

## EDUCATION UNIONS THROUGH THE EYES OF TEACHERS<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract

The purpose of this research is to reveal the problems experienced by education union managers and to develop solutions for these problems according to the opinions of unionized and non-unionized education workers. The research was designed in the screening model and was carried out using the qualitative research method. The research was carried out with 40 participants, 20 of whom were union members and 20 were non-union members, working in 10 primary, secondary and high schools in Kahramanmaraş in the 2019-2020 academic year. In this research, a semi-structured interview form titled "Problems Experienced by Education Unions" was used as a data collection tool. The data were analyzed by using content analysis technique, which is one of the qualitative data analysis techniques. The results showed unionized teachers are the most important problems faced by education union in Turkey; They stated that economic difficulties, not finding enough members, not helping teachers enough, introducing themselves enough, not dealing with teachers' problems in real sense, not being taken seriously by the government, not being afraid of political pressure and not being against anyone.

**Keywords:** Union, organization, education union.

### Introduction

The nature of union work varies according to each country. Economic unionism, in other words, pragmatist unionism in the United States of America (USA), non-revolutionary reformist unionism in England, and class unionism and political unionism in Continental Europe are more developed (Ekin, 1996, 18; Yılmaz, 2010). In Turkey, on the other hand, in the democratization and westernization process, trade unionism struggled to exist with long-term interruptions under the influence of Europe and the USA. In this context, while there are great changes in the field of industrial relations in the world, it is known that Turkish industrial relations have been affected by these developments and entered a structuring process accordingly. Considering Turkey's modernization process, it is a well-known fact that the institutions and rules taken from the West come into conflict with their own social dynamics. The situation is similar in terms of the emergence of unions and their socio-economic status (Yılmaz, 2010).

Teachers are the people who make up the highest number of education workers, have better education in terms of quality and come from low-income segments of the society. The fact that the task they have given is to all of the society has caused them to experience and observe all the

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problems in the society. All these factors have always revealed teachers as a dynamic and close to organization employee segment (Altunya, 2008, 20). Education unions are legally obliged to set and meet teachers' expectations. Teacher unions are important for teachers' social participation, gaining prestige with their roles in the school, and socialization of teachers (Bascia, 2000). However, trade union knowledge, experience and union skills are insufficient in Turkey. These inadequacies cause inexperience and drift in the determination of the union's goals, mission and vision along with the organization. In fact, this inadequacy sometimes imposes duties on unions that are not their own jobs and that they cannot cope with.

A century has passed since the establishment of the first teacher organizations in Turkey. This period is not short for a professional organization process. Considering that union organizations started in the same period, it can be said that teachers who cannot complete their professional organization fully today face significant problems in their professional organization. It is necessary to draw lessons from the positive and negative experiences of the past so that the organization in accordance with the dignity of the profession can be completed on the right foundations and in this way, teachers can defend their rights in professional solidarity (Uygun, 2012).

When the aims of unionism are examined, we can collect them under four headings: economic purposes, purposes of making arrangements related to working conditions, the aim of providing social change and the aim of ensuring the participation of the individual in the decision-making process. Unions are classified in order to achieve these goals. When these classifications are examined (Özkiraz & Nuray, 2008);

**Workers' Union:** Workers' unions are established on the basis of line of business. According to the definition in the law, it is established by at least seven workers working in a business line and workplaces in this business line on the basis of business line. The line of business that a workplace enters is determined by the main business it carries out.

**Employer's Union:** Employer unions, like labor unions, are established in a line of business and by at least seven employers in that line of business, as specified in the law. Employers' unions are established to protect and develop the common professional interests of capital owners vis-à-vis workers and public legal entities. It is an organization that emerged after the 1961 constitution.

**Public Servants' Union:** According to the Public Servants' Unions Law No. 4688, public servants' unions are established by public servants working in public workplaces in a service branch in order to operate throughout Turkey on the basis of service branch. More than one union can be established in a service branch. However, a union cannot be established on the basis of profession or workplace, it can only be established on the basis of service branch. The service branches of public institutions are determined by a regulation to be prepared jointly by the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Labor and Social Security and the State Personnel Presidency.

