THE BARRIERS THAT HINDER THE USE OF STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING IN SCHOOLS IN NORTH CYPRUS

Dr. Gulen Onurkan Aliusta
Dr. Bekir Ozer
Eastern Mediterranean University

Abstract

Student-centred learning (SCL), which is considered as the biggest education reform in North Cyprus, was put into practice in schools in 2005 with the aim to improve the quality of education. There have been continuous complaints from teachers with respect to the compability of SCL with the current Cyprus Turkish education system since its adoption in schools. According to teachers, there are serious barriers that hinder the use of SCL in classroom teaching and learning. Unfortunately, there are few empirical studies conducted on the use of SCL, particularly the barriers that hinder its effective use is an under-researched area. Therefore, this study aims to identify the barriers that hinder the use of SCL in high schools based on teachers' opinions. The study employs the case study method conducted in public high schools. In total, 33 teachers participated in the study and the required data were collected through semi-structured interviews. The results of the study revealed an interrelated web of factors that inhibit the implementation of SCL in classroom practices. "Student profile", "curriculum", "teachers" "educational resources", "parents" and "structure of classrooms" were reported to be the barriers. One striking finding of the study is that the teachers do not believe that they have sufficient training to fully implement SCL in their classrooms.

Keywords

Student-centred learning, Constructivism, High schools, North Cyprus.

KUZEY KIBRIS'TAKİ OKULLARDA ÖĞRENCİ MERKEZLİ ÖĞRETİMİN UYGULANMASINI ENGELLEYEN ETMENLER

Dr. Gülen Onurkan Aliusta
Dr. Bekir Özer
Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesi

Özet

Kuzey Kıbrıs'ta en büyük eğitim reformu olarak kabul edilen öğrenci-merkezli öğretim (ÖMÖ), eğitimin kalitesini artırmak amacıyla 2005 yılında okullarda uygulamaya konmuştur. ÖMÖ'nün okullarda uygulamaya konmasından bu yana Kıbrıs Türk eğitim sistemine uygunluğu konusunda öğretmenlerden sürekli yakınmalar gelmektedir. Öğretmenlere göre, ÖMÖ'nün sınıftaki öğretme ve öğrenme sürecinde uygulanmasını engelleyen önemli etmenler bulunmakatadır. Ne yazık ki, ÖMÖ'nün uygulanması ile ilgili yapılmış az sayıda görgül çalışma bulunmaktadır. Özellikle, ÖMÖ'nün etkili bir biçimde uygulanmasını engelleyen etmenleri ortaya çıkarmaya dönük yapılan çalışmalar pek bulunmamaktadır. Bu nedenle bu araştırma, ÖMÖ'nün genel liselerde uygulanmasını engelleyen etmenlerin öğretmen görüşlerine dayalı olarak belirlenmesini amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışmada örnek olay yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Çalışmaya toplam 33 öğretmen katılmış ve gerekli veriler yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmeler aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Çalışmada elde edilen sonuçlar, ÖMÖ'nün sınıflarda uygulanmasını engelleyen birbiriyle ilişkili etmenlerin olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. "Öğrenci profili", "eğitim programı", "öğretmenler", "eğitim kaynakları", "anne-babalar" ve "sınıfların yapısı", uygulamayı engelleyen etmenler olarak belirlenmiştir. Çalışmanın önemli bir bulgusu da, öğretmenlerin ÖMÖ'yü sınıflarında tam olarak uygulayabilmeleri için yeterli eğitimi almadıklarına inanmalarıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Öğrenci-merkezliöğretim, Yapılandırmacılık, Liseler, Kuzey Kıbrıs.

INTRODUCTION

Current research (Cheang, 2009; Keziah, 2010; Smith and Cardaciotto, 2011; Wohlfarth et al., 2008) has demonstrated the effectiveness of student-centred learning (SCL) for the enhancement of student learning relative to traditional teacher-centred teaching (TCT). TCT, which puts emphasis on didactic lectures and ignores the active participation of students, has been attacked rigorously as it was found to foster rote learning, overloading students with excessive information that can hardly be transferred to their daily lives (Weimer, 2002). SCL, a teaching and a learning approach which has its roots in constructivism, has emerged as a response to TCT, aiming to foster the effectiveness and efficiency of student learning. In contrast to TCT which considers students as passive recipients of knowledge, SCL puts students at the centre of instruction considering their needs, abilities and interests in the teaching and learning process. SCL considers students as active agents who take the responsibility for their own learning, including them in decision making at all stages of instruction (Özer, 2008).

"Student-centered" and "teacher-centered" are the two extremes usually represented on different ends of a continuum and the extent to which teachers can move from TCT to SCL depends on certain factors (O'Neill and McMahon, 2005). Literature provides support for the argument that the implementation of SCL may sometimes be hindered due to various factors. Having a prescribed curriculum is considered as an important factor, putting pressure on teachers to cover fixed amount of content in a due time and discouraging them to allocate time for student-centered methods (Blumberg, 2009; Bolden and Newton, 2008; Brandes and Ginnis, 1986; Gladys et al., 2012; Mangan, 2011; Thanh, 2010; Yılmaz, 2009). The implementation of SCL is also found to be problematic in countries where there are limited educational resources such as technology and study materials for both teachers and students (Altinyelken, 2011; Güneş and Baki, 2011; O'Neill and McMahon, 2005; Schweisfurth, 2011; Thanh, 2010). Unfortunately, in some parts of the world there are no other resources available to teachers other than textbooks (Gladys et al., 2012; Mohammad and Harlech-Jones, 2008). Students' previous learning experience is also reported to be an impediment as it is found to influence students' views of learning, the way they approach learning and their motivation (Attard et al., 2010; Blumberg, 2009; Doyle, 2008; Felder and Brent, 2006; Güneş and Baki, 2011; Mangan, 2011; Thanh, 2010; Weimer, 2002). Another important barrier towards reform in education is the negative attitudes of teachers towards change (Attard et al., 2010; Marsh, 2007; Weimer, 2002; Yilmaz, 2009). Literature reports that some teachers rely on TCT as they are not comfortable with using SCL in their classrooms while some others find the approach quite threatening which is mostly related to the issue of power and

