



RETHINKING ADULT EDUCATION IN TURKEY: THE PROPOSAL OF AEP MODELⁱ

Engin Dilbazⁱⁱ

Dr., Ministry of National Education,
Turkey

Abstract:

In this study, it is aimed to examine adult education policies in Turkey based on the views of managers, teachers, qualified instructors and trainees and to present a conceptual model for a future-based adult education system. The study is a case study and has the single nested case study design. Adult education policies in Turkey, which is the single case of the study; is considered in the dimensions of policy and strategy, organizational structure and implementation. By using semi-structured interview technique in the study, data on the features of a future-based adult education system were collected from a total of 32 managers, teachers, qualified instructors and trainees who played a role in the adult education system in Turkey and were selected through stratified purposeful sampling. Content analysis, one of the qualitative data analysis methods, was used for the analysis of the data. In consequence of the study, certain findings related to the basic features of a future-based adult education system have been reached particularly in the dimensions of policy and strategy, organizational structure and implementation, educational qualifications, human capital education and sustainable development, organizational autonomy, access and participation, teaching methods and techniques and content. As a result of the study, it is suggested for the implementers that a restructuring process should be initiated towards a productive, employable, self-sufficient and sustainable economic structure in adult education. As for the researchers, quantitative and qualitative studies are also recommended in the dimensions of human capital education, sustainable development, global change and developments, and 21st century skills.

Keywords: adult education, politics, sustainable development, strategy

1. Introduction

It is possible to define the twenty-first century with rapid changes and transformations in economy, society, culture, technology and many other areas. In parallel with these

ⁱ This article is derived from the doctoral thesis of the writer, which has been presented at Anadolu University, Turkey in 2021.

ⁱⁱ Correspondence: email engndilbaz@hotmail.com

changes and transformations; the needs of individuals and societies are changing and diversifying, and countries are making reforms and revisions in their education systems in line with changing needs. Rapid economic and social change affects the education policies of countries and even dominates the emerging policies (Koşar, 2013, p.264). As a matter of fact, industrialization, which gained acceleration with the first half of the twentieth century, reconstructed the expectations and educational needs of individuals from education according to the cognitive and behavioral expectations of the industrial society (Merriam, Cafarella, Baumgartner, 2007). In the twenty-first century, the codes pertaining to the rapid change experienced in almost every field have redefined the expectations of the individual from education and learning in line with the expectations of the society from the individual.

It can be stated that the main purpose of education at every step is to provide learners with the basic skills which prepare them for life. In the course of globalization, the new type of individual required by the twenty-first century is faced with increasingly diversified skills and competencies. In this context, it is expected from the field of adult education (AE) to prepare adults for new learning skills and competency areas as well as to develop existing skills and competencies.

In Turkey, especially since the 2010s, a strong need for new policies and implementations in AE, rather than temporary solutions has been in question in order to overcome the problems such as illiteracy, which has become a problem again due to the refugee crisis, as well as the young population density and unemployment pressure. As a matter of fact, considering the participation rates in AE activities in Turkey; it is observed that participation rate in face-to-face AE activities in Turkey, which is 5% according to 2019 data is far away from both the average of OECD countries, the average of EU countries and the EU 2020 AE participation rate target of 15% (OECD, 2019; Eurostat, 2019). According to UNHCR (2020) data, the number of registered refugees in Turkey has reached 4 million, and the number of refugees in Turkey is more than the population of 61 countries in the world. It can be claimed that this means redefining learning needs, especially language education and literacy, for the aforementioned 4 million refugees (UNHCR, 2020).

It is possible to examine adult competencies as a reference point for AE in three competency dimensions: verbal skills, numerical skills and problem solving skills (OECD, 2019). Comparing the verbal, numerical and problem-solving proficiency rates of adults in Turkey to the rates of OECD member countries, it can be suggested that a long way to go for Turkey in terms of developing skills and competencies exist. As a matter of fact, according to the OECD Skills Survey, Turkey is placed near the bottom among 34 countries which participated in the research in terms of all three skills/competence areas (OECD, 2019).

Considering AE in Turkey in terms of individuals in addition to participation rates and proficiency levels, it is observed that a great number of individuals are marginalized from both educational/vocational and social life due to such factors as patriarchal family and society structure, economic inadequacies, gender-based images, the duties imposed on women by the institution of marriage and unfair division of social roles between the

sexes, inability to enable the disabled individuals to adapt to lifelong learning processes due to some institutional or irrational reasons. It can be claimed that in the long run, this means loss of self-confidence, unsatisfied self-esteem, aimlessness, lack of expectation; a lifestyle limited to performing certain routine tasks such as child care, cooking, doing dishes and laundry, cleaning, and an indirect sense of achievement which is paralleled only by the success of spouse or children, or in some cases, a timewasting process which is reduced to satisfying merely basic physiological needs (Altınova, 2009). The result of these unsatisfied basic psychological needs may vary on a scale ranging from the slightest sense of individual inadequacy at one end to heavy social costs at the other. In this context, it is of crucial importance to include the segments of the society which require special attention in lifelong learning processes.

AE system in Turkey is required to be restructured with a multidimensional managerial perspective from policies to structural changes and regulations which are needed in the organizational structure. Examining the studies in the literature; it is observed that they mostly focus on educational qualities (Kahriman, 2010; Ağcihan, 2015; Karabacak, 2018; Çevik, 2019). However, no study has been found in the literature on the features of a future-based AE system which aims to increase participation rates in AE processes, develop adult skills, and solve the existing problems in the AE system in Turkey. In this context, in the AE field in Turkey; beyond an approach which offers temporary solutions to existing problems, there is a need for a flexible and sustainable system which is compatible with the codes of change and where resources are used effectively and efficiently.

This study, which aims to propose a model by evaluating the political and strategic features, organizational structure and implementations of the AE system in Turkey, is important in terms of being the first study in which a conceptual model proposal was submitted in the field of AE in Turkey. In this context, the study is expected to set an example being a reference for the studies which will ensure more effective acceptance of AE in the society in Turkey as well as in the dimensions of evaluation-monitoring and implementation of new AE policies; determining RE needs, creating observable-measurable goals, programming and planning works, impediments to participation, AE strategies and techniques, educational environments.

1.1. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to propose a conceptual model by evaluating the views of trainees, qualified instructors, teachers and managers as well as the political and strategic features, organizational structure and implementations of adult education policies in Turkey. For this purpose, answers to the following questions have been sought:

- 1) How do trainees, qualified instructors, teachers and managers evaluate the features of a future-based adult education in terms of
 - a) the basic policies, strategies and legal regulations of the education system
 - b) the organizational structure of the education system
 - c) education implementations?

- 2) How should the features of a “future-based model” which is proposed based on the views of trainees, qualified instructors, teachers and managers be in terms of
 - a) policies and strategies
 - b) organizational structure
 - c) implementations?

2. Material and Methods

This section presents information about the model of the study, the study group / universe and sampling, data collection tools, data collection and analysis.

2.1. The Model of the Study

The study has been designed in a case study pattern. A case study is a research method which studies a current phenomenon in its real-life environment, and is used in situations where the boundaries between the phenomenon and the environment, which it occurs in, are not clearly defined and where more than one source of evidence or data exist (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). Four types of case study patterns can be listed as a) holistic single case pattern; b) a single nested case pattern; c) holistic multi-case pattern; d) the nested multiple case pattern (Yin, 2003, p.39). "Adult Education Policies in Turkey", which is the only case subject to the research are considered in the dimensions of a) *its political and strategic features; b) its organizational structure; c) implementations*. In this context, it is a nested single case study.

2.2. Study Group

The purposeful sampling technique, which is one of the non-random sampling methods, has been used in the selection of the study group for the qualitative dimension of the research. The stratified purposive sampling method among purposeful sampling techniques was preferred because of its convenience for the purpose of the study. The advantage of purposeful sampling is that it provides the researcher with the opportunity to return to people and events which are believed to be critical to the research (Denscombe, 2007).

The study group consists of a total of 32 participants including 8 qualified instructors, 8 teachers, 8 manager and 8 trainees who worked at the official institutions, where AE was provided, in the 2017-2018 academic year and selected by stratified purposeful sampling technique. In the process of selecting participants for the study group, approximately equal numbers of male and female participants were selected from the strata. In this context, it is aimed to reflect on the study the possible differences in perspective and interpretation resulting from the gender difference.

It is aimed to obtain information from all parties regarding the AE process by prioritizing to select the participants in such a manner to cover all sides of the AE process, including trainees, qualified instructors, teachers, institution managers and top managers. Thus, it is aimed to reveal the differences of perspectives between the parties, to describe AE from different perspectives by evaluating the perceptions of each stratum

regarding policies and strategies, organizational structure and implementations, and the possible differences between these perceptions.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

During the collection of qualitative data, face-to-face interviews were conducted with 32 participants. The interview technique allows the observation of such things as people's experiences, knowledge, feelings, attitudes, perspectives, their own actions and how they organize or define the world in a certain time period, through questioning (Patton, 2002).

Semi-structured interview forms consisting of open-ended questions were used in the interviews with the participants. Semi-structured interview is an interview format in which the same questions are asked to the participants in a similar order (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993, p. 426). The interview form, which includes open-ended interview questions, was prepared in accordance with the study questions by reviewing the literature. After the semi-structured interview form was prepared for the first time, necessary corrections were made by receiving feedback from field experts in order to check its applicability. Preliminary interviews were conducted with 5 participants to test the interview form, which was revised by the experts and rearranged according to the feedback. After the preliminary interviews, the questions were revised and the form was given its final form.

2.4. Data Collection and Analysis

In the research, pre-prepared semi-structured questions were directed to the participants, and they were given the opportunity to state any points which they wanted to add. Before the interviews, a comfortable environment was created to ensure the confidentiality of the interviews and the participant's candid answers to the questions, and the interviews were recorded with the permission of the participants. The duration of the interview per participant lasted approximately one hour. Qualitative data analysis was used in the study. Qualitative data analysis is the process of organizing the data as the researcher understands it, by transforming interview transcripts, notes on the subject, and documents into certain patterns, categories, and descriptive units (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

Content analysis was used in the analysis of the data which were collected from the participants. Content analysis enables the emergence of the implicit content rather than the content perceived at first glance and is a second reading to determine the elements in the message which affect the individual without being perceived (Bilgin, 2006). In content analysis, the creation of categories and subcategories is critical for the correct interpretation and analysis of the content (Kuckartz, 2014). In content analysis, it is aimed to reach concepts and relationships which can possibly explain the collected data rather than the direct transfer of them (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011, p.223).