**Confederation:** According to the Trade Unions and Collective Bargaining Law, it is the only upper union organization that worker and employer unions can come together and establish. It is made up of unions. According to the law, they are organizations with legal personality formed by at least five unions in different business lines. In order for confederations to be established, each of the unions that come together must be in different business lines. In general, confederations are involved in the regulation of laws and relations with employers' organisations, the government and political parties.

A systematic organized structure is needed in order to identify the disruptions and deviations in the process, to constantly identify the inadequacies, to develop programs based on the determinations and to develop a future-oriented strategy in accordance with the organizational structure and organizational goals of union managers and unionism.

In this context, the aim of the research is to reveal the problems experienced by education union administrators according to the thoughts of unionized and non-unionized education workers and to develop solutions to these problems. The research sought answers to the following questions:

1. What kind of problems do education unions face?
2. What kind of material and moral pressures are there on education unions?

3. What is the relationship between education unions and politics?
4. Which direction will be the future of education unions?
5. What kind of solution processes can be developed against all problems faced by education unions?

## Method

### Research Design

Phenomenology design, one of the qualitative research methods, was used in the research. The most important feature of qualitative research is that they are exploratory, so it is very useful and useful in explaining the subjects that have not been studied much (Neuman, 2012: 228; cited in Karataş). Phenomenology is an approach that tries to reveal how people make sense of their experiences, perceptions, concepts, by researching deeply what reality is. The main thing in phenomenology is to reveal how people who experience a certain situation interpret this situation (Cemaloğlu, 2020). The phenomenon in this research is the perceptions of teachers about the problems experienced by education unions and their solution offers.

### Research Sample

In the study, the problems experienced by the unions in the education sector in Turkey and the suggestions for the solution of the problems were discussed with the views of the teachers who are members of the union and not. It was carried out with a total of 40 participants, 20 of whom are union members and 20 non-union teachers, working in 10 primary schools in Kahramanmaraş in the 2019-2020 academic year. Introductory information about the participants is given in Table 1.

**Table 1.**  
*Information About The Working Group*

	Non-Union Teachers	Unionized Teachers
Variables	f	f
<i>Gender</i>		
Female	12	7
Male	8	13
<i>Marital status</i>		
Married	11	10
Single	9	10
<i>professional seniority</i>		
1-5 years	9	5
6-10 years	6	6
11-15 years	3	4
16-20 years	1	3
20 years and above	1	2

*Did you change union?*

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Yes	8
No	12

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### Research Instrument

In the study, the relevant literature was first searched in order to determine the opinions of school principals about local and central in-service training. Afterwards, a semi-structured interview form developed by the researcher was used. Interviewing is a method that is carried out in order to reveal the perspectives, personal experiences, feelings, perceptions and values of individuals, to understand how they interpret their behaviors, attitudes, feelings and life that we cannot observe and to obtain information about lived situations (Merram 2018; Patton, 2018). In the study, a semi-structured interview form developed by the researcher was used to obtain the data. The interview form consists of two parts. The first part consists of 5 questions containing the personal information of the participants, and the second part consists of 5 open-ended questions. These questions are;

1. What are your thoughts on the problems faced by education unions? Please explain.
2. Is there any material and moral pressure on education unions? Please explain.
3. What are your thoughts on the relationship between education unions and politics? Please explain
4. What do you think about the future of education unions? Please explain.
5. Considering the difficulties faced by the education unions, what kind of solutions do you suggest? Please explain.

