

Examination of the Reasons for Participation and Satisfaction Levels of Trainees at Public Education Centers: A Case Study on Hozat Public Education Center

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to examine the reasons for participation in courses that are offered by public education centers within the scope of lifelong learning, and the level of satisfaction of trainees, focusing on Hozat Public Education Center. Since the study aims at determining the reasons why trainees take part in the courses as well as their levels of satisfaction objectively, it was designed on the basis of relational survey model which is a quantitative research model. The population of the research consists of 767 trainees that participated in the courses between the educational term of 2021-2022 (those courses were offered between 01.01.2022-30.06.2022), and the sample consists of 352 trainees some of whom were reachable, and the others that could be selected by simple random sampling method. The data was collected through “Trainee Satisfaction Questionnaire” and “Questionnaire on Reasons for Course Participation” that the Ministry of National Education offers to the trainees in public education centers. As the measurement scores demonstrated normal distributions, parametric tests were used to analyze data. Pearson’s correlation coefficient was used to determine the relationship between scores from the surveys on the reasons for participation in courses and satisfaction levels of trainees. Analysis showed that there was a low level of positive correlation between the scores of surveys on participation reasons and satisfaction levels of the trainees (Crobach’s Alpha=0.29). There was not a meaningful correlation between the scores of the trainees’ satisfaction with the courses and the reasons for attending the courses and trainees’ sex, educational levels, professions, or occupations. According to the findings, men and women participate in courses that the Public Education Center offers at a similar rate. However, the satisfaction levels of men and women with the courses, and their thoughts on participation reasons are slightly below average. This finding clearly indicates that public education centers should be enhanced and supported in line with their aims. **Keywords:** Education, adult education, lifelong learning, public education, Hozat.

Introduction

Although its origin is controversial, it is safe to say that public education is a type of education as old as human history. First humans who reflected what they learned by doing, living, and making observations in their natural environment on their lives, could establish a new type of learning based on regularized environments by their successors over time. As a matter of fact, it became possible to provide formal and informal education in organized environments, under the supervision and control of governments only with the Industrial Revolution, which occurred in the 1760s. Public education, which was perceived as a religion-based educational process in the West until the 1700s, has evolved into a regular and organized vocational education process for adults and out-of-school people in later periods. Public education, the main purpose of which is to contribute to the social and cultural development as well as enhancing individuals’ skills and prompting them to acquire professions, also carries out its tasks more efficiently and effectively in accordance with up-to-date conditions. (Celep, 2003; Tezcan, 2012). In the case of Turkish educational history, it is evident that informal education has always been important and continued without interruption until today. Public education has served many similar and different purposes throughout the years, and it gained a new objective after the establishment of the Republic. In other words, with the establishment of the Republic, the demands of the new political system increased the significance of public education. (Yıldız, A., Uysal, M. 2013). It is evident that informal education was carried out with the help of institutional entities ranging from Village Chambers, Nation’s schools, Evening Art Schools to Community Centers, courses for teachers in villages, as well as courses for illiterate soldiers (Ali Schools) and Apprenticeship Education Centers. (Geray, 2002; Celep, C. 2003; MEB, 2006). Today, public education is conducted by the

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General Directorate of Apprenticeship and Informal Education, and it was included into the scope of General Directorate of Lifelong Learning by the decree law on the Organization and Duties of the Ministry of National Education dated 25/8/2011 and numbered 652 (MEB HBÖGM, 2022).

A total of 6 million 317 thousand 933 trainees participated in the courses that have quite comprehensive and numerous institutional entities in almost all cities and are offered by 998 public education centers as well as 27 Turkish Traditional Arts Institutes. (MEB, 2022). The main inquiry about the courses that public education centers offer is not the number of participants, but rather the extent to which public education centers fulfill the trainees' expectations from the courses. Therefore, the competence level of public education centers, which undertake the mission of public education under the General Directorate of Lifelong Learning, is critical for research studies focusing on the extent to which expectation levels of trainees are met by these courses.

