

A QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF THE QUALITY OF TURKISH ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement

Turkey has achieved remarkable progress in education system coverage in recent years. After the eight-year compulsory Basic Education Law¹ (Law No. 4306) was signed into law in August 1997, Turkey embarked on an unprecedented expansion of public schooling. This Basic Education Program entails a broad range of actions, financed largely by government revenues, but also by major private enterprise contributions and international loans and grants. Total annual expenditures for the Basic Education Program are in the order of US\$3 billion annually. These outlays include investment outlays for the construction of new schools and the renovation or expansion of existing ones, a massive provision of computers, educational equipment, and educational materials, recurrent spending on the remuneration of teachers and other educational staff, and on new recruitment, and additional staff training to expand the provision and quality of schooling.

These investments have contributed to a dramatic increase in coverage. Specifically, whereas total basic education enrollments had declined during the six years prior to the Basic Education Law, enrollments increased by 1.5 million after the law became effective. According to official figures, this increase raised the net enrollment ratio for eight-year basic education from 76 percent to 95 percent in 2002. Girls' enrollments in rural areas made the swiftest gains. In sixth grade classes located in rural schools, the enrollment rate of girls increased by 162 percent in the first year of the Program, and has continued to make sharp gains since (MONE, 2004). There are few cases in the history of any national education system that can compare with the initial achievements of Turkey's Basic Education Program.

Nonetheless, improvement on other measures of education system quality and performance, such as school quality and learning achievement, are not commensurate with the gains in access. New international assessment results, such as the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and the Progress in International Reading Literacy

¹ Turkish parliament approved the Basic Education Law (Law No. 4306) which extended the duration of compulsory schooling from five years to eight years in 1997. Following the Law #4306, a new elementary education strategy named "the Basic Education Program" (also called 'big bang' approach) has been put into practice by the Ministry of National Education in order to spread basic education.

Study (PIRLS), and other comparative measures, place Turkey well behind most of its counterparts on student learning achievement. In TIMSS 1999, Turkey was ranked 31st according to mathematics results and 33rd according to Science results among the 38 participating countries. Thirty-five countries participated to the PIRLS 2001 and Turkey was ranked 28th among them.

Turkish students also performed poorly in national assessments such as Students' Achievement Determination Study (SADS). In SADS 2002, 1/3 of the students were in the bottom quartile. Meaning that at least 4/5 of the answers of a student in this quartile were wrong. The results of High School Entrance Test (HSET)² in 2003 and in 2004 were disappointing. Among the 591.181 eight-grade elementary school students who took the HSET in 2003 40.586 (about 4%) received a "0" (zero) score. In 2004 about 10% of those taking the test (634.787) received a "0" (zero). Table 1 shows the average net scores in 2002, in 2003 and in 2004 HSETs.

Table 1. The Average Net Scores in HSET (25 questions were asked in each area)

| | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 |
|----------------------|-------|------|------|
| SCIENCE | 3.93 | 2.63 | 4.70 |
| MATHEMATICS | 3.12 | 3.11 | 1.15 |
| TURKISH (Reading...) | 10.48 | 9.94 | 7.54 |
| SOCIAL STUDIES | 7.76 | 8.25 | 7.78 |

These results suggest that increases and improvements in educational inputs do not guarantee the quality of education. Parallel to the quantitative progress, the effectiveness and the quality of school education must be a priority objective.

It is interesting, however that in spite of the students' general failure in the national and international assessments, a few schools produce good results with average level of resources.

At this point there are no comprehensive research studies of the best practices of elementary schools in Turkey. The qualitative analysis of these schools can explain what is going right in those schools and why. Through this analysis, the characteristics and practices of these schools can be identified then shared and emulated. The practices and characteristics that make a school a "good school" within the Turkish context should be evaluated and examined.

² There are different types of high schools in Turkey: science high schools, Anatolian high schools, general high schools, vocational and technical high schools, and multi-programmed high schools. Science high schools and Anatolian high schools are the most prestigious and the most difficult to enter of all high schools in Turkey. Therefore, admission to these schools is competitive by government examination called High School Entrance Test (HSET)

The purpose of this study is to construct a picture of “what is a good school” in urban areas of Turkey and to identify their characteristics. The focus is on elementary schools that produce effective results with limited resources and are therefore identified as “good schools”. The identified characteristics and the practices of good schools that produce good results with limited resources can then be transferred and improved by other schools. The results of this study will help policymakers to identify what makes a good elementary school and help them establish educational priorities.

Defining the Quality School

Though often used in discourses about education, quality is a difficult and elusive term to define. While everyone is in favor of building the quality school the arguments start when a definition of quality is put forward. In the management literature, the term quality has different meanings and has been variously defined as excellence (Peters and Waterman, 1982), value (Feigenbaum, 1951), fitness for use (Juran and Gryna, 1988), conformance to specifications (Gilmore, 1974), conformance to requirement and defect avoidance (Crosby, 1979), meeting and exceeding customers’ expectations (Parasuraman et. al., 1985).

According to Sallis (2001), the relative definition of quality has two aspects to it. The first one is the procedural concept of quality. From this aspect, quality can be seen to be achieved by putting systems and procedure into operation and ensuring that those systems are efficiently and effectively operated. It ensures that activities conform to requirements. Educational results being measured against performance indicators are a good example of this. The second concept is the transformational concept of quality. It is based on the need to make the organization ‘customer’ rather than ‘product’ focused. Transformational quality is achieved through establishing customer requirements and then building structures and particularly organizational cultures which empowers employees to meet them. Quality can be defined as that which best satisfies and exceeds customers needs and wants. It is the consumers who make the judgment on quality. The learners, parents, employers, and society are the external or primary customers of the educational services.