### Validity and Reliability

In qualitative research, validity is examined in two types as internal validity and external validity. Internal validity: It is the success of the process followed while collecting the research results, revealing the studied reality. To what extent are our interpretations of the events we are investigating or the facts that we think we understand sufficient to reflect the real situation as a whole? How meaningful and consistent are the findings in themselves? What are the principles, rules, or plans used to justify the findings? Are there any facts or events that are unclear or unrelated? The questions in the form aim to increase internal validity. External validity, on the other hand, is the generalization of the research, or rather, it gives similar results at different times (Miles, 2016; Patton, 2018; Silverman, 2016; cited in Baltacı,2019). In order to establish external credibility in order to ensure confirmability, the participants and other sources of research should be clearly stated. In addition, data collection tools and data analysis should be reported in detail (Creswell, 2008; Connelly, 2016; cited in Baltacı). Internal reliability is the study of how consistent the research is. In order to ensure the validity and reliability of the research, the following steps were followed;

- Depth-based data collection: All the data obtained as a result of the research are shown by comparing them with each other and with the literature.
- Long-term interaction: The research was carried out in March 2020 in a one-month period and this period is considered to be long enough within the scope of the research.
- Diversification: Interviews and observations were made to collect data in the research. Document analysis technique was not included.
- Expert review: During the study, an expert lecturer on qualitative research techniques was consulted.
- Participant approval: Immediately after the interviews were completed, the answers given to the participant were read and it was ensured whether the statements made by the participant were understood correctly or not.

- Detailed description: The province, district, school types where the research was conducted and demographic characteristics of the participants were expressed in detail.

As a result, the statements of the participants were directly quoted for the internal reliability of the research, and the collected data were associated with the results of the research in order to ensure external reliability. In addition, the raw data obtained in the research will be stored so that they can be used in different studies.

### Data Analysis and Process

In the research, the data collected with the semi-structured interview form were analyzed using the descriptive analysis technique, one of the qualitative data analysis techniques, in order to obtain suggestions regarding the problems experienced by the teachers in the education unions and the solution of these problems. The descriptive analysis technique is a method used in the processing of data that does not require in-depth analysis and is applied in the form of direct quotations in order to present the answers of the participants that will provide clarity to the subject (Guzelyurt, Tok, Tümas, & Uruğ, 2019). In order to ensure the privacy of the participants in the research, codes such as S-1, S-2, ... were given and analyzes were made.

### Findings

In this section, the findings obtained as a result of the data analysis are presented in order, taking into account the main categories obtained in the research.

#### 1. Opinions of Participants Regarding the Problems Encountered by Education Unions

In the research, seven of the non-union teachers stated that they did not find the work of the unions "sufficient", 12 of them said that they did not "follow" the work of the unions, and one non-union teacher said that the work of the unions was "adequate". On the other hand, three of the unionized teachers stated that they found the work of the unions to be "sufficient" in general, 15 of them stated that they did not find it sufficient, and two of them stated that they did not "follow" the work of the unions.

**Table 2.**  
*Findings Regarding The Problems Faced by Education Unions*

<i>Unionized Teachers</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>Non-Union Teachers</i>	<i>f</i>
		Lack of sufficient enforcement power over the government	2
Not finding enough members	2	Inability to express themselves adequately	2
Inability to help teachers enough	2	Teachers' reluctance to become members	2
Lack of unity and unity in the field of education	2		
Inability to introduce themselves enough	2		
The fact that teachers' problems are not addressed in real terms	2		
Not being taken seriously by the government	2		
Unions don't have problems	2		



When the data in Table 2 is examined, it is seen that the opinion with the highest frequency at the beginning of the problems faced by the unions cannot adequately respond to the problems of teachers economically. Some of the participants did not express their opinions regarding this item. When the prominent ones among the unionized participatory views are examined;

*T-3 "Unless the current economic problems of the teachers are solved, other problems will not make much sense and the unions will always question their existence before the teachers."*

*T-8 "While unionists receive high salaries and allowances, it is not meaningful what teachers do when they cannot reach this income."*

*T-18 "Of course, unionism is not an easy task. Especially when the meaning and definition of unionism in Turkey is not established, it will not be easy at all. First of all, the unions should come together with their members and be the only voice so that they can make a voice and make their presence felt."*

