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Academicians' Opinions about Privatization in Higher Education? A Comparative Research in State and Foundation Universities

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to compare the views of instructors in public and foundation universities on privatization in higher education. The sample of this study consisted of 2.246 academicians who worked in eight foundation and six public universities in Turkey during the 2012-2013 academic year. Data was collected with the Opinions Regarding Privatization in Higher Education scale. Results of the analysis suggested a significant difference between the views of public and private university instructors regarding privatization. The scores of foundation university instructors in the opinions regarding privatization in higher education scale are higher than the scores of academicians of public universities. Academicians in foundation universities have more favorable opinions towards privatization than their colleagues in public universities. However, the fact that academicians in both institutions expressed an "uncertain" opinion proves that they believe privatization practices are not basically effective in solving problems regarding the higher education system.

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Privatization in higher education, Public universities, Private universities, Academicians, Financing education.

Introduction

Privatization is the advent of the government partially or wholly withdrawing from an economic area, selling it off or gradually pulling out of the market to leave its place to private companies and volunteer agencies (Ernst &Young, 1994, p.4; Bös, 1991, p.2; Savas, 1999; Whitty & Power, 2000). But the point here is that not every privatization implementation results with a sale transaction (Boursma, 2002, p.26; Önder, 1994, p.10; Ertuna, 1993, p.20). In this respect, we can consider privatization occurs when the private sector gains a broader field of activity due to the government reducing its investments and force on education (Green, 2005, p.5; Demirbaş & Türkoğlu, 2002; Aktan, 2004, p.20). Since the early 1980s, with regards to transportation, healthcare and many other fields, the private sector has economically increased its effects. Recently, however, we have witnessed private enterprises investing more in the education sector and an increase in the number and effectiveness of private higher education institutions in Turkey. The government has begun assigning its position in economic policies to the private sector and the changes that globalization brought about has caused crucial changes in social life. One of these changes is, just like in many other areas, the increase of private sector's activities and force on the education system. This has raised the issue on whether higher education should include any privatization practices or not. The notion of privatization in higher education has led to major discussions among those who support them and those who oppose.

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In Turkey higher education is provided by public and non-profit foundation (private) universities. All the higher education institutions in Turkey are subordinate to the Council of Higher Education (CoHE). The Council of Higher Education is a supreme organ that regulates all higher education practices, directs the applications of higher education institutions and organizes plans regarding higher education at the national level. Although all the universities in Turkey are subordinate to the Council of Higher Education, there are major differences between public and foundation universities regarding issues such as personnel selection and employment, administrative structure, financial resources and rector elections. These differences bring to mind the question to what extent the instructors of public and foundation universities are effective in opinions regarding privatization in higher education.

The search for increasing higher education financing resources other than public resources is still under way. Accordingly, there are people who both support and oppose to the idea that the private sector should play a bigger part in higher education finance. Analyzing how academicians perceive privatization, which is broadly applied in economic fields within the framework of more liberal economic policy approaches, can contribute to creating a more effective administration strategy for the higher education system. In this respect, the primary goal of this study is to compare the views of instructors in public and foundation universities on privatization in higher education. Hereunder, for the sub-goals of this study, the answer to whether there are any differences between the opinions of public and foundation university instructions regarding privatization in higher education according to the; gender, professional seniority, professional title and administrative function variables will be sought. This study is of vital importance because it is one of the most comprehensive studies in Turkey and because, in an environment where universities were facing problems in terms of finance and quality, it enabled us to look for solutions from a privatization perspective.

Higher Education and Privatization

Globalization and neoliberal practices became effective and after considering quality in generating and presenting services, certain reforms in public administration became crucial. Educational sector has also been affected by these reforms (Papadopoulou & Yirci, 2013). The effects of neoliberal policies in world economy have become evident in the higher education field, too. As a result, terms such as privatization in higher education, commercialized universities and internationalization have become widespread. These terms, which, for some signify the collapse of higher education due to their potential to wipeout social justice, equality and educational rights and for some signify a way out due to their potential to increase competition in higher education and to reduce the government's financial burden, have led to various disputes among scientists.

Although many don't accept the main idea of economy, together with the reasons, effects and future outcomes of the government reducing the budget for universities, in other words universities seeking ways to create their own resources can be presumed as higher education being privatized. Terms such as corporate autonomy, independent-public, public-private, state assisted, liberalization define the different ways of privatizing universities (Breneman & Finney, 1997 and MacTaggert, 1998 cited in Withney, 2003, p.53). Micheal and Krevotics (2005, p.18) indicate that privatization of universities is different from other privatization definitions. Accordingly, privatization in higher education points out the increased involvement of private higher education institutions in the system. According to Aksoy (2011) the concept of privatization in education can be used instead of or together with terms such as commercializing, monetarizing, capitalizing, commoditizing, subcontracting and marketizing education.