Adams (1997) identifies multiple meanings of quality: quality as reputation, quality as resources and inputs, quality as processes, quality as content, quality as outputs and outcomes, and quality as ‘value-added’. Quality as reputation refers to a general consensus, rarely quantified, of high and low quality, most commonly used in reference to particular schools that are “known” for their quality, or sometimes their lack thereof. Quality as inputs and resources is an extremely common usage of quality. In this sense high quality is seen high

levels of provision of resources. Unfortunately, educational research has failed to identify in any very convincing and conclusive formulation the inputs most essential to desirable outcomes of education. Quality as process highlights the need to understand the use of educational inputs. Perception of this need is relatively new among policy-makers, who have traditionally focused on the inputs and, when possible, the outputs and outcomes of education systems. However, research has found that schools with similar levels of resources often produce quite different results. As a result, attention turned to the processes within schools. Quality as content refers to the knowledge, attitudes, and skills intended to be transmitted through the school curriculum. Quality as outputs or outcomes involves the consequences of education. “Outputs” refer to the short-term consequences of schooling, e.g., students’ cognitive achievement, completion rates, individual skills, attitudes, and behaviors, while “outcomes” refer to longer-term, often socially significant, consequences of education, e.g., employment, earnings, health, civic engagement, and the like, as well as social attitudes, behaviors, and skills. Quality as valued-added refers to the extent to which the school/system has improved, often in terms of students, sometimes larger groups or institutions. A value added- focus considers the degree of change rather than the final state or the way in which the change came about.

In addition to Adams’ initial effort to construct a better understanding of quality, UNICEF (2000) presented a definition framed around five key characteristics: (1) learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities; (2) environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive, and provide adequate resources and facilities; (3) content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for acquisition of basic skills; (4) processes through which trained teachers use child-centered teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skilful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities; and (5) outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society.

National Center for Education Statistics’ report (2000), *Monitoring school quality: an indicators report*, explores why some schools may be better than others at helping students learn. The research described in this report indicates that school quality affects student learning through the training and talent of teaching force, what goes on in the classrooms, and the overall culture and atmosphere of the school. Within these three areas this report identifies 13 indicators of school quality: (1) school leadership; (2) goals; (3) professional community; (4) discipline; (5) academic environment; (6) teacher academic skills; (7) teaching

assignment; (8) teacher experience; (9) professional development; (10) course content; (11) pedagogy, (12) technology; and (13) class size.

European report on the quality of school education: sixteen quality indicators (2000) was published by the European Commission. This report on the quality of school education is based on the 16 indicators selected by the working group in cooperation with the Commission. These indicators cover four broad areas: attainment levels; educational success and transition; monitoring of school education; and educational resources and structures (European Commission, 2000). These areas and their indicators are shown in Table 2.

It can be seen from the Table 2 that attainment level in some fields can be considered as strong indicators of the quality of school education. In some fields – ‘mathematics’, ‘reading’, ‘science’- the data from TIMMS, PIRLS, and IEA were used to evaluate the quality of school education in European countries. Reading, mathematics, science, and social studies claim their place as indicators because they provide essential knowledge tools and provide the foundations for life long learning skills. SADT includes evaluation in mathematics, reading, science, and social studies. Therefore, SADT results were served as one of the main reasons for the selection of the schools in this study. Elementary school supervisors provided valuable information on other indicators such as drop out rates, parental participation, resources, and evaluation.

Table 2. The Sixteen Quality Indicators in Four Areas

| AREA | INDICATORS |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Attainment | 1. Mathematics 2. Reading 3. Science 4. Information and communication technologies (ICT) 5. Foreign languages 6. Learning to learn 7. Civics |
| Success and transition | 8. Drop out 9. Completion of upper secondary education 10. Participation in tertiary education |
| Monitoring of school education | 11. Evaluation and steering of school education 12. Parental participation |
| Resources and structures | 13. Education and training of teachers 14. Participation in pre-primary education 15. Number of students per computer 16. Educational expenditure per student. |

In order to address what is meant by the term ‘quality school’, Fuller (1986) explores four categories of quality definitions, namely technical production process, individual abilities

and perceptions, school and classroom organizations, and institutional signals. He agrees that determining a definitive answer for school quality, one that will apply to all contexts, is a formidable, if not an impossible, task. We have a sense of what we are looking for, but are at a loss to articulate how it is to be measured and under what conditions. Glasser (1990) admits that it would be extremely difficult to come up with an exact definition of quality education that would apply to all situations. Even without being able to define it, however, we can almost always recognize it when we see it.

METHODOLOGY

Although the data for this study were collected mainly through qualitative research methods, quantitative data in the form of school test results and data about school resources were used in the process of selection of the schools to be included in this study. Most of the data were collected through observations, interviews, and focus group meetings at the participating schools.

The qualitative research method was used in this study. The data was collected through observations, interviews, and focus group meetings from the schools selected as sample.

Selection of the Provinces and the Schools

The schools within the scope of the research were selected by using extreme or deviant case sampling. This approach focuses on cases that are rich in information because they are unusual or special in some way. The logic of extreme case sampling is that lessons may be learned about unusual conditions or extreme outcomes which are relevant to improving more typical programs. With limited resources and limited time an evaluator might learn more by intensively studying one or more examples of really excellent programs. The evaluation focus, then, becomes a question of understanding under what conditions programs exemplify excellence (Patton, 1987)

On April 12, 2002 the Ministry of National Education (MONE) in Turkey conducted an assessment study namely Student Achievement Determination Test 2002(SADT 2002). The purpose of this assessment was to gather the information necessary to increase students' successes rather than to rank the schools, teachers, and students according to their performance in the test. Five-hundred and forty-one public elementary schools participated in

the assessment study. Turkish, mathematics, science, and social studies tests were administered to the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eight grade students. The contents of these tests are similar to TIMMS and PIRLS. As stated earlier the results of SADT 2002 were very disappointing. Only 20 schools were found to be very successful among 541 participant schools. These 20 schools were in the fourth quartile. Four schools were selected among 20 successful schools through the following processes:

1. The names of the schools were given to the school supervisors from the provinces and they provided information about (a) reputation of the schools among public, (b) general performance assessment of the school teachers given by the school supervisors, (c) limited resources but good results in high school entrance tests, (d) high attendance rate, (e) parental involvement, (f) discipline and order in the school, (g) extra curricular activities and success in these activities, (h) openness to the public, and (i) commitment to success.
2. Good performing schools with average clientele and resources were determined based on the information provided by the supervisors from the provinces.
3. The schools that are on the university campus or in the official housing units, and supported by the foundations were eliminated.
4. A total of four schools out of the remaining ones were selected, two from developed provinces (ANKARA, ANTALYA), and two from developing provinces³ (ORDU, SAMSUN). These schools have the best SADT score average in their provinces and the school in Antalya has the best score average amongst the 541 school.

Since the MONE did not announce the SADT results in public, the following pseudonyms will be used: Ankara Central Elementary School, Antalya Sub-Province Elementary School, Samsun Central Elementary School, and Ordu Central Elementary School.