*When the prominent opinions of non-union teachers participating in the research are examined;*

*T-1 "The biggest problem faced by the unions is that they do not have any sanctioning power over the government, and that they cannot show a clear and conclusive will when necessary"*

*T-6 "The fact that the unions still do not have a vision that can prove their adequacy in our country and they do not try to be."*

*T-13 "According to yesterday, the problem of the unions was that they did not have enough members, and that's why they said they couldn't be effective. However, when we look at today, the most important problem is that the number of members is sufficient but the unions are still not effective."*

## 2.Opinions of Participants on Material and Moral Pressures on Education Unions

"Is there any material and moral pressure on education unions? The answers given by the unionized and non-unionized participants to the question "Please explain" are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.**

*Teachers' Opinions on The Material and Moral Pressures on The Union*

<b>Unionized Teachers</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>Non-Union Teachers</b>	<b>f</b>
Political parties are pressing	14	There are pressures by political parties	13
Governments are pressing	11	Governments are pressing	10
I think There's political pressure	2	I think There's political pressures	4
I didn't see any pressure	2	I think they are under pressure from teachers	1

As seen in Table 3, 14 of the unionized teachers and 13 of the non-unionized teachers stated that political parties exert pressure on the unions. Again, 11 of the unionized teachers and 10 of the non-union teachers stated that the governments put pressure on the unions. Again, 5 unionized and 5 non-union teachers stated that they think there is no pressure on the unions. Regarding whether there is material and moral pressure on the unions operating in the education sector;

*Unionized T-16 "Every political party has a union in its own way. As the government changes, political pressures build up."*

*Unionized T-20 "It is not possible to put pressure on which union the government is close to."*

*Non-Union T-1 "Yes, the Government. The union established for our right only looks after the interests of the government."*

*Non-union T-19 "There can be expectations arising from the similarity of the mindset rather than pressure, time, time." he stated.*

### 3.Opinions of Participants on the Relationship of Education Unions with Politics

"What are your thoughts on the relationship between education unions and politics? The answers given by the unionized and non-unionized participants to the question "Please explain" are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4.**

*Teachers' Views on The Relationship Between Education Unions and Politics*

<b>Unionized Teachers</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>Non-Union Teachers</b>	<b>f</b>
There is a political relationship, it is not natural	9	Yes, it does. But I don't think it's natural	12
There is definitely. Normal to some extent, but too much harms everyone	4	It certainly exists and it's natural	5
There is a relationship and it is natural.	2	It is in question. It is natural, provided that it is not overdone.	2

As seen in Table 4, 9 of the unionized teachers and 12 of the non-union teachers stated that there is a union-politics relationship, but this relationship is not true and natural. Again, 4 unionized teachers and 2 non-union teachers stated that the relationship between union and politics is somewhat natural. Two unionized and non-unionized teachers stated that there is a union-politics relationship and this relationship is natural. Regarding the relationship between unions operating in the education sector and politics;

*Unionized T-3 "It should be within the limits."*

*Unionized T-8 "Yes, they all feed off from various ideologies."*

*Unionized T-13 "Of course it is the case and it is quite natural. It is impossible not to take sides. Although they are not connected in the sense of bigotry, I think they are connected."*

*Unionized T-17 "Yes, it is in question. I do not find it natural, in fact, I find it more appropriate to gather under one roof."*

*Unionized T-18 "Certainly it is, I doubt the Unions will be neutral."*

*Unionized T-19 "Relationship is in all of them, and this is a situation that disrupts unity. Ideological unions lose credibility."*

*Non-Union T-3 "It certainly should not be the political ideology of the unions."*

*Non-Union T-4 "Absolutely there is. It is natural. There is no institution in Turkey where political ideology does not interfere."*

*Non-Union T-9 "I think there is. It is natural to have them. Because wherever there are people, there is a political ideology."*