Despite the fact that there are few studies on the subject, it is also possible to find many prominent studies. One such example is the study conducted on the public education center located in Erzin district of Hatay by Peker et al. (2011). The population of this study includes 450 trainees that registered to the courses offered by Erzin Public Education Center during the 2020-2021 academic year, and the sample consists of 372 from these trainees. According to the findings of the research that was designed on the basis of a quantitative research model, it was shown that trainees' reasons for participation affected their level of satisfaction with the courses. Additionally, the research study made it evident that the major reason for the trainees to attend these courses was to receive the required documents for job applications. Another study was conducted by Taşkın et al. (2022) on Bandırma Public Education Center. The sample of this study, which was designed on the basis of quantitative methods, was 10 trainees that attended the courses in the 2022-2023 academic year by person. According to the findings of the study, trainees were content with the courses in the public education center. Coşkun (2012) examined the expectation and satisfaction levels of the attendees in the case of courses offered by Tuzla Public Education Center in the 2011-2012 academic year. The population of this research consisted of 950 trainees, and the sample consisted of 537 trainees that continued the courses. The data of this research study, which employed the quantitative research approach, was collected with two questionnaires to determine expectations and satisfaction levels of the attendees. According to the findings, the majority of the attendees had the following demographic characteristics: women, aged 36 or above, married with children, primary school graduates, members of middle income group. Trainees stated that they attended the courses mostly "to make changes in their daily lives" and "to improve their individual traits", and least because of "the desire to be more appreciated within their social environment". With respect to the satisfaction levels, the highest ranked questionnaire statement was "Do you think you would consider recommending the courses to your relatives and others?", while the lowest ranked one was the statement "Did you have a hard time understanding the concepts that were explained to you during the courses?". In his doctoral dissertation, Tezcan (2012) aimed to determine the motivational orientations of the trainees that attended the courses offered by the public education center in the 2010-2011 academic year in center of Muğla, based on the Cyril O. Houle's classification of adult learners. As a result of the analysis of 562 questionnaires received from the questionnaires applied to 989 trainees registered in the course, goal-oriented adult learners attended the courses to obtain certificates and for professional concerns, activity-oriented adult learners attended to meet new people and escape from their routines, learning-oriented adult learners attended only to learn. Özengi (2017) aimed to assess the effects of the courses offered by Amasra Public Education Center on the trainees in terms of physical condition, educational setting, and lifelong learning. The population of the study, which was conducted in the 2015-2016 academic year, consisted of 2022 trainees and the sample consisted of 150 out of 2022. The study detected a significant difference on the factors such as physical condition, education process, and lifelong learning. The study also found that sex variable is only an important factor in terms of physical condition. The study did not detect any evidence for differences in terms of physical condition of the public education center, education process, lifelong learning dimensions caused by age or marital status. Acun's study (2015) examines the case of Kastamonu city. The study addresses the expectations and satisfaction levels of the trainees that attended vocational and technical courses offered by the Kastamonu Public Education Center in the 2013-2014 academic year. The sample of the study consists of the 402 trainees from all 8206 trainees that attended 390 courses offered by the Public Education Center. The analysis of the data collected through surveys on "Reasons for Participation" and "Satisfaction Levels" showed that the least influential factor in participation was "Decreasing domestic spendings by meeting some needs at home". The most influential factor was "the desire to be more useful at work and for the social circle." The trainees stated that they were satisfied with the outcome of courses, while the results of surveys indicated that trainees were least satisfied with the insufficient number of cultural and social activities included in courses offered by the public education center.

Research ethics committee approval

Ethical approval for this research study was granted by the Non-Interventional Research Ethics Committee of Munzur University Rectorate by the Decision made in the Session Date 28.04.2022, Date and Number 10.05.2022-51987.

The objective and Importance of Research

Self-development, active citizenship and employability are all fundamental parts of a whole. In this context, the link between education and work life can be quite meaningful. The need for a desired number of competent labor forces able to address expectations of the market made it imperative for the business world and educational institutions to collaborate. Europe seems to have achieved this, although partially. In this regard, Turkey has taken important steps, and has employed certain educational institutions and conferred some responsibilities on these institutions. Public education centers are one of the most prominent of these institutions (HBÖGM, 2018). As a consequence, the quality of services public education centers provide gain importance. Despite various methods and tests available to assess the quality of education public education centers provide, the most valid one is to refer to opinions of individuals/trainees who receive services from public education centers. In this context, within the scope of researcher’s opportunities, the aim of the research was to examine the reasons for participation in and their satisfaction levels with courses offered by Hozat Public Education Center. The research aims to answer questions below:

1. What is the participation rate in courses offered by the public education center?
2. What is the satisfaction level of trainees with the courses opened by the public education center?
3. Is there any meaningful correlation between the reasons for participation and satisfaction levels of the trainees?
4. Does the satisfaction level of a trainee differ due to factors such as sex, age, marital status, educational status, profession and participation in previous courses opened by the public education center?