authority in instruction (Weimer, 2002; Yilmaz, 2009). Parents are also highlighted as an important factor, particularly the cultures in which teacher is regarded as the one who is responsible for students' learning seem to be more comfortable with TCT. Hence, a teacher, who tries to pass the responsibility of learning to students, may be viewed with suspicion and accused of not doing his or her job properly (Altinyelken, 2011). High stakes examinations, which are now widely used to evaluate public education in many countries, is underlined as another significant barrier (Altinyelken, 2011; Bolden and Newton, 2008; Gladys et al., 2012; Marsh, 2007; Yilmaz, 2009). High-stakes examinations require teachers to teach to exams through the use of traditional lectures rather than promoting the use of student-centered teaching and learning methods/techniques (Gladys et al., 2012; Marsh, 2007; Yilmaz, 2009). Another barrier towards change is the fact that teachers are neither sufficiently educated nor trained to use SCL. Unfortunately, lecture is still found to be the dominant instructional practice used in education faculties (Geven and Santa, 2010; Güneş and Baki, 2011; Gladys et al., 2012; Mangan, 2011; Schweisfurth, 2011;Struyven et al., 2010; Yilmaz, 2009). Having a large class is considered as an obstacle (Altinyelken, 2011; Güneş and Baki, 2011; Thanh, 2010). Teachers of such classes tend to adopt low level teaching strategies such as lecturing as they think they would not have enough time to monitor and guide all students engaging in student-centered teaching and learning methods (Hoyt and Perera, 2000; Thanh, 2010).

The adoption of student-centered learning (SCL) in schools in 2005 is considered as the biggest education reform launched in North Cyprus. With the introduction of SCL, the Ministry of Education aims to increase the effectiveness of instruction, equipping students with the necessary skills and competencies required for knowledge economies of the future. However, there have been continuous complaints from teachers regarding the compatibility of SCL with the current education system. Unfortunately, there is little empirical research on the implementation of SCL in classroom teaching and learning in North Cyprus, particularly, the barriers teachers encounter in schools is an under-researched area. Teachers play the key role in the implementation of SCL; therefore, conducting research on their opinions would give an indication of the extent to which SCL is implemented, highlighting potential barriers that impede its use. This study aims to identify the barriers that hinder the use of SCL in high schools in North Cyprus based on teachers' opinions.

METHOD

Research Design

This is a descriptive study that employed case study method. The aim of using case study method is to build a complex and a holistic picture consisted of words describing opinions of participants conducted in a natural setting (Creswell, 2003). According to Miles and Huberman (1994), a case is "the unit of analysis …a focus or heart of the study" (p. 25). In this research, the case of the study is a group of teachers teaching in general high schools in North Cyprus.

Participants

In total 33 teachers teaching in 11 public high schools in North Cyprus in 2010-2011 academic year participated in the study. Purposive sampling technique (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2006) was used in order to make sure that the sample chosen best represented the characteristics of the entire population. 20 of the participants were female and the remaining 13 were male. Regarding the subject taught, 14 of them were teaching social sciences, 11 science, 5 languages and the remaining 3 fine arts. For the teaching experience, 13 had a teaching experience between 6-10 years, 9 of them 11-15 years, 7 of them 16-20, 1 of them 1-5 years and the remaining had teaching experience for 20 years or above. Finally, considering the pedagogical knowledge 18 were the graduates of a teacher certificate program and the remaining 15 were the graduates of a teacher education program.

Instrumentation

Semi-structured interview form, that consisted of open-ended questions, was used as a data collection instrument to obtain in-depth data from the teachers. Expert opinion was received to ensure the validity of the form and necessary amendments were made. Furthermore, the form was piloted with five high school teachers to see if it was capable of collecting the required data. Before the administration of the interviews, all teachers were informed about the purpose of the study and their consent was sought. All participants were assured that the information they provided would be kept confidential and would only be used in the present study. The anonymity of participants was maintained through the use of pseudonyms. The interviews took approximately 50 minutes each, were conducted in Turkish to avoid language barriers, and were tape recorded. Once the data were collected, all interviews were transcribed verbatim and translated into English.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis with a focus on commonalities, relationships and differences (Gibson and Brown, 2009). Apriority codes, which were adopted from the related literature, including "curriculum", "in-service teacher training", "high stakes exams", "parents" "educational resources", "students" previous learning experiences", "number of students found in each class" were used to form a basic outline for preliminary categorization. In addition to apriority codes, empirical ones were also generated inductively. Following coding, categories containing the barriers that impede the use of SCL in schools were formed. Coding checks (Cohen et al., 2007; Miles and Huberman, 1994) were made in order to ensure whether there was adequate agreement between two different coders in terms of codes generated from the same set of data. Therefore, after coding the data obtained from the interviews, the transcriptions were given to an outsider who was an expert in qualitative data analysis. Finally, the codes were compared and the intercoder agreement was found to be in the 90% range.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrated a complicated web of factors that were reported to be as main barriers in adopting SCL. The categories emerged from the data are "student profile", "curriculum", "teachers", "educational resources", "parents" and "structure of classrooms". Each category is elaborated below.