2.5. Validity and Reliability

Participant confirmation, data source diversification and expert evaluation methods have been used in the study in order to ensure internal validity. In order to ensure internal

reliability, the findings are given according to the created categories and sub-categories, without adding the researcher's comment. The participants' consent was obtained by summarizing their statements after the interviews, and they were allowed to indicate anything which they wanted to add or correct. Purposeful sampling method was used to ensure external validity and participants were selected according to certain criteria. All study-related documents were recorded by the researcher for confirmation review in order to ensure external reliability.

3. Findings

In this section, the findings of the study and the interpretations of the findings are given. Findings of the study are discussed under the headings of policies and strategies organizational structure and implementations.

3.1. Findings on the Features of a Future-based AE

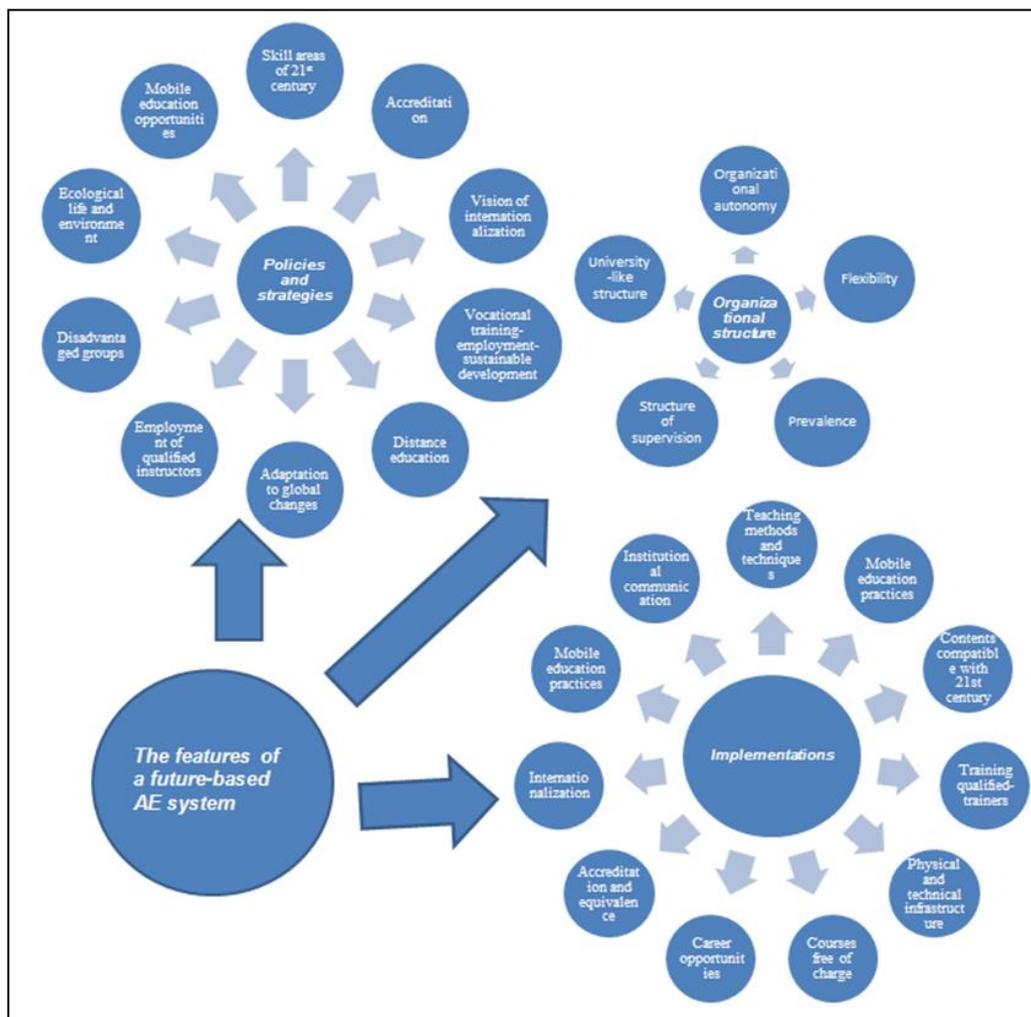


Figure 1: Features of a future-based AE

Findings on the features of a future-based AE system are analyzed in three dimensions as views on the political and strategic features of AE, views on the features of its organizational structure and views on the features of its implementations (See Figure 1).

3.1.1. Findings on Political and Strategical Features

Examining the figure; it can be claimed the main political and strategical features of a future-based AE include the integration of skill areas of 21st century and distance education into the AE system, future-based policies and strategies which address the vision of internationalization, vocational training-employment-sustainable development, adaptation to global changes, employment of qualified instructors in AE, disadvantaged groups, ecological life and environment, and mobile education opportunities.

The participants have emphasized the importance of the vision of raising qualified individuals who have mastered new skill areas in the ideal AE system in the context of policies and strategies centered on the skills of 21st century. It can be suggested that as for the AE system, they emphasize a vision which reflects the 21st century value system such as entrepreneurship, innovation, technology production, creative thinking, learning to learn, rather than the theoretical education of knowledge and skill transfer. A3 states that the information transferring role of the school system in general and the AE system in particular is no longer functional, and access to information in direct proportion to the production speed of information in the 21st century no longer needs an organizational framework. Similarly, other participants emphasize that in the context of policies and strategies of a future-based AE system, training for and production of new skill areas which have gained momentum especially since the 2010s is a vision which should be defined as a priority for the AE system.

In the context of the need for distance education in AE; it can be claimed that it is the prominent idea that the facilitating quality of the developments in information and communication technologies have eliminated the problems, especially the accessibility, related to the classroom-based, place-dependent face-to-face education model; the quality of the knowledge embodied in the image of the teacher and the school is changing, and that the learner assumes the responsibility of learning first hand on the basis of the idealized future image. Q1 expresses his views *"I believe it would be right thing to do if certain courses could be delivered completely and others partially through distance education by producing content suitable for these courses."* M1 states that he believes impressive results can be obtained, maybe not at the practical level, but at least at the theoretical level by using effective and reliable measurement-evaluation methods and techniques as well as forming an effective coaching or guidance system and the effective use of feedback mechanisms in the distance education process. S1 and S4, on the other hand, consider the need for distance education in the context of increasing access opportunities and participation rates. As a matter of fact, S1 emphasizes that access to distance education is as easy as having a smart mobile phone, which is now an accessible technology for almost everyone.

In the dimension of bringing disadvantaged social segments in social life and business, S7 and Q7 mention the gender inequality and state that the integration of women into social life and business is of crucial importance in terms of individual and social aspects. Approaching the issue from the perspective of geographical and cultural inequalities, K2 claim that an ideal AE system can be a balancing factor in terms of these inequalities. Considering the issue in terms of economic inequalities, K8 emphasizes that it is the mission which he attributes to his ideal AE system that the low-income individuals of the society, who are economically disadvantaged, should be qualified through AE and brought into economic life.

In the context of policies and strategies for establishing the link between vocational education, employment and sustainable development, the participants refer to the policies and strategies which favor sectoral supply-demand balances and prioritize in-service/on-the-job training. P4 emphasizes that mere theoretical dimension of a profession and gaining related skills at the level of knowledge are not enough to practice that profession, even if it is enough to receive a certificate. Expressing that vocational training can only transform into employment through personal relationships and subjective references P7 proposes the idea of creating an employment platform within the AE system, where criteria for objectivity were met.

It is observed that the views on the employment of specialized personnel in the AE are themed around three sub-headings. The first of these represents a radical view which can also be read as '*employment of personnel specialized in the field of AE*'. Examining the thematic views around this sub-heading; it is advocated that the personnel who work in the AE should be trained to acquire the andragogic formation as early as at the higher education stage. Secondly, the view which can also be expressed as '*specialization of the personnel employed in the AE*' emphasizes the necessity of completing the andragogic formation deficiencies of teachers and qualified instructors who work in the AE through in-service training. Thirdly, it is observed that the view which can be expressed with the sub-heading of '*employment of personnel who are experts in their fields*' explains the problem of qualification partially by the instructor's field proficiency, and more by the selection or assignment of the trainer, rather than vocational competence and andragogic formation. M7 states that autonomy should be given to AE institutions in the selection of both teachers and qualified instructors with a model similar to that of teacher selection for project schools, which takes their competence in the field into account.

In the context of adaptation to global developments and changes, it can be suggested that the participants generally believe that policies and strategies for a future-based AE system should primarily put the vision of technology production on the agenda. In this regard, T5 states that the AE system could also have an important mission, as well as universities, especially in technology production. Participants emphasize that public education centers are generally known as furnishing, tailoring and embroidery courses, and highlight a political and strategic transformation to change this perception which belongs to the past century.

Emphasizing that accreditation should be adopted as the basic vision for RE strategies, the participants state that accreditation processes create learning organizations and make continuous development possible and compulsory, and that these processes lead organizations to a never-ending journey towards the better and perfect. S3 states that certain mechanisms, structures and models are required to ensure certificates' international validity. S3 also suggests that through these certain mechanisms, structures and models; institutions, managers and trainers will also transfer their potential to the development of AE in a continuous development task.

In the context of internationalization, P5 maintains that the globalization phenomenon, which is gradually gaining momentum, has become a transformative force which imposes change in almost every step of the education systems, and that the AE field cannot remain indifferent to human mobility, which forces this acceleration.

It is emphasized that the AE system should undertake an effective mission in the context of protecting ecological life and the environment. P3 expresses that organic agriculture and animal husbandry, reproduction of heirlooms and cultivation of crops through certain programs, conservation and sustainability of natural resources, designing programs and nature-based innovative occupational/economic models should constitute the main agenda, policies and strategies of AE system.

In the context of regulations which implement mobile education opportunities to reduce access problems, P1 evaluates access to AE services in the context of equal opportunity.

3.1.2. Findings on the Features of the Organizational Structure

Considering the features of the organizational structure of a future-based AE system; those headings come to the fore: organizational autonomy, flexibility, prevalence, supervision structure and university-like structure.

In the context of organizational autonomy, the participants focus on an organizational structure which enables AE institutions to take initiative in order to create flexible, effective and efficient curriculums; to diversify, support and encourage course types in accordance with regional needs, local differences and regional priorities/needs. In this context, P2 suggests:

"Institutions should open such courses and train such qualified personnel that businesses line up at the door of the course to employ the personnel trained in these courses. But every institution should figure out its own area of strength, first of all, there should be elbowroom for this as well."

M2 underlines certain risks and mentions the differences in the dynamics of immigrant-receiving and sending regions and cities. M2 expresses:

"The structure of the society is changing in the cities that receive immigration, everything is included in this: from the language problem to the unemployment problem."

Sending regions also have their own problems. If every institution has its own plan, they can put different solutions into practice considering its environment."