Today, there is a competition between institutions with the basis of qualified workforce. Although today a university diploma does not promise for a good job, families regard education as the most important investment for their children's future. These instances have led to an increase in the demand for higher education. However, governments have chosen to reduce public expenditures on education. These tendencies have caused higher education to become privatized and a marketplace (Bray, 1999, p.11).

There are several factors that lead us to face privatization in higher education. First of these is the boom in knowledge-based economy. We are in an age where the resources of welfare are no longer natural resources and workforce but information and communication. There is a shift from a physical-capital based industrial society to an intellectual-capital based information society. As a result, the importance of

education in raising qualified people has increased. The second factor is the change in student expectations. Students now demand more quality in education, flexible course hours, cheerful and a helpful staff and efficient service from their school. The demand for higher education has increased as well. In America, while the rate of students who wanted to continue higher education was 42% in 1970, this rate is now 65%. The government is unable to satisfy this increased demand. The private sector is expected to step in here (Levine, 2001, pp.133-137). Accordingly, the progress of knowledge-based society, the increased demands of students and the increased demands from higher education have caused a change in the supply-demand balance of universities. Because public universities were unable to satisfy the demand, the private sector interfered and became an active rival to public universities.

The universal tendencies of higher education have brought about new features. One of these features is the increase in the number of universities even in unexpected countries. For example in China, 1236 universities were established during the 15 years after privatization in education was legalized. This shows that the private sector is ready to establish a university and that public finance is not required. The established universities are traditional universities that had to redesign themselves (Zajda, 2006, p.X). In order for universities to orient to the changing circumstances and sustain themselves, they need to render themselves and find ways to provide service with more quality within the emerging competitive environment.

According to Aktan (2006,pp.1-3) globalization, forming a knowledge-based society, increased competition, the shrinking of countries, reorganization of countries, the increase in the demand for higher education are the main factors that affect the changes in higher education. The shrinking of countries shows itself in the processes of privatization and localization in higher education and the passing of finance from public to private institutions. Due to the increase in the demand for higher education, an increase and diversity occurred in higher education supplies and the number of private universities also increased.

Government monopoly on higher education disappeared when the tendency to benefit from the private sector in the higher education field became widespread. Therefore, higher education was no longer a public property but became a private property. This process, which occurred differently in every country and developed in Far East and Former Soviet countries at the beginning of 1990's, continued to gain strength after China, India and even Russia adopted it. This approach which enables the private sector to play a role in higher education financing has found an area of application in almost all developing countries. Today, in many countries there exists a dual structure of private and public universities (CoHE, 2007, p.20).

Brandenburg (2012) claims that in the traditional university approach, the property of universities belong to the government. There is a high level control and supervision in these universities which provide their incomes through taxes. As a result of the private sector gaining importance, a private corporation logic became dominant in higher education administration, governmental control decreased and most of the income was gained from those who received an education service. Due to the privatization of universities a profit-making motive becomes prominent and the goals of universities are shaped according to student, customer and investor requests.

Higher education is provided by private institutions through 5 different ways. These are (CoHE, 2007, pp.20-21):

"1) Non-profit foundation universities (Harvard, Stanford)

2) For-profit institutional universities (University of Phoenix)

3) Corporate universities (Motorola University, Oracle University)

4) Transnational universities (Nottingham, The Appollo Group)

5) Virtual universities (Tec de Monterrey)"

Foundation universities, which can also be regarded as private universities, exist as non-profit universities in Turkey. Companies are legally not allowed to establish for-profit universities other than these universities which provide most of their income through tuition fees.

Universities which implement privatization applications have 4 features. These are:

1) Institutional Autonomy: The university is free to determine its goals, schedule, reward and discipline system, procedures regarding student admission, number of students. In other words universities are independent in product identification, resource processing and distribution processes.

2) Institutional competition: Because the budget and resources of the university depends on the number of its students, the university will strive to keep its standards at a high level.

3) Fees: The university is the exclusive authority which determines fees that are collected from students and the student aids that are provided for the students as credit or scholarships.

4) Information: Students have quick access to the information that will assist them. In the market theory, quality is automatically protected by consumers who exploit present information while they accept the best possible product for themselves (Brown, 2011, pp.13-15).