Methodology

The model of the Research

The research utilizes the correlational survey design from qualitative research approaches. The correlational survey model is a survey model that aims to investigate relationships between two or more variables. The correlational survey model is used to determine whether variables change together, and if they do, the model can be used to observe the nature and direction of the change (Karasar, 2015). In other words, the model makes it possible to detect change between two or more variables requiring the correlational survey. The fact that numerically measurable data requires statistical analysis comprises the quantitative aspect of the research. (Karasar, 2015; Büyüköztürk, Ş. ve Ark. 2011; Ekiz, 2020).

The Universe and Sample

The universe of the research consisted of trainees that attended courses offered by the Public Education Center in Hozat district of Tunceli between 01.01.2022 and 20.08.2022. The sample of the study consisted of the trainees that could be reached among these trainees. Between the dates 01.01.2022 and 30.06.2022, the number of trainees that attended the courses offered by Hozat Public Education Center was 767 (Table 1). Although the number of individuals comprising the sample was estimated to be at least 246 based on calculations on the number of trainees in the universe, 352 trainees, whose survey results were valid, were included in the sample. (Sekeran, 2003; Bartlett, Kortlik ve Higgins, 2001; Yazıcıoğlu ve Erdoğan, 2004; Hum ve Leow, 1996; Bal ve Gundry,1999).

Table 1: Number of Courses and Trainees at Hozat Public Education Center (01.01.2022-30.06.2022)

Years (Course Period)	Number of Courses	Number of Trainees	Female Trainees	Male Trainees
01.01.2022-30.06.2022	38	767	316	451

If the number of individuals is given, the calculation of the sample with 95% reliability ($\alpha=0.05$ the level of significance) is as follows:

$$n = Nt^2 pq / d^2(N-1) + t^2pq = 15.555/633$$

$$n = 246$$

In this formula:

- N: Number of individuals in the universe (767)
- n: Number of individuals to be included in the sample (?)
- p: Frequency of the examined event (probability) (0.20)
- q: Frequency (probability) of non-occurrence of the examined event (0.80)

t: The theoretical value obtained from the table t at the certain degrees of freedom and specified error margin (1.96)

d: The desired \pm deviation according to the frequency of the event (Sekeran, 2003; Bartlett, Kortlik, & Higgins, 2001; Yazıcıoğlu & Erdoğan, 2004; Hum & Leow, 1996; Bal & Gundry, 1999). $767/352= 45\%$ values.

Accordingly, although the sample number was calculated as 246, 352 of 550 surveys that were responded were found to be suitable for analysis. Table 2 illustrates the descriptive statistics.

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Personal Data of the Sample Group : (N=352)

Ranking No	Variables	Features	N	%
	Sex	Female	220	62,5
		Male	132	37,5
	Marital Status	Married	180	51,1
		Single	159	45,2
		Other	13	3,7
	Age	18-22	56	15,9
		23-27	92	26,1
		28-33	73	20,7
		34-39	61	17,3
		40-45	43	12,2
		46-50	17	4,8
		51+ above	10	2,8
	Profession or Job	Public employee	80	22,7
		Retired	150	42,6
		Self-employed	70	19,9
		Housewife	18	5,1
		Unemployed	30	8,5
		Private sector employee	4	1,1
	Income	1000 TL and below	51	14,5
		Between 1001 – 3000 TL	76	21,6
		Between 3001 TL -5000 TL	120	34,1
		Between 5001-7000 TL	47	13,4
		Between 7001-9000 TL	28	8,0
		9001-above	25	7,1
	Education	Primary school	5	1,4
		Middle school	65	18,5
		Highschool	128	36,4
		Associate's degree	81	23,0
		Bachelor's degree	51	14,5
		Postgraduate degree	1	,3
	Indicate the type of course you are currently enrolled in	Vocational or Technical	245	69,6
		General (social / cultural)	107	30,4
	Have you taken any other courses offered by the Public Education Center?	Yes	241	68,5
		No	111	31,5
	Number of children	1	145	41,2
		2	195	55,4
		3	8	2,3
		4	3	,9
		5	1	,3