In the context of flexibility, the participants highlight the flexible organization model which prioritizes and supports cooperation between institutions and organizations. Cooperation, in this context, means benefiting from the opportunities of other institutions and organizations in order to spread the courses and to deliver the service to the service place, mediating the meeting of potential employees who are trained in vocational courses with employers, opening courses in line with the employer's request in the fields which employers need, asking for help from other institutions and organizations to encourage participation in the courses which are opened.

The participants who have expressed their opinions in the context of prevalence refer to the inadequacy of the number of AE institutions and transportation problems; they also underline a structure which is easily accessible and geographically extended to all neighborhoods, districts and villages outside the center. In this regard, P3 suggests *"If it is in the neighborhood and five to ten minutes walking distance from my home, of course I will. In my opinion, a course should be opened in every neighborhood."* Another participant states *"A unit which is organized like a university in city centers and central districts; training centers operating as representative offices or affiliated branches in neighborhoods, villages and districts outside the center..."*

According to this view, in the context of the expansion of ideal AE institutions; it can be said that an organizational model in the form of central and subordinate provincial organization within its autonomous structure is suggested.

It is observed that the participants who express their opinions in the context of university-like structure point to a university structure in which various fields of activity are combined and integrated within a campus structure.

In the context of the structure of supervision, S3 claims that AE institutions should have a supervisory structure in which administrative, educational and financial dimensions are effectively supervised through both internal and external auditing.

3.1.3. Findings on the Features of the Implementation

It is observed that participant views on the implementations of a future-based AE system focuses on such topics as contents which are compatible with 21st century competence and skill areas, distance education and e-learning contents, teaching methods and techniques, mobile education practices, trainer qualifications, technical infrastructure, accreditation, internationalization, career opportunities.

Considering the views about the contents which are compatible with the 21st century competence and skill areas, it is observed that the participants define the technology production mission to the AE system. However, it can be claimed that they consider it critically important to gain skills at the application level such as using information and communication technologies, innovation, entrepreneurship, creative thinking, critical thinking, problem solving, decision making and communication. In this regard, M8 states that it is possible for the AE system to make room for itself in the field

of technology production, by giving importance to individual initiatives in the context of technology production. M7 also states that AE should expand its fields of activity towards technology production applications, especially in areas such as code writing, producing computer games, producing software and applications. Referring to the new value system of the twenty-first century, Q1 expresses his views on the concepts of learning to learn, innovation and entrepreneurship. M3 explains that there is a need for implementations which understand the new type of individuals, adopt new information sources and learning styles. Q4, on the other hand, emphasizes that the use of media can be a source for educational designs in AE applications in certain areas.

In the context of the integration of distance education into AE and e-learning contents, considering the social trends in the world scale T1 expresses the concepts of digital literacy, especially the use of social media, and emphasizes that the literacy habits of individuals are changing from printed materials in favor of digital materials. S1 states that by developing modular e-learning contents, information and education can be delivered to large segments of the people through distance education, which can be accessed with a smartphone. M1 highlights that with the full or part-time integration of distance education into the teaching processes, it is possible to save a great deal of time and building/facility and investment costs, and to channel the savings into re-education investments. Q6 states that e-learning contents should not merely be considered as course materials which are used in the distance education system, but it would be more accurate to consider it as an e-library which anyone who searches for accurate information and a reliable source can refer to.

Teaching methods and techniques is considered in two dimensions as on-the-job training and internship practices; and modern teaching methods and techniques. In the dimension of on-the-job training and internship practices, the participants concentrate on vocational training in AE and state that trainees should be trained within the production/service processes. Participants underline that in both vocational and personal development courses, trainees should benefit from internship opportunities at the end of the course processes, within the bounds of possibility, and experience the knowledge or skills which they have acquired on the job. M5 maintains that a holistic structure can be provided by adding the dimensions of sales and marketing or service delivery in addition to production, in in-service/on-the-job training processes. In the dimension of modern teaching methods and techniques, the participants express their views within the framework of the activation of project-based study/learning models in teaching processes and the integration of new approaches in the context of teaching methods and techniques into teaching processes.

T2 summarizes the views of the participants in the context of implementations aiming at training qualified educators;

“As for the solution; those who will work in this adult field should be selected at the undergraduate level and trained in that direction... But if we are talking about the issue in terms of public education now, qualified instructor should receive serious training on such subjects as adult learning features and method-technic...”

T6 refers to the need for a performance-based assessment model specifically for teachers involved in the AE system.

In the context of physical and technical infrastructure; M6 maintains that AE institutions should be a center of attraction and emphasizes the importance of practices which focus on providing physical areas to provide social, cultural and sportive opportunities and the effective operation of these areas. M6 also states that AE institutions should leach into the cultural, artistic and sportive life of the city in which they live. Emphasizing the arrangement of classrooms, T5 draws attention to the importance of practices for a physical arrangement in the form of field classrooms. Tr3 focuses on the importance of practices for the improvement of the course center regarding the basic factors which directly affect learning such as heating, lighting and cleaning.

Emphasizing *the public relations* dimension of the concept in the context of institutional communication, Q5 points out the establishment of public relations units and call centers within the institutions as an ideal implementation. Tr5, who expresses an opinion on institutional image management as the dimension of corporate communication concept; mentions the insufficiency of WEB sites, not adequately advertising of some of the opportunities associated with AE, and the failure to benefit from the opportunities to increase the visibility of AE institutions through promotional products. The views of Tr5 refer to the need for AE institutions to develop practices which prioritize institutional image management.

Considering the opinions of the participants in the context of career opportunities, it can be stated that they advocate the applications which provide career opportunities both in the private sector and through personal enterprise support if the trainees who are included in the AE system gain certain qualifications. In this regard, Q7 emphasizes that a career practice where trainees can be considered as trainers within the AE system is also worth considering.

In the context of accreditation and equivalence T3 emphasizes that it is necessary to perform studies which check whether the certificates reflect the quality and ensure that the documents reflecting the competence are also valid in the international arena. In addition, T3 underlines those accreditation-oriented implementations can be considered as the main performance criterion of AE institutions. M4 suggests that the models to be designed for the accreditation process, similar to the examples of some practices which are being implemented at the national scale, will increase the good examples by revealing motivational factors for the targets.

In the context of internationalization; Q2 refers to the fact that trainee exchange programs will contribute to the rising values such as cultural sharing, skill exchange and world citizenship due to their two-way interactional structure. Q8 states that observing his friends who studied in undergraduate programs and became exchange students abroad as part of the Erasmus student exchange program, he witnessed a great cultural and social change in a short time. Q8 explains that he wishes for a practice similar to Erasmus student exchange programs and processes to be implemented in the AE field as well.

In the context of mobile education practices; P1 expresses that mobile education practices are important in order to contribute to diminishing access problems. Emphasizing the importance of performing mobile education practices only by means of education buses or trucks designed for educational purposes, instead of any other vehicle, P1 emphasizes that the educational purposes which can be taken as a criterion in the preparation of these vehicles should not only be limited to educational purposes, but also have socialization aspects such as concerts, exhibitions and promotions.

4. Adult Education Participation (AEP) Model

In this section of the study, the model requirement for the “Adult Education Participation Model (AEP)”, information on the development of the model, the assumptions, methodology, structure and design of the model are included.

4.1. Requirement for the Model

It is possible to define the social features of the twenty-first century by the rapid changes and transformations in economic, social, cultural, technological and many other fields. As a matter of fact, the codes related to the rapid changes which have been experienced in almost every field in the twenty-first century have redefined the expectations of the individual from education and learning in parallel with the expectations of the society from the individual. Transformations in the source and nature of knowledge have revealed new requirements and skill areas in line with the changing cultural, educational and economic needs of the individual and society. Such concepts as problem solving, leadership, creativity, entrepreneurship, learning to learn appear to be the rising values related to the changing nature of education in the societies of the twenty-first century (Orloev et al., 2015). Behaviorist descriptions of education as in “*the process of creating a deliberate and desired behavior change in an individual’s behavior through experience*” (Ertürk, 1998, p.12), are gradually giving way to the key roles assigned to education in such issues as social change, human capital, sustainable development, and elimination of inequalities. Considering AE systems, which are open social systems, in the light of the changes and developments in the twenty-first century; it can be claimed that AE purposes are also changing in the themes of sustainable development, elimination of inequalities, learning to learn, skill-based education, technology-based education, distance education and internationalization in parallel with the changes and developments experienced on a world scale.

It is obvious that the AE system and its institutions in Turkey is required to be restructured, given the participation rates in AE and the specific training needs in the context of adult skills development. In this prospective restructuring process, it is necessary to create effective policies which include macro-scale trends and local needs, in order to transform policies into actions through strategies, and to continue this whole process with correct and consistent decisions. It is also crucial that AE system in Turkey should be restructured with a multi-dimensional managerial perspective, ranging from policies to strategic planning in which strategies which transform policies into actions are

determined, from associating and evaluating activities with institutional vision and missions, to structural changes and arrangements needed in the organizational structure.

The transition process, which is envisaged in parallel with the need for restructuring of the AE system in Turkey; introduces the necessity of the redefinition of new vision and goals, strategies, process, process components, relations between components, decision making mechanisms and decision support systems. As a matter of fact, it is possible to suggest that an effective and efficient AE system can be created through a flexible and sustainable model which is compatible with the codes of change, where resources are used effectively and efficiently, rather than an approach which solely offers temporary solutions to existing problems.

In the study, the focus is on the restructuring of the AE system in Turkey to contribute to participation increase in AE and developing adult skills. It is aimed to develop a conceptual model which considers political and strategic, organizational structure and practical dimensions of prospective restructuring process of AE. A conceptual framework is proposed by considering political and strategic, organizational structure and practical dimensions, which are considered as three important dimensions of AE in the conceptual model, in the dimensions of the system's environment, input, process, output and feedback. It is expected that the model can function as a decision support in a prospective restructuring process.

4.2. The Purposes of the Model

In the study, the codes related to the ideal AE system and the decision options for political and strategic, organizational structure and implementation of this ideal AE system are discussed. Furthermore, it is aimed to make a systematic modeling of the ideal AE system and its subsystems in the dimensions of inputs, process, outputs and feedback.

The main purpose of the model is to examine the future-based AE system in the three basic dimensions of political and strategic, organizational structure and implementation; and to determine the structuring process in these dimensions and to present a conceptual framework. The sub-purposes of the study can be listed as follows:

- a) Proposing a political decision framework in the process of prospective restructuring of the future-based AE system.
- b) Considering the future-based AE system in the context of adult skills development.
- c) Considering the future-based AE system in the context of training human capital and sustainable development goals.
- d) Considering the future-based AE system in the context of internal and external stakeholders, institutions and organizations and their duties, powers and responsibilities.
- e) Considering the future-based AE system in terms of the possible benefits which it can provide to the trainees who are the final beneficiaries.