*Non-Union T-15 "Of course there is. I don't think it's natural. The aim of the union is not to make political propaganda; to serve a purpose."*

*Non-Union T-16 "I don't think there is a relationship between education unions and political ideologies."*

*Non-Union T-20 "There is definitely a relationship between education unions and political ideologies. If it were not, there would not be a separate union for each political view. It's natural, but I don't think it should happen." expressed an opinion.*

#### 4. Opinions of Participants on the Future of Education Unions

"What do you think about the future of education unions? Please explain." The answers given by the unionized and non-unionized participants to the question are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5.**

*Opinions of Participants on the Future of Education Unions*

<b>Unionized Teachers</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>Non-Union Teachers</b>	<b>f</b>
They have to be objective. It should focus on education and training problems away from political ideologies.	3	I do not see the future of education unions well.	3
It is necessary to make use of the good opportunities in the best way	3	Unfortunately, I don't see a future unless the mindsets of unionists change.	3
It should be collected and the work to be done should be evaluated by taking the teachers into consideration.	3	they need to get out of the pressure	2
I think they have a static structure. I don't believe they're going to make a splash with that logic.	3	Hopefully, it will become more autonomous in the future and government pressure will decrease.	1
don't see it well unless it is out of the control of politics or various organizations.	2	What education unions are today, will be the same tomorrow.	1

As seen in Table 5, unionized teachers stated that they should be objective about the future of the unions, deal with the problems of education, evaluate the opportunities well, and meet the expectations of the teachers by getting together. Unionized teachers stated that leaving the unions under the control of the government, opposition or any organization would be an opportunity for the unions. Non-union teachers, on the other hand, stated that they are not very hopeful about the future of education unions and that they need to change their current understanding. The non-union teachers stated that the future of the unions would be better if the pressure of the governments decreased.

Concerning with the future of education unions;

*Unionized T-8 "As long as members are registered with promises, the unions will be fine. Unions only lead to dividing people and discrimination within occupational groups."*



*Unionized T-9 "I think it will change according to the political spectrum. Their internal dynamics do not hinder their functioning."*

*Unionized T-12 "I don't see a bright future. I believe that if they see themselves as an education union and not as a political party, and if they can act together, the existing problems will decrease."*

*Unionized T-17 "The quality is increasing day by day. Opportunities increase as people know their rights and responsibilities. The obstacles in front of them will be lifted in time."*

*Unionized T-18 "I am sure that there are political effects, the unions close to the government are more comfortable materially and morally. Operations and opportunities are becoming more. Other unions are struggling, there are resignations, and the unions that are deemed ineffective are emptied."*

*Unionized T-20 "I don't think there will be any changes in the future either. Because, unless our education system and the perspective of teachers change, it cannot be expected to develop in unions." expressed.*

Again, regarding the future of education unions;

*Non-Union T-1 "They will be shut down for doing nothing."*

*Non-Union T-8 "In education unions, it continues to function according to the surplus of members, and the surplus of members is in direct proportion with the ruling party. Opportunity can be resolved not by dividing into groups, but by unity under one roof."*

*Non-Union T-9 "I don't see well. Because people who understand business do not unionize. What happens to the work done by people who are not competent in their job?"*

*Non-Union T-11 "If it continues like this, I don't believe it will benefit the employees. I think they will lose their credibility and functionality."*

*Non-Union T-20 "It is necessary for educators to convey their voices according to their needs and problems, not their political ideologies. Obstacles I think; The interests of the government and the party that will enable differences in ideology will prevent them." expressed his opinion.*

## 5. Opinions of the Participants on the Difficulties Encountered by Education Unions and Suggestions for Solutions

Considering the difficulties faced by the education unions, what kind of solutions do you suggest? Please explain." The answers given by the unionized and non-unionized participants to the question are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6.**

*Opinions of the Participants on the Difficulties Encountered by the Education Unions and the Solution Proposals*