As Table 2 illustrates, 62.5% of the trainees participating in the study were female and 37.5% were male. In terms of their marital status, 51.1% are married, 45.2% are single and 3.7% have other marital status (divorced or widowed). Regarding the age variable; 15.9% of the trainees were between the ages of 18-22,

26.1% between the ages of 23-27, 20.7% between the ages of 28-33, 17.3% between the ages of 34-39, 4.8% between the ages of 46-50 and 2.8% between the ages of 51 and above. In terms of their professions, 22.7% of the respondents were public sector employees, 42.6% were retired, 19.9% were self-employed, 5.1% were housewives, 8.5% were unemployed and 1.1% were employed in the private sector. With regard to their income level, 14.5% of the participants had a monthly income of 1000 TL or less, 21.6% had an income of 1001-3000 TL, 34.5% had an income of 3001-5000 TL, 13.4% had an income of 5001-7000 TL, 8.0% had an income of 7001-9000 TL and 7.5% had an income of 9001 TL or above. Concerning their educational levels, 1.4% had primary school education, 18.5% had secondary school education, 36.4% had high school education, 23.0% had associate's degree, 14.5% had bachelor's degree and 0.3% had postgraduate degree. According to the type of course; 69.62% attended Vocational and Technical courses and 30.4% attended General (Social-Cultural) courses. When asked whether they enrolled in any other course offered by the Public Education Center, 68.5% of those surveyed stated that they did, while 31.5% indicated that they had not participated before. 41.2% of the participants have 1 child, 55.4% have 2 children, 2.3% have 3 children, 0.9% have 4 children and 0.3% have 1 child.

Data Collection Tools

The data for the research was collected from the questionnaire consisting of the three parts, (1) “Personal Information Form”, (2) “Reasons for Participation in the Courses”, (3) “Satisfaction Levels of the Trainee Survey”.

Questionnaire on the Reasons for Participation in the Courses

The questionnaire “Reasons for Participation in the Courses” is prepared and implied by the Ministry of National Education to detect the reasons why the trainees attend courses offered by Public Education Centers. The questionnaire has been used in similar research studies in various years. For instance, Selçuk (2021) used the questionnaire that was published in the Ministry of National Education Communique Journal, Issue: 2645. Likewise, Coşkun (2012) also utilized the questionnaire in the thesis “Evaluation of Expectations and Satisfaction Levels of Trainees Attending the Courses Opened by Public Education Centers (Case of Tuzla)”. The questionnaire consists of 16 items. The questionnaire comprises Likert Scale questions, answers to which are organized as “yes” (3), “partially” (2), “no” (1), based on a triple Likert scale.

The Cronbach Alpha value was found to be 0.737 after the reliability analysis Selçuk conducted for the “Reasons for Participation in the Courses Questionnaire”, while Peker et al. (2021) calculated it as 0.879. The Cronbach’s Alpha value for this research was calculated as .892 after the reliability analysis, and experts’ views for the construct validity were deemed sufficient.

Questionnaire on the Satisfaction Levels of the Trainees

“The Questionnaire on Satisfaction Levels of the Trainees” is a likert scale survey that is applied to the trainees that attended courses at Public Education Centers, consisting of 18 items. Two of the questions are negative, while the rest are affirmative. An answer scale consisting of answers “yes” (3), “partially” (2), and “no” (3) was organized. The Cronbach Alpha value of the questionnaires was calculated as 0.742 by Coşkun (2020), and as 0.888 by Peker et al. (2021). For this research, Cronbach’s Alpha value was calculated as .846. Therefore, experts’ views were deemed sufficient for the questionnaire’s content validity.