4.3. Assumptions of the Model

In order to ensure the validity and practicality of the conceptual model, it is assumed that

- a) modifications to the legal legislation which are required will be made,
- b) cooperation with the private sector and public institutions and organizations will be ensured during the transition to the system,
- c) the expropriation procedures which are required for the institute campuses which are anticipated in the model can be realized and public resources will be allocated,
- d) beneficiaries have access to the technological infrastructure and equipment which are required at the implementation level.

4.3. Methodology of the Model

A prospective restructuring process in the AE exhibits the features of a system with its objectives, components, dimensions, sub-dimensions, processes and principles. In this context, the system should be considered through a conceptual model in order to be able to define and evaluate the functions of the system and its subsystems.

Reviewing the definitions in the literature in the context of the conceptual model, it is observed that the quality of '*visualizing the image*' is emphasized in terms of the basic notions of the concept. As a matter of fact, according to Sargent (1987), the conceptual model is "*the mathematical, logical or verbal representation of a problem area for a particular study.*" According to Pace (2000), modelling is defined as "*translating modeling requirements into detailed design frameworks on which a system can be built*". Conceptual models serve as a guide in determining system requirements, structures, and behaviors. Reviewing the literature, it is observed that different types of conceptual models are used in different disciplines, especially in the fields of computer science, information management, business process modeling, software engineering and systems engineering (Allworth, 1999; Fettke & Loos, 2003). So, different types of conceptual models, each of which has its own advantages and weaknesses.

Since the 1980s, different conceptual modeling methods have been introduced for different purposes. In addition, different conceptual models can be mentioned as in terms of expression, graphic, textual and combinational; based on the modeling object, static and dynamic conceptual models. According to Becker et al. (2009), conceptual models are generally classified as data models, process models and behavioral models. The main purpose of AEP model is to examine the three basic dimensions of a future-based AE system as political and strategic, organizational structure and implementation, and to determine the structuring process in these dimensions and to present a conceptual framework. For this purpose, the AEP model has been designed in the business process model, which is one of the process models which is considered to be suitable for the essence of the model.

4.4. Structure of the Conceptual Model

The AE system model is a dynamic system model which includes political and strategic, organizational and implementation subsystems; and in which educational activities within the production processes are carried out through eclectic training models and in which educational models such as in-service/on-the-job training and distance education are jointly adopted and transformed into concrete outputs. Examining the subsystems

which constitute the system model; it is observed that each of the dimensions of political and strategic, organizational structure and implementation is in an inclusive, connective and hierarchical relationship with the other/others. In addition, each subsystem is the subsidiary and complement of the other (See Figure 5.3).

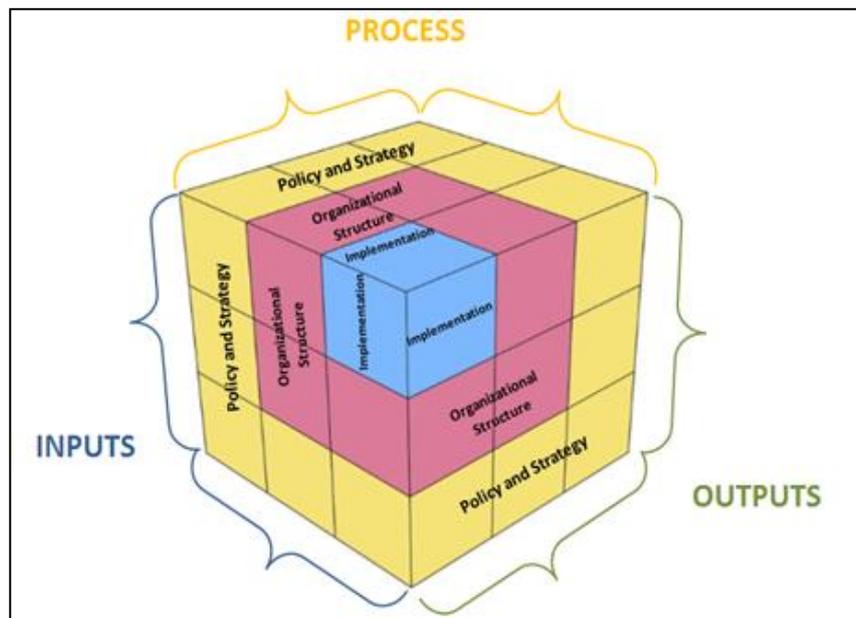


Figure 5.3: Basic components of the system

The political and strategic dimension of the three sub-systems, which are defined as the main components of the system, serves as a guiding function regarding the establishment of the instrumental organizational structure by drawing a political decision framework, and also regarding the nature of the implementations which are suitable for achieving the strategic goals which are set in this political decision framework. The organizational structure, which is proposed in accordance with the political decision framework and the ultimate goal of achieving strategic goals, constitute the ecosystem of the model, in a sense. As a matter of fact, the vision which is obtained from policies and strategies is objectified both within the organizational structure and in the implementation dimension. The organizational structure, which is created under the premise of policies and strategies, should allow/determine the direction of the applications which are the source and mediator of the achievement of the strategic goals. In a sense, the organizational structure functions as a bridge which leads the implementations to strategic goals. The implementation has a core function at the center of the system. It is the implementation subsystem which Inputs in the conversion process; is expected to transform inputs into outputs equipped with various qualities through the harmonious interaction of a series of subsystems such as trainers, curricula, teaching methods and techniques, and educational content.

It is possible for the system to be in the state of equilibrium with the harmonious coexistence of the sub-systems. As a matter of fact, a possible dysfunction in any of the subsystems may be reflected on the system as a whole and disable the local steps to be

taken to bring the system back into balance. In this context, continuous feedback from the entire system and each of its subsystems allows timely and critical interventions to improve the system and ensure its effectiveness and efficiency.

Examining the general framework of the model; it is observed that each subsystem in the model is related to each other. A continuous feedback among subsystems exists; outputs are continuously compared to the targeted indicators during the evaluation process (See Figure 2). Detailed explanations about the model are given as sub-headings.

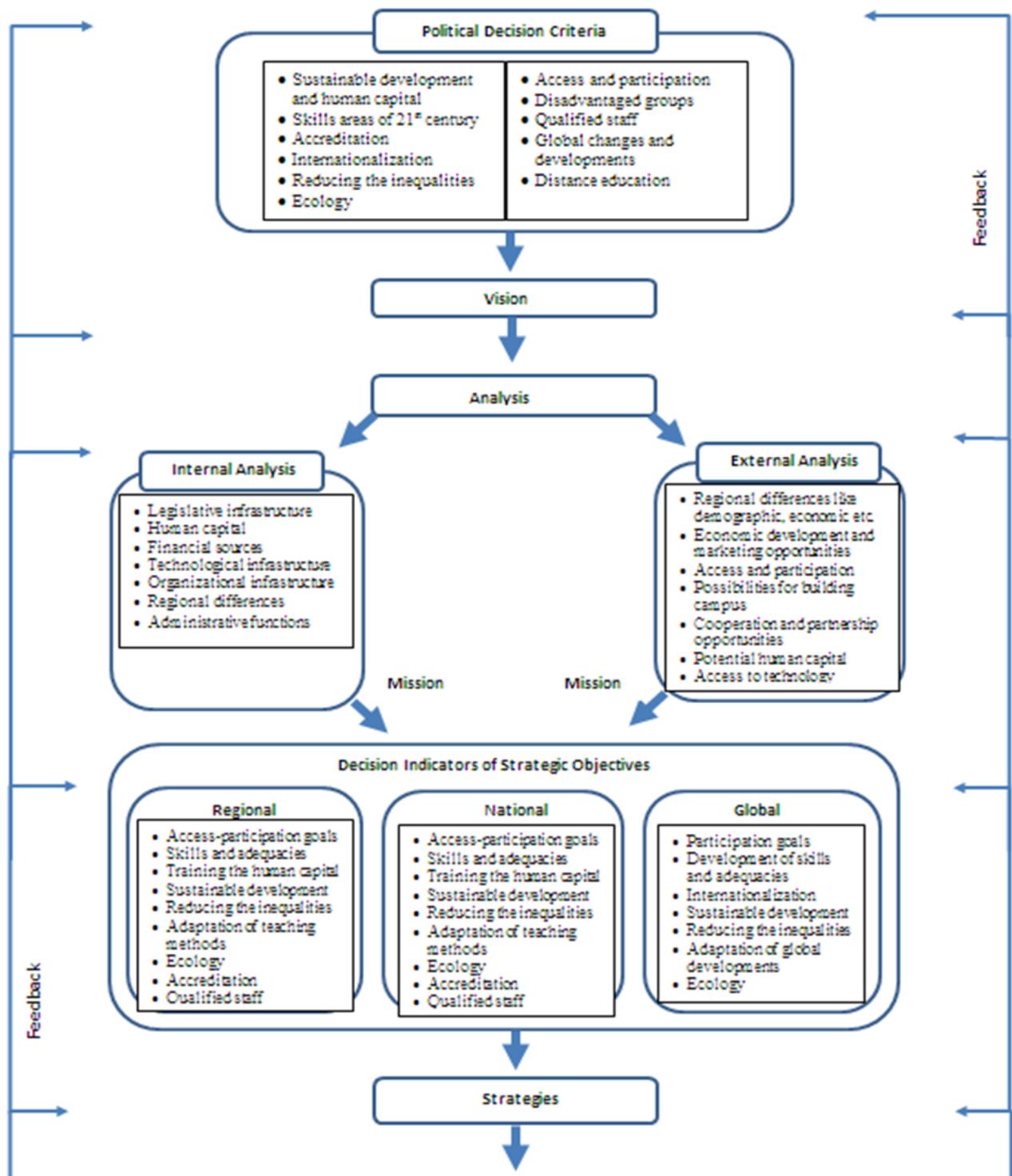


Figure 2: Adult Education Participant (AEP) model (part 1)