Table 2. Provinces and Schools in the Research Sample

| PROVINCE | SCHOOL NAME | SADT Average |
|----------|---------------------------------|--------------|
| ANKARA | Central Elementary School (CES) | .5489 |
| ANTALYA | Central Elementary School (CES) | .6546 |
| SAMSUN | Central Elementary School (CES) | .6097 |
| ORDU | Central Elementary School (CES) | .6196 |

³ The provinces have been classified into two categories as developed and undeveloped (regions having precedence in development) according their levels of development determined by State Planning Organization in Turkey.

Student achievement has been considered a key indicator of educational quality and student scores on large-scale assessment are the subject of public scrutiny. Student test scores, particularly on large-scale assessments such as TIMMS, PIRLS, HSET, and SADT, are considered as important elements of school quality. To find and focus on cases that are rich in information and to learn from extreme outcomes, the results of these assessments are highly appropriate. However, test scores can only be interpreted meaningfully in the context of the school and the educational system produced them. Therefore, the other components of the school that produced assessment results should be understood. To understand and evaluate the quality of education requires not just numerical values or quantitative measures, but a more vivid picture of unique and complex character of schools. Using qualitative method this research intends to provide this kind of detailed information.

Collection and Analysis of Qualitative Data

The data were collected through individual interviews and focus group interviews. A semi-structured interview form developed by the researcher was used to collect data. The school principals, the teachers, the students, and the parents were the sources of data. Interviews were conducted with the principals. Focus group interviews were conducted with the teachers, the students, and the parents.

In this study eight to ten people participated to the each focus group interview for one to one-half hour. Following Patton (1987) our participants were organized in focus groups that were relatively homogenous within each category, i.e., teachers, students, and parents. They were asked to reflect on the questions posed to them by the researcher as they interacted with each other. Their discussions often extended beyond the original question. The goal was elicit high quality data in a context where views could be shared and disagreements acknowledge. In this way participants were able to check and balance each other, in the process, weed out false or extreme views.

Content analysis was used to analyze the data. Content analysis involves identifying coherent and important examples, themes, and patterns in the data. Thus, the complexity of the data was organized into categories. The five elements of the quality management process (Kaufman, 1993) were used as the main categories: inputs, processes, products (micro-level results), outputs (macro-level results), and outcomes (mega-level results). Sub-categories were established under each main category. Three of the elements relate to results (outcomes, outputs, products), one relates to methods (processes), and the other to resources (inputs):

Inputs: In education, inputs include learners, teachers, schools, classrooms, media resources, available learning materials, budgets, board members, pre-service training levels and credentials, administrators, parents, community members, lobbyists, legislators, and the historical perceptions of the schools – all of the ingredients an educational system can or must use as it does its work.

Processes: In an educational setting, processes include teaching learners, developing learning materials, scheduling, activities (including athletics, guidance, and cultural endeavors), in-service training of teachers, courses. Processes transform inputs into results. They should add value to the inputs in terms of the results they deliver.

Products (micro-level results): In an educational agency, products include a completed course, an instructional video disk, a filed attendance report, an accomplished counseling objective, a lost football game, an approved strategic plan, a passed literacy exam, a delivered orchestra recital. Products in education are the building blocks of the system. The educational products are the individual learner and teacher contributions. We keep score on our products with grades and test results.

Outputs (macro-level results): An automobile (made up of fenders, chassis, tires, and so on); a prescription drug (including bottle, cotton, pills, label, box); a computer system (including disk drives, keyboard, modem, software, cases, monitor, mouse, instruction books, power cords, printer). Outputs are the macro-level results we can and do deliver to our external clients. Outputs are the integration, the adding-up, of all of the products. Education, too, has outputs. These include graduates from a high school, an individual who is certified as a licensed vocational nurse, a merit scholar headed for our finest state university, an apprentice mechanic who gets a job with the city bus company. We keep score on our educational outputs; we gather data on graduates, completers, non-completers, job placements, college entries.

Outcomes (mega-level results): Educational outcomes are mega-level results, such as parents satisfied with the quality of education, a learner who gets and keeps a job, a graduate who enters higher education, completes a degree, and gets and keeps a job (Kaufman, 1993, p. 33-35).

FINDINGS

The five elements of the quality management process (Kaufman, 1993) were used as the main categories: inputs, processes, products (micro-level results), outputs (macro-level

results), and outcomes (mega-level results). The findings of this research will be presented under these main categories.

Inputs / Resources

The selected schools in this study must represent good performing schools with median clientele and resources. The schools selected for this study had to demonstrate good performance in spite of serving communities of a low socio-economic level and having scarce resources. It was found that the schools have serious input related constrains such as poor school facilities and crowded classes. However there is still a serious demand for registering students to these schools. The pressure from senior authorities and false registry documents are well known situations experienced in every registry period. Table 4 and Table 5 summarize the resources of the schools.

Table 4. Basic Data on Inputs/Resources of the Schools

| SCHOOLS | NUMBER OF STUDENT | AVERAGE CLASS. SIZE | NUMBER OF ADMINISTRATORS | NUMBER OF TEACHERS | OTHER PERSONNEL | SCHOOL IMPLEMENTATION |
|-------------|-------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ANKARA CES | 856 | 47 | 1 Principal 2 Asst.Principals | 44 (sufficient) | 1 office personnel 3 cleaners | Double shift ⁴ |
| ANTALYA CES | 450 | 36 | 1 Principal | 19 (sufficient) | - 2 cleaners | Normal ⁵ (Full-time) |
| SAMSUN CES | 1611 | 35 | 1 Principal 4 Asst.Principals | 66 (sufficient) | 1 office personnel 4 cleaners | Double shift |
| ORDU CES | 1670 | 45 | 1 Principal 4 Asst.Principals | 64 (sufficient) | 1 office personnel 4 cleaners | Double shift |

The four schools of this study are well-performing schools in terms of student achievement; however their there are large differences in their enrollment. They range from 450 to 1670. However, research studies on the relationship between school size and student achievement have found that enrolment data cannot be assumed to have a direct causative effect on achievement (Duke, 1998; Heck & Mayor, 1993; Howley, 1996; Lee & Smith, 1997; Stockard & Mayberry, 1992). The literature has shown no consistent relationship between class size and student achievement. In one study, for instance, class size demonstrated no significant effect on achievement (Lytton & Pyryt, 1998). However, with smaller class sizes, teachers are able to provide a wider variety of instructional methods and learning activities (Blatchford & Mortimore, 1994). With smaller class size, students benefit

⁴ Elementary schools with a doubled-shift system, where education is carried on with different groups of students in the morning and afternoon.

from more individualized instruction (Betts & Shkolnik, 1999), and students are more proficient at basic skills and master more subject matter.