Unionized Teachers	f	Non-Union Teachers	f
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All education unions should be closed and gathered under a single union.	6	It should be gathered under one union.	3
Stop caring about politics and deal with teacher rights	3	They should focus on the needs and wishes of teachers	2
Education unions need to work hard, not just to recruit teachers.	3	They need to develop themselves.	2
I think they have a static structure. I don't believe they're going to make a splash with this poin of view	3	I don't think it provides enough good and quality service to its members.	2
They need to have more control of the field.	2	Education unions urgently need to be free of ideology.	2

As seen in Table 6, unionized teachers stated that in order to solve the problems experienced by the unions, unions should be gathered under one roof, they should deal with teacher problems rather than politics, go to the field, deal with each teacher individually and work harder. Non-union teachers, on the other hand, for the solution of the problems experienced by the unions; They stated that unions should gather under one roof, be more sensitive to the needs of teachers, stay away from politics and work harder.

For the solution of the current problems experienced in the activities of the education business;

*Unionized T-1 "They should express themselves more clearly and better. They should better announce their services and increase their relations with people."*

*Unionized T-11 "Teachers should not be approached just for the sake of being an authorized union, we don't see their faces at other times."*

*Unionized T-13 "Teachers should be contacted more frequently and interested. I wish that trade unionists who are talented enough to feel it without telling the teacher's distress will be raised."*

*Unionized T-17 "The aims and targets should be determined well, more extensive studies should be carried out, non-purpose activities should not be carried out."*

*Unionized T-18 "It should increase its activities and be closer to its members, keeping them informed of every situation. If the managers they choose are deemed inadequate, changes should be made, there should be no favoritism."*

*Unionized T-20 "First of all, unions should think and defend the teachers they represent, not themselves. Because they are in different unions, the activities of blocking others must come to an end. In short, the unions should try to protect the rights of teachers, which is their main job, instead of polemicizing with each other."*

*Non-Union T-31 "I think they should take the trade union activities in European countries as an example, especially in terms of unionism practices, and examine them." expressed an opinion.*

Again, unlike the views expressed above, for the solution of the problems experienced by the education unions;

*Non-Union T-1 "The unions know what to do. You can ask them why they don't do it."*

*Non-Union T-2 "Teachers should know their problems well. They should work more systematically. They should increase their strength."*

*Non-Union T-4 "It should be listened to the problems of the teachers and presented it properly to the Government."*

*Non-Union T-7 "Let them try to solve problems instead of dealing with each other."*

*Non-Union T-8 "Educational unions should only carry out works that care about education workers and gather under a single roof, not for the purpose of obtaining political profit in the works done."*

*Non-Union T-10 "There should be more collaboration with members. Union officials only come when they are going to sign up. I think they don't call and ask after that. They also need to stay away from politics."*

*Non-Union T-11 "Unions are not places where politics is made. There should be places that make efforts to improve the personal rights of the employees and to increase the quality."*

*Non-Union T-13 "They should stop serving ideology. The unity of all education workers should be ensured."*

*Non-Union T-15 "Teacher problems should be dealt with realistically. Qualified solutions should be developed for the problems encountered in education. Instead of instant solutions, universal solutions should be found. The solution should not upset the other while pleasing one."*

*Non-Union T-17 "Staying away from politics, turning to constructive work, understanding that the teacher is human. Having presidents with educational backgrounds. Presidents and advisors should also have a level of legal knowledge."*

*Non-Union T-18 "First of all, they should explain the purpose and activities very well, they should work actively, they should always be behind the educator."*

*Non-Union T-20 "Imagine a community where you have to be of the same mindset in that group, what a pity it is. However, we must be Free of Speech and Free of Conscience so that we can raise individuals with strong brains and personalities who are concerned about the future for the great Turkey of the future. Now I ask, are our thoughts and conscience free? How much personality do we have that we will grow." expressed his views.*