Data Analysis

Before deciding which statistical methods to utilize in the data analysis, Skewness and Kurtosis values were checked to detect whether scores received from the questionnaires were normally distributed. This value was calculated as Skewness=.619-.130; Kurtosis =.676-.259 for the “Reasons for Participation in the Courses”, and as Skewness=.695-.130; Kurtosis =.456-.259 for the “Satisfaction Levels of the Trainees”. The analysis has shown that both questionnaire scores were distributed normally (Büyüköztürk, 2002:40). Therefore, parametric tests were used together with descriptive statistics to analyze data. Additionally, the below interval was taken into consideration during the evaluation of the scores obtained from the questionnaire (Tablo: 3). Accordingly, if the mean of the responses to a question is close to 3, it is interpreted as a high level of agreement. If the mean of the responses is close to 1, it is interpreted as a low level of agreement with the questionnaire items (Özdamar, 2004).

Table 3: Reference Interval Values When Evaluating Scale Scores

Options	Scores	Score Interval	Evaluation
Unimportant/No	1	1.00-1.66	Lower
Important/Yes	2	2.34-3.00	Medium
Partially/Partially	3	1.67-2.33	Low

Findings

In this section of the research study, findings related to the sub-problems are presented. Accordingly:

Findings related to the first sub-problem

The first sub-problem of the study was described as “What is the agreement level of the trainees with the reasons for participation in the courses opened by the Public Education Center?”. The descriptive statistics of the opinions on the reasons for the participation of the trainees in the courses opened by the Public Education Center are presented in Table 4.

Table 4.: Descriptive statistics of the reasons for the participation of trainees in the courses opened by the Public Education Center (N=352).

Item No	Questionnaire Items	N	X	SS
kk14	Desire to be more appreciated in my environment	352	1,75	,800
kk16	Need to decrease domestic spendings by meeting some of my needs or my family’s needs	352	1,65	,792
kk13	Merely out of curiosity	352	1,75	,762
kk10	The fact that the course I am attending is appreciated in my environment	352	1,56	,737
kk3	To get rid of the stress and depressive feelings	352	1,53	,716
kk12	Desire to prepare for a new job	352	1,49	,708
kk8	Desire to acquire needed skills and knowledge to be able to find a second job for extra income along with my current job	352	1,57	,701
kk15	The fact that I need the document I will obtain when the course ends	352	1,48	,687
kk1	Desire to meet new people and make new friends	352	1,43	,672
kk11	To acquire a profession or improve my current profession	352	1,44	,664
kk4	To catch up with the fast change in the community	352	1,47	,631
kk9	Desire to be more beneficial for my family, environment and the institution I am working for	352	1,38	,625
kk2	To become more healthy physically and mentally	352	1,35	,600
kk6	Desire to make changes in the daily life	352	1,38	,596
kk5	Desire to make use of my spare time (Hobby)	352	1,39	,584
kk7	To improve my personal characteristics	352	1,31	,536
For all reasons		352	1,4950	,41986

As illustrated in the Table 4, the trainees agreed most with the reasons for the participation in the courses opened by the Public Education Center “Desire to be more appreciated in my environment” and “Merely out of curiosity” with a mean of 1.75. They agreed with the statement “The need to decrease domestic spendings by meeting some of my needs or my family’s needs” at the second highest level with a mean of 1.65. The third highest level of agreement was “The desire to acquire needed skills and knowledge to be able to find a second job for extra income along with my current job” with a mean of 1.57.

The lowest level agreement with a reason for participation in the course was “To improve my personal characteristics” with a mean of 1.31, the second lowest level of agreement was with “The desire to make changes in my daily life” with a mean of 1.38, and the third lowest one was “To make use of my spare time (hobby)” with a mean of 1.39. However, when evaluated as a whole, it is shown that the trainees agree with the reasons for attending the course at a low or lower level ($\bar{X}=1.50$).

Findings related to the second sub-problem

The second sub-problem of the study was described as “What are the levels of satisfaction with the courses opened by the Public Education Center?”.

The descriptive statistics of the satisfaction levels of the trainees with the courses opened by the Public Education Center are set out in the Table 5 (N=352).

Table 5: Descriptive statistics of trainees' satisfaction level with the courses offered by the Public Education Center (N=352).