As Brown (2011) states, quality control and control operations of private higher education institutions that operate in the market are carried out by the students they serve to. Therefore, the quality of a service that is provided has to be at a high standard. Otherwise, fewer students will prefer this university and as a result, its competitive power will decrease and will have difficulty in sustaining itself.

Nicolescu (2007, p.215), who claims that private higher education institutions are more student-centered than public higher education institutions, states that both the academic staff and the administrative staff in private universities are highly expected to listen to students and solve the problems. Private universities, which are market-oriented in issues concerning budget implementation and financing, perform activities such as publicity stunts, pamphlet distribution and high school visits. It is obvious that private universities put more effort in order to pull in students and this brings about practices in favor of students (Cevher, 2015). Conversely, Yıldız (2008) emphasizes that privatization in higher education has rather harmful effects. Privatizing higher education as a policy will drag the education system into the free market and transform it into a for-profit trading enterprise, thus, education services will no longer be free. Structuring education institutions as commercial enterprises will turn students into customers that are a source of income. Regarding students as customers may cause artificial relationships that are based on personal interests. Teachers are inevitably seen as artisans that sell knowledge and poor and disadvantaged people are left to the mercy of charity institutions, rich businessmen and non-governmental organizations. This implies a limitation of the social right to educate and disfranchisement of social security (Yıldız, 2008).

Belfield and Levin (2002) state that there will always be a group that supports privatization implementations and a group that opposes them. Because it can cause teachers to lose their job, their working conditions to worsen or social adaptation to be disturbed, teachers unions may display a harsh manner towards privatization. There is also a group which argues that once the government takes its hands off the field, there will be a more competitive atmosphere between education institutions. It should be kept in mind that privatization is not a magic wand for the Turkish education system that is struggling with many problems. However, after implementing the reform practices in private universities, practices that are labeled as good can be implemented in public universities as well.

Public and Foundation Universities in Turkey

Just like in the rest of the world there has been an increase in the demand for higher education in Turkey as well. For example, in 1984 while the number of students in higher education institutions was 322,320, in 2011 this number was 3,817,086 (Günay & Günay, 2011). Accordingly, the number of universities increased. In 2003, while there were only 70 universities in Turkey, today this number has increased to 170. According to the Constitution, in Turkey, universities are ordained by the government (Ministry of Education (ME), 2011 p., 43). In Turkey higher education is provided by public and foundation universities. Although these two university types share the same service functions, there exists some differences between them.

The primary difference between foundation and public universities is their financing resources. Foundation universities are institutions that, in principle, provide education-training service with their own resources. Therefore, most of their costs are met through the fees collected from students. In other words, foundation higher education institutions cause no burden for governmental budget (Mutluer, 2008, p.18).

Foundation universities can receive a share from the general budget in the case of fulfilling or demanding specific conditions. In order to contribute to the expenses of higher education institutions established by foundations; limited with the allowance in the budget, and in response to the application of the foundation higher education institution, Council of Higher Education's view and the Ministry of National Education's proposal, the Ministry of Finance provides government aid (ME, 2011,p.172). The majority of public university incomes are supplied by the treasury. Recently, the quest for university resources has increased as a result of university-industry cooperation. In addition, students who enrolled or continued their education in public universities after the 2012-2013 academic period were exempted from tuition fees (Gür, Özoğlu, Coşkun & Görmez, 2012, p. 15).

Private and legal entities cannot establish for-profit universities in Turkey. Private higher education institutions (university and vocational colleges) can be established by foundations under certain conditions. The legal framework regarding foundation based higher education institutions is defined by the Constitution, Law of Higher Education and Regulation for Foundation Higher Education Institutions. Private universities share the same rights and powers with public universities. They are also subject to the same academic standards, rules and principles (ME, 2011, p.172).

The procedures regarding how academic administrators are appointed differ in public and foundation universities. The rector in public universities is appointed by the President among three candidates that are nominated through a secret ballot that the Council of Higher Education conducts among six sub-candidates chosen by professors. The rector in foundation universities is appointed by the board of visitors who assign the candidate the Council of Higher Education confirms. While the chief of disbursement in public universities was the Rector, in foundation universities with the law no. 5467 in 1 March 2006 the chairman of board of visitors was appointed to the chief of disbursement position (CoHE, 2007, p.45).

