

## Experiencing a Learning Organization: School Administrators Identify Causes of Teacher Ineffectiveness

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**ABSTRACT** This study aimed to determine school problems that cause teacher ineffectiveness, and to find possible solutions to these problems in school improvement. This descriptive study aimed to analyze and identify the current situation. Semi-structured interview technique was used to collect qualitative data. Participants in this research were 17 administrators from 6 schools in city of Gaziantep in the 2012-2013 academic years. In the experience of learning school, school administrators detect problems of the school and aim to find solutions with meetings. Within the research project of the Learning Organization, 12 meetings were held guided by an experienced coach. Participants were asked: "What are the factors that cause ineffectiveness of teachers in school improvement?" In this qualitative research, content analysis was carried out on recorded administrators' responses. In the findings of research 5 main themes were identified: inadequate teacher education, lack of diversity, limited teaching ability, lack of motivation, and emotional exhaustion. Consequently the administrators identified several responses including determining salary based performance and arranging seminars to develop pedagogical content knowledge.

### INTRODUCTION

It's vital for schools to keep pace with the change for the developing technology and challenging educational sector. The schools need a valuable and multidimensional strategy to be developed. When schools are closed to change, they become worthless and lose their influence. Therefore they have to renovate themselves to become effective. According to Coe (2009: 376) to make the school more effective, new strategies should be implemented. One of the strategies to be followed by the school administrators is to use feedbacks derived from the educational experiences.

The most important thing in choosing the school improvement strategy is to find effective and proper data collection tools (Bernhart 2005). Student information system, school data cen-

ters and learning management systems for evaluating students' success could be assumed as a data collection tools. Teachers and school administrators cannot be successful if they don't use educational tools effectively (Bernhart 2005; Heritage and Chen 2005). In today's world, schools are facing challenges to make new learning opportunities forced by the new technologies. The failure of the schools for making new learning opportunities result from their lack of knowledge about how to do it, not for their desire to do it. Therefore, the need for reorganization of the schools is increasing. The reorganization of schools could be named "learning school" for the students and the school staff (Leithwood et al. 1998: 243-244).

According to Senge (2006) who produced the learning organization concept, learning organization is "where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning to see the whole (reality) together". Garvin (1999) defines learning organization as an organization that has the skill to create, ac-

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quire, transfer and reflect the knowledge. Rosen (1998) defines learning organization as an organization that promotes and supports the development of staff, increases the capacity of organization and so creates a continuous environment to learn and to develop.

Learning organizations have the infrastructure and culture to support the organizational learning process. Individuals are seen active participants and mediators to the development and change. Organizational learning is a capacity for an organization to change its infrastructure, culture and values. So to be a learning organization depends on the openness to the organizational and individual learning. Those organizations that empower their staff in individual and organizational level become more successful in changing the organization (Perkins et al. 2007).

The human is the most impressive factor in learning organization context (Bubb and Earley 2009) because the humans form organizations. In this respect, quality of schools is strongly connected with the quality of the teachers. Quality of teachers is the most influential element determining the quality of a school. Many studies have been conducted on teacher quality.

The educators, policy makers and researchers discussed the quality of teachers in different perspectives. Rivkin et al. (2005) found great differences between qualified and unqualified teachers and noted that this difference influences student success significantly. Blank and Langesen (1999) defined the teacher qualification as a measurable student outcome and the possession of the standards that teachers had to have. School administrators define the quality of the teachers as having specific skills and potentials. Some educators define the qualified teacher as having pedagogical knowledge, continuing learning lifetime and profession and empowering its instructional capacity (Bolyard and Moyer-Packenham 2008).

The qualification of the teacher as a whole has an important effect on quality of school. Particularly teacher's language and cognitive skills have a significant impact on student success (Rice 2003; Leigh and Mead 2005; Metzler and Woessmann 2010). In a few study, the subject matter knowledge, instructional methods knowledge and pedagogical skills increase educational quality (Monk 1994; Allen 2003; Prokop et al. 2011; Hudson et al. 2010; Usak 2009; Lin

2008). Despite the fact that many studies had been done on quality of teachers (Luschei 2012; Yeh 2009; Akiri and Ugborugbo 2009), limited number of studies have been done on inefficiency of teachers (Torf and Sessions 2005). Accordingly, teacher inefficiency should be studied and solutions to make a productive and effective school should be proposed.

### **The Aim of the Study**

The aim of the study is to investigate the causes of the teacher's inefficiency and find solutions for in order to develop schools as a learning organization. The questions of the study were 1. What are the factors effecting teacher's inefficiency in developing schools? 2. What are the solutions for teacher's inefficiency?

