

The Importance of Interview on The Land Consolidation Projects: The Case Study in Kesik Village**

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ABSTRACT

Land consolidation practices are the most effective method applied to solve the problem of land fragmentation in our country, as in many countries of the world. However, it is an essential tool of rural development that aims to improve the forms of parcels and provide agricultural infrastructure services to increase production in agriculture and ensure the well-being of rural residents. As part of land consolidation projects, one-on-one interviews are conducted with landowners (participants) who have a parcel in the project area. The interview study is essential to obtain up-to-date information in the formation, such as the use cases of parcels in the project area, the presence of fixed facilities, the characteristics of parcels, and the operating conditions. By interviewing all participants in the project area separately, preferences are taken for the new location of each parcel in response to the parcels they have. When receiving these preferences, their answers should be taken with care by asking special questions, such as where and how the new parcels will be, whether they want to divide or merge the parcels if they are shares. This stage is critical, as all the wishes, arrangements, and personal thoughts are expected within the scope of land consolidation are determined in the interview. It is unlikely that the first request of participants will always be fulfilled. Balancing blocks in a single-request deployment may not be possible. Therefore, especially from participants with more than one parcel, second and third requests must be received. Interview work is a crucial stage that affects the success of the project. For this reason, the interview work should be carefully applied by the project engineers to reflect complete, up-to-date, and accurate information. However, due to the interview work performed without due care, the special situations indicated by the participant in the interview can be ignored, which negatively affects the duration of the project. In this study, data from the land consolidation project carried out in Kesik village of Yeşilhisar District of Kayseri province were used. It was found that the number of parcels in the project area before land consolidation was 2136, while after land consolidation, this number fell to 1562 parcels. The interview participation rate in the study is 88%. However, 65% of those polled had a single choice. As a result of the preferences, 238 parcels belonging to 137 enterprises were not distributed to their preferences, the interviews of these parcels were examined, and the reasons were examined. The results of the interviews were interpreted to reveal the importance of the interview studies.

Keywords: Interview, Land Consolidation, Participant, Request

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is primarily the processing of soil to meet the nutritional needs of humanity. Humanity resorts to agriculture not only for dietary requirements but also for commercial purposes. For this reason, agriculture is an essential source of livelihood in human life. However, as the world population increases, soil, one of the essential resources required for agriculture, becomes insufficient and decreases rapidly, becoming a problem in agricultural production (Özsari et al. 2021).

An example of the decline of soil existence today is the fragmentation of agricultural land for various reasons. As a result of agricultural land fragmentation, the existence of land that landowners can process decreases, and businesses have land in different locations and irregular ways. These disorders encountered in agricultural land negatively affect the yield that can be taken from the soil (Boztoprak et al., 2015). Land consolidation projects are carried out in many countries to prevent land fragmentation (Janus and Ertunç. 2021).

Land consolidation projects are an essential tool for increasing agricultural production, regulating landforms to increase the welfare level of people living in rural areas and providing agricultural infrastructure systems including road, irrigation, and drainage systems to the land. (Crecente et al. 2002; Derlich 2002; Magel 2003; Van Dijk 2003; Thomas 2004; Van Dijk 2007; Sklenicka 2006; Thomas 2006; Yaslioglu et al. 2008, 2009; Kirmikil. 2019).

According to the report prepared by the Euphrates Development Agency in 2013, the number of enterprises engaged in agricultural production in our country is increasing. However, the size of agricultural land owned by enterprises is decreasing. In contrast to this situation in developed countries, especially in the European

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Union, the number of agricultural enterprises decreases every day, while the size of business land is increasing. According to this report, the average agricultural area per farmer in Turkey was 6 hectares. In European Union countries, this number is 19.7 hectares on average (İşcan et al. 2020). The average size of enterprise land owned by more than 50% of European Union countries is over 20 ha (Arıcı and Aslan. 2014).

The first land consolidation study in Turkey was carried out by the Topraksu Organization in 1961 (Arıcı and Aslan. 2014). In land consolidation studies, the creation of sufficient agricultural land in order to prevent land fragmentation affecting rural development is an essential condition. For this reason, the creation and preservation of the size of sustainable enterprise land increase the success of land consolidation projects (Boztoprak et al.2015; Değirmenci et al. 2017).