Although three of the schools are double shifted in order to accommodate a larger population, the average class sizes are still high. Because of the good reputation these schools have among the public, parents prefer to send their children to these schools.

Table 5. Basic Data on Inputs/Resources of the Schools

| SCHOOLS | Science lab. | ICT Class & number of computers | Number of overhead projector | Library & Number of books | Sports saloon | School playground |
|-------------|--------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| ANKARA CES | Yes | Yes – 13 | 4 | Yes – 5000 (Sufficient) | Yes – (Insufficient) | Large enough |
| ANTALYA CES | Yes | Yes – 20 | 4 | Yes – (Insufficient) | No | Large enough |
| SAMSUN CES | Yes | No | 12 | Yes – (Insufficient) | Yes – (Insufficient) | Only 300m2 |
| ORDU CES | Yes | No | 4 | Yes – (Insufficient) | No | Large enough |

School facilities play a significant role in teaching and learning process. The accessibility of science and computer labs, physical education facilities, libraries; the number of volumes of books available for circulation can be used as quality indicators.

Each of the schools included in this study has one well-equipped science laboratory which has been used very effectively by the students and teachers. The laboratories were established through their own budgets or by donors.

Samsun Central Elementary School and Ordu Central Elementary School do not have any computer facility. The number of students per computer in Ankara Central Elementary School is 66 and in Antalya Central Elementary School is about 23.

Ankara Central Elementary School has a rich school library. They have collected around 5000 books collected through several campaigns. The other three schools also have libraries; however, they are not rich in resources or are in poor physical condition.

The schools have a low number of overhead projectors. The number of students per overhead projector is shown in brackets: Ankara CES (214), Antalya CES (113), Samsun CES (134), and Ordu CES (418).

Parent characteristics are considered to be very important part of the input in education. The selected schools' parent profile are composed of parents who work mainly in the public sector with low or middle income, small shopkeepers, workers, unemployed or daily employed.

⁵ Normal (full-time) elementary schools, where education is carried on the whole day with the same students.

These findings show that the selected schools have very limited resources while serving a low income clientele. They represent less than an average school in terms of their inputs. Then, what makes these schools good? To answer this question their good practices we must examine in the processes level.

Operations / Processes

Parent Participation

Research studies are consistent in finding a positive correlation between parental participation and student achievement and performance (Reynolds, 1992; Stevenson & Baker, 1987; Fehrmann, Keith, & Reimers, 1987). This positive influence is not restricted only to achievement. Parental involvement in school events is also associated with better student attendance and behavior (Griffith, 1996; Keith, Quirk, Cohen-Rosenthal & Franzese, 1996; LeRae, 1992; Stevenson & Baker, 1987).

This research revealed that the school administrators and teachers were satisfied with the participation and support of their school's parents. The parental contribution was not only financial. It also showed as involvement in the process, expression of expectations and creation of factors to affect the realization of those. A close cooperation with the parents based on mutual trust and respect was found in the schools. Parental participation has taken place through different ways in these schools. Ankara CES has more good practices than the other three schools. The practices of the school regarding parent participation are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Parent Participation and Contributions

| SCHOOLS | PARENT CONTRIBUTIONS |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ANKARA CES | Financial aid, participation at meetings, organization of charity meetings, voluntary employment in the school library, repairing the book covers, classification of books, organizing and participating to trips, involvement in school development management team studies, annex building architectural project design, active involvement in ceremonies and celebrations... |
| ANTALYA CES | Financial aid, participation at meetings, creating high academic expectations such as high success in high school entrance tests and therefore creating an impact on teachers for the purpose of creating a competitive environment... |
| SAMSUN CES | Financial aid, participation at meetings, annex building architectural project design, involvement in school development management team studies, creating high academic expectations... |
| ORDU CES | Financial aid, participation at meetings, fulfillment of the demands from the school |

The principals' and the teachers' statements in individual interviews and focus group interviews related to parent participation as follows:

“Everyone in the school knows that it is not possible to have improvements in the school without parent support. That’s why the parents are important to us and why we call them if they can not call us. (Teacher)”

“We invite parents to the school one by one and show them what we have done with parent contributions. This has created a mutual trust as a result of which the parents are doing whatever demands we have for them. (Principal)”

“The parents should first be convinced about what his/her contribution will mean for the student. We try to explain this with patience and with clarity. (Principal)”

School Climate

The research suggests that principals can have an indirect influence on school effectiveness through actions and attitudes that shape the school’s learning climate (Hallinger, Bickman & Davis, 1996; Heck, Larsen & Marcoulides, 1990; Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach, 1999). For example, principals in high-achieving schools involve teachers to a much greater extent in instructional decision-making. Principals are also found to have a more direct influence on their school’s student achievement rates through their leadership practices (Heck, Larsen, et al., 1990).

The principals, the teachers, and the students commonly reported that the school climate is very positive in the schools of this research. Some of their statements follow:

“The teachers and the administrators come to school with joy and motivation every day. It is a pleasure for us to be teachers in this school. (Teacher)”

“In the history of our school, there has never been an investigation or discipline related action against our teachers and administrators. (Principal)”

“I miss my school during holidays because I am treated as a mature individual despite being an elementary school student. They love the students. (Student)”

“Our school has a very cozy ambiance! (Teacher)”

“There is mutual tolerance and good will. Everyone is always sincere and ready to help each other.(Teacher)”

“The duties are never assigned in a bureaucratic way. Everyone takes the responsibility of tasks suitable to his/her potential automatically. (Teacher)”

The mentioned practices of the school that help to create positive school climate are shown in Table 7.

