an advocacy coalition with RPP to oppose and change the policy, their efforts went down the drain at least on the policy formulation phase. As a pressure group, they did not create any

impact on the bureaucrats and politicians. It derives from this context clearly that teachers those who would be directly affected by the policy did not have any opportunity to become part of the formulation process and remained as “outsiders” even though they were the target group of the policy. This is rooted in two issues: first there is no legal regulation that would allow teachers to become part of the policy process and second, the voices raised by the unions were either ignored or tried to be silenced. Policy making institutions are not responsive to demands of the interest groups and stakeholders (Howlett & Ramesh, 1995), even though the concept of “stakeholder” became part of the official discourse of education policy makers.

Another important finding to discuss, in addition to weakness of education unions, is the absence of educational associations in Turkey. Non-governmental organizations functioning within the education sector mainly aim at covering the areas left open by the government such as Mother-Child Foundation (ACEV), Association for the Support of Contemporary Living (CYDD), Educational Volunteers (TEGEV), and Turkish Education Foundation (TEV). However, compared to the United States, professional organizations for certain groups in the education sector, subject area teachers, school principals, or guidance and counselors, and Parent-Teacher Associations are missing in the civil society which was described as “vibrant.” Associations such as Association of Educational Administrators and Inspectors (EYEDDER), Turkish Psychological Guidance and Counseling Association (PDR) and English Language Education Association (INGED) can be given as example to few professional associations which focus mainly on the promotion of academic work in their area rather than representing the interests of their members and becoming a pressure group. Regarding the Think-Tanks which became very popular in the policy arena of the western world, only one major organization function in the education sector; Education Reform Initiative (ERG) formed by a private university focuses on executing sector analysis and publishing reports based on these analyses and try to influence the policy making in education. Even though ERG’s reports created credible impression in the area, their role in influencing policy is still limited.

Based on this social framework, it is possible to conclude that civil society in the education arena is just a reflection of the picture of civil society at the national level in which “interest group associations remained as ‘outsiders’ and could not become ‘insiders’” (Heper & Yıldırım, 2007, p. 23); no pressure group exists; and strong state dominates the weak civil society (Altan-Olcay & İçduygu, 2012; Çaylak, 2008; Çarkoğlu & Cenker, 2011; Hedges & Kılıçoğlu, 2009; Keyman & İçduygu, 2003; Toprak, 1996). The results of this study in terms of policy actors are congruent with the results of a few other studies, especially on the point of very visible and active bureaucracy (Robins, 2009) and lack of pressure group challenging strong state or weak impact of pressure groups (Anbarli, 1999; Özen & Özen, 2010; Robins, 2009) and lack of participation of teacher unions (Top, 1999) in the process of policy formulation. The conclusion of Heper and Yıldırım (2011) that strong state tradition in Turkey “has let little scope for the emergence of an efficacious civil society” (p. 1) is valid for the education sector and educational policy making as well, as power to decide is held with in the hands of few political and some bureaucratic elites in the MoNE.

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