The wishes and opinions of farmers who maintain their lives with agricultural production are the essential part of land consolidation efforts. In each arrangement carried out by land consolidation studies, the wishes of farmers should be taken into account. Because farmers who own businesses are satisfied with land consolidation work is an essential factor for the success of the project (Kirmikil. 2019).

Interview studies, which are a stage of land consolidation studies, are when business owners (participants) want to combine their land in which block, requests, and preferences such as neighbourhood status, share allocation, or merger are received and processed in interview forms (Demirarslan. 2019). It is important that the interview Work is carried out by the project engineer himself. Since the project engineer has mastered the location and characteristics of the parcels at the project site, he performs successful interview Work by ensuring that the requests are received logically (Kirmikil. 2019).

Interviews cannot be taken correctly and in accordance with the technique when the project engineers cannot participate in the interview work or when the interviews are conducted by people who do not have sufficient knowledge of the field of study and the Project (Kirmikil. 2019).

It is not possible for all participants to settle on their 1st choice for the location of their new parcels. When distributing parcels to new blocks, balancing the blocks with distribution may not occur according to each participant's initial request. Therefore, participants should be taken as much as possible in the 2nd and 3rd preferences.

In some cases, parcels of participants participating in interview studies cannot be assigned according to the preferences of participants on the new parcel map.

In this study, interviews of parcels that cannot be distributed according to their preferences were examined and interpreted to explain that interview studies are an important stage of land consolidation projects.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

As a field of study, data from the land consolidation project of Kesik village, connected to the District of Yeşilhisar in Kayseri province, was used. NetCAD GIS 8.0 capabilities were used to process graphical data before and after land consolidation. LITOP 6.6 was used to analyze non-graphical data such as social structure survey reports, land distribution information, and interview reports.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Land consolidation data for Kesik Village are given in Table 1. According to these data, the total number of parcels in the project area was 2136 before the land consolidation study. The number of parcels fell to 1562 after the land consolidation study. Consolidation project success was calculated as 26%.

Table 1. Change in number of parcels before and after land consolidation.

LAND CONSOLIDATION					
BEFORE L.C.			AFTER L.C.		
Total number of landowners	Total number of parcels	Total parcel area (da)	Total number of landowners	Total number of parcels	Total parcel area (da)
1729	2136	39.805	1244	1562	39.453