Table 7.Practices That Create the Positive School Climate

| SCHOOLS | PRACTICES |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ANKARA CES | “What we do is focused on humans. That’s why we thought that it would be necessary to reduce the formalities and to change the government office look. We have started every new day with different kinds of music. It was first the administrators who have started to do move with the music and the students have joined them immediately. The teachers surprised at first but they have also participated later on. The parents, who did not at first |

| | |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | understand what we were doing, have started to enjoy this as well...(Principal)" |
| | Distribution of responsibility based on volunteerism, democratic management, respect even to marginal ideas. |
| ANTALYA CES | "Everyone feels a mutual responsibility. (Principal)" |
| | "We come together a lot more informal circumstances. (Teacher)" |
| SAMSUN CES | Participation to decision making, team work, transparency and democratic approaches. |
| ORDU CES | "In ceremonies what we do is real ceremony; we do not give long speeches or make announcements. We only say what has to be said and we do it in the classrooms. This has created a more positive communication between us and the students. (Principal)" |
| | "Our principal rarely uses his office; he makes use of every opportunity to be with the teachers, students, and parents (Teacher). |
| | "The principal comes to our classroom instead of calling us to his office when he wants to talk with us. (Teacher)" |
| | "I am always ready to take risks for the favor of the teachers and the students. (Principal)" |

According to Glasser (1992), a school is a quality school when all students who are asked to describe their school will say: "I like school; I look forward to going each day." "I am learning things at this school that I believe are good for me.", and all teachers would say: "I like working in this friendly school: No one coerces me, and I do not to coerce anyone else." "I am treated like a professional; I am encouraged to teach the curriculum the way I believe is best for my students." "I am pleased with the new way of evaluating students." "I no longer even think about discipline problems: They have disappeared from my classes."

During the individual interviews and the focus group interviews the students and teachers statements were very similar to Glasser's points.

Teaching-Learning Environment

The physical environment of the classrooms was observed in this study. All the classrooms were visited during the break times to examine the classroom arrangements. All the classrooms were formally arranged classrooms with chairs and desks facing forward and students sitting neatly in rows starting at the head of the individual in front. Even in classrooms where the student number is appropriate for different classroom organization, the row alignment was used. In some classrooms with the row alignment, it was observed that some of the chairs were fixed to the floor. The arrangement of this type of classroom determines the role behavior of both teacher and students. This type of classrooms is not likely to stimulate and challenge students. Therefore, the teachers become more active than students in the learning process.

Rows of desks reduce interaction among students and make it easier for them to concentrate on individual assignments. Rows also direct students' attention toward the

teacher, so they are particularly appropriate for teacher-centered instruction (Weinstein & Mignano, 1993).

Six classes were selected randomly in the four schools in order to observe the teaching and learning processes. It was observed that all the students in the class were asked to focus on a single activity. Individual Education Plans (IEP) were not observed in any of the classrooms. The teachers applied the presentation technique and used questioning techniques from time to time in the courses observed. It was observed that in two different music courses flute and lute were played and that the overhead projector was used to demonstrate “the eye and its structure” in a science course. No other utilization of educational technology or material was observed. The teachers described their teaching and learning strategies as follows:

“Description and discussion are intensively done in my classes. The students are receivers. They also express their own ideas but it is me who eventually determines right and wrong.”

“We unfortunately do not have a creative learning process because of the system, we are always focused on exams. The majority of the issues we discuss in the class are related to exams such as “Will this question be asked in the exam?”

“There is no time to create students who can freely think, comment, and change. The examination system forces the students to memorize and us to use teacher centered methods.”

“I give the lecture, I even doubt whether they listen to me enough or not because the classrooms are over-crowded.”

“Our senior administrators take the centralized exam results as the main performance criteria. Therefore, the teaching process of 5 hours is comprised of 3 hours with teacher led course description and 2 hours of test solving.”

In addition to the teachers’ views, the students’ also expressed their views on the learning and teaching processes are as follows:

“Our teachers mostly use the overhead projector in the lessons.”

“We go to the science lab a lot. We do experiments in groups if there is enough material, if not the teacher does the experiment and we watch.”

“The subjects that we learn from the VCDs are easier to remember.”

“We have not seen any teacher apart from the computer teacher while using a computer.”

It was also found that the existing computer facilities were not used to achieve the curriculum objectives. Even the computer teachers are too far away to teach computers to support curriculum activities. The following dialogue took place between the researcher and the students in a school with a well equipped science lab and IT lab:

- Kids, as an authorized officer I am going to close down your science lab. What do you think about this?
- No! Never, it is very ridiculous! We learn many things there, we do experiments. It is an important place for us...
- OK, I have changed my mind. I will not close down your science lab, but I will close down the IT lab.
- No, do not close it!
- What will you lose if I do so?
- Ehhmm... We will only be deprived of the games, that's all.

Rescigno (1988) reports that the use of technology in the classroom enabled students to progress through lessons at their own pace, increasing student achievement levels. Recent research indicates that computers can raise student achievement but, when used the wrong way, they can do more harm than good (Archer, 1998).

Time Outside the School Hours

Social Activities: The high number of the students (school size), the academic pressure on the students, and the constraints of the physical environment reduce student the participation in social activities (chess, modern dance, chorus, theater, different sport branches).

Attendance in Private Courses after School Hours: In Antalya CES, there are no students going to a private course. However, all of the teachers spend three more hours with students after the class hours in order to revise the subjects and make tests. They are doing this free of charge. In the other three schools, the number of the students from 5th and 6th grade that go to private course is rare. As for the 7th grade, this number is around 30% and for the 8th grade students approximately 55% of them go to a private course.

Homework and Exam Preparation: Approximately three hours for homework and two hours for test-solving adds up to 5 hours per day. The homework is given mainly for review purposes. The assessment of the homework varies from teacher to teacher: "I do not control homework." "I asked them whether they did it or not." "I find out during the lesson." "I randomly pick one or two out of the class to check the homework." "Those who do not do it come forward." "I only check the homework of the students whom I doubt."

Reading Habit: The students of the Ankara CES have been using their library in an effective way. On average a students takes two books a week. In the other three schools, the students said that they cannot find time for free reading.

Supporting Professional Development and Leadership

Descriptions of usually quality schools indicate that in-service training and other forms of professional development generally are on-going activities which are carried out at the school site. In addition to this, leaders emerge at all levels in quality schools. Table 8 summarizes the findings related to the professional development and leadership.