There are substantial differences among public and foundation universities with regards to academic staff and number of students. In Turkey, it is widely accepted that education should be provided by the government and this service is mainly carried out by the government. Accordingly, the majority of the resources that are reserved for higher education are met by public funding (Küçükcan and Gür, 2009, p.69. Because there is a wide tendency towards fulfilling the demand for higher education through public universities, public universities host more students and academic staff. In this context it would be benefical to mention Anadolu University which is one of the largest distance learning systems in the world. Since 1982-1983 academic year, Anadolu University has been attracting students for higher education opportunities through distance education (Çekerol, 2009). Currently it has about 1,400,000 students via distance education. In other words, 43 % of the students attending higher education in Turkey are in the Open Education system of Anadolu University. These features help us to define Anadolu University as a mega university (Anadolu University, 2016; Aydın & Ozkul, 2015)..

According to Turkish Higher Education Council's statistics regarding total student numbers, during 2015-2014 academic year while public universities had 2.995.556 students, foundation universities had 219.974 students (CoHE, 2016). The number of academic staff in public universities is 130.340 while this number is 18.981 in foundation universities (CoHE, 2016). It is evident that public universities are also quantatively superior with regards to the number of academic staff.

Table 1. Some similarities and differences between state and foundation universities

	State universities	Foundation
Academic staff salary	unsatisfactory	satisfactory
Tuition fee	low	high
Job security of employees	high	low
Financial flexibility	low	high
Structure of	full- fledged	compact
Market focus	supply	demand
Emphasis on student satisfaction	low	high
Competitive character	low	high
Autonomy	low	high

Resource: Vardar (2012).

Vardar (2012) demonstrates the similarities and differences between foundation and public universities on Table 1. Academic staff wages in foundation universities are higher than public universities but job security is lower. Foundation universities are more flexible in financing and are more competitive. This leads them to act with market logic and open up areas that have an extensive demand. While student satisfaction is crucial in foundation universities, it is rather less in important in public universities. One difference Vardar (2012) emphasized was about autonomy. In Turkey, foundation universities which ensure their incomes through charities, founder support and tuition fees have relatively a more autonomous structure than public universities whose income is almost fully met by the state budget.

Methodology

The research model, research population, data collection instruments, operations conducted during the scale development process, operations directed at scale validity and reliability, operating the data collection instruments and information regarding data analyses are given in this section. The screening model which is commonly adopted in descriptive research techniques constituted the research model.

Research Population and Sample

The population of this study consisted of academicians who worked in eight foundation and six public universities in Turkey during the 2012-2013 academic year. These universities are located in Ankara, Istanbul, Kayseri, Elazığ, Kahramanmaraş, Konya, İzmir, Mersin and Gaziantep provinces. As it is seen, the universities are mainly from the big cities. Before collecting the data official approbation was obtained from the sample universities. The researchers followed ethical codes and participants were requested to fill in the forms anonymously based on voluntary basis. Total number of academicians in the sample is 2,246. According to the Council of Higher Education's 2013 data, there are 113,849 in public universities and 18,064 in foundation universities with a total of 131,913 academic staff. The primary reason for dividing the study as foundation and public universities is because they differ in working conditions, financing, administration, staff structure and academic staff wages.

The convenience sampling method was used in determining the sample. The convenience sampling method was used because it is difficult in accessing the units under the sample. The researcher chooses an easy accessible situation and participants continue to enter the sample until the required sample size is attained. The sample method which we recently come across frequently and which is used in internet-based surveys is an example for convenience sampling (Kabakçı-Yurdakul, 2013, p.83; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007, p.113). Together with conditions such as cost, speed and accessibility, the difficulty in accessing units which are to be included in the sample was also a factor in selecting this method for the study. With the purpose of collecting data from a wide range of participant from different cities and universities made the researchers use this method. Therefore, geographical, time and cost difficulties in reaching more participants could be avoided.

The website link which featured measuring instruments was e-mailed to the academic staff working at universities that allowed the survey. The e-mail clearly informed about the title of the research, where and by who it was conducted. 2.246 scale forms were collected during the data collection process. Total number of the academics in the chosen universities is 15,788. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p.113), at least 383 samples should be gathered from a population of 150,000 considering 95% confidence level with 5% margin of error.

Table 2. The distribution of the academic staff in the sample

Type of university	Number of academic staff	%
State university	1272	56,6
Foundation university	974	43,4
Total	2246	100

According to Table 2, 56.6% of the participants are academicians who work in public universities and 43.4% of the participants are academic staff who works in foundation universities. It is evident that the academicians of foundation universities show more willingness and spare more time to fill in the survey and

participate in the study. The average participation rate into the study is 14.2%; however, participation rate reaches up to 17.6% in foundation universities. This might have stemmed from the fact that the participants from public universities have some negative biases on privatization of education or that the topic in concern did not thoroughly attract their attention.