Item No	Questionnaire Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
km9	Were there any situations that made you uncomfortable in our center?	352	2,41	,805
km8	Did you find it difficult to understand what was taught in the course?	352	2,38	,786
km19	Do you find the equipment needed for the course sufficient?	352	1,60	,744
km10	Do you think that the courses offered by the Public Education Center meet the expectations of the public?	352	1,53	,715
km20	Do you think the education you are receiving will address your needs?	352	1,53	,704
km7	Does public education support cultural and social needs of the society?	352	1,51	,667
km14	Are there sufficient social and cultural activities at the Public Education Center?	352	1,46	,657
km1	Did the education you received at the Public Education Center released your goal?	352	1,45	,648
km5	Apart from the center's administrators and trainers, did other staff help you to facilitate your work?	352	1,45	,648
km11	Will the education that you received at the Public Education Center contribute to your work life?	352	1,42	,644
km13	Do you think that the evaluation of the exams at the Public Education Center is fair?	352	1,38	,637
km12	Are announcements about issues of interest to trainees made in a timely manner at the Public Education Center?	352	1,37	,618
km16	Do the administrators of the Public Education Center visit the classrooms and do they work to overcome any shortcomings and problems?	352	1,34	,601
km18	Do you think the Public Education Center offers the education in line with your expectations?	352	1,35	,594
km6	Did you observe that the administrators and the trainers work hard enough to make the center function better?	352	1,39	,570
km17	Would you like to attend any other courses or activities offered by the Public Education Center?	352	1,31	,564
km4	At the end of this training, do you think that the trainers working in the Public Education Center are sufficient?	352	1,29	,552
km15	Do principal and deputy principal pay attention to problems arising from the courses or the trainees?	352	1,30	,551
km3	Do you think Public Education Centers follow the changes and developments in education and training?	352	1,36	,532
km2	Would you recommend Public Education Centers to your relatives and other people?	352	1,23	,466
For all		352	1,5041	,32347

When the satisfaction level descriptive statistics are examined in Table 5, the trainees agreed with the statement "Were there any situations that made you uncomfortable in our center?" with a mean of 2.41 at the highest level. Another way of interpreting this is that the trainees did not encounter any situation that disturbed them in the Public Education Center during the course and this situation was satisfactory. The second highest level of satisfaction was with the statement "Did you find it difficult to understand what was taught in the course?" with a mean of 2.38. This finding also suggests that the trainees were satisfied that the learning materials offered during the course were presented in a way that they understood. The third highest level of satisfaction was with the statement "Do you find the equipment needed for the course sufficient?" with a mean of 1.60. In other words, the trainees were satisfied with the adequacy and features of the tools and equipment provided in the courses they took.

Among the statements of satisfaction with the course, the lowest level with a mean of 1.23 was the statement "Do you think that Public Education Centers follow the changes and developments in education and training?", the second lowest level with a mean of 1.36 was the statement "Do you think that Public Education Centers follow the

changes and developments related to education and training?" and the third lowest level with a mean of 1.30 was the statement "Do principal and deputy principal pay attention to problems arising from the courses or the trainees?". In other words, they expressed their dissatisfaction with the fact that the management was not responsive enough to the problems faced by the trainees at the Public Education Center and keeping up with the changes and development.

Findings related to the third sub-problem

The third sub-problem is described as "Is there a significant relationship between the reasons for participating in the courses opened by the Public Education Center and the level of satisfaction with the courses?" and the findings are compared in Table 6.

Table 6: The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Analysis Results of the scale scores of the questionnaires “The Reasons for Participation in the Courses” and “The Satisfaction Levels of the Trainees”

Variables		REASONS FOR PARTICIPATION	FOR SATISFACTION
REASONS FOR PARTICIPATION	Pearson Correlation	1	,289**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000
	N	352	352
	Pearson Correlation	,289**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	
	N	352	352