Table 8. Supporting the Professional Development and Leadership

| SCHOOLS | LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS AND PRACTICES |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ANKARA CES | Computer training for all the teachers. Support for continuation of the university graduate program (masters or doctorate). Cooperation with the universities as well as seminars on hyperactivity, physical education and active learning. Following up technology and technology transfer. Strong human relations. Committing the teachers to the school vision. Classroom visits. Creation of democratic school environment. |
| ANTALYA CES | The school principal is an acting one. She does not have any encouragement in the education process. There is however a sense of responsibility and determination at every level. The teachers are active in launching and conducting the process. |
| SAMSUN CES | Launching the total quality management applications. Involving the parents actively in the process. Continuation of the professional development for teachers through school-university cooperation. |
| ORDU CES | Presence of all the factors that form a school. Democratic attitude and behaviors. Taking risks and supporting those who take risks. |

Products / Micro Level Results

Products are the micro-level building-block results we get from the transformation of the inputs through application of our process (Kaufman, 1993). Attendance, drop-out rate, course completed, and competency test passed are some examples of micro level results.

A strong positive relationship between attendance and student performance has been reported in a number of studies (Caldas, 1993; Lamdin, 1995). Young people without a complete education may experience greater difficulty than others with regard to social integration and active participation in democratic society (European Commission, 2000).

The micro level results of the schools are presented in Table 9. It is found that the schools give great attention to this level. The schools really care about the specific skills, knowledge, attitudes, and abilities of the students as they move from course to course, and level to level. The tests are the primary focus.

Table 9. Micro Level Results

| SCHOOLS | MICRO LEVEL RESULTS |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ANKARA CES | There is no continuous absenteeism or drop-outs from the school. Daily attendance is full. The students are happy to be at school. All of the students finish the school. The school has an average of 75% in school level identification exam. The school has successful results in many social and sportive activities (Turkish Champions and runners-up previously in volleyball, good performances in handball...) The school teachers, administrators, and the students are all satisfied with what has been put into life. |
| ANTALYA CES | There is no continuous absenteeism or drop-outs from the school. Daily attendance is full. All of the students finish school. They have the best score in the sub-province regarding the achievement level identification test. The students are tired and worried because of the high academic expectations and relevant activities. They mentioned that the teachers prefer teaching math to physical education, music, and arts and crafts. |
| SAMSUN CES | There is no continuous absenteeism or drop-outs from the school. Daily attendance is full. The 6 th , 7 th , 8 th grades' teachers believe that the students coming from the primary level are well prepared. The school always finishes at the top three levels in the annual level identification exams in the province. They have had important achievements in social and sportive organizations amongst the school. |
| ORDU CES | There is no continuous absenteeism or drop-outs from the school. Daily attendance is full. The students are worried because of the exam-based high expectations of the teachers, administrators and the parents. The school is always in the top three in the annual level identification exams in the province. |

Regular attendance at the school, completion of a course, and good test results do not assure success in life. Therefore higher-order results become important: macro level results.

Outputs / Macro Level Results

Outputs are the macro-level results we can do and deliver to our external clients. Outputs are the integration, the adding-up, of all of the products (Kaufman, 1993). Graduates, completers, job placements, acceptance to the finest upper level schools etc. are some examples of the macro level results. If the schools care about the quality and competence of the completers and the leavers when they leave their educational system, macro level results become important.

Although the schools state their visions as “Happy and successful students” “Self-sufficient, productive and modern individuals” “To see every one of our graduates as a happy and successful member of the society” “To make the school a center that changes the society” “Happy people who are good at doing their job whatever profession they have”, it is found that their common vision “to be at the top in Science and Anatolian High School’s Entrance Tests”. This point is especially obvious in their learning and teaching practices. The macro level results of the schools are presented in Table 10.

Table 10. Macro Level Results

| SCHOOLS | MACRO LEVEL RESULTS |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ANKARA CES | In 2002-2003, 35% of the students taking the exam have won entry to Anatolian or Science High Schools. The students eligible for Anatolian Fine Arts High School are also in that |

| | |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <p>portion. An important part of the remaining students earned the right to go to a super high school and the rest did not have any difficulty registering in a general high school. The teachers and administrators mentioned that their graduates are more successful in the next educational level than the graduates of other schools. The school does not have a planned follow-up system for its graduates.</p> |
| ANTALYA CES | <p>In 2002-2003, 49 (69%) of the 71 students taking the exam have earned the right to go to Anatolian and Science High Schools and the Police College. No student applied to enter The Anatolian Fine Arts School. The other students preferred going to general high schools. The .6546 SADT average makes this school the best among 541 public elementary schools.</p> |
| SAMSUN CES | <p>In 2002-2003, 85 (46%) of the 182 students taking the exam have earned the right to Anatolian and Science high schools. Some of the graduates went on to the super high school while some others went to the general high schools. The .6097 SADT average makes them the top school in the province.</p> |
| ORDU CES | <p>In 2002-2003, 94 (51%) of the 186 students have earned the right to go to Anatolian and Science high schools. Two students went to Kuleli military high school. None of the students went to Anatolian Fine Arts High School. The other students went to super and general high schools. The students do not have any problem with acceptance or attendance in the next level of education.</p> |

Outcomes / Mega Level Results

Mega level results are concerned with societal and community outcomes and consequences. Some example of a mega level results are that all learners will be self-sufficient and not be under the care, custody, or control of another person, agency, or substance; all learners will be productive individual who are socially competent and effective, contributing to self and others; financially independent etc. (Kaufman, 1993). Schools that have a mega focus are concerned with the current and future self-sufficiency, self-reliance, and quality of the word. When the graduates have started to use the skills, attitudes, and knowledge gained from the school, there is an impact on consequences in and for the society.

There is no doubt that the teachers and the principal of the schools selected for this study are very dedicated, self-sacrificing, and caring people. They are doing their best to do things right. However, as Peter Drucker reminds us, doing things is not as important as doing the right things. Mega level results show us whether or not we do the right things. The teachers and the principals have no clear answers for the questions about who are the clients of the schools and what should be delivered to them. They do not have any identified shared vision. Beside, they do not have any practice to evaluate whether or not they do the right things. The mega level results of the schools are presented in Table 11.