Table 3. Seniority levels of academic staff

Seniority	Frequency	%
0-9 years	1081	48,1
10-19 years	608	27,1
20 + years	557	24,8
Total	2246	100,0

According to Table 3, almost half of the participants have a seniority level between 0-9 years. This shows that 48.1% of the academic staff who took part in the study has still not completed ten years of work. It is evident in the data that participation rates declined while seniority increased. In other words the participation rate of young academicians is higher.

Data Collection Instrument

"Opinion Scale for Privatization in Higher Education" which was developed by the researcher was used to collect the data. A question repository was created based on the literature and studies that were examined during the first phase of the scale development process. Before the pilot study, items in the question repository were examined according to language and expression then a draft form was created.

Expert opinions (n=8) were consulted to for the validation tests of draft forms. Because the research subject was about education (n=3), economics (n=3) and management (n=2), it was crucial that the number of experts consulted to were high and that their professions were focused on these fields. As a result of the opinions and suggestions, a tentative scale with 20 items was created and the pre-implementation process started. For the pre-implementation process, the Opinion Scale for Privatization in Higher Education tentative form was conducted on a random sample of 480 academic staff from one public and one foundation university who were working during the 2012-2013 academic year. While interpreting the data collected from the assessment instruments, the 7 point likert scale was used to determine average scores and rates. The data collected were copied to the SPSS (20.0) software. To test the construct validity of the tentative form an exploratory factor analysis was conducted. Factor analyses are conducted to group related variables and put forward common factors. By grouping related variables, the researcher gathers those which will help interpreting a concept or an entity (Henson and Roberts, 2006; Özdamar, 2002, pp.235-236; Tabachnick and Fidel, 2007, p.608). Analysis results showed the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value as .94. The Barlett test results indicated that an exploratory factor analysis can be conducted. Therefore, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted according to the varimax principal component analysis method.

The correlation matrix of the scale, which showed the compatibility of scale items, was examined before determining the number of scale factors. According to the correlation matrix of the items, the correlation coefficient of three items is less than .30. This showed that these three items have a low compatibility score with other items and therefore researches decided to take them out of the scale. The exploratory factor analysis was repeated for the remaining 17 items. Factors and the factor load values of the items that resulted from the varimax principal component analysis are given in Table 4.

It is evident in Table 4 that the factor load values of single factors of the items that demonstrate opinions on privatization are between .805 and .531. The total item correlations of each item in the scale are between .749 and .497. According to the factor analysis, the general reliability coefficient value of the scale resulted as .89 after the first implementation. After the three items that had low compatibility rates were taken out from the scale, the cronbach alfa coefficient value increased to .93 for the reliability analysis.

To test the accuracy of the one-dimensional model that emerged after the exploratory factor analysis, a Confirmatory Factor Analysis was conducted on the scale with the Amos 18 software. While factors are determined with the exploratory factor analysis, the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is conducted to determine whether there is a sufficient relationship between factors and to see to what extent these factors explain the model. The CFA creates a new scale, but it can also be used in order to assess the psychometric

features of a present or an emerging scale or to examine their construct validities (Harrington, 2009, p.5; Brown, 2006, p.1).

Table 4. Factor loading values and total item correlation of the scale items

	Factor	Total
Negatively effects the success levels of students who are regarded as customers.*	.630	.594
Privatizing higher education in Turkey brings damage rather than advantage.*	.777	.743
Enables foundation universities to provide service with a stronger infrastructure.	.688	.631
Reduces objectivity while assessing student success in foundation universities.*	.641	.605
Increases parent, student and executive expectations from foundation university instructors and causes the staff to find themselves under pressure.*	.531	.497
Reduces bureaucratic obstacles that instructors come across and creates a flexible atmosphere for scientific studies.	.656	.596
Enables foundation universities to create new programs aimed at the needs of the country.	.736	.681
Damages the sense of equality and social justice.*	.622	.593
Increases competition and quality searching between universities.*	.781	.725
Provides more options to parents and students while choosing a school.	.744	.677
Increases worker performance.	.785	.726
Enables material and human resources to be effectively used.	.805	.749
Ensures qualified instructors to get the wage they deserve.	.736	.677
Causes education to be commercialized and students and parents to be accepted as customers.*	.632	.600
Limits union and social rights of workers and reduces their wages.*	.556	.520
Crucial because the government is unable to finance educational services by itself.	.751	.704
Reduces higher education expenses of the government.	.585	.522