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to the categorization of Cohen, the analysis indicates "0,10-0,29=low, 0,30-0,49=moderate and 0,50-1,0=high" correlation, while according to Büyüköztürk’s categorization the results are classified as "0,0-0,29=low, 0,30-0,69=moderate, 70-1,00=high" correlation. These two different views on the correlation levels were included in the evaluation. Table 6 presents the correlation coefficient as 0.289 for the given data. Since the significance rate is less than 0.05 (Sig. 2-tailed), the relationship between the satisfaction level and the reasons for participation is significant (p<.05). The coefficient of determination was calculated by squaring the correlation coefficient (R2) as R2=0.08. According to this finding, it was shown that approximately 0.08 (% 08) of the satisfaction level variable could be explained with the participation in the courses variable. This rate is quite low in terms of the correlation between the two variables. In other words, the scores between the reasons for participation in the courses and satisfaction levels with the course variables have a very low correlation (r=0.229). This finding can be interpreted to indicate that there is not an observable relationship between the average scores of the reasons for participation in the courses and satisfaction levels with the courses (Büyüköztürk, 2002).

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

Discussion

Although its origin is controversial, adult education in Turkish Educational History dates back to the Seljuk and Ottoman Empire periods. In the Seljuk and Ottoman Empire period, Madrasas and Enderun Schools, shopkeeper organizations, guilds, armed forces and some voluntary organizations provided training for adults (Kurt, 2000). After the establishment of the republic, necessary education for adults was provided with the help of Public Branches, Public Schools, People’s Houses, Village Institutes, Public Training Centers and Evening Courses starting first with the Nation Schools in 1928 (Geray, 2002; Okçabol, 1994) in the process of building the new social structure, especially with literacy rates (Gülbitti, 2020). Currently, in the light of the social conditions transformed by the developing and changing technology as well as taking the EU acquis into consideration, adult education is provided by the institutional bodies named as life-long learning, continuing education, continuing learning, etc.

Public Education Centers are the prominent adult education institutions. In almost every period of the history of the Republic, Public Education Centers have maintained their importance as institutional structures for adults, and as a matter of fact, while the Ministry of National Education has brought all institutions and organizations providing education services for adults together under the roof of the General Directorate of Lifelong Learning, public education centers have managed to maintain their place.

The founding principles of Public Education Centers first appeared in 1951, and in 1952 public education centers were known by the name Public Education Bureaus within the body of the Ministry of Education, later in 1953 they continued to operate as Public Education Rooms in villages and small towns (Kurt, 2000; Kılıç, 1981). In 1960, these bodies evolved into Public Education Centers under the General Directorate of Public Education, a body of the Ministry of Education at that time. (Lokmanoglu et al., 1999). As of 2011, the General Directorate of

Lifelong Learning continues its activities through the sub-bodies such as Maturation Institutes, Open Plan Schools and Public Education Centers (Kaya, 2015; Yıldız, 2012).

At the current stage, the continuing aspect of education impelled countries to take measures. Thus, while Europe has realized continuous learning, which is conceptualized as lifelong learning, at a rate of 12.5, while this rate is 2.9 in Turkey (Kaya, 2015).

A key point to be highlighted here within the scope of this research is that the services provided by Public Education Centers target adults. As a matter of fact, the target group of Hozat Public Education Center in this sense is adult education. While all segments of society are the target audience of lifelong learning, adult education refers to education that targets only one audience within the scope of lifelong learning. Thus, considering adult education as the basis of the educational services of the Public Education Center is also taken as the limitation of the research.

It can be said that adult education, which was mentioned as a very important issue after the establishment of the Republic, is still continuing to be addressed by establishing institutions such as "public schools", "public training centers", "people's houses" and "nation schools". For several reasons, in addition to acquiring a job and profession, literacy, knowledge and skills needed in some areas, it is seen that adults are in need of attending the courses opened by Public Education Centers in their residences.

The satisfaction of the trainees with the courses opened by the Public Education Centers is as crucial as the reasons for the participation of the trainees in the courses opened by the Public Education Centers. Examining the findings related to the sub-problems of the research conducted in this context, it is possible to see the fact that the level of the trainees' agreement with the reasons for attending the courses and their satisfaction with the courses are not at the expected level. This finding could be viewed as a significant assessment that calls for the enhancement of Public Education Centers to become more efficient institutions in the direction of their aims.