Table 11. Mega Level Results

| SCHOOLS | MEGA LEVEL RESULTS |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ANKARA CES | The school does not have any method to determine the external client satisfaction and |

| | |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | societal outcomes. However, the graduates are proud to be naming themselves as from this school. Being from this school is perceived as a privilege in the environment. The parents want to send their children to this school. The parent satisfaction is not only related to the exam results. They believe that the students acquire the basic skills, behaviors, and habits in a good way. |
| ANTALYA CES | The school does not have any method to determine the external client satisfaction and societal outcomes. The parents are very satisfied with the competitive process. They cannot think of a better result than having their children go to an Anatolian or Science High School. The parents prefer this school when compared with the other local ones. |
| SAMSUN CES | The school is well known by the society. The main preference reason is given as the achievement in the exam results. The school does not have any practice to determine the external client satisfaction and societal outcomes. |
| ORDU CES | The school does not have any practice to determine the external client satisfaction and societal outcomes. "The parents whose first kid is graduated from our school send their younger kid to us as well." |

Core Values

Based on the findings it is possible to identify several common qualities of the schools of this study:

- Although none of the schools has written down their vision and institutionalized it formally, they have a shared hidden vision: being at the top in national assessments.
- Their performances in assessments evoke admiration.
- They place strong emphasis on basic curriculum including Turkish, Math, Science, and Social Science.
- Academic achievement is high.
- Parents speak well of the school and the schools have a very good reputation among public.
- Parental involvement and support is high.
- A school climate that is conducive to learning and teaching was found in the schools.

What might explain these schools' results? How might they be different from other schools that had the same opportunities, resources, and purposes in the same educational system, but not attain the same stature? To identify the underlying characteristics and dynamics common to these schools the following question was asked to the participants from the schools and the answers of the participants were presented in Table 12: *"Imagine that all of us were suddenly transported to the year of 2075. Many of the things at your school have been changed by the developments we cannot anticipate. But no matter what changes might have occurred at the school you wish for finding two or three things had remained same. What they would be?"*

Table 12. The Core Value Statements

| SCHOOLS | "Wish to see it remained same in 2075." |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ANKARA CES | <p><u>Student expressions:</u> "Having fun while learning", "Affection of our teachers", "The presence of teachers caring about us", "Interest for all of our friends without discrimination as lazy, hard working or others"</p> <p><u>Parent expressions:</u> "Achievement" "Safe and orderly environment"</p> <p><u>Teacher and principal expressions:</u> "Openness to innovations", "Parent interest and contribution", "The passion, willingness, excitement, and enthusiasm of teachers" "Freedom of expression", "Easy communication" "Respect the principles of Ataturk (the founder of modern Turkey) on which our country is founded"</p> |
| ANTALYA CES | <p><u>Student expressions:</u> "Dedication and the sacrifice of the teachers" "Love and respectful atmosphere"</p> <p><u>Parent expressions:</u> "Achievement" "Caring teachers" "Hard working" "Mutual respect and</p> |

| | |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | love” <u>Teacher and principal expressions:</u> “The motivation and competitiveness of the students” “Determination of the students to win” “Respect and interest from students and parents” “Trust of students and parents” “More teaching time” |
| SAMSUN CES | <u>Student expressions:</u> “The affection from our teachers” “Our effort to win” “Fairly treatment to all people” <u>Parent expressions:</u> “Achievement” “Mutual respect” “Solidarity” “Self-sacrificing teachers” “Safe school” |
| ORDU CES | <u>Teacher and principal expressions:</u> “Love of the profession” “Love of children” “The solidarity between parents and the school” “Being optimistic about life” <u>Student expressions:</u> “Determination and enthusiasm to win” “Respect and love in the school” “Joy of learning” “Teachers’ support” <u>Parent expressions:</u> “Achievement” “Honesty” “Tolerance” “Order in school” “Respect and love” <u>Teacher and principal expressions:</u> “The existence of the school” “School administrators who listen to and care about everyone” “Acting in the best interest of students” “Democratic behaviors in school administration” |

Answering this question, the participants addressed the core values of the schools. According to Collins and Porras (2002) core values are the organization’s essential and enduring tenets—a small set of guiding principles; not to be confused with specific cultural or operational practices; not to be compromised for financial gain or short-term expediency. The core values are very important because they define the schools character and serve as the schools timeless guiding principle. Caring, compassion, respect, fairness, integrity, commitment, honesty, passion to win, safeness and order, and academic achievement were noticed as the core values of these schools commonly. While preserving these values, it is expected that these values stimulate the progress. *What did the core values provide these schools?* The answers of the participants were presented in Table 13.

Table 13. What did the core values provide?

| SCHOOLS | What did the core values provide? |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ANKARA CES | “They forced everyone to make efforts to contribute.” “I started to love my job more, and we are all connected as a family.” “The students enjoy coming to the school.” “We have taken more valid decisions. “We love being adored and preferred.” “We have seen individual differences and offered education accordingly.” |
| ANTALYA CES | “We had to come to the school a lot more, even spent weekends at school.” “A lot more students have been placed in better schools” |
| SAMSUN CES | “We have won the interest, support, and appreciation of the parents.” “A peaceful atmosphere to work in.” “Strength to handle the situations such as low salary, heavy work load etc..” “Academic success.” “Maintaining the good reputation of the school.” |
| ORDU CES | “Consistency and permanency in academic success.” “A competitive and strong school.” |

DISCUSSIONS CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Kaufman’s (1993) elements of quality management process were used to evaluate the findings of this study. Three of the elements relate to results (outcomes, outputs, products) and each of them indicates a different level of quality. The quality management process includes the European Commission’s sixteen quality indicators classified in four broad areas. The main difference between them is that Kaufman stresses the societal usefulness and

consequences of school education as mega level quality. Delivering education that provides societal good must be the main focus of an educational system. Table 12 compares the two approach of quality in education.

Table 12 Comparison of Kaufman’s Quality Elements with European Commission’s Quality Areas

| Kaufman’s Quality Elements | | European Commission’s Quality Areas |
|--------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------------------|
| Outcomes (Mega level results) | ↔ | (Missing element) |
| Outputs (Macro level results) | ↔ | Success and Transition |
| Products (Micro level results) | ↔ | Attainment (Mathematics, Reading, Science...) |
| Processes | ↔ | School Education |
| Inputs | ↔ | Resources and Structures |

It is concluded from this study that the four schools of this study have macro level quality focus. Although no school was able to present a formal vision statement based on the focus group meetings with teachers, parents, students, and administrators, the following was found as the informally (or hidden) shared ideal vision in these schools: “There will be no student who fails to graduate and everyone will get accepted into Anatolian High Schools and Science High Schools or other preferable high schools through High School Entrance Test (HSET).” This shared ideal vision identifies students and parents are to be the primary client and beneficiaries of the schools.