Student Profile

Student profile was reported to be the most important barrier impeding the use of SCL. The sub-categories emerged are "traditional educational background", "low motivation" and "heterogeneous classrooms".

Majority of teachers remarked that the students in high schools are not ready to adopt SCL because of their traditional educational background. As teachers stated most of their students are passive recipients of knowledge who are dependent on teachers in the teaching and learning process. They consider teacher as the only source of information and thus expect to learn everything from him or her. According to the teachers, because of their educational background and the way they approach teaching and learning, adopting student-centered roles is too challenging for the students.

> They [students] want me to summarize and explain the main points in
> the book. They think it is my responsibility to do this. They tend to be

> passive in class and are reluctant to take part in student-centered activities (Ada, a Turkish language and literature teacher).

The above quote reveals that the students not take the responsibility for their own learning and want the teacher to do knowledge transmission from the course book. Furthermore, they do not want to be active learners in the teaching and learning process. This finding is in line with previous studies in the literature (Aswegen and Dreyer, 2004; Attard et al, 2010; Blumberg, 2009; Doyle, 2008; Felder and Brent, 2006; Güneş and Baki, 2011; Mangan, 2011; Raselimo and Wilmot, 2013; Thanh, 2010).

There was absolute unanimity among teachers that most students are demotivated in the teaching and learning process. As stated by the teachers, majority of students are unwilling to participate, fail to do homework regularly and come to class without making necessary revisions. Teachers also stressed the difficulty of providing external stimuli in motivating their students to be more active in the teaching and learning process.

This is evidenced by the comments made by a philosophy teacher, Irmak:

> It's very difficult to trigger their motivation. The only way is to use bribery. I use exams as a threat. I said that I will ask that topic in the exam and it works. If there is no grade in return, nothing works.

The comment made by Irmak, voiced by most teachers, stresses the difficulty of motivating students. There is a general tendency among teachers to use "reward" and "punishment" in order to trigger the motivation of students. Most teachers considered "reward" and "punishment" to be of particular help; however, some teachers stated that this may also be ineffective for some students. This contradicts with SCL as SCL highlights the importance of intrinsic motivation and does not rely on extrinsic motivators in the teaching and learning process. As Weimer (2002) argued, extrinsic motivators only seem to work just for a short period of time and they are far from creating intellectually mature, responsible and motivated students. Previous studies also report student demotivation as an impedimentin the implementation of SCL **(**Altinyelken, 2011; Güneş and Baki, 2011; Yilmaz, 2009)**.** As some teachers pointed out, the reasons of their demotivation may be related to the fact that all students are promoted to upper levels irrespective of their performance in class. According to the regulations in Turkish Cypriot education system, only students who fail all courses are asked to repeat a grade. Moreover, student progress is based on grades they obtain from written tests and their performance in other class activities is usually not taken into consideration. This may be another reason why most students prefer to be passive in class.

Having a heterogeneous class was also reported to be a challenge that prevents the use of SCL. As teachers remarked they find it hard to address different

needs, abilities and interest of their students within the same class. According to the teachers, the more the students, the harder it gets to cater for the differences. This finding may indicate that teachers lack the necessary knowledge for the implementation of SCL as they do not know how to approach student differences in class. SCL requires teachers to consider different needs, abilities and interests of individual students. As stated in the literature teacher should use variety of methods, materials and topics in class to cater for student differences in class (Weimer, 2002).

Curriculum

The curriculum was reported to be an important factor inhibiting the use of SCL. The sub-categories emerged are "fixed and prescribed course content", "traditional assessment system", "nature of course books" and "subject matter taught". In fact, all these categories are interrelated with each other.

The content of the courses in high schools was reported to be largely incompatible with the SCL. According to the majority of the teachers, the course content is overloaded and fixed for all subjects. Therefore, teachers tend to use traditional approach in order to be able to cover all topics in due time. Student-centered methods are not preferred because they are considered as time consuming. This is reinforced when Su comments on the course content as follows:

> There are too many topics to cover and we are always behind the schedule. I cannot use student-centered methods because they take time and I only have 40 minutes to cover a topic. I wish the course content were more suitable for SCL.

Su explains the reason why she cannot devote time to student-centered methods. This finding is consistent with previous research (Blumberg, 2009; Bolden and Newton, 2008; Brandes and Ginnis, 1986; Gladys et al., 2012; Mangan, 2011; Raselimo and Wilmot, 2013; Thanh, 2010; Van Aswegen and Dreyer, 2004; Yilmaz, 2009).

Moreover, as most teachers explained, exam-oriented assessment system puts extra pressure making them feel responsible for covering all topics before exams. As they stated, in contrast to the alternative assessment methods used in SCL, student achievement in high schools is usually assessed through the use of written exams. The assessment system used in Turkish Cypriot education system is exam-oriented in which entrance to secondary schools and higher education are determined by nationwide exams. This finding also supports previous research conducted in the field (Altinyelken, 2011; Bolden and Newton, 2008; Gladys, 2012; Marsh, 2007; Yilmaz, 2009). A math teacher's statement clearly shows how teachers' approach to teaching is affected by this exam:

> In our education system almost all exams consist of multiple choice questions. We feel the pressure of preparing our students to those exams. I bring multiple choice questions to my classrooms so that my students will get used to the testing system (Doruk).