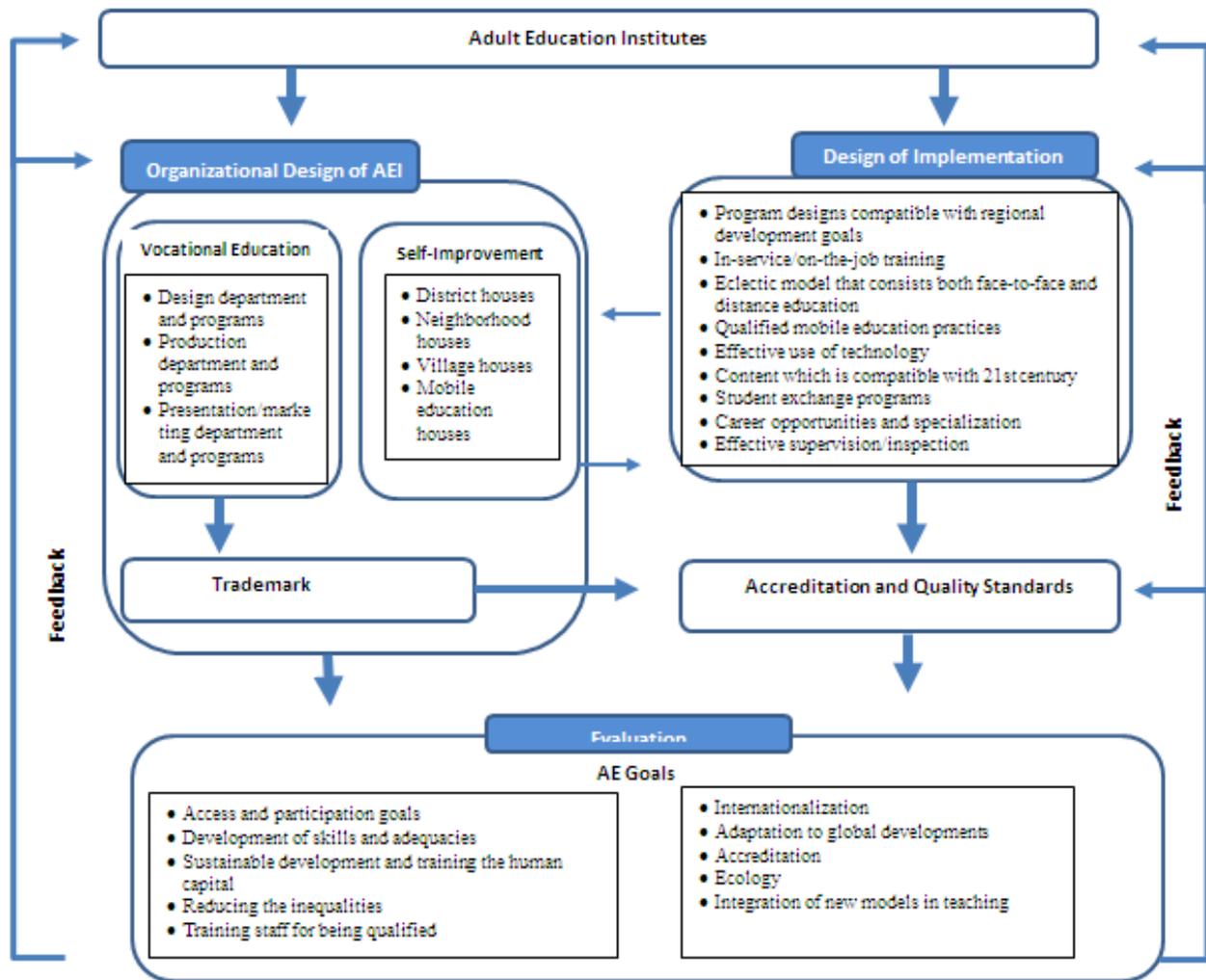


Figure 2: Adult Education Participant (AEP) model (part 2)

4.4.1. Political and Strategic Features

Among the factors which affect the system requirement, global expectations and targets in the AE play a critical role in the design of the AEP model. Macro-scale changes and transformations in political, economic, cultural, social and technological fields result in diversification of demands in the AE and expansion of AE's sphere of influence. These emerging innovations, transformations and changes determine the direction of new policies. In this axis, forming the political decision framework sets the reference point of the model design. In terms of the conceptual model; it is critical that the policy maker and decision-maker guide the process in parallel with the political decision framework in the formulation of AE policies phase.

A future-based AE system should be contributing to the following considering the political and strategic decision framework of the conceptual model;

- a) Raising human capital,
- b) Achieving sustainable development goals,
- c) Equipping participants as the individuals who have the skills and competencies required by 21st Century,

- d) Mechanisms to increase and encourage participation in activities; and to solve access and infrastructure problems to AE activities/institutions/applications,
- e) Reducing all kinds of inequalities based on regional and economic origin, gender, physical / mental disabilities, ethnic origin, lifestyle choices,
- f) Training and employment of qualified instructors,
- g) Protection the ecological balance,
- h) Accreditation processes which serve to make skills and competencies visible / valid on a global scale,
- i) Achieving internationalization goals, from local to universal, aiming at educating world citizens.

In the conceptual model, the vision, which is the self-expression of where the upper-level institutions and related institutions responsible for the coordination of the AE system want to be and what dream they share, is determined within the framework of political decision criteria. The vision, which ascends from the synthesis of organizational ideals and values, should include a motivating idealism which partners will adopt. As a matter of fact, the vision is a mental expression of the highest state which is desired to be reached in the future and the realistic, reliable and attractive future which the organization wants to achieve (Awamleh & Gardner, 1999, p. 346).

Analysis is of critical importance in defining and employing management functions according to the conceptual model. The starting point in the development of a system is the system analysis (Girginer, 2001). In the analysis phase, in order to achieve these ideals, the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats which the institution owns and faces are determined and the relationship between the ideals which are defined in the vision and the given situation is revealed. In the internal analysis, the strengths and weaknesses of the upper-level institution in the context of achieving the ideals which are defined in the vision are evaluated. In this context, internal analysis is performed under the following headings for the delivery of AE services by the upper-level institution;

- a) Current and required legislative infrastructure,
- b) The quality, quantity and selection of human resources,
- c) Financial resources, possibilities and opportunities,
- d) Technological infrastructure,
- e) Organizational infrastructure,
- f) Regional differences,
- g) Management functions (planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, evaluating)

In the external environment analysis, the opportunities and threats which the upper-level institution has and faces are evaluated in the context of the ideals which are expressed in the new AE vision. In the external analysis, the following issues are analyzed:

- a) Social, cultural, economic and demographic differences on a regional scale,
- b) Regional economic development and market opportunities,
- c) The structure of potential human capital,
- d) Indicators of access and participation,

- e) Campus facilities,
- f) Regional and national-scale cooperation and partnership opportunities and possibilities,
- g) The level of access of potential human capital to technology

The mission of the institution is revealed by the holistic evaluation of the data which are obtained from internal and external analyses. Mission is the reason for existence and constitution of an organization (Kılıç, 2010). In this context, the mission statement unifies the different components in the system around common goals by revealing the answers to the questions "why does the institution/organization/system exist" and "what is our mission". Therefore, the mission undertakes a guiding function for the design of administrative works and structures (Kılıç, 2010).

In the conceptual model, the upper-level institution which is responsible for the overall AE system sets out its strategic objectives at regional, national and global levels. Depending on the strategic purposes at the regional, national and global levels, the general framework of the national strategies is determined.

In the model, the design and analysis processes of political and strategic decision frameworks and, in a sense, the general framework of managerial functions are set. In the context of the systems approach; it is observed that political inputs turn into strategic outputs as a result of the analysis process. Strategies as outputs, on the other hand, are presented to the "*Adult Education Institutes (AEI)*", which are the basic service units where production functions are performed in the conceptual model, as well as their intermediary upper institutions.

4.4.2. Features of Organizational Structure

Organizational dimension in the design of the conceptual model has a very important place in terms of defining the basic service units where production functions are performed, revealing the sub-systems and relations among the production units, and serving as the keystone which takes the burden of the system by bridging policies and implementations.

Considering the features of organizational structure of a future-based AE system, it can be suggested that it must comply with the following:

- a) *Flexibility*, which functions as a suspension absorbing the inequalities arising from economic, geographical, demographic, cultural and social differences between regions (provinces-districts-neighborhoods-villages), taking these differences into account;
- b) *Autonomy* which is approached as in universities;
- c) *Delegation of authority* from the center to the local;
- d) Neighborhood/village-based organization to eliminate *access* problems;
- e) A self-sufficient and sustainable *economic structure* which produces surplus value, provides employment;
- f) A simplified structure which facilitates *coordination* between institutions / units / partnerships by reducing the hierarchy and managerial power distance

In the conceptual model, it is taken as basis to create an autonomous, flexible and economically strengthened organizational model which facilitates the access and delivery of services in regions with different geographical, economic and demographic backgrounds. At the core of this organizational model, AEI, which is the basic production units of educational services, takes place. Functioning directly under the Ministry of HBÖGM; 81 AEIs, one in each city center exist (See Figure 3):

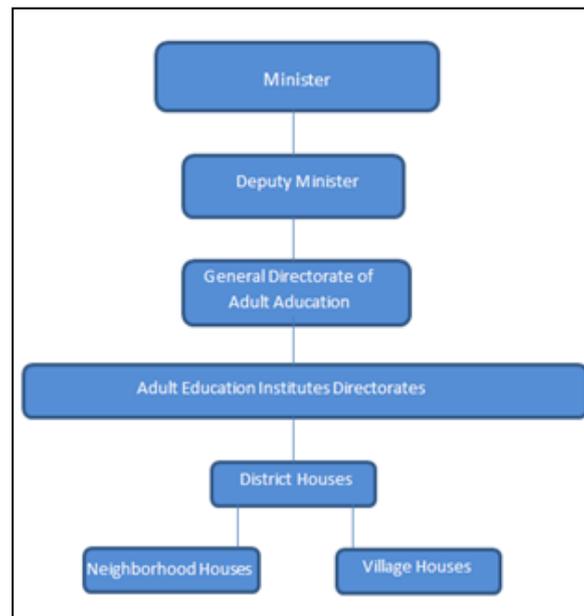


Figure 3: AE organizational structure

Considering the RE organization structure according to the model; a transition is observed to a neighborhood and village-based organization model instead of the district-based organization model of the existing public education centers, one in each district. Considering the administrative structure of Turkey; there are 30 metropolitan cities with a population of over 750 thousand, central districts and districts connected to them, and 51 cities and districts affiliated to them (TBMM, 1949). In this context, organizing and conducting personal development courses which are considered within the scope of non-professional AE activities is under the responsibility of :

- a) District house secretariats, which are primarily responsible to AEI directorates in central districts and other districts of provinces with metropolitan status;
- b) District houses secretariats, which are primarily responsible to AEI directorates in districts of provinces which do not have metropolitan status;
- c) Neighborhood house secretariats, which are primarily responsible to the district house secretariats in neighborhoods, towns or villages;
- d) AEI directorates in city centers which do not have metropolitan status;
- e) The secretariat of the smallest administrative unit (neighborhood house, district house, etc.) to which the place where the training is held is affiliated, among the education activities organized on mobile education buses operating at the required places and times.

- f) AEI directorates work directly under the general directorate of HBÖ. AEI directors are appointed directly by the ministry among the applicants based on the following criteria:
- g) In case of equality, *academic title* in the field of AE, education administration, education, public administration, business administration, economics, respectively;
- h) *Experience of public administration*, in order of level and duration;
- i) *Adult education experience* at the practical and academic levels, respectively;
- j) In the event that no suitable candidate can be found, among the applicants is education level, public administration experience, YE experience, respectively.