## **MATERIAL AND METHODS**

The school administrators arrange meetings to determine the organizational problems and find solutions for it. In this study, school administrators arranged a meeting to determine the teacher's inefficiency as a problem for school improvement. In this descriptive study data were collected by a semi-structured scale. The semi-structured interview enables researchers to collect data systematically (Yildirim and Simsek 2005).

### **Study Group**

The researchers used purposeful sampling method in this study. Purposeful sampling allows researchers to study the situation deeply, which provides substantial information (Yildirim and Simsek 2005). In this sampling method some criteria are determined for the sample, and it is assumed that this sample represents the population (Tavsancil and Aslan 2001).

The study group consists of 17 school administrators from 6 elementary and secondary schools located in the city center of Gaziantep. Some researchers used the same method for data gathering (Torf and Sessions 2005; Torf and Sessions 2009). In one of that study, researchers collected data from 20 school administrators for determining the teacher efficiency.

All the participants are males. One of the participant's education level is graduate level, one

is PhD and the rest have undergraduate levels of education. 5 of them are school principals, 11 of them vice-principals, one of them is team coach. The mean of the administrators' tenure is 13 years and the administrative tenure mean is 4 years (see Table 1). That shows that the participants have enough experience and knowledge to get the data.

### Data Collection

Despite many studies on teacher efficiency (Luschei 2012; Yeh 2009; Akiri and Ugborugbo 2009) there are a few studies investigating teacher inefficiency. Torf and Sessions (2005) gathered data from school principals to investigate the teacher inefficiency. The same method is used in this study and data were collected from school principals to investigate teacher inefficiency. For this purpose, 17 school principals and vice-principals were included in this study to collect data in the 2012-2013 academic years. In semi-structured interviews, participants were asked about teacher inefficiency in school improvement. Data were analyzed by content analysis method and some themes were emerged by means of causes and solutions for the teacher inefficiency.

### Data Analysis

The data were collected via audio-recordings and by taking notes during interviews. After the individual interviews, the data were verified

through focus group discussions. The verified data then written in a text file and transferred to the program Atlas Ti 6.0 to be analyzed. The content analysis was done initially by the primary researcher and then by two other researchers. The codes that were specified by researchers were compared to determine reliability. The formula "reliability= [number of agreements/ (total number of agreement + disagreement)] x100" was applied (Miles and Huberman 1994: 64). It was observed that there was an 81% concordance in this study. Those codes emerged from analysis which are connected with each other formed the themes. 30 themes created in total after the data analysis. Because some themes have common meanings, 5 major themes were formed after regulation of the themes. For example, the theme, "All teachers come from the same region" was combined with the theme "Teachers are commonly coming from Gaziantep and its provinces" under the major theme called "The teachers are local people".

After the data were analyzed by the researchers, data were given back to the participants to review and confirm the data, and the data were reanalyzed after confirmation. Besides the written data were confirmed by another researcher. This is done because of the validity of the data. In this respect, this study can be seen as joint research (Barnes 2004; Bennet and Roberts 2004). For the reliability, the data were analyzed by the researchers individually (Ratcliff 1995).

**Table 1: Demographic information of participants**

<i>Number</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Education level</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Years of experience</i>	<i>Experience of management</i>
1	Male	Ph.D.	Team coach	19	4
2	Male	M.A.	Principal	13	1
3	Male	B.A.	Principal	10	2
4	Male	B.A.	Vice-principal	9	3
5	Male	B.A.	Principal	14	4
6	Male	B.A.	Vice-principal	18	7
7	Male	B.A.	Vice-principal	13	3
8	Male	B.A.	Vice-principal	10	3
9	Male	B.A.	Principal	14	5
10	Male	B.A.	Vice-principal	11	2
11	Male	B.A.	Vice-principal	8	1
12	Male	B.A.	Vice-principal	10	3
13	Male	B.A.	Vice-principal	14	6
14	Male	B.A.	Principal	18	7
15	Male	B.A.	Vice-principal	13	4
16	Male	B.A.	Vice-principal	13	5
17	Male	B.A.	Vice-principal	11	3

## RESULTS

The findings of the study were presented below and the data were organized under the main themes emerged after the analysis. Results indicated five main themes that are shown on Table 2.

**Table 2: Teacher inefficiency main themes and the number of sub-themes**

	Main themes	Number of subthemes
Teacher Inefficiency	Insufficient teacher education	7
	Lack of variety	5
	Limited teacher skill	6
	Lack of motivation	8
	Teacher exhaustion	4
	Total	30

### 1. Main Theme: Insufficient Teacher Education

Insufficient teacher education emerged as a leading factor for the teacher inefficiency in analyzing the data and six sub-themes constituted this main theme. Sub-themes can be seen on the Table 3.