With respect to the coursebook used there were contradictory opinions. While some teachers agree that the books are in line with SCL, some others disagreed with that. This finding about the books brought up a significant issue: the need for in-service training on the use of books. As the data revealed some teachers do not know how to incorporate student-centered assessment methods into the teaching and learning and/or they are not aware of the importance and the aim of them.

Based on the data, subject matter taught can also be an inhibiting factor. Some teachers reported that some courses such as maths cannot be taught through student-centered teaching methods. As teachers remarked, due to nature of some courses, in which there are so many rules to be taught, they have to lecture. Few teachers believed that the subject they teach is not appropriate for the use of student-centered teaching and learning methods mainly referring to the discovery learning method. One of the comments directed towards SCL in the literature is that it may work well for social sciences and humanities whereas it may not be effective in teaching well-structured subjects such as science and maths (Feng, 1996 as cited in Santrock, 2001). However, as Attard et al. (2010) argued "some differences do arise when teaching across different subject disciplines, with a notable distinction being between the humanities and the sciences. However, SCL provides an underlying learning philosophy which can be used in both areas." This finding also shows that some teachers may not know how to incorporate SCL in their lessons.

Teachers

The sub-categories are "traditional conceptions of teaching and learning" and "lack of in-service teacher training programmes".

The findings of the study demonstrated that the majority of teachers considered themselves as the main source of information responsible for student learning. Traditional teaching methods and techniques that include lectures, question and answer, whole class discussion and homework are used extensively with an emphasis on lecturing as the most appropriate teaching method to be used in high schools. Student-centred methods are not preferred as they are considered as time-consuming. Only few teachers mentioned about discovery learning method but they stated that they rarely use them.

> Discovery method is difficult to use. I believe that students learn better when I lecture. It is the teacher's duty to that. They [students] come

here [school] to learn, not to discover things and we don't have time for that, do we? (Cenk, a maths teacher)

The above quote reveals Cenk's concern that the discovery method is difficult to use and he explains the reason, voiced by most teachers, why he prefers to lecture.

Another finding that supports the use of teacher-centred approach is that most teachers act as authority figures making all decisions in class. Some teachers stated that they cannot trust students as they are too young to make right decisions. Sometimes, some students can be provided with choices, yet, it is mostly the teachers who say the final word.

Based on the findings it can be said that the way teachers approach to teaching and learning is in line with teacher-centred approach. This may indicate that teachers are not aware of the effectiveness of SCL and/or they lack the the knowledge and competency to utilize student-centred teaching and learning methods in classroom practices.

All these findings draw attention to the importance of in-service teacher training programmes offered to teachers. In fact, most teachers confessed that they are not ready to implement SCL due to lack of sufficient training. This is reinforced when Berke, a history teacher, comments on the need for in-service training as follows:

I cannot say that I can fully implement SCL, I know what it is, its principles and characteristics and also the teaching methods but I can't say that I can use them. Most teachers are like me, we need in-service training.

There were also complaints about the content of in-service teacher training offered. As stated by the teachers, in-service training organized by the Ministry of Education was not very effective, focusing on the theory rather than practical aspects of the SCL. Literature also highlighted the inadequacy and content of in-service training (Altinyelken, 2011; Gladys et al., 2012; Güneş and Baki, 2011; Mangan, 2011; Struyven, 2010; Yilmaz, 2009).

Educational Resources

"Inadequate educational technology", "lack of labs" and "inadequate number of books" are the sub-categories emerged.

As pointed out by some teachers, although there have been improvements with regards to the provision of educational resources that includes technology such as computers and the Internet and also labs and books in schools, they are still insufficient for the effective use of SCL. This finding is in line with previous studies conducted in different educational contexts (Altinyelken, 2011; Guro

and Weber, 2010; Güneş and Baki, 2011; Schweisfurth, 2011; Thanh, 2010; Yilmaz, 2008).

With respect to computers and Internet, teachers remarked that there is a computer lab with Internet connection in each school. However teachers' use of the labs is limited as there are many classrooms and they have to make a reservation beforehand. Therefore, teachers complain about not being able to use the labs whenever they need to. Moreover, due to high number of students in each class, students have to share the computers and this may be frustrating for some of them.

Regarding the labs and materials there are also complaints from teachers. Particularly, teachers teaching chemistry complained about the lack of science labs and scarcity of materials needed to undertake experiments. Although there is a lab in some schools, schools' budget is insufficient in financing the cost of materials required. This was considered as one of the biggest challenges that prevents teachers from utilizing the "learning by doing" principle of SCL.

> There used to be a lab in our school but they turned it into a staff room. We can't do experiments which are very important in teaching chemistry because we never have the necessary materials. (Defne, a chemistry teacher)

Another concern of the teachers is not having adequate number of books and study materials for students in school libraries. SCL requires students to do research outside the class. This creates a problem for students living in rural parts as they are not provided with such opportunities at home.

Parents

The sub-categories emerged are "low socio - economic background" and "negative attitudes towards teaching and learning".

Some teachers, particularly the ones teaching in rural parts of the country reported socio-economic background of parents as an obstacle. According to the data gathered, most parents living in villages are from low socio-economic backgrounds and this has some negative consequences on students' success in schools. Firstly, as parents themselves are not educated, they are not very good role models to their children. Secondly, most families in villages are either farmers or workers; therefore, children are required to help their parents after school, affecting their performance negatively in schools. This is evidenced when Melis, a teacher who works in a village, comments on parents as follows:

> …socio-economic background of parents is a factor…children don't get motivated as they don't even see their parents reading books. Imagine a mother telling her child "there's no need for you to study, you're going to find a husband and get married anyway". Most parents

are farmers. Most students don't do homework because they help their parents after school.