### **Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations**

Seven of the non-union teachers who participated in this research, which was conducted to reveal the problems experienced by the unions operating in the education sector and to develop solutions to these problems, stated that they did not find the work of the education unions in general sufficient, 12 stated that they did not follow them, and one found them sufficient. On the other hand, three of the unionized teachers stated that they found the work of the unions to be sufficient in general, 15 stated that they did not find it sufficient, and two of them did not follow it. According to unionized teachers, the most important problems faced by education unions in Turkey are; economic difficulties, not being able to find enough members, not being able to help teachers enough, not being able to introduce themselves enough, not addressing the problems of teachers in real terms, not doing enough activities in order not to contradict anyone, fearing political pressure, not being taken seriously by the government. Non-union teachers, on the other hand, are the most important problems experienced by education unions; They stated that they do not have sufficient sanctioning power over the government, they cannot express themselves adequately and teachers do not want to be a member. The expression "everyone is caring for himself" in a unionized teacher actually shows us that the unions are not managed well enough and there is nepotism, and that the same teachers say that this negative situation is valid for all unions, actually shows that there is such a problem in general unions.

In the research, the vast majority of unionized and non-unionized teachers stated that there is pressure on unions stemming from political parties and politicians. Unionized and non-unionized teachers stated that the secondary pressure on unions stems from governments and governments. The perception among teachers that each political party has a union in its own way shows us that unions show a political base and that unions are highly influenced by political parties. Almost all of the teachers who participated in the research agreed that there is a relationship between unions and



politics. However, while some of the unionized and non-unionized teachers accepted that this relationship was natural, the other part stated that this relationship should not exist. Again, some of the teachers stated that the relationship between the union and the political institution is somewhat normal, and that it causes problems after a certain level. In the research, it was seen that even the teachers who are members of the union did not have any consistency among themselves on this issue. It can be stated that the difference of opinion about the relationship between union and politics and whether this relationship is natural or not is also valid for non-union teachers.

In the research, union and political party relations in Turkey are seen as one of the problem areas. Unions were seen as a sphere of influence by political parties due to their structure that could not establish a "tradition" and that resulted from the lack of a model in this sense. It was not possible for the unions to remain independent from these influence processes. In almost every period since the establishment of the unions, political parties have made a clear effort to have a voice or a voice in the management of the unions and other non-governmental organizations. In case the unions turn into organizations where only a certain political view is in the administration, the existing relations with the members may also be limited to the activities of the political party. Union/member relations can be regulated depending on whether the party to which the party is associated is an opposition party or a ruling party. This phenomenon makes "being a party member" common among union members. The relations of some of the members with the union can be reduced to the minimum level only for this reason, and the union membership continues almost "forever". It is observed that this phenomenon continues to pose an important problem area for some of the unions in terms of not bringing in new members to the union and not spreading democracy within the union (Lordođlu, 2004). From the point of view of the development process of trade unionism in Turkey, the main purpose of the unions has been the reflection of political and ideological ideas in business life rather than protecting workers' interests. In fact, some unions followed a non-partisan policy and acted in line with the wishes of the party in power, and it was thought that conflicting with the ruling party meant loss (Özkiraz and Talu, 2008).

Regarding the future of unions, some of the unionized teachers; They stated that they would be closed because they did nothing, that they would not be able to make a leap because they have a static structure, that their future would not be very good because they did not come out of the control of the government or opposition or various organizations. Unionized teachers, union officials for the future of unions to be better; They stated that teachers should be objective, stay away from political ideology, focus on education and training problems, and evaluate the demands of teachers by taking the work to be done seriously. Unionized teachers stated that the future of unions is also related to the political spectrum of the country. In addition, they stated that more awareness of the rights and responsibilities of the employees and the need for an organized society to be felt more will affect the future of the unions positively.