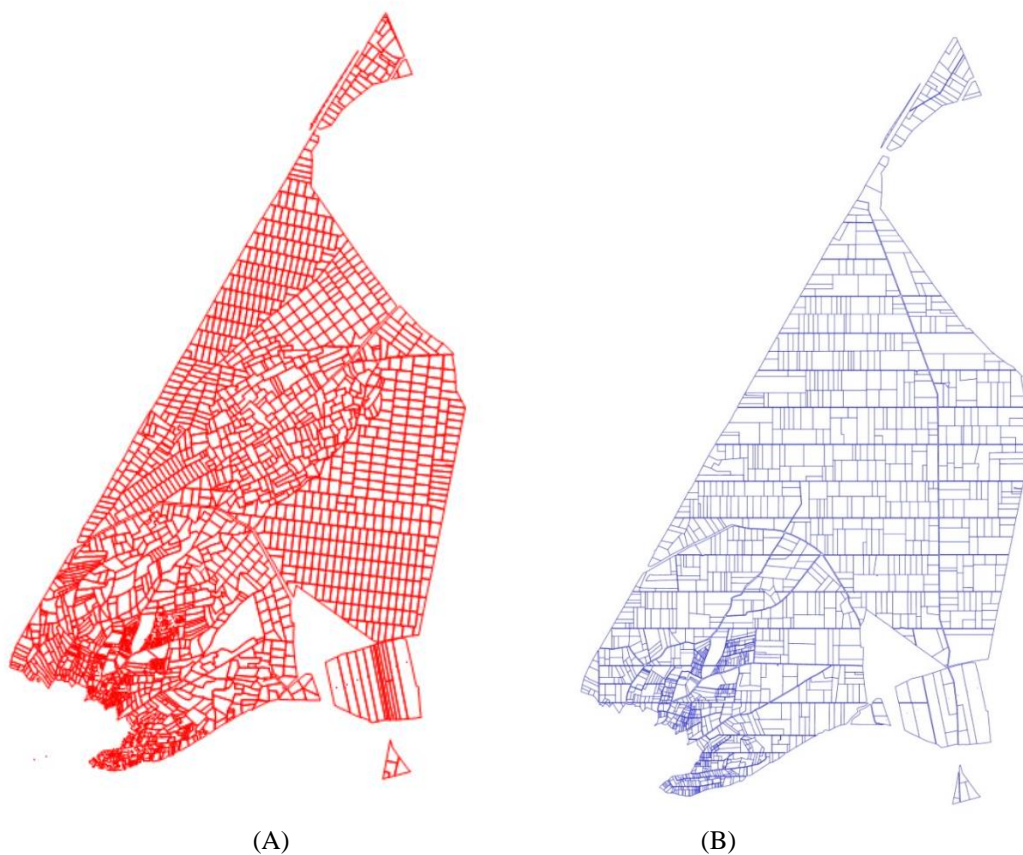


Figure 1. Plot map before (a) and after (B) land consolidation.

Bayram and Değirmenci (2018) examined the parcel shapes of the Yıldıztepe land consolidation project in the 2. Kısım of the Niğde Misli plain and found that the number of parcels before land consolidation fell to 3350 units from 6222 units and the land consolidation rate was 46.14%. In another study, land consolidation rates were calculated as 38.35% in Niğde Hasaköy and 34.49% in Niğde Bağlama (Lök and Değirmenci, 2019). Arslan and Tunca (2013) found land consolidation rates in the Left Coast irrigation area in the Bafra Plain at 55% in Dedeli, 58% in Örencik, and 22% in the village of Yörgüç. Dağdelen et al. (2017) Aydın Yenipazar-Hamzabali 63% in the number of parcels in the consolidation project of the village, Durduran et al. (2018) they stated that the number of parcels decreased by 43.22% in the land consolidation project of Konya and Topraklık District.

In the interview study with business owners in Kesik Village, the number of preferences received from participants is shown in Table 2. According to these data, no choice was made for 66 parcels in Kesik village. The number of participants who made one choice was 1978, while there were 748 participants who made two preferences and 240 participants who made three preferences. In the project, the participation rate in the interview study is 88%. 2% of respondents made no preferences at all, while 65% made a single choice.

Table 2. Numerical Data of Preferences Obtained In Interview Studies.

	Number of Preferences	Rate
0 preference	66	%2
1 preference	1978	%65
2 preference	748	%25
3 preference	240	%8

As a result of the preferences received in the interview studies, 238 parcels belonging to 137 businesses were not distributed to their preferences, and 100 parcels randomly selected from these parcels were examined in detail why they were not distributed to their preferences. The most common causes are listed below.

- *Lack of sufficient space in the block:* As an example, the total number of block values of block 1211 is 183,094. Figure 2 shows the old and new parcel status of landowner 19. A red scanned parcel is the last state of parcels before aggregation, and parcels surrounded by a black line are the last state of parcels after aggregation. Due to the fixed facility in the parcel, the participant made the only choice, but due to the lack of sufficient space in the block during distribution, part of the parcel was assigned to the nearest location in the opposite block.