** Reversely coded items*

Maximum Likelihood method was preferred in the CFA of the Opinion Scale for Privatization in Higher Education. The reason why this method was used is because in the CFA process the maximum likelihood method is the most preferred method, it offers many advantages in determining the correct amount of factors, provides effective solutions in demonstrating the relationship between the data and because it offers many fit indexes while testing the efficiency of the model (Harrington, 2009, p.28; Brown, 2006, p.21). For the CFA of the scale the Chi-Square Goodness of Fit $\chi 2$, RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation), GFI (Goodness of Fit Index), CFI (Comparative Fit Index), NFI (Normed Fit Index), TLI (Tucker Lewis Index) and AGFI (Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index) fit indexes were taken into consideration and values related to the single factorial scale model are given in Table 5:

Table 5. CFA Fit Indices of the scale

Measure	Good fit	Acceptable interval	Fit Indices of the model
($\chi 2$/sd)	≤ 3	≤ 4-5	1,795
RMSEA	≤ 0.05	0.06-0.8	0.08
NFI	≥ 0.95	0.94-0.90	0.93
CFI	≥ 0.97	≥ 0.95	0.920
GFI	≥ 0.90	0.89-0.85	0.860
AGFI	≥ 0.90	0.89-0.85	0.850
TLI	≥ 0.95	0.94-0.90	0.909

According to Table 5, the DFA fit indices indicate that especially after the Chi-Square Compliance Test, the model is rather accordant. The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation was (RMSEA: 0.80) for this model. According to the table, the comparative fit index is (CFI: 0.920). These results are close to the satisfactory compatibility range. Brown (2006, p.87) states that values close to the .90-.95 range indicate a

satisfactory model. As Ayyıldız and Cengiz (2006) put forward, the goodness of fit indexes resulting positive does not prove that the model is good, but definitely prove that it is not a bad model.

The assessment instrument giving similar results on practices that are implemented at different times is important in displaying its reliability. Therefore, the test-retest method was adopted in finding the stability factor of the Opinion Scale for the Privatization in Higher Education scale. The scale, which was first conducted on academicians working in a public university, was conducted on the same group again 2 weeks later. The relationship between the two scales was calculated after the test-retest process with the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient method. According to the test-retest results the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient value is .852 (p=0.000). The degree of linear relationship between two variables grows stronger as the correlation coefficient gets closer to 1 (Rebekić, Lončarić, Petrović, & Marić, 2015; Yenihan & Cerev, 2015; Cohen, 1988; Hauke & Kossowski, 2011). The findings of the test-retest analyses show that the scale scores resulting from two different measurements do not vary over time. Values that were obtained from the validity and reliability tests during the scale development process indicate that the scale is adequate to use in the study.

The scales were sent to the academicians in the sample with web-based surveys (inter-survey). Therefore, the target group was accessed in a more economic and rapid way while saving more time. Academic staff working in the sample universities was sent e-mails twice. The academicians were briefly informed about the title and goal of the study and were asked to answer the scale questions. There was a one week time lag between the two e-mails.

Findings and Comment

Findings on whether there are any differences between opinions of public and foundation university instructors on privatization with regards to the gender, professional seniority, professional title and administrative function variables are discussed in this section. Findings from the t-test on the gender variable are given in Table 6:

Table 6. T-test results of instructor opinions on privatization in higher education regarding the gender variable

	Gender	n	$\overline{X}$	SD	t	Df	p	Levene Test f	Levene Test p
State Universities	Male	774	3,857	1.0427	4.869	1270	.000	1.294	0.255
	Female	498	3.571	.98758					
Foundation Universities	Male	460	4.261	.99772	3.070	972	.002	.834	0.361
	Female	514	4.062	1.01703					

It is evident in Table 6 that there is a statistical significant difference in the opinions of public university instructors on privatization in higher education regarding the gender variable (p=0.000< 0.05). According to Kubiatko and Arik (2014) gender is an important variable in terms of attitudes and opinions in education. In this study male participants' scores ($\overline{X}$ =3.857) concerning privatization in higher education are higher than female participant scores ($\overline{X}$ =3.571). The reason for this may be because female participants, who are an academic staff, a mother and a wife, are worried that their work load and working hours will increase due to privatization. Belfield's (2003) research titled Privatization of Education, Evidence from England resulted with a significant difference with regards to the gender variable. Female participants supported privatization less with respect to male participants in the England case as well. Aksoy's (2006) study also states that 80% of female participants oppose to privatization implementations in the healthcare system.