Unions have started to experience significant member losses since the 1980s in Turkey as well as in the rest of the world. It would not be a wrong prediction to say that if the unions continue their current understanding and policies, they will continue to lose power. A very large part of the unions have been organized in the public sector for years, which provides easier and effortless organization. However, as a result of the rapid downsizing of the public sector in recent years, the ground on which the unions stand loses its solidity. In other words, in order for the unions to gain strength in Turkey, organizational problems in the private sector should be well identified and new policies should be developed for these problems (Uçkan and Kađnciođlu, 2008). In this context, ŐimŐek and Seashore (2008) proposed a series of strategies and tactics for education unions to realize their future image in their research. These strategies are; to focus on teacher quality, to set the professional standards required for the profession, to take a leadership role for the professional and professional development of teachers (putting this issue forward as the most important component of collective agreements), to take the lead for the institutional transformation of unions, to develop and disseminate standards on performance-based pay, to be involved in difficult processes, to stay closer to school and class levels, to focus on more horizontal and flexible structured union organization models.

When the findings obtained as a result of the research were examined, it was revealed that unionized and non-union teachers agreed on the necessity of gathering all education unions under one roof in order to increase the quality of education unions in Turkey. Unionized teachers, union officials in order to increase the qualifications of the unions; They stated that they should be interested in teachers' rights, which is their job, not politics in the real sense, they should work harder, communicate with each teacher and go to the field. Unionized teachers, in order to increase the qualifications of the unions, the union officials should consider the needs and wishes of the teachers, develop themselves and get rid of political ideology, do not approach teachers only for the sake of being an authorized union, engage in educational activities (competition, cinema, theater, etc.), raise the problems of education to higher levels. They stated that they should carry their vision and mission to their members and people who are considering becoming a member, not to engage in unintended activities, to increase their activities and to be closer to their members, to inform their employees about every situation, and to change the managers they have chosen if they are deemed inadequate.

They also stated that there should be no favoritism in the unions, that they should defend the teachers they represent, and that the activities of blocking others because they are in different unions should come to an end. The non-union teachers stated that the education union officials should know the problems of the teachers well, work more systematically, try to solve the problems instead of dealing with each other, not do the work for the purpose of obtaining political rent, stay away from politics, and develop quality solutions to the problems encountered in education. In addition, it has been seen that studies should be carried out in order to have educator members in the unions as presidents, union presidents and advisors to have a good level of legal knowledge, to explain the aims and activities very well, to monitor and develop education and training.

While developing new policies, unions should be aware of the problems arising from their own internal structures as well as international and national problems, and they should present these problems accurately and realistically. For this, unions should conduct research or support the researches that draw the profiles of their current and potential members and determine their expectations. In order for the unions to get out of the crisis they are in, they have to give up their habit of waiting from the state and the reflex of throwing the responsibility to the laws and hold the mirror to themselves a little bit. In other words, unions should get rid of their defensive structures, acquire a new structure that is open to criticism and communication, participatory, transparent and hardworking, integrating with the class, and should undertake different missions in a way that differentiates the expectations of workers (Uçkan & Kaçnicioğlu, 2008). In addition to these, some legal arrangements should be made in order to eliminate trade union blockages in Turkey and to develop trade unionism. In terms of legal changes, job security should be ensured, barriers to organization should be removed and union organization should be facilitated. In order for the union organization to gain members and increase its effectiveness, horizontal organizations should be used in addition to vertical organizations (Friedrich Ebert Foundation, 1996).

Based on the results of the research, the following recommendations were developed;

- In the research, it was determined that the teachers did not follow the work of the education unions and did not find them sufficient. Teachers' expectations from education unions should be determined through research, and their management and actions should be restructured according to the expectations of their base.
- Education unions can initiate necessary scientific and legal studies so that teachers can deal with their common problems more effectively and competently and gather them under one roof.
- Education unions should stay away from politics as much as possible and avoid being an element of pressure on them. In order to achieve this, education unions should be united and mechanisms can be developed to ensure their cooperation for a common struggle.
- Education unions can conduct mixed researches throughout the country to identify the problems they face and to have a strong future. According to the results of this research, education unions can plan what they need to do in the short, medium and long term.



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