**Table 3: Insufficient teacher education sub-themes**

	Sub-themes	f
insufficient teacher education	Insufficient teacher pre-service education	7
	Teacher unwillingness for professional development	6
	Low quality educational meetings in holidays	4
	Schools don't benefit from inspectors sufficiently	3
	Teacher job analysis	2
	Lack of private teacher training high schools	1

Insufficient pre-service education is the most cited theme emerged in the data analysis. 7 of the participants stated that the pre-service education is insufficient and it leads teacher inefficiency. One of the participants stated: "*I believe teachers are not well trained in pre-service education and in practicum, and it leads to teacher inefficiency*". The other participants also stated the same things about pre-service education.

Teachers should be life-long learners for their professional development. 6 of the participants

stated that many of the teachers don't develop themselves for their pedagogical, professional and individual progress. One commented: "*teachers are reluctant about their professional development; most of them don't read books or join some seminars and trainings after graduation.*"

In Turkey schools arrange educational meetings for the same class level teachers focusing on their instructional methods, strategies and materials. Teachers are expected to work and study collaboratively in these meetings to teach students better and use quality instructional materials. But 4 participants reported that these meetings are seen as a time consuming event and teachers don't take it seriously. One stated: "*Because these meetings are not at high quality, teachers are inefficient.*"

The other problem which has been seen by the participants is that teachers and school administrators do not benefit from inspectors sufficiently. Inspectors are expected to teach and train the teachers well, find solutions to the problems teachers face and guide them for better instruction. But the formal relations between teacher and inspector don't allow this, or the quality of the instructor prevents this. Inspectors should guide teachers about their professional development and instructional ability.

How can we say a teacher is insufficient? How will we assess the efficiency of the teacher? Mostly in western countries teachers are assessed by the student success in national or international level exams. In Turkey teachers are not assessed like this, school principals assess teachers from time to time. But to evaluate the teacher efficiency some job analysis should be done, one participant reported in this study.

One of the participants mentioned teacher-training high schools. Now in Turkey there is no teacher training high schools, only the state schools train high school students as a prospective teacher candidates. The participant thinks that establishing teacher-training high schools will lead a competition about these schools and the quality will increase, so the number of the quality students who will prefer the faculty of education will increase.

### 2. Main Theme: Lack of Variety

Insufficient teacher education emerged as a leading factor for the teacher inefficiency in analyzing the data and six sub-themes constituted

this main theme. Sub-themes can be seen on the Table 3.

This theme consisted of 4 sub-themes and can be seen on the Table 4. These themes are: 1. Teachers are not graduates of popular universities, 2. Teachers are local people, 3. Teachers at the same region mostly graduated from the same university, 4. Lack of change in working places

**Table 4: Lack of variety sub themes**

	Themes	f
Lack of variety	Teachers are not graduated from popular universities	3
	Teachers are local people at the same region mostly graduated from the same university	3
	Lack of change in working places	2
		1

This study is carried out in the southeast region of Turkey. The popular universities of Turkey are mostly located in big cities. Therefore 3 participants think that, teachers are not graduated from popular (quality) universities, so their quality is at low level. Graduates of popular universities mostly work in their regions and so the quality teachers don't want to work at his region of Turkey. One of the participants stated: "Because our city is located at the south-east region of Turkey, the newly graduated teachers from popular universities don't want to come here, and mostly we have the low-level university graduates and this leads to lack of variety, all the teachers quality seems at ordinary level. If we had a high and low quality teachers, a heterogenic community, teachers' efficiency would increase.

The participants state that their teachers are mostly local people; they have the same culture and tradition with the students. That seems opportunity for enhancing quality but that teachers are coming from the same city or region leads them to have similar thoughts, it prevents the variety of thoughts, variety of instructional strategies and evaluation. And some educators think that it lowers the educational quality.

Two participants stated that because most teachers have graduated from the same university, it leads an organizational culture in which everybody has the same thoughts. Diversity in an organization creates a rich organizational culture and so the teachers in this environment will develop themselves and show high performance.

There is lack of change in working places for teachers in Gaziantep. So one participant stated:

"Because teachers don't relocate to the other schools, by the time passes they get used to the school culture and become reluctant to change. Changing the schools for teachers opens a new window to them, new colleagues and new culture makes them willing and curious to the development and change".