It is evident in Table 6, which demonstrates t-test results obtained from foundation university instructor opinions on privatization in higher education regarding the gender variable, that there is a statistical significant difference (p=0.002< 0.05). Male participants' scores ($\overline{X}$ =4.261) concerning privatization in higher education are higher than female participant scores ($\overline{X}$ =4.062). This finding is compatible with the results of public universities.

Table 7. ANOVA results of instructor opinions on privatization in higher education regarding the professional seniority variable

Seniority	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	Df	f	p	LSD
1.State Universities							
a) 0-9 Years	536	3.679	1.044				--
b) 10-19 Years	377	3.814	1.006	2	2.085	.125	
c) 20+ years	359	3.773	1.033	1269			--
Total	1272	3.745	1.031				
2. Foundation Universities							
a) 0-9 Years	545	4.031	1.043				
b) 10-19 Years	231	4.270	.985	2	9.996	.000	a<b
c) 20+ years	198	4.365	.908	971			c>a
Total	974	4.156	1.012				

Results of the variance analysis which was conducted to determine whether there are any differences between the opinions of instructors concerning privatization in higher education with regards to the professional seniority variable are given in Table 7. According to the analysis results, there are no statistical significant differences between the opinions of public university instructors with regards to the professional seniority variable (p=0.125> 0.05). A statistical significant difference was observed in the opinions of foundation university instructors on privatization in higher education regarding the professional seniority variable (p=0.00< 0.05). However, LSD test was conducted in order to determine between which groups this difference occurred. Mean scores ($\overline{X}$ =4.031) concerning opinions on privatization in higher education of participants who have 0-9 years seniority was observed to be lower than the other groups. When professional seniority levels of foundation university staff increase, their opinions concerning privatization in higher education become more favorable. The reason for this may be because when seniority increases, foundation universities tend to increase their investments, increase instructor wages or enhance working conditions in order to maintain their experienced staff.

A variance analysis was conducted in order to determine whether there are any significant differences between opinions of public university instructors concerning privatization in higher education with regards to the professional title variable. A significant difference with regards to the professional title variable was observed in the opinions of the instructors concerning privatization in higher education (p=0.004< 0.05). According to the LSD test, which was conducted to determine between which groups the difference occurred, there is a difference between academicians with the title associate professor, assistant professor and instructor and research assistants. Research assistants were the participants whose opinions received the lowest scores with regards to the professional title variable ($\overline{X}$ =3.552). The reason for this may be because research assistants are young academicians who have little experience and a low title and therefore may be concerned that they will become unemployed due to privatization. The chance that working conditions will become difficult after privatization may have led to this result as well.

A significant difference was observed in the opinions of foundation university instructors on privatization in higher education regarding the professional title variable (p=0.00< 0.05). According to the LSD test results, which was conducted to determine between which groups the difference occurred, there is a significant difference between the opinions of instructors with the title of professor and instructors, lecturers and research assistants in favor of the first group. When professional titles of foundation university

staff increase, their opinions concerning privatization in higher education become more favorable. When the opinions of instructors on privatization in higher education are examined according to the type of institution, specific differences were observed. Instructors in public universities from all titles have a more negative opinion on privatization in higher education than instructors in foundation universities. However, research assistants from both institution types have a more negative view on privatization than the other groups.

A t-test was conducted in order to determine whether there are any significant differences in the opinions of instructors working in public and foundation universities according to the administrative function variable. According to the analysis results, no statistical significant difference was observed in both institutions types with regards to the administrative function variable (Public: p=0.344> 0.05; Foundation: p=0.180> 0.05). Opinion score averages of participants with an administrative function were observed to be relatively higher than the average of participants without an administrative function. These findings were compatible with the findings of Addi-Raccah (2012). Addi-Raccah (2012), who aimed at defining the opinions of Israeli instructors on privatization, states that teachers who have an administrative function have a more positive view on privatization.

Score averages of foundation university instructors on privatization in higher education ($\overline{X}$ =4.156) were observed to be higher than the score averages of public university instructors on privatization in higher education ($\overline{X}$ =3.745). In other words, opinions of foundation university instructors on privatization in higher education are more favorable. This may be because these instructors compared with their colleagues working in public universities, work in institutions with better facilities, receive higher wages and their institution values them greatly.

Although the opinions of foundation university staff seem to be relatively more positive than those working in public universities, they still have some concerns regarding privatization in higher education. For example, both public and foundation university instructors are worried that due to privatization in higher education, education will be commercialized and students and parents will be regarded as being customers ($\overline{X}$ =5.17). On the other hand, together with privatization, parents and students gain more options in choosing their school ($\overline{X}$ =4.98) and this is regarded as the primary benefit that privatization offers by the instructors of both university types.