The secretaries of the district and neighborhood houses are appointed by the AEI directorates, with the ministry taking the necessary measures regarding accountability and transparency, based on the same criteria.

In the conceptual model, AEI is the basic service units where training services for both vocational training and personal development are structured, produced and presented. AEI is organized in the form of campuses which focus on vocational education in order to increase the quality of educational processes for vocational education and personal development. According to the model, considering the functional structure of the institute campuses, it is observed that the field of vocational education and personal development, and education processes are also separated from each other, relatively. As a matter of fact, differentiated technical equipment and infrastructures in the fields of design, production, presentation/marketing are needed in in-service/on-the-job training applications, which are anticipated in the conceptual model. Vocational training units in AEI are represented at the level of chiefs as design units, production/cultivation units, and presentation/marketing units (See Figure 4):

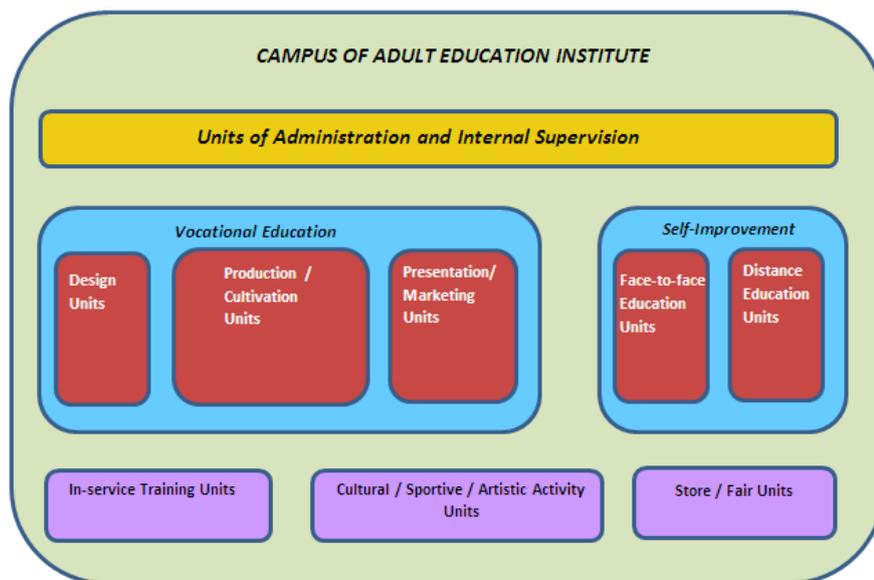


Figure 4: AEI functional structure

Design units are organized under the design field chiefs. Design areas and design workshops which are established within the body of design area chiefs differ based on the institutes according to the development strategies and priority areas determined by AEI by taking into account the geographical, economic, agricultural and industrial characteristics of the province within the framework of national AE policies and strategies. In line with this, the economic structure, types and potentials of the provinces where the institutes are located are analyzed and courses and programs are organized for the design of new products and services. For example, in AEI which is located in x province, where industrial economic activities are based on textile and wood products, agricultural economic activities are based on beet production and cattle breeding, priority is given to design workshops for the design of original products in these fields, as well as courses and programs to be conducted in these workshops.

In the model, production and cultivation units are organized under the production and cultivation area chiefs. Production and cultivation units are organized with a holistic approach to transform product designs from design into physical products or services. In the field of production and cultivation, priority is given to courses and programs which aim at transforming product designs from design into products. Courses and programs are conducted with eclectic methods and techniques which combine theoretical education, in-service/on-the-job/production process education and distance education. In this context, production workshops are established with technical and hardware infrastructure which are suitable for the module contents which are prepared in line with the program priorities. The courses and programs which are organized in these workshops are subsidiary and complementary to design courses and programs. Product designs which are realized in industrial, agricultural or service-oriented design-based programs in design units are transformed into industrial products or services in production units and programs.

Presentation/marketing units are organized under the presentation/marketing area chiefs. Presentation/marketing units are organized with an approach which integrates the design and production processes, covering the dimensions and processes for the presentation and marketing of the final products, which are revealed at the end of the design and production processes. In this context, workshops and laboratories are established with technical and hardware infrastructure suitable for the module contents prepared in line with the presentation and marketing program priorities. In the established workshops and laboratories, programs for the presentation or marketing of products or services which are obtained as a consequence of design and production processes are given priority.

In the conceptual model, the trainees who have successfully completed their training in the vocational training units of AEI, which are defined as design, production and presentation/marketing and who have been certified/accredited, who have interest and competence, are directed to the in-service training unit within AEI in order to be trained as trainers. It is aimed that trainer candidates in AEI in-service training units gain basic trainer competencies in such areas as andragogy, teaching methods and techniques, assessment-evaluation, communication, which are required to be a trainer in AE.

Cultural, artistic and sportive activity units in AEI aim to create an ecosystem in the cultural, artistic and sporting context which is fed by the environment and society in which they live, as well as nourishes the environment and society in which they live. In this context, certain facilities and units are established where activities such as sports competitions and leagues in various branches, cinema, theater, concerts, exhibitions, panels, camps, and festivals can be organized under the coordination of culture, art and sports field chiefs.

Shopping centers are created as attraction centers which allow the employment of trainees as well as the presentation and marketing, wholesale or retail sale of the products and services which are provided by the vocational training units within AEI. In all processes and units serving the operation of shopping centers, employment of graduate trainees and internship opportunities for trainees is taken as a basis.

In the conceptual model, it is observed that the organizational structure of the self-improvement field differs from the field of vocational education. Thus, contrary to the centralization trend in the field of professional development at the provincial level in the context of the political decision framework and the characteristics of an ideal organizational structure, an organization model is preferred at the neighborhood and village scale for the purpose of reducing access problems in the self-improvement field (See Figure 5):

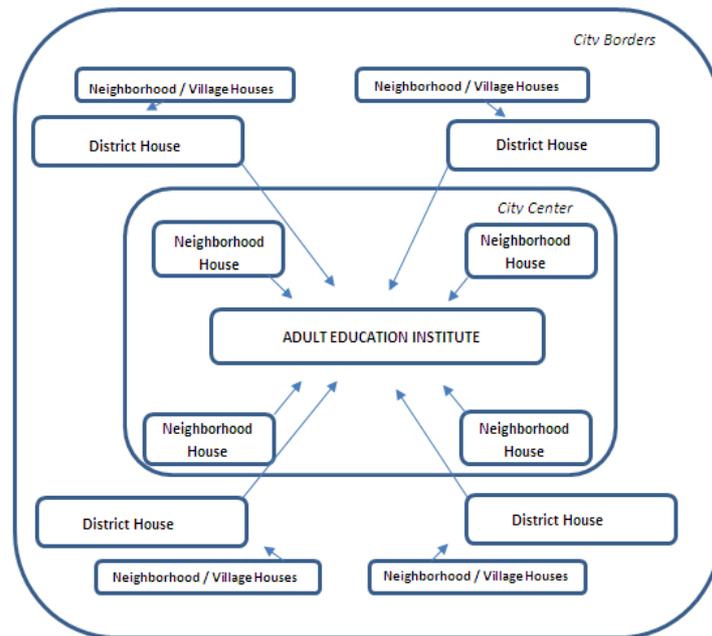


Figure 5: Organization model of self-improvement field in provinces which do not have metropolitan status

Examining the self-improvement field organization model in the provinces which do not hold metropolitan status, district, neighborhood and village houses are available in the field of self-improvement. The model anticipates neighborhood houses according to the needs and the characteristics of the settlement in the city centers which do not hold metropolitan status, and district houses and the neighborhood and village houses

connected to the districts outside the center. In the central districts and districts outside the center of the provinces which hold metropolitan status, district houses, and depending on the characteristics of the settlement, neighborhood and village houses which are connected to them are assumed. An AEI can collaborate with local governments, public institutions and special provincial administrations and sign protocols for the selection of the location of district, neighborhood and village houses, and the allocation of requirements such as buildings and equipment. In addition, AEI is responsible for the execution and supervision of courses and programs to be organized in neighborhood houses, and the assignment of trainers and secretaries. Mobile education buses are assigned to conduct the courses in places where it is not possible to establish a neighborhood/village house due to the characteristics of the settlement, even if possible, it is not economical to establish a neighborhood/village house in proportion to the quantity of the course demand, or where the population is low or scattered. AEI in the city centers and the district houses are directly responsible for organizing and conducting the training activities which are performed on the mobile education bus in the districts to which the neighborhood or village where the bus operates are affiliated. The temporary allocation of the education buses is authorized by AEI.

4.4.3. Features of Implementation

Considering the implementation features of a future-based AE system, it can be suggested that it must comply with the following,

- a) Applications and e-learning contents supported by the distance education model;
- b) Content which is compatible with 21st century skills and competencies?
- c) Polytechnic training implementations prioritizing in-service/on-the-job training;
- d) Qualified mobile education practices;
- e) Strengthened technical, technological and hardware infrastructure;
- f) Educational practices which offer career opportunities to participants;
- g) Internationalization-oriented student exchange programs which aim to gain a vision of world citizenship through education, and activities and implementations in this context;
- h) Programs and implementations which are compatible with regional priorities in terms of economic, social, geographical and cultural aspects;
- i) Implementations for training qualified AE instructors in the context of professional knowledge, field knowledge and educational practices covering adult learning characteristics, principles, methods and techniques;
- j) Implementations which aim accreditation

Considering AE processes from a formal point of view, the programs and education practices; theoretical education, on-the-job training and internship/practice should be handled with a holistic approach. Theoretical training, on-the-job training and internship/practice dimensions should be modular, and it should be possible to apply all three dimensions sequentially or simultaneously depending on the type and structure of the program. Development of trainees is supported through tools such as modular e-learning contents, WEB 2.0 tools, and on-line education platforms, by including face-to-

face education applications in all aspects of the process, simultaneously with distance education applications. It is also possible to perform some of the programs which are organized especially in the field of personal development only through distance education. Distance education practices also include practices which support cooperative learning, such as peer matching and peer education. In addition to the technical, technological and hardware infrastructure which is required in both theoretical education, on-the-job training and internship/practice dimensions; it is a prerequisite to establish a sustainable and developable infrastructure which enables distance education processes to be performed effectively and efficiently in the process. Distance education processes should be made accessible to everyone who is a stakeholder in the education process. In this context, it is crucial to design web-based programs with free, qualified and easy-to-use interfaces, websites with e-learning content and mobile applications, to transfer existing good implementation examples to distance education platforms, and to create new/continuously renewed e-learning contents.