Another sub-category is the negative attitudes towards teaching and learning. As remarked by some teachers, some parents, who are from low socio-economic background, do not see any benefits of higher education. They have their own jobs and they want their children to do the same job. Therefore, finishing high school is sufficient and there is no point in receiving further higher education.

Structure of Classrooms

Most teachers described their classrooms as "not fully equipped and furnished", "small" and "overcrowded".

Majority of teachers stated that classroom equipment and furnishing do not support the use of SCL. Although some teachers expressed their enthusiasm about the use of computers and projectors, only very few classrooms, (mostly, one in each school) were reported to be fully equipped with such technology. Besides, furniture in classrooms was found unsuitable for pair/group work activities in classrooms. Previous studies also report poor physical conditions of classrooms as an impediment (Altinyelken, 2011; Yilmaz, 2008).

Teachers are also concerned about the size of the classrooms and also the number of students in each class. They stated that sometimes they have 35 or 40 students which affect the activities done in class. Classes with more than 30 students are considered as crowded by teachers.

> I have more than 40 students in a small classroom. Group-work activities are problematic because it's very difficult to check what each group is doing. I can't even move around because there is no space. (Nisan, an English language teacher)

As Nisan stresses, organizing groupwork activities is difficult because of limited space and the large number of students. Altinyelken (2011) also reports student number as a factor inhibiting the use of SCL, stating that conducting such activities would take up considerable time with a large class.

CONCLUSION

The data collected for this study clearly demonstrated that SCL is not implemented in most aspects in schools in North Cyprus due to the barriers as reported by the teachers. The barriers are as follows:

- Majority of teachers identified student profile as the most important challenge that hinders the use of SCL in high schools. Students in high

schools were reported to be from traditional educational backgrounds who are mostly demotivated to take initiative in the teaching and learning process. Majority of teachers tend to make use of extrinsic motivators: reward and punishment to motivate students. Having a heterogeneous class was also reported as another barrier.

- Curriculum used in high schools was found to be another important impediment in adopting SCL. Due to the nature of course content, which was reported to be prescribed, overloaded and fixed, student-centred methods are not preferred to be used as they take considerable amount of classroom time. Moreover, they are not considered as very effective in preparing students to nationwide exams which consist of multiple choice questions. With respect to the use of teaching methods, lecturing was reported to be used extensively in all subjects. In terms of assessment methods, student success is mostly evaluated through paper and pencil tests in midterm and final exams. Homework and active participation of students are considered but not regarded as very important when it comes to assigning a grade to students. Alternative assessment methods such as portfolio that focuses on the process rather than product are not included in the assessment system. Regarding the suitability of course books, there were contradictory findings. There were also teachers who thought that the subject they teach is not compatible to the use of SCL.

- The data revealed that most high school teachers have traditional conceptions of teaching and learning. Teachers consider themselves as the main source of information responsible for student learning. They act as an authority figure in the teaching and learning process making all the decisions. Inadequacy and the content of teacher training were also emphasized as an important barrier as significant number of teachers remarked that they lacked the necessary skills and knowledge to implement SCL effectively in their classrooms.

- Educational resources that include educational technology, labs and books were reported to be insufficient in high schools. Schools' budget is found to be insufficient to finance the cost of materials needed to undertake some activities.

- As teachers stated some parents can also pose problems in the implementation SCL. Parents from low socio-economic background and parents who have negative attitudes towards teaching and learning can affect the use of SCL in a negative way.

- Structure of classrooms creates a challenge for teachers. According to teachers, the classrooms are not fully equipped and furnished. Moreover, they are small and mostly overcrowded with more than 30 students in each class.

As a result of the study, there are serious barriers that hinder the use of SCL in high schools in North Cyprus. The education offered in high schools is reported to be incompatible for the implementation of SCL. Moreover, neither students nor teachers are found to be ready to fully implement SCL in the teaching and learning process as they both lack the required knowledge and skills. Consequently, both teachers and students seem to need training on SCL required for the effective implementation of SCL. Contextual factors that include curriculum, educational resources, class size, course books, and in-service training opportunities for teachers should also be reconsidered and necessary amendments should be made to ensure the effective use of SCL in schools.

REFERENCES

Altinyelken, H. K. (2011). Student-centred pedagogy in Turkey: Conceptualisations, interpretations and practices. *Journal of Education Policy, 26*(2), 137 – 160.

Attard, A., Di Iorio, E., Geven, K., & Santa, R. (2010). *Student-centred learning: Toolkit for students, staff and higher institutions.* Berlin: Laserine.

Blumberg, P. (2009). *Developing learner-centred teaching, a practical guide for faculty.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Bolden, D. S., &. Newton, L. D. (2008). Primary teachers' epistemological beliefs: Some perceived barriers to investigative teaching in primary mathematics. *Educational Studies, 34*(5), 419-432.

Brandes, D., & Ginnis, P. (1986). *A guide to student-centred learning.* Great Britain: Athenaeum Press Ltd.

Cheang, K. (2009). Effect of learner-centred teaching on motivation and learning strategies in a third-year pharmacotheraphy course. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education, 73*(3), Article 42.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education.* New York: Routledge.

Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed method approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Doyle, T. (2008). *Helping students learn in a learner-centred environment.* Virginia: Stylus Publishing, LLC.

Felder, R. M., & Brent, R. (1996). Navigating the bumpy road to student-centered instruction. *College Teaching, 44,* 43-97.

Fraenkel, R.J. & Wallen, E.N.(2006). *How to design and evaluate research in education* (6th ed.). New York: McGrawHill.

Geven, K., & Santa, R. (2010). *Student centred learning, survey analysis time for student centred learning.* Bucharest: Education and Culture DG.

Gibson, W.J. & Brown, A. (2009). *Working with qualitative data.* California: Sage Publications.

Gladys, S., Zacharia, N., Gracious, Z., & Nicholas, Z. (2012). The challenges of implementing student-centred instruction in the teaching and learning of secondary school mathematics in a selected district in Zimbabwe.*International Journal of Current Research, 4*(5), 145-155.

Guro, M., & Weber, E. (2010). From policy to practice: education reform in Mozambique and Marrere teachers' training college. *South African Journal of Education, 30*, 245-259.

Güneş, G., & Baki, A. (2011). Reflections from application of the fourth grade mathematics course curriculum. *H. U. Journal of Education, 41*, 192-205.

Hoyt, D., & Perera, S. (2000). Teaching approach, instructional objectives and learning. Manhattan, Kans: IDEA Centre, Kansas State University.

Kervin, L., Vialle, W., Herrington, J. & Okely, T. (2006). *Research for educators.*

Melbourne: Thomson Social Science Press.

Keziah, A. (2010). A comparative study of problem-based and lecture-based learning in secondary school students' motivation to learn science. *International Journal of Science and Technology Education Research, 1*(6), 126-131.

Mangan, A. (December, 2011). Moving towards student-centred learning: A case study. A paper presented at the International Conference on English Pedagogy, NCI. Dublin, Ireland.

Marsh, C. J. (2007). A critical analysis of the use of formative assessment in schools. *Educational Research for Policy and Practice, 6,* 25-29.

Miles, M. B., &Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: A source book of new methods.* Beverly Hills: Sage.

Mohammad, R.F., &Harlech-Jones, B. (2008). Working as partners for classroom reform.*International Journal of Educational Development, 28*, 534-545.

Mustafa, M., & Cullingford, C. (2008). Teacher autonomy and centralized control: The case of textbooks. *International Journal of Educational Development, 28*, 81-88.

O'Neill, G., & McMahon, T. (2005). Student-centred learning: What does it mean for students and lecturers? Retrieved from The University College Dublin, Web: http://www.aishe.org/readings/2005-1/

Özer, B. (2008). Öğrenci merkezli öğretim [Student-centred teaching].In Hakan, A. (Ed.), *Öğretmenlik meslek bilgisi alanındaki gelişmeler* (pp. 21-40). Eskişehir: Anadolu Üniversitesi Açıköğretim Fakültesi.

Raselimo, M., & Wilmot, D. (2013). Geography teachers' interpretation of a curriculum reform initiative: The case of the Lesotho environmental education support project (LEESP). *South African Journal of Education, 33*(1): 1-15.

Santrock, J. W. (2001). *Educational Psychology* (1st ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Schweisfurth, M. (2011). Learner-centred education in developing country contexts: From solution to problem? *International Journal of Educational Development, 31*(5), 425-432.

Smith, C. V., & Cardaciotto, L. A. (2011). Is active learning like broccoli? Student perceptions of active learning in large lecture classes. *Journal of theScholarship of Teaching and Learning, 11*(1), 53-61.

Struyven, K., Dochy, F., &Janssens, S. (2010). Teach as you preach: The effects of student- centred versus lecture-based teaching on student teachers' approaches to teaching. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 33*(1): 43-64.

Thanh, P. T. H. (2010). Implementing a student-centred learning approach at Vietnamese higher education institutions: Barriers under layers of casual layered analysis (CLA). *Journal of Future Studies,15*(1), 21-38.

Van Aswegen, S., & Dreyer, C. (2004). An analysis of the extent to which English second language teacher educators are implementing learner-centred teaching and learning: A case study. *South African Journal of Education, 24*(4), 295-300.

Weimer, M. (2002). *Learner-centred teaching.*San Fransisco: Jossey-Bass.

Wohlfarth, D., Sheras, D., Bennet, J. L., Simon, B., Pimentel, J. H. & Gabel, L.E. (2008). Student perceptions of learner-centred teaching. *Insight: A Journal of Scholarly Teaching, 3*, 67-74.

Yilmaz, K. (2008). Social studies teachers' views of learner-centred instruction. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 31*(1), 35-53.

Yilmaz, K. (2009). Democracy through learner-centred education: A Turkish perspective. *International Review of Education*, *55*, 21-37.

GENİŞ ÖZET

Öğrenci-merkezli öğretimin (ÖMÖ) geleneksel öğretmen-merkezli öğretimden daha etkili bir öğretme ve öğrenme yaklaşımı olduğu birçok araştırma (Cheang, 2009; Keziah, 2010; Smith ve Cardaciotto, 2011; Wohlfarth ve ötekiler. 2008) ile ortaya konmuştur. Temeli yapılandırmacılığa dayanan ÖMÖ, öğrenmenin etkililiğini ve verimi artırmak için, öğretmen-merkezli öğretime karşı geliştirilmiş bir öğretme ve öğrenme yaklaşımıdır. Öğrencileri edilgin bilgi alıcılar olarak gören öğretmen-merkezli öğretimin tersine ÖMÖ, öğretimin odağına öğrenciyi yerleştiren, öğretme ve öğrenme sürecinde öğrenci özelliklerini, yeteneklerini ve ilgilerini göz önünde bulunduran, öğretimle ilgili karar sürecine öğrencileri de katan ve öğrenmede öğrencileri etkin kılan bir yaklaşımdır (Özer, 2008).