Differences of opinions that were put forward with this study are compatible with the findings of Addi-Raccah's (2012) study. Addi-Raccah, who questioned the views of teachers on privatization in education, grouped the opinions into three. Some teachers supported privatization in education and some opposed it. But the majority of the participants expressed both positive and negative views on this issue. These teachers who have a complicated view on privatization state that while privatization positively affects education it can also increase social injustice.

Discussion and Conclusion

In today's world where competition is increasing both at the national and global level, where institutions require qualified work force and also neoliberal economic policies have made themselves evident in every sphere of life. The influence of this on higher education was the increase in the number of foundation universities. These foundation universities can be regarded as a type of private university particular to Turkey. In this respect, this study, which aimed at examining the opinions of public and foundation university instructors on privatization in higher education, is one of the detailed studies on this subject. The concept of privatization in higher education was not regarded as transferring the properties of public universities to private universities, but rather as higher education institutions, which are not fully dependent on the government in finance and administration, being more involved in the higher education system. Moreover, the term private university does not exist in the legislative framework or legal documents.

Study findings suggest that participant opinions regarding privatization in higher education differ with regards to the type of the institution. Participants who work in foundation universities have a more positive view on privatization in higher education than their colleagues in public universities. However,

participants from both foundation and public universities were observed to have some concerns about privatization. The primary concern is about the chance of education being commercialized. Addi-Raccah (2012) claimed that teachers had both positive and negative opinions on privatization. Belfield and Levin (2002) state that there will always be a group that supports privatization implementations and a group that opposes them. Because it can cause teachers to lose their job, their working conditions to worsen or social adaptation to be disturbed, teachers unions may display a harsh manner towards privatization.

The negative view of public university instructors concerning privatization in higher education is evident in the findings of other studies which were conducted to determine the views on privatization. For example Erdoğan's (2011) postgraduate thesis titled *Analyzing Privatization According to Worker Expectations and a Case Study* points out that workers in general have negative expectations from privatization. According to the answers that the workers gave, psychological factors such as the concern that wages will fall or becoming unemployed can be listed as factors that negatively affect their expectations.

Foundation universities are regarded as more favorable according to most of the studies that comparatively examine foundation and public universities in Turkey. For example Çivilidağ's (2011) study indicates that the job satisfaction score averages of foundation university instructors are significantly higher than instructors working in public universities. Gülnar's (2012) study states that research assistants in foundation universities have a *medium* level of job satisfaction while research assistants in public universities have a *low* level of job satisfaction. According to Kısabacak's (2011) qualitative study, academicians see two advantages in working in private universities. These are academic freedom and resources reserved for researches. While the private sector-university cooperation is criticized due to some barriers, it is supported by academicians. Cevher (2015) states that foundation universities are preferred as they serve international training opportunities, different and flexible educational programs, have dynamic staff and strong communication between academic staff and students.

Çağlıyan's (2007) study indicates that, compared to academicians working in public universities, academicians working in foundation universities experience less burnout and more job satisfaction. Balay's (2012) study titled "*Effect of Learner Organization's Perception on Organizational Commitment: A Comparison Between Private and Public Universities*" puts forward that instructors in foundation universities remarked that they are more loyal to the institution they work in than those who work in public universities.

Foundation universities seem to be in a more favorable position according to the studies that discuss the foundation and public universities in Turkey. The fact that foundation universities have a more autonomous structure than public universities is influential in this outcome. Because of the strict burocratic structure (in terms of financial and management mechanism), public universities seem to have some challenging difficulties to use their potential completely. Within this framework, in terms of finance and administration, public universities should become more independent. Structural changes and reforms in higher education should be put into practice as soon as possible. One of these reforms is enhancing public-private cooperation in higher education financing. It will be difficult to carry out these reforms by including only the private sector. Academicians from both public and foundation universities have certain concerns regarding privatization in higher education and it is crucial to relieve these concerns.

In conclusion, there is a need of a new, rational higher education and university structure that will satisfy both supporters and opposes of privatization in higher education. In this context the structure of Council of Higher Education which was established in 1982 should be revised and must be reformed in order to meet the needs of the public and foundation universities. As Celik (2015) states Turkish Higher Education system has a centralized feature which obstructs not only public universities but also foundation universities. Also there are great differences among universities in terms of quality, academic staff number and student structure. In order to decrease these differences new quality standards and accreditation activities may be increased. It may also be beneficial to examine the university and higher education systems in other countries so as to create a more transparent, autonomous, accountable, entrepreneur university system which is unique to Turkish context.

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