As a matter of fact, the reasons for participating in the courses opened by the Public Education Center, the trainees agreed with the statements "To be appreciated more in my environment" and "Just out of curiosity" at the highest level with a mean of 1.75, while at the lowest level they agreed with the statement "To improve my personal characteristics" with a mean of 1.31. Nevertheless, based on an overall evaluation, it was observed that the trainees agreed with the reasons for attending the course at a low or lower level ($\bar{X}=1.50$). In Akkiraz's (1987) study, finding a job and making use of spare time were found to be the reasons for trainees to attend courses at the highest level, while in Sağlam and Korkmaz's (2019) study, reasons for developing professional knowledge and skills, income, finding a job, social relations, personal relaxation and satisfaction were detected as the reasons agreed at the highest level.

The trainees agreed with the statements, questioning their satisfaction levels with the courses opened by the Public Education Center, "Were there any situations that made you uncomfortable in our center?" and "Did you find it difficult to understand what was taught in the course?" with a mean of 2.41 at the highest level. When similar research findings are examined, it is seen that the level of satisfaction with the courses is quite low in Peker et al. (2021). Particularly, the physical features of the classrooms, the length of the course durations, poor maintenance of machinery, tools and equipment, etc. were seen to lead to disappointment in the trainees.

When the findings of trainees' reasons for the participation and satisfaction levels according to sex are compared with similar research findings, it is seen that male trainees participating in the courses opened by the Hozat Public Education Center agreed with the survey items at a higher level with an average of ($\bar{X}=1.65$) than female trainees ($\bar{X}=1.40$). In Aktaş and Yolcu's (2020) study, when female participants ($\bar{X}=2.43$) were compared to male participants ($\bar{X}=2.08$), the reasons for participating in training activities in HEMs were higher on the basis of economic reasons. In Çoşkun's (2020) study, female and male trainees agreed with the reasons for attending courses at approximately the same level.

Conclusion

Adult education is as old as the history of humanity. The fact that adult education is still of key importance is a done of its significance. This is due to the individual's ability to adapt to new social conditions created by advances and changes in science, technic, and technology. Public or adult education, which used to be offered to certain age groups for certain periods, became a more integrated and efficient type of education, before as a part of informal education and today as a part of continuing or lifelong learning. The importance of public education has become recognized in Turkey as a type of education for all segments of society. The concept of lifelong learning has been institutionalized as the General Directorate of Lifelong Learning under the Ministry of Education and this institution offers education for all segments of society with different institutional bodies. Public education

centers are one of the prominent examples of these institutions. Their main purpose is to contribute to the continuous development of all segments of society without exceptions, by providing all kinds of training they need, especially vocational training. Public education centers, where certificate programs for new jobs and professions are especially eminent, exist on an organizational level in all provinces and districts of Turkey. However, the problem arises in the trainees' reasons for the participation in the courses and satisfaction levels, not in their organization. Our public education centers lack enough opportunities and facilities that enable them to fulfill their functions, therefore it becomes difficult and often impossible for them to fulfill the functions they undertake. In this sense, when the findings of the research conducted to determine the reasons for the participation of the trainees in the courses opened by the Hozat Public Education Center and the level of satisfaction with these courses are evaluated as a whole: The trainees' levels of agreement with the reasons for attending the courses and their satisfaction with the courses were found to be below average, that is, low. The results of the test conducted to detect the significance of the gap between the reasons for attending the courses and satisfaction levels according to some demographic characteristics (gender, education level, marital status), set out that the gap was not significant.

The most important reason for the trainees to participate in the course was "To be appreciated more in my environment" and "Merely out of curiosity" at the highest level with a mean of 1.75, and "To improve my personal characteristics" at the lowest level with a mean of 1.31. The trainees stated their satisfaction with the item "Were there any situations that made you uncomfortable in our center?" at the highest level with a mean of 2.41 and they responded to the item "Do you think that Public Education Centers follow the changes and developments related to education and training?" at the lowest level of satisfaction with a mean of 1.23

Recommendations

Within the scope of lifelong learning, Public Education Centers are non-formal education institutions that have an important place in the education needed by all segments of society regardless of age, gender, job and profession, etc. Their ability to fulfill their functions depends to a great extent on the facilities and opportunities provided to them. In this sense, Public Education Centers need to be supported in every aspect (physical, instructor, equipment, financial, etc.). In particular, master trainers who undertake courses should be equipped to fulfill their responsibilities and their personal rights should be organized according to the conditions of the day.

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