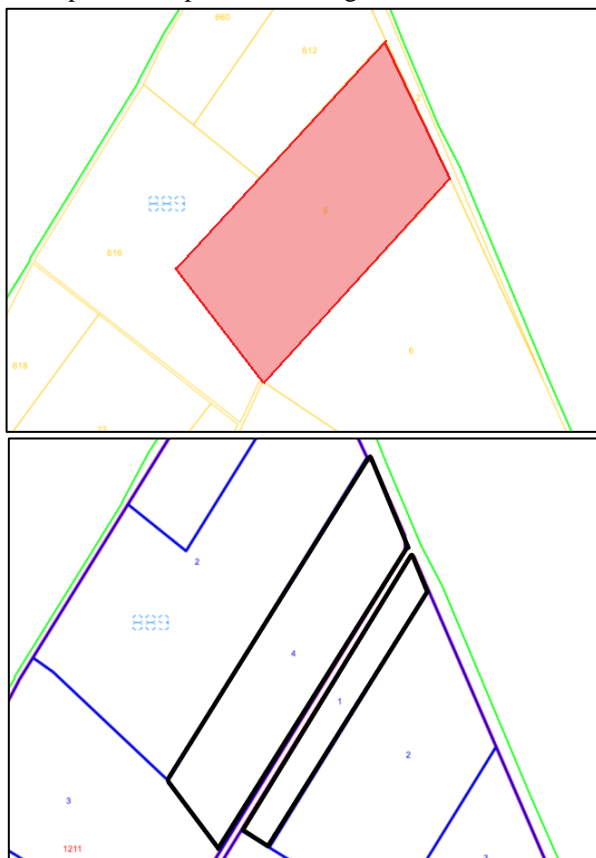


Figure 2. Old and new status of the parcel belonging to Landowner No. 19.

- *Availability of parcels:* A parcel can have more than one share. As shown in Figure 3, the participant has two different plots in the same block. One parcel has 5 shares, while the 2nd parcel is single shares. The participant chose different blocks by separating his share in the parcel from other shareholders. However, the project engineer made the distribution as a single parcel by combining the participant's 2nd parcel in the same block and the share reserved parcel.

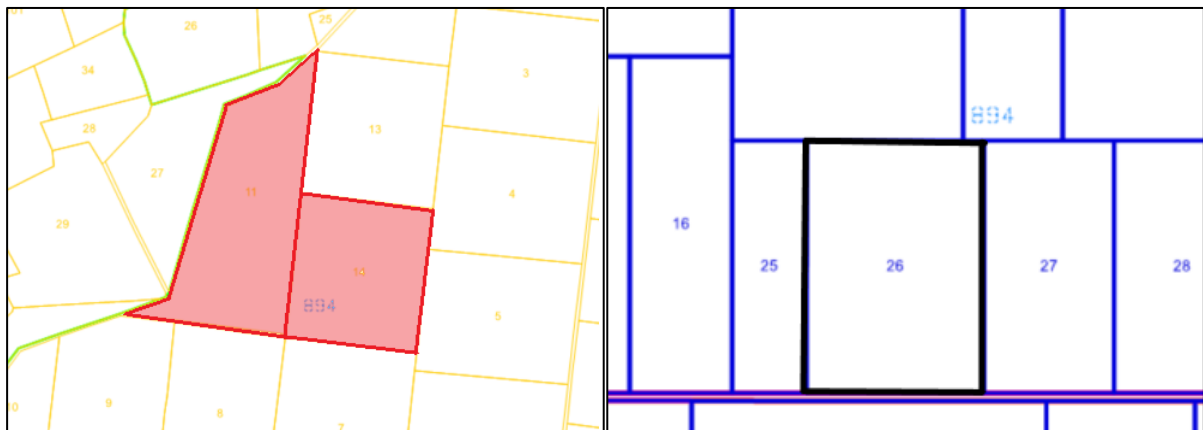


Figure 3. Old and new image of the parcel belonging to Landowner No. 863.

- ***Project engineer's initiative:*** The project engineer is obliged to conduct the interviews himself. But in some cases, the interviewer and the distribution person are not the same, which can cause some negativity. In the study, participant number 912 has a single parcel, and parcel 4 is a share. The participant preferred different blocks by asking for a share separation. But on the initiative of the project engineer, all shareholders were separated from each other and distributed to different places in the same block. The participant's share was separated from other shareholders and his request was fulfilled, but it was not given in his preferred block. This is evaluated among parcels that are not distributed to their preferences due to the fact that the parcel remains in the same block.
- ***Receiving a single (insufficient) preference:*** He made the only choice for the participant parcel number 1222 to remain in the same block. But as can be seen in Figure 4, the participant's request did not come true, and the parcel was assigned to the nearest block after aggregation. This is the most common case in parcels that cannot be assigned according to their preferences. The project engineer can evaluate the location and characteristics of parcels and other issues when receiving preferences and special requests, and must ensure that requests are received logically by convincing the participant.