Kuzey Kıbrıs'ta eğitimin kalitesini artırmak amacıyla 2005 yılında bütün okullarda ÖMÖ uygulamaya konmuştur. Ülkede en büyük eğitim reformu olarak kabul edilen ÖMÖ'nün uygulamaya konmasından bu yana Kıbrıs Türk eğitim sistemine uygunluğu konusunda öğretmenlerden sürekli yakınmalar gelmektedir. Öğretmenlere göre, ÖMÖ'nün sınıftaki öğretme ve öğrenme sürecinde uygulanmasını engelleyen önemli etmenler bulunmaktadır. Ne var ki, Kuzey Kıbrıs'ta ÖMÖ'nün uygulanması ile ilgili yapılmış az sayıda görgül çalışma bulunmaktadır. Özellikle, ÖMÖ'nün etkili bir biçimde uygulanmasını engelleyen etmenleri ortaya çıkarmaya dönük yapılan çalışmalar pek bulunmamaktadır. Bu nedenle bu araştırmada, ÖMÖ'nün genel liselerde uygulanmasını engelleyen etmenlerin öğretmen görüşlerine dayalı olarak belirlenmesi amaçlanmıştır.

Bu çalışmada araştırma deseni olarak örnek olay yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Çalışmaya toplam 33 öğretmen katılmış ve gerekli veriler yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşme formu kullanılarak toplanmıştır. Görüşme formunun uzman görüşü alınarak geçerliği saptanmıştır. Her bir öğretmenle yapılan görüşme yaklaşık 50 dakika sürmüştür. Toplanan veriler tematik analiz yoluyla çözümlenmiştir. Çözümlemede görgül kodlar türetilmiş, sonra da ÖMÖ'nün uygulanmasını engelleyen etmenleri kapsayan kategoriler oluşturulmuştur. Ardından kodlama denetimi için iki ayrı kodlayıcının kodları karşılaştırılmış ve aralarında %90 oranında uyum saptanmıştır.

Çalışmada elde edilen sonuçlar, ÖMÖ'nün liselerde sınıflarda uygulanmasını engelleyen birbiriyle ilişkili etmenlerin olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. "Öğrenci profili," "eğitim programı," "öğretmenler," "eğitim kaynakları," "anne-babalar" ve "sınıfların yapısı," uygulamayı engelleyen etmenler olarak belirlenmiştir.

Öğrenci profili, öğretmenlere göre, liselerde ÖMÖ'nün uygulanmasını engelleyen en önemli etmendir. Öğrenciler geleneksel eğitim sisteminde yetişmiş olmalarından ötürü ÖMÖ'ye uyum sağlamaya, başka bir deyişle ÖMÖ'ye uygun

öğrenci rollerini göstermeye hazır değillerdir. Ayrıca, öğrencilerin öğretme ve öğrenme sürecine dönük güdülenme düzeyleri düşük olup etkinliklere katılmaya isteksizdirler. Sınıfların farklı gereksinmelere, yeteneklere ve ilgilere sahip olan öğrencilerden oluşan çok türlü sınıflar olması da ÖMÖ'nün uygulamasına engel oluşturmaktadır.

ÖMÖ'nün uygulanmasını engelleyen öteki önemli etmen liselerde uygulanan eğitim programıdır. Öğretmenlere göre, derslerin içerikleri yoğun ve sabittir. ÖMÖ'nün uygulanması durumunda derslere ayrılan zaman yeterli gelmemektedir. Ayrıca, değerlendirme sistemi sınav odaklı olup alternatif değerlendirme yöntemlerinin kullanımını kapsamamaktadır. Kullanılan ders kitaplarının da ÖMÖ'ye uygunluğu belirgin değildir. Bunların yanı sıra, kimi derslerin öğretimi ÖMÖ yöntem ve tekniklerinin kullanılmasına elverişli değildir. Bütün bunlar, ÖMÖ'nün derslerde uygulanmasına engel oluşturmaktadır.

Öğretmenlere göre, geleneksel öğretim anlayışına sahip olmaları ve ÖMÖ'nün uygulanmasına dönük yeterli hizmetiçi eğitimden geçmemiş olmaları, kendilerinin ÖMÖ'nün uygulanmasına engel olan bir başka önemli etmendir. Öğretmenlerin büyük bir bölümü kendilerini öğrencilerin öğrenmesinden sorumlu tek bilgi kaynağı olarak görmektedirler. Öğretmenler, derslerde en çok anlatıma dayalı öğretim yöntemleri kullanmakta, ÖMÖ'ye uygun yöntemleri "zamanın boşa harcanmasına yol açan yöntemler" olduğunu düşünerek tercih etmemektedirler. Öte yandan, öğretmenler ÖMÖ ile ilgili yeterli eğitim almadıklarını, bu nedenle sınıf uygulamalarında ÖMÖ yöntem ve tekniklerinden yararlanamadıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Öğretmenler, kendilerine uygulanan hizmetiçi eğitim programlarından da daha çok kuramsal bilgileri kapsamaları, uygulamaya yer vermemeleri nedeniyle yakınmışlardır.