Examining the applications in the conceptual model in terms of vocational education; priority is given to the organization of vocational programs in parallel with regional priorities and requirements. with the aim of identifying regional priorities and needs; social, economic, geographical and cultural inequalities Analyses are performed by AEI in order to identify regional priorities and needs and in line with strategic objectives in the context of regional opportunities and sustainable development goals and human capital social, economic, geographical and cultural inequalities. AEI takes necessary precautions to increase participation in courses and programs which are organized in line with the regional priorities and requirements which are revealed as a result of the aforementioned analyses. Public relations activities are utilized effectively for this purpose.

In neighborhoods or villages where it is not possible to establish a neighborhood/village house depending on the characteristics of the settlement, mobile education activities are organized. Mobile education activities are performed through mobile education buses, which are designed to meet the educational purpose and have the necessary technological and equipment infrastructure. In addition to AE process, mobile education buses provide cinema, theatre, concert, festival, etc. for students and/or adults who study at schools in villages and neighborhoods where economic and geographical impossibilities exist. It can also be used to organize events; educational processes can be combined with such activities.

Accreditation, according to the conceptual model, is a performance indicator at the level of both participants and programs. Considering the participants in particular; the accreditation process is anticipated for those who have the interest and desire among the participants who deserve to receive a certificate successfully in each of the conceptual training, in-service/on-the-job training and practice/internship processes. Those who are successful in the accreditation process are entitled to receive a national and/or internationally accredited qualification/vocational qualification certificate. Participants who have a qualification/vocational qualification certificate are given priority both in the selection of trainer candidates and employees in affiliated enterprises, and in benefiting

from the grant and loan incentives which are given to entrepreneurs for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Considering the AEI in terms of the accreditation process, departments and programs which are opened within the AEI should have a basic and final accreditation vision. As a matter of fact, accreditation is of vital importance in the context of performance indicators of the AEI which is located in 81 provincial centers. In other words, as a reference point, it provides an objective criterion for the evaluation of AEI that how many departments, how many programs and how many participants can accredit each institute.

Considering the conceptual model in the context of the career opportunities which it can offer to the participants; it can be claimed that it offers career structuring opportunities in three areas as trainer, employee and entrepreneur (See Figure 5.14)

In the context of career opportunities, participants are informed in line with their interests, wishes and abilities and by taking such evaluation criteria into consideration as their success at the program graduation, education levels and accreditation. Considering the career opportunities in terms of trainers, trainer candidates who successfully graduate from the programs are accepted in a training process which includes concepts, principles, methods, techniques and practices specific to the AE field. Those who are successful at the end of this training process are primarily employed with the title of trainer or qualified instructor in programs and courses, if needed. In terms of vocational training, AE participants are qualified as employees as well as students, from the moment they are involved in the training process, in proportion to the share they receive from the added value which is produced and the income which they earn. Moreover, the participants who successfully graduate from the programs; in line with their interests, desires and abilities, are primarily employed in enterprises within the body of the AEI and in affiliated enterprises through protocols and collaborations, taking into account evaluation criteria such as their success at program graduation, education levels, and accreditation. Among the participants who successfully graduated from the programs, those who want to become entrepreneurs; are primarily benefited from SMEs grant and loan incentive support programs, taking into account the evaluation criteria such as their success at program graduation and accreditation.

4.5. Evaluation

Evaluation phase includes testing the effectiveness of the model, interpreting the feedback received from the subsystems, and realizing possible corrections and configurations in line with these feedbacks. In the evaluation; the policy and strategy by which the model is designed, organizational structure and the effectiveness; and efficiency level of the operation in the implementation of subsystems are determined through regional, national and global AE targets and performance indicators. At this stage, the degree of achievement of the targets and performance indicators, which are determined by the AEI, is evaluated and feedbacks are provided for the sub-systems within the AEI ecosystem. Through the provided feedbacks, the causes of possible disruptions which are observed in subsystems are determined and necessary adjustments are made.

Evaluation at the national level is performed by considering the degree of achievement of national and global AE targets and performance indicators. At this stage, analyzing the feedback which is received from the AEs and the degree of achievement of the goals specific to each AE, and the AEs, which are also subsystems of the system, are evaluated. As a result of these evaluations, possible disruptions are detected, and necessary precautions are taken in the subsystem.

5. Conclusion and Discussion

Considering the findings of the study based on their educational qualifications, it is observed that the views of the participants are generally themed around that the trainers are unqualified in terms of adult learning principles, methods and techniques, and they do not have an andragogic background in theory and practice, and the lack of field teaching programs at the undergraduate level which will support AE is a source of serious problems in the field. These results do not support the findings of the research conducted by Çevik (2019) that *“the trainers who perform adult education activities have a high level of application of andragogic teaching principles”*. This is because the trainers who were selected as the study group in Çevik’s study (2019) has a high tendency to evaluate the andragogic background of the trainers in general, of which they are also a member. The findings, on the other hand, agree with the result of the study which was conducted by Karabacak (2018) in order to measure the knowledge level of trainers related to andragogy who work in public education centers with the results that *“the trainers working in the field of adult education have only superficial knowledge in the context of andragogy principles and they cannot internalize the application of this superficial knowledge in this educational environment”*. However, these results support the conclusions of the research conducted by Phillips et al. (2017) that *“the more adult trainers improve themselves in the field of adult education and andragogy, and follow the current literature, the more useful they can be in the field of AE”*.

Analyzing the findings in the context of human capital, employment and sustainable development, it is concluded that the AE is insufficient in terms of the contribution of human capital to sustainable development goals through the training of human capital and the employment of qualified human capital. This is believed to be due to the inability to transform human capital into employment in addition to the quality problems in the vocational education process and the absence of a sustainable model in this regard. In this context, raising human capital through vocational AE and employing it through a sustainable model are considered critical in terms of sustainable development goals. Considering the international policy texts which address sustainable development, it is possible to state that this result is in accord with “Sustainable Development Goal 4” and the “Education 2030 Action Plan” (United Nations, 2015), which aim to address the economic, social and environmental demands of youth and adults by helping them develop the skills which they need for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship. .

Considering the findings in the context of adaptation to global changes and developments, it is observed that AE institutions are generally identified with tailoring, embroidery and furnishing courses, and they are mostly perceived as institutions which the social needs of adults, especially women, who do not take part in business life, are met through furnishing courses. It is thought that this perception results from the inadequacy of the AE system in adapting to global developments and changes. In this context, it can be suggested that AE policies and strategies fall behind the new value system, which has emerged 21st century and include such contents as leadership, entrepreneurship, taking initiative, and creative thinking. As a matter of fact, it is considered that this result does not agree with the 21st Century AE vision defined by United Nations (2015). In this context, it can be claimed that AE institutions need policies and strategies which will prioritize their adaptation to paradigmatic transformations and changes which are experienced on a global scale.

Considering the findings on organizational autonomy and flexibility; it is observed that the centralized organizational structure, in some cases, prevents the institutions which provide AE from taking the initiative and achieving their AE goals. These obstacles result in the ignoring of regional, economic, demographic, cultural and social differences in implementation; the elimination of or delay in the solution of possible problems which can be prevented by local measures. Moreover, it is possible to state that the centralized organizational structure limits the ability of AE institutions to produce micro-scale strategic policies in the pursuit of employment-oriented vocational training and production, branding and sustainable development goals, as well as such issues as budgeting, personnel, protocol authorizations. In this context, it is believed that strengthened AE institutions are needed in the organizational context at the local level through delegation of authority and relative autonomy in the AE field in order to adapt to the environment in which they live in line with cultural, geographical, social, economic and demographic differentiations and at the same time to have the power to direct it.

Considering the findings in the context of access and participation problems, in addition to the problems which result from policies and strategies, the existence of problems arising from the organizational structure and practice draw attention. Among the access and participation problems are the inadequacy of the participation incentive and support systems, the problems of the access of the disadvantaged segments arising from the organizational structure, the problems of publicity/ awareness and dissemination, the access and participation problems arising from the regional/cultural / demographic differences. Comparing these results to the results of the research conducted by Komşu (2014); it can be suggested that the results of the two studies partially overlap. As a matter of fact, in both studies, it is observed that the inadequacy of publicity/awareness and dissemination are considered as an important participation problem. However, it is observed that the inadequacy of participation incentive and support systems and the problems arising from the organizational structure for the access of disadvantaged segments, which are among the obstacles to participation in this study, are not considered as obstacles to participation in the study of Komşu (2014). It is thought that this may be due to the differences in the cultural and demographic structures in

which both studies were conducted. In conclusion, it is observed that it is required to take structural measures to reduce access problems, to employ incentive and support systems to reduce participation problems, and to handle publicity and dissemination at a professional level.

Considering the findings related to accreditation and equivalence; it is possible to state that the certificates which are obtained from AE institutions mostly do not indicate that the knowledge and skills related to the relevant program have been acquired, therefore the certificates do not indicate the quality; and this discredits certificates and institutions. Certain problems such as supervisory inadequacies, varying criteria at the implementation stage from institution to institution, program to program, trainer to trainer, failure to provide standardization and equivalence, and rarely unethical practices are considered to be the cause of the reputation problem related to certificates. In this context, accreditation should be adopted as the basic vision for AE strategies, both at the institutional level and on the basis of programs.

Considering the findings regarding the course participation fees, it is concluded that revolving fund organizations in AE institutions define the main source of income not over production or product, but on the fees which are received from the trainees brings into disrepute over AE's public nature, which is/should be a public service. As a matter of fact, it is observed that some AE institutions have converted the certification authority which they hold on to behalf of the public into money, reducing it to almost the level of certificate sales, especially in the context of certain courses which require certification. Moreover, it is mentioned by the participants that many people cannot attend the courses or have to leave the course simply because they have difficulty paying the fees. It is believed that this does not comply with the organizational goals and vision of AE.

Considering the findings regarding the integration of distance education into AE, it is observed that no distance education-oriented structuring in the RE system is available in Turkey. Examining the views of the participants in general, in the context of the need for distance education in AE; it can be claimed it is the prevalent idea that the facilitating nature of the developments in information and communication technologies eliminate the problems related to the classroom-based, place-dependent face-to-face education model, especially the accessibility; that the quality of the information embodied in the image of the teacher and the school, is changing, and that the responsibility of learning is assumed by the learner at first hand on the basis of the idealized image of the future. However, taking global social trends into account, the concept of digital literacy, especially the use of social media, changes individuals' habits of literacy and access to information. Considering the fact that distance education also provides an education opportunity which is independent of time and place contributes to reducing the inequalities of opportunity in access to AE, it is thought that a structuring process should be performed in the AE system to benefit from distance education opportunities as well. Thus, along with the pandemic process, which has been on the world agenda since March 2020, it is observed that it is critical to make effective use of distance education opportunities in the field of AE.