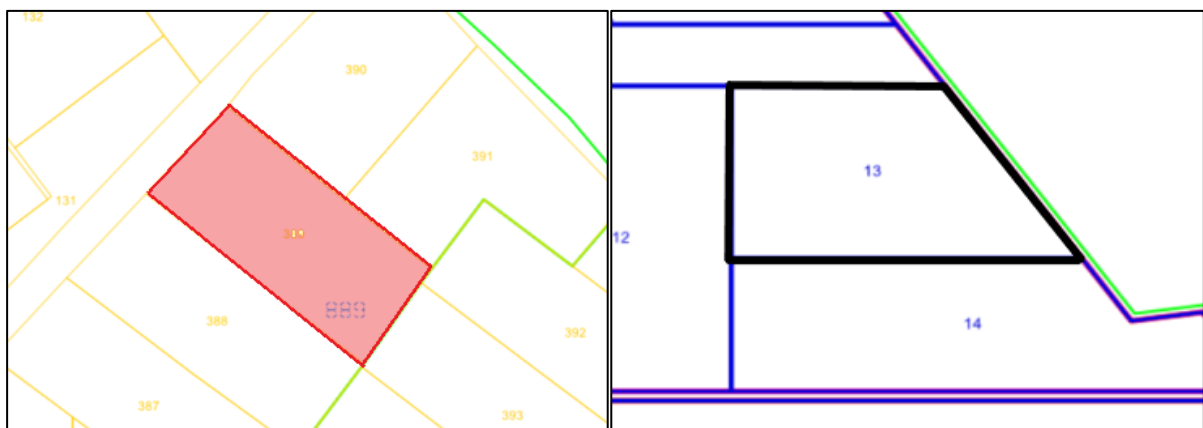


Figure 4. Old and new parcel status of Landowner No. 1222.

- ***Merger with shareholders:*** Landowner number 430 has two parcels with shares. According to the special request of the participant, both parcels were combined with other shareholders, but the shares were settled according to the preference of the participant with a large share.



Figure 5. Old and new parcel status of Landowner No 430.

The examples given above are the most common cases of 238 parcels that are not distributed according to their preferences in the land consolidation study of Kesik village. The majority of these parcels are the participants who made the only choice in the interview studies. Among the 238 parcels in question, the proportion of participants who make a single choice is approximately 63%. Many of these participants preferred only the block where their parcels were located. In other words, they demanded that their parcels not be relocated and remain in place.

The biggest reason that the single preferences made by participants cannot be realized is that the blocks cannot be balanced if they are placed in their preferred blocks. In such cases, parcels are usually assigned to the nearest block preferred by participants.

Another reason arises when parcels have more than one shareholder. In this case, two or more people who have shares in the same parcel may have different preferences for the same parcel. If their shares are inseparable, and in the new case, they are shares in the same parcel, the parcel was assigned to the preferred block of only one of the shareholders. In such a case, the interview preferences of other participants who share the parcel cannot be realized by the project engineer.

Another situation encountered is that the participant cannot determine why the preferred block or blocks are preferred in the interview study. Some participants prefer a different block rather than the block where the parcels they own are located. In these cases, there are no parcels or relationships in which they own or own shares in their preferred blocks. During the distribution phase, it was observed that these parcels were assigned to the appropriate blocks, not to the preferences of the participants.

Among the most critical problems is insufficient participation in interview work. As the landowners do not live in the village or cannot be reached, people cannot follow the project's operation. A relative living in the village or the headman makes their choice, and they are entered as the only choice so that the current parcels are preserved. From time to time, non-preferential distributions take place.

In cases where land consolidation projects are not distributed to participants' preferences as a result of the above reasons, business owners are likely to object to their new location. Excessive objections and reorganization of these parcels extend the completion time of land consolidation works and negatively affect the work.

In order to avoid problems arising from interview Work, participants must be informed about the functioning of the project and the importance of the interviews. In addition, for the interview work to be successful, the project engineer must have sufficient knowledge of the work area and receive the 2nd and 3rd preferences by giving the correct directions in the preferences they will give to the participants during the interviews. In the interview studies that will be conducted in this direction, the problems that we interpret in this study will be less common and will have positive results in the success of land consolidation studies.

As a result, in this study, the impact of the interview stage on the success of land consolidation projects and the considerations that should be considered at the interview stage was emphasized.

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