Öğretmenlere göre, ÖMÖ'nün okullarda uygulanmasını engelleyen etmenlerden biri de eğitim kaynaklarının yetersizliğidir. Liselere bilgisayar ve internetin girmiş olmasına karşılık, bilgisayar laboratuarı, fen laboratuarı ve okul kitaplığı yeterli araç-gereçten, çalışma ve öğrenme kaynaklarından yoksundur.

Öğrencilerin anne-babalarının düşük sosyo-ekonomik düzeyde olmaları ve çocuklarının öğrenimlerine karşı olumsuz tutuma sahip olmaları da ÖMÖ'nün okullarda uygulanmasını engelleyen etmenler arasındadır. Öğretmenlere göre, özellikle kırsal bölgelerde yaşayan aileler okuldan sonra çocuklarının yardımına gereksinme duymaktalar, bu da çocukların gerek okul dışındaki öğrenmelerini gerekse okuldaki etkinliklerini olumsuz yönde etkilemektedir. Kimi anne-babalar da çocuklarının aile işlerini sürdürmelerini istediklerinden lise sonrası eğitimi gerekli görmemekte, bunun sonucu çocukların eğitime ilgilerini azaltmaktadır.

Öğretmenlere göre, sınıfların yapısı da ÖMÖ'nün okullarda uygulanmasını engelleyen bir etmendir. Bilgisayar ve projeksiyon aleti gibi teknolojiler her

sınıfta yoktur. Sınıf mobilyaları grup çalışması yapmaya elverişli değildir. Sınıflar küçük, buna karşılık öğrenci sayıları yüksektir. Bunlar, sınıfta ÖMÖ'nün gerektirdiği etkinliklerin yapılmasına olanak vermemektedir.

Sonuç olarak, Kuzey Kıbrıs'ta 2005 yılında uygulamaya konan öğrenci-merkezli öğetimin (ÖMÖ) liselerde etkili biçimde uygulanmadığı, uygulanmasını engelleyen önemli etmenlerin olduğu söylenebilir. Bu etmenleri büyük ölçüde öğrencilerin öğretmen-merkezli bir eğitimle yetişmiş olmaları nedeniyle ÖMÖ'ye uyum sağlayamamaları, eğitim programlarında içerik ile öğretim teknolojilerinde ve değerlendirme sisteminde değişikliğe gidilmemiş olması, öğretmenlerin ÖMÖ ile ilgili yeterli eğitim almamaları ve bunun sonucu olarak da çoğu zaman anlatıma dayalı öğretimi tercih etmeleri oluşturmaktadır.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Dr. Gulen Onurkan Aliusta graduated from Istanbul University, English Language Teaching Department in 1994. In 2009 she completed her master's degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language at the Bilkent University. In 2014 she completed her Ph.D. studies in Educational Sciences (Curriculum and Instruction) at the Eastern Mediterranean University in North Cyprus. Currently she is working as a senior instructor at the Educational Sciences Department of Eastern Mediterranean University. / Correspondence Address: Eastern Mediterranean University Faculty of Education, Famagusta, North Cyprus via Mersin 10, Turkey / Email: gulen.onurkan@emu.edu.tr

Dr. Ozer is a professor of curriculum and instruction, and currently he is working at the Eastern Mediterranean University in North Cyprus. Preiviously he worked at the Anadolu University for 32 years. He teaches courses on curriculum development, instructional design and theories, instructional models and professional development of teachers at the university. Dr. Özer has got research reports, articles, papers, books and chapters in books related to teacher training programs, professional development of teachers, and learning strategies and teaching them which were published in Turkey and abroad. / Correspondence Address: Eastern Mediterranean University Faculty of Education, Famagusta, North Cyprus via Mersin 10, Turkey / Email: bekir.ozer@emu.edu.tr

G. O. Aliusta, B. Özer

YAZARLAR HAKKINDA

Dr. Gülen Onurkan Aliusta, 1994 yılında İstanbul Üniversitesi İngilizce Öğretmenliği Bölümü'nden mezun olmuştur. 1998 yılında Bilkent Üniversitesi'nde İngiliz Dili Eğitimi alanında yüksek lisans eğitimini, 2014 yılında Kuzey Kıbrıs'ta Doğu Akdeniz Üniversite'sinde Eğitim Bilimleri (Program Geliştirme ve Öğretim) alanında doktora eğitimini tamamlamıştır. Dr. Onurkan Aliusta şu anda Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü'nde öğretim görevlisi olarak çalışmaktadır. / İletişim Adresi: Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi, Gazimağusa, Kuzey Kıbrıs /Eposta: gulen.onurkan@emu.edu.tr

Dr. Bekir Özer, eğitim programları ve öğretim profesörüdür. Kuzey Kıbrıs'ta Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesi'nde çalışmaktadır. Bunun öncesinde 32 yıl Anadolu Üniversitesi'nde çalışmıştır. Üniversitede program geliştirme, öğretim tasarımı ve kuramları, öğretme modelleri, etkili öğrenme teknikleri ve öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimi ile ilgili dersler vermektedir. Dr. Özer'in öğretmen eğitimi programları, öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimi, öğrenme stratejileri ve öğretimi ile ilgili yurtiçi ve yurtdışında yayımlanmış çeşitli araştırma, makale, bildiri, kitap ve kitap bölümleri bulunmaktadır. / İletişim Adresi: Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi, Gazimağusa, Kuzey Kıbrıs / Eposta: bekir.ozer@emu.edu.tr