### 3. Main Theme: Limited Teacher Skill

Limited teacher skill is emerged from the study as an important theme for the teacher inefficiency (see Table 5) and involves 4 sub-theme called 1. Authentic and productive teacher scantiness, 2. Lack of teaching experience, 3. Low capacity of teachers, 4. Low skills of teachers.

**Table 5: Limited teacher skill sub-themes**

	Themes	f
Limited Teacher Skill	Authentic and productive teacher scantiness	5
	Lack of teaching experience	5
	Low capacity of teachers	4
	Low skills of teachers	3
		1

Authentic and productive teacher scantiness is the main sub-theme emerged in the main theme of limited teacher skill. Five of the participants stated this as a problem for teacher's inefficiency. One stated: "Our teachers are not qualified, productive and creative". So we can conclude that to be an efficient teacher, one must be productive and creative. If the teacher is creative and productive he will be a lifelong learner and become reluctant to develop himself.

Lack of teaching experience is another issue participants stated in this study. Four of the participants commented on this issue. One reported: "Our teachers lack teaching experience, because many of them have just graduated from the university". So, teachers who have more teaching experience are more efficient.

One of the main issues in teacher inefficiency reported in this study is the low capacity of the teachers. That means faculty of education accepts low-scored students in the national students evaluation exams. The students who have more capacity prefer to study Law, Engineering or Medicine schools because of higher income. Besides after graduation, students have to enter a Public Staff Selection Examination to get into a government job. Teachers who can't pass

this examination mostly prefer schools. So, another issue emerges that the low-quality teachers get into job in these schools.

The other issue is the lack of teaching ability for the schools. That means teachers are not chosen by an interview and can't be seen on task when they are nominated as a teacher. Teaching profession requires not only computational and verbal ability but also require personal qualifications. One of the participants reported this: "Some people want to be a teacher even when they do not have personal qualifications for this profession". So, it can be concluded that personal qualifications are essential for becoming a teacher.

#### 4. Main Theme: Lack of Motivation

Lack of motivation is another issue emerged as a main theme in this study (see Table 6), and have 5 sub-scales called 1. Teachers don't like teaching profession, 2. Lack of self-devotion, 3. Teachers don't like school and school management, 4. Lack of reward 5. Doing extra jobs

**Table 6: Lack of motivation sub-themes**

	Themes	f
Lack of Motivation	Teachers don't like teaching profession	7
	Lack of self-devotion	5
	Teachers don't like school and school management	3
	Lack of awarding	3
	Doing extra jobs	1

The mostly cited sub-theme in lack of motivation is that the teachers don't like teaching profession. One of the participants reported: "Teachers don't take pleasure when doing their jobs." The other participant stated: "People do this job only for money, not as their ideal job." So, we can conclude that desire for being teacher and idealism for being good teacher leads to efficiency.

Lack of devotion is another sub-theme emerged under the main theme. One of participants stated: "Teachers don't have adequate devotion and concern to their job". That means if the teachers don't pay attention to the students and sacrifice themselves, their efficiency will decrease.

One of the main issues in teacher inefficiency is that teachers don't like school and school management. One of the participants reported:

"Sometimes some teachers don't adapt to school climate and culture, so they have conflict with the administration." If a teacher has a conflict with the school administration, his organizational commitment will decrease and his efficiency will be lowered.

Three of the participants reported the importance of rewards in efficiency of teachers. One stated: "Every teacher regardless of their working quality gets the same salary. Teachers should be paid according to their performance". So if all the teachers who teaches well or bad gets the same salary, some teachers will not be willing to work hard. But if they are paid according to the performance, teachers will want to work hard and their efficiency will increase.

Doing extra jobs is often seen in Turkish settings for the teachers. That's because of the low salary, and low status. One of the participants stated: "Teachers do extra jobs such as giving special courses, doing another jobs etc.," So doing extra jobs lowers teachers' energy and performance and they become inefficient in their main job.

#### 5. Main Theme: Teacher Exhaustion

Teacher exhaustion is another theme emerged in this study for teacher inefficiency. The sub-themes for this theme are 1. Intimidation, 2. Desire, 3. Stopping personal development and 4. Lack of excitement in teaching. Frequencies about these sub-themes can be seen on the Table 7.

**Table 7: Teacher exhaustion sub-themes**

	Themes	f
Teacher Exhaustion	Themes	f
	Intimidation	5
	Desire	4
	Stopping personal development	2
	Lack of excitement in teaching	2

Intimidation is an important factor in efficiency of teacher. One of the participants stated about intimidation: "Teachers face intimidation in their profession by the time passes". Intimidation is an indicator of exhaustion. In such situations, teachers can not work efficiently.