Considering the findings of the study regarding teaching methods and techniques, it is concluded that the teaching methods and techniques used in AE are mostly limited to lecturing and question-answer methods, technological developments are rarely used; creative and various activities specific to adult learning are seldom which can attract the attention of adults. In this context, in general; it is thought that activating project-based study/learning models in teaching processes and integrating new approaches in teaching methods and techniques into teaching processes are of critical importance. In the case of vocational AE; it is concluded that by intertwining education and production, production environments should function as education units and educational environments should function as production units, and in-service/on-the-job training practices should be employed.

Strategic target decision indicators have been defined by determining political decision criteria in the proposed AEP model based on the findings of the research. These political decision criteria and strategic target decision indicators should be qualified to raise human capital, achieve sustainable development goals, contribute to the priority of skills and competencies of 21st century, use mechanisms which increase and encourage participation in activities with access and infrastructure problems, reduce all kinds of inequalities, train and employ qualified trainers, protect ecological balance, contribute to accreditation processes and internationalization processes.

Considering the characteristics of the organizational structure, the organizational structure of AE should comply with certain qualities such as taking into account the economic, geographical, demographic, cultural and social differences between regions and administrative units, flexibility to reduce inequalities arising from these differences; autonomy which is considered with a university approach; delegation of authority; neighborhood/village-based organization; a self-sufficient and sustainable economic structure which produces surplus value, provides employment; organization in the campus model; a simplified structure which facilitates coordination by reducing vertical hierarchy and managerial power distance.

Considering the features of the implementation, the AE practices should reflect such qualities as applications and e-learning contents which are supported by the distance education model; the contents which are compatible with 21st century skills and competencies; in-service/on-the-job training; qualified mobile education applications; strengthened technical, technological and hardware infrastructure; educational practices which offer career opportunities; student exchange programs for internationalization; programs and practices which are compatible with regional priorities in economic, social, geographical and cultural aspects; practices for training qualified AE trainers; practices targeting accreditation.

6. Suggestions

This section presents suggestions for practice and research within the framework of the study results.

6.1. Suggestions Regarding Implementation

Based on the results of the study, it is possible to list the suggestions for practice as follows:

- Studies should be performed to increase trainers' qualifications who work in the field of AE in the context of adult learning principles, methods and techniques.
- The most attended courses should be determined, and AE field teaching undergraduate programs should be opened in the relevant departments of universities, which serves as a source for these fields.
- Effective and sustainable models should be employed to transform the human capital which is raised through AE into employment.
- A restructuring process in the direction of autonomy/localization and delegation of authority within the context of organizational structure should be initiated. Organizational possibilities in the campus model should be considered in the possible restructuring process.
- Accreditation in terms of both programs and trainees should be included in the AE agenda; efforts should be made for AE institutions to adopt accreditation as their main vision.
- It should be ensured that all courses at all AE institutions, regardless of type, are free.
- E-learning contents should be prepared and presented to users with open access over a digital platform.
- A structuring process should be initiated to benefit from distance education opportunities.
- Studies should be performed to ensure the integration of new approaches in teaching methods and techniques and new educational technologies into teaching processes.
- In-service/on-the-job training implementations should be expanded by making efforts to ensure that production environments function as education units and educational environments as production units.
- Studies which contribute to the preservation of ecological balance should be conducted.
- Internationalization in AE should be put on the agenda by designing student/trainee exchange programs.

6.2. Suggestions Regarding Research

Based on the results of the study, it is possible to list the suggestions for research as follows:

- Examining the literature, it is observed that there is a limited number of studies considering AE policies in Turkey. In this context, it is suggested to conduct new studies examining AE policies and strategies, organizational structure and implementations in Turkey.
- It can be said that studies dealing with trainer qualities and trainee perceptions are predominant in the studies in the literature. Therefore, quantitative and

qualitative studies are also suggested in the dimensions of raising human capital, sustainable development, global change and developments, and 21st century skills.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares no conflicts of interests.

About the Author

Engin Dilbaz is an administrator of education. He is a doctor in the field of educational administration, supervision, planning and economy. He conducts researches on educational policies, educational philosophies, adult education and sustainable development. <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9382-9691>

References

- Ağcihan, E. (2015). *Yetişkin eğitimi alanında eğitim veren öğretmenlerin yetişkin eğitimi alanındaki yeterlilikleri*. Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi. İstanbul: Yeditepe Üniversitesi, Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü.
- Allworth, S. (1999). Classification structures encourage the growth of generic industry models. In *The eighteenth international conference on conceptual modelling* (industrial track). Springer, Paris, France, pp 35–46. D. L. Moody (Ed).
- Altınova, H. H. (2009). *Yaratıcı drama yönteminin kadınların özsaygı düzeyine ve toplumsal cinsiyet bilincine etkisi*. Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi. Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü.
- Awamleh, R., Garner, W. L. (1999). Perceptions of leader charisma and effectiveness: the effect of vision content, delivery and organizational performance. *Leadership Quarterly*, 10 (3). 345-373.
- Becker, J., Rosemann, M., Indulska, M., Green, P. (2009). Business process modelling- a comparative analysis. *Journal of the Association for Information Systems*, 10 (4), 333-363.
- Bilgin, N. (2006). *Sosyal bilimlerde içerik analizi*. Ankara: Siyasal.
- Bogdan, C., Biklen, K. (1992). *Qualitative research for education: an introduction to theory and methods* (2nd Edition). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Çevik, Ö. (2019). *Yetişkin eğitimi veren eğitimcilerin andragojik öğretim ilkelerini uygulama düzeylerine yönelik bir karma yöntem çalışması*. Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi. Niğde: Ömer Halisdemir Üniversitesi, Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü.
- Denscombe, M. (2007). *The good research guide*. New York: Open University.
- Eurostat. (2019). *Adult education survey*.
https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/metadata/EN/trng_aes_12m0_esms.htm#
(Erişim tarihi: 23.10.2019).
- Ertürk, S. (1998). *Eğitimde program geliştirme*. Ankara: Meteksan.

- Fettke, P., Loos, P. (2003). Multiperspective evaluation of reference models: towards a framework. G. P. D. In *International conference on conceptual modelling*, Springer, Berlin, Germany, Oct. 13, pp. 81-90. Gentner, H. J. Nelson, M. Piattini (Eds).
- Girginer, N. (2001). *Uzaktan eğitim kararlarında teknoloji, maliyet, etkinlik boyutları ve uzaktan eğitime geçiş için kavramsal bir model önerisi*. Yayınlanmamış Doktora Tezi. Eskişehir, Anadolu Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü.
- Kahrıman, N. (2010). *Adult educators' views on their occupation and professionalization of adult education*. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis. İstanbul: Boğaziçi University, Institute of Education Sciences.
- Karabacak, S. (2018). The level of andragogical knowledge of the educator working with adults in Turkey. *Bartın University Journal of Faculty of Education*, 7 (2), 537-561.
- Kılıç, M. (2010). Stratejik yönetim sürecinde değerler, vizyon ve misyon kavramları arasındaki ilişki. *Sosyoekonomi*, 2, 81-98.
- Komşu, U. C. (2014). *Türkiye'de kent sorunları ve yetişkin eğitimi: Mersin Karaduvar mahallesi örneği*. Yayınlanmamış Doktora Tezi. Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi, Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü.
- Koşar, S. (2013). Eğitim politikaları. S. Özdemir (Editör), *Eğitim yönetiminde kuram ve uygulama içinde* (s. 262-287). Ankara: Pegem Akademi.
- Kuckartz, U. (2014). *Qualitative text analysis: A guide to methods, practice and using software*. London: Sage.
- McMillan, J. H., Schumacher, S. (1993). *Research in education, a conceptual introduction* (3rd Edition). New York. Harper Collins.
- Merriam, S. B., Cafarella, R. S., Baumgartner, L. M. (2007). *Learning in adulthood*. London: Oxford University.
- OECD. (2019). *Skills matter: additional results from the survey of adult skills*. https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/skills-matter_1f029d8f-en#page1 (Erişim tarihi: 25.04.2020).
- Orloev, N., Beloev, H., Iliev, M., Vassilev, Y., Uzunov, K., Boneva, P. (2015). Higher education in the economy of knowledge. *9th International Technology, Education and Development Conference Proceedings*, Madrid, Spain, pp. 19-26.
- Pace, D. K. (2000). Ideas about simulation conceptual model development. *Johns Hopkins APL Technical Digest*, 21 (3), pp. 327-336.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative evaluation and research*. (2nd edition). California: Sage.
- Phillips, L. A., Baltzer, C., Filoon, L., Whitley, C. (2017). Adult student preferences: Instructor characteristics conducive to successful teaching. *Journal of Adult and Continuing Education*, 23 (1), 49-60.
- Phillips, L. A., Baltzer, C., Filoon, L., Whitley, C. (2017). Adult student preferences: Instructor characteristics conducive to successful teaching. *Journal of Adult and Continuing Education*, 23 (1), 49-60.
- Sargent, R. G. (1987). An overview of verification and validation of simulation models. *Proceedings of the 1987 Winter Simulation Conference*.

- United Nations. (2015). *Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Outcome Document for the UN Summit to Adopt the Post-2015 Development Agenda: Draft for Adoption*. New York.
- UNHCR. (2020). *UNHCR Türkiye istatistikleri*. <http://www.unhcr.org/tr/wp-content/uploads/sites/14/2020/09/UNHCR-Turkey-General-Fact-Sheet-September-2020.pdf> (Erişim tarihi: 27.09.2020).
- TBMM. (1949). *İl İdaresi Kanunu*. <https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.3.5442.pdf> (Erişim tarihi: 21.06.2020).
- United Nations. (2015). *Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Outcome Document for the UN Summit to Adopt the Post-2015 Development Agenda: Draft for Adoption*. New York.
- Yıldırım, A. ve Şimşek, H. (2011). *Sosyal bilimlerde nitel araştırma yöntemleri*. (8. Baskı). Ankara: Seçkin.
- Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research design and methods* (3th Edition). London: Sage.

Creative Commons licensing terms

Authors will retain the copyright of their published articles agreeing that a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0) terms will be applied to their work. Under the terms of this license, no permission is required from the author(s) or publisher for members of the community to copy, distribute, transmit or adapt the article content, providing a proper, prominent and unambiguous attribution to the authors in a manner that makes clear that the materials are being reused under permission of a Creative Commons License. Views, opinions and conclusions expressed in this research article are views, opinions and conclusions of the author(s). Open Access Publishing Group and European Journal of Alternative Education Studies shall not be responsible or answerable for any loss, damage or liability caused in relation to/arising out of conflict of interests, copyright violations and inappropriate or inaccurate use of any kind content related or integrated on the research work. All the published works are meeting the Open Access Publishing requirements and can be freely accessed, shared, modified, distributed and used in educational, commercial and non-commercial purposes under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).