Quality is what the client wants, can use, and should have. The four schools of this study deliver what their students and parents want: to be accepted into Anatolian High Schools or Science High Schools. In 2003, 600,289 eight grade students took the HSET and only 10% of them were placed into these prestigious high schools. However 35% of Ankara CES students, 69% of Antalya CES students, 46% of Samsun CES students, and 51% of the Ordu CES students were placed based on HSET results. Thus, these schools have a very good public reputation regarding results. Parents prefer to send their children to these schools and as a result of this achievement and client satisfaction, the contribution and participation of parents are very high.

The mega level quality focus was not found in any of these schools. It is difficult to state that these schools view education as a means to societal ends. Because of a highly competitive environment the schools ignore the mega level results and only focus on the micro and macro level of quality. But passing courses or achieving HSET does not assure a desirable society for people.

This research showed that in spite of the limited resources such as poor physical facilities, overcrowded class size, poor educational technologies the participating schools are similarly successful in getting micro level results (passing courses, daily attendance, zero dropout ext.) and macro level results (transition to upper level education, success in HSET etc.). How do they achieve these results despite all these input related difficulties? To answer this question the processes in these schools should be examined.

At the process level there are some common practices observed in the schools and these practices are consistent with their informally shared vision. The learning-teaching process is mainly teacher centered and teacher led methods are used a lot more. In addition to this the learning and teaching activities are mainly focused on pencil and paper. Considering the existing resources crowded class sizes, and informally shared ideal vision which focuses on HSET, these in-class activities are not surprising. Using the teacher centered approach,

teachers save time, increase on-task behaviors, thus, cover all the objectives of heavily overloaded curriculum. Beside these, extra assignments and homework prepare students for HSET. At this time, there are no complaints from students, teachers, principals, and parents because they have a shared vision.

Teachers were found very dedicated and caring about students. Therefore, they are given great respect by students and parents. The school climate described very positive by the students, parents, teachers, and the school administrators. The core values of the school have a big impact to achieve micro and macro level quality.

The practices of these schools mentioned above can be seen very traditional or old-fashioned but it is obvious that these practices serve to deliver macro level quality. However, the students sacrifice a lot to achieve macro level results. After a long school day, usually from 9am to 4:30pm, they go back home and have to spend 3 to 5 hours test solving and doing homework. More assignments are given for weekends. If students do this, they have a better chance to be successful in HSET, if they don't they not only fail in HSET, but also jeopardize their chance to continue education at the university level in the future because Anatolian High Schools graduates and Science High Schools graduates are more successful than the other school graduates.

Based on the results of the study the following recommendations can be made. First, society is the primary client for elementary education. Therefore, schools must select mega level quality because this level focuses on societal usefulness and consequences of education. Variety in high school type should be eliminated and HSET should be abolished. To move from macro level quality to mega level quality class sizes should be reduced and a working curriculum for society should be developed.

References

- Archer, J. (1998). Instruction. Technology Counts. *Teacher*, 10, 18–19.
- Betts, J.R. & Shkolnik, J.L. (1999). The behavioral effects of variations in class size: The case of math teachers. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 21, 193–213.
- Blatchford, P. & Mortimore, P. (1994). The issue of class size for younger children in schools: What can we learn from research? *Oxford Research of Education*, 20, 411–428.
- Caldas, S.J. (1993). Re-examination of input and process factor effects in public school achievement. *Journal of Educational Research*, 86, 206–214.
- Colins, C. J. (2002). *Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies*. New York: Harper Business Essentials.
- Duke, D.L. (1998). *Does it Matter Where our Children Are Learning?* ERIC Document 418578.
- European Commission. (2000). *European Report on the Quality of School Education: Sixteen Quality Indicators*. Luxemburg: European Communities.
- Fehrmann, P.G., Keith, T.Z. & Reimers, T.M. (1987). Home influence on school learning: Direct and indirect effects of parental involvement on high school grades. *Journal of Educational Research*, 80, 330–337.

- Glasser, W. (1992). *The Quality School. Managing Students without Coercion*. New York: Harper Perennial.
- Griffith, J. (1996). The relation of parental involvement, empowerment, and school characteristics to student test performance: An organizational analysis. *Journal of Educational Research*, 90, 33–41.
- Hallinger, P., Bickman, L. & Davis, K. (1996). School context, principal leadership and student reading achievement. *Elementary School Journal*, 96, 527–549.
- Heck, R.H., Larsen, T.J. & Marcoulides, G.A. (1990). Instructional leadership and school achievement: Validation of a causal model. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 26, 94–125.
- Howley, C. (1996). Compounding disadvantage: The effects of school and district size on student achievement in West Virginia. *Journal of Research in Rural Education*, 12, 25–32.
- Kaufman, R. & Zahn, D. (1993). *Quality Management Plus: The Continuous Improvement of Education*. Newbury Park, CA: Corwin.
- Keith, T.Z. et al. (1996). Effects of parental involvement on achievement for students who attend school in rural America. *Journal of Research in Rural Education*, 12, 55–67.
- Lamdin, D.J. (1995). Testing the effect of school size on student achievement within a school district. *Education Economics*, 3, 33–42.
- Lee, V. E. & Smith, J.B. (1997). High school size: Which works best and for whom? *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 19, 205–227.
- Leithwood, K., Jantsi, D., & Steinbach, R. (1999). *Changing Leadership for Changing Times*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- LeRae, P. (1992). *Parental Involvement: Relationships of Expectations, Goals, and Activities to Student Achievement among Minority, Socioeconomic, and Gender Groups*. ERIC Document 353065.
- Lytton, H. & Pyryt, M. (1998). Predictors of achievement in basic skills: A Canadian effective schools study. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 23, 281-301.
- Paton, M. Q. (1987). *How to Use Qualitative Methods in Evaluation*. Newbury Park, CA: Corwin.
- Rescigno, R.C. (1988). *Practical Implementation of Educational Technology; The GTE/GTEL Smart-Classroom; The Hueneme School District Experience*. ERIC Document 313007.
- Reynolds, A.J. (1992). Comparing measures of parental involvement and their effects on academic achievement. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 1, 444–462.
- Stevenson, P.L. & Baker, D.P. (1987). The family-school relation and the child's school performance. *Child Development*, 58, 1348–1357.
- Stockard, J. & Mayberry, M. (1992). *Effective Educational Environments*. Newbury Park, CA: Corwin.
- Weinstein, C. S. & Mignano, A. J (1993). *Elementary Classroom Management: Lessons From Research and Practice*. New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc.