Teachers lose their desire to teaching profession by the time passes. Sometimes this time is shortened to one year. After working one year in teaching profession, teachers start to lose their

desire to teach. So the teachers become reluctant to teach well in their classes.

Stopping personal development is another issue that teachers face in their work. When the culture or the climate of school does not allow the teacher to develop personally, teachers start to teach or behave in the same manner and it leads to inefficiency.

Lack of excitement in teaching is another issue emerged under this theme. One of the participants stated: "Teachers cannot protect their first day excitement later." That means teachers are very excited when they start to work in first days, but later they lose their excitement and their efficiency decreases.

## DISCUSSION

While the teacher efficiency is very important for school and student success, there is no study, which explores the teacher inefficiency in Turkish settings. Also in international level there are many studies that investigate the teacher efficiency (Luschei 2012; Yeh 2009; Akiri and Ugborugbo 2009) but there are few studies, which investigate teacher inefficiency (Torf and Sessions 2005). We believe that this study will fill the gap in teacher inefficiency.

The quality of pre-service education emerged as an important factor in evaluating the efficiency of teachers. Kavas and Bugay (2009) asked teachers about their pre-service education in their study and most of the respondents reported that their pre-service education is insufficient and there is a lack of practice. Students have their courses mostly theoretically from incompetent lecturers in their pre-service education and this leads them to be inefficient in their profession. Torf and Sessions (2009) studied this subject in USA settings and found that the teachers' inefficiency comes from their lack of content and pedagogical knowledge (planning the lesson, classroom management and communication skills). Studies show that there are significant differences between efficient and inefficient teachers, and these differences contribute important results on the student success (Rivkin et al. 2005; Rockoff 2004).

Metzler and Woessmann (2010) found in their study that one point increase in teacher's content knowledge point results 10 percent increase in student success. Also many researchers found that teacher's pedagogic knowledge effects stu-

dent success positively (Hill et al. 2005; Monk 1994; Schacter and Thum 2004; Rowan et al. 1997). Insufficient pre-service and in-service education such as meetings and inspector training found in this study effects the efficiency of the teachers consistent with the literature.

In lack of variety theme, there are few teachers graduate from popular universities and the low scored students of the faculty of education shows that skilled students mostly prefer medicine, law and engineering schools for better income and status. The same results have found in similar studies investigating the teacher efficiency conducted in USA that successful students mainly prefer to study law and medicine schools for better income and status (Leigh and Mead 2005).

School administrators and vice-administrators indicated that limited teaching ability of the teachers reduces the efficiency. Some researchers found the same results in their study that teacher ability is strongly related with the student success (Darling-Hammond 2000; Rowe 2003).

Lack of motivation is the main theme emerged in this study that includes sub-themes that teachers do not like the teaching profession and they don't self-sacrifice for their students. The negative feelings and attitudes according to the teaching profession of the teachers decrease the efficiency. Some studies show that positive attitudes of the teachers to their profession make them more creative and efficient (Cakir 2005; Kirbiyik 1995; Capa and Cil 2000). According to Wang (2010) the organizational commitment of teachers increases the efficiency while the pressure decreases it.

Exhaustion is one of the main causes of low job satisfaction and efficiency. Some studies show that exhaustion is directly related with efficiency of the teachers (Maslach 1982; Kyriacou 2006; Randall and Scott 1988)

One of the interesting and important results of this study is to pay the teachers according to their performance. USA government increased the salary of the teachers to enhance the performance, but contrary to it, the performance of the teachers decreased (Leigh and Mead 2005). Some researchers found that charging according to the performance would increase the efficiency of the teachers (Springer and Gardner 2010; Leigh and Mead 2005). But the main issue here is to find an effective way to charge the teachers correctly.

## CONCLUSION

The quality of pre-service education emerged as an important factor in evaluating the efficiency of teachers. In lack of variety theme, there are few teachers graduating from popular universities and the low scored students of the faculty of education shows that skilled students mostly prefer medicine, law and engineering schools for better income and status.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Ultimately this study shows that education policy makers should consider payment according to the performance in schools for better student success. This will increase the qualifications of the teachers as well as school success. Schools should seek solutions for the newly qualified teachers who have insufficient knowledge and skills. Also, policy makers and university administrations should increase the quality of university instruction and practicum. Teaching profession should be made attractive for skillful students for the future of the education and for the nation. Schools also should be evaluated for their productiveness regularly.

This study could be done with national level and using other scales. Also, this study could be extended with different participants.

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