THE REALITY OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND BASIC EDUCATION IN TURKEY

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Abstract

Introduction: Today, basic education which is 12 years in many of the developed countries in the world was extended from five to eight years in Turkey in 1997 and "Primary Education" was redefined as an "eight-year continuous education". Total of primary schools is 35,581 in the country-wide. The number of students in per teacher is 26.4 and number of students per classroom is 36.9 according to the data for the year 2005. One may come to the conclusion, with a rough comparison in terms of just two parameters (teacher-student and classroom rates), that there is no substantial abnormality in Turkish primary schooling. *Method:* The aim of this study is to reveal this idea is wrong that because of the differences of primary schools substantiated. To this end, first, the data relating to the various features of primary schools (number of schools, students and teachers, etc.) have been gathered from the statistics of Ministry of National Education. Second, these numbers have been taken out of the ones in the total numbers of the above (number of schools, students and teachers, etc.). *Findings:* The Turkish Republic's obligation to provide every citizen with primary education through the Ministry of National Education gave rise to the different applications in primary education as in other countries and at the different school levels due to the country's conditions and infrastructure. The types of primary school may be categorized as open primary education, distance education, normal and teaching shift, special schools, private schools, multigrade schools, transported (mobile) schools and boarding primary schools. There are 35,581 primary schools in Turkey; however the number of normal schools is only 5,199. The number of students attending these schools is only 2,189,370. *Suggestions:* As the findings of this study show, the existing conditions (at least the quality of school, the number of teachers and students) are not in the same level in the schools in dual, boarding, multigrading and transported village schools. To develop professional know-how for alternative primary education applications and to attempt to make qualitative and quantitative arrangements (programme compliance) on these schools based on this knowledge as well as the other attempts (such providing all schools with the same human and device equipment) are the necessary precautions.

Keywords: Education, Basic education; Primary school, International Student Assessment, Rural areas;

INTRODUCTION

When the history of mankind viewed as a challenge to survive, the success of such a challenge depends on the kind of things human beings learn from their own experiences, or from those they acquire from others. The significance of learning has necessitated the introduction of formal and basic education for children. Human beings owe their existence to synergy and solidarity rather than individualism and competition. Exhibiting quite a sporadic nature at the beginning, such synergy turned into an integral and persistent body, leading to the construction of the structure called "society". So as to secure the progress of society as well as the activities in the social life, there arose the necessity to provide individuals with schooling from kindergarten to the doctorate study. While doctorate study bears somewhat a

more professional nature, education in primary teaching and kindergarten embodies more general and vital knowledge and skills. The potential and unique contribution to be made by each individual to his/her own society and mankind led to the introduction of compulsorily education devoted to tutoring the "core knowledge" which the individual needs in social and global life. With changes and transformations exerted by the swift progress in science and technology, the volume and complexity of such "core knowledge" has augmented. And this, in return, prolonged the process of refining the "core knowledge" and transmitting it to children. Today, basic education policy extends over a long period of time and it is globally believed to have a seminal effect on the development level of countries (Colclough 1982; Glewwe 1996; Psacharopoulos 1994; Rosenzweig 1995). On the other hand, the efforts for widening the scope of basic education to the whole society are closely interlinked with such issues as the cost, the expansion of its period; social, economical, geographical and cultural conditions, characteristics and backgrounds of the children and their families. Therefore, the process of extending the basic education may differ in each country.

Primary Education in Turkey: The efforts initiated in Europe for the extension of education/primary schooling in the Industrial Period (19th century) commenced in the Ottoman Empire with an imperial edict issued during the reign of Mahmut II in 1828. Then, by virtue of the first article of the "Provisional Code for Primary Schooling" enacted in 1913, it was laid down to render primary education compulsory and further to serve it free at state schools. After the declaration of the Turkish Republic, the concept of free and basic education was put on the agenda again and the provision setting forth that primary education is "free and compulsory" for children aged between 7-14 was included in Article 87 of the Constitution of 1924 (Akyüz 2001). Thereafter, this provision was also included in the 1961 and 1982 Constitutions. It was specified under the "right and duty of education and training" section (Article 42) in the Constitution of 1982 stipulating that "primary education is compulsory for all female and male citizens and served free in state schools" (Kavak 1997:p.7).

Today, basic education which is 12 years in many of the developed countries in the world was extended from five to eight years in Turkey in 1997 and "Primary Education" was redefined as an "eight-year continuous education". Primary education in Turkey involves the education and training of children between the age groups of 6 to 14, and it is compulsory for all male and female citizens, and is free at State schools. The objective of primary education is to ensure that every Turkish child acquires the necessary knowledge, skills, behaviour and habits to become a good citizen and is raised in accordance with the concept of national morals and that he/she is prepared for life and for the next level of education in accord with his/her interests, talents and capabilities. Primary education institutions consist of eight-year schools where continuous education is provided and graduates are awarded primary education diplomas.

Table 1 shows total of primary schools country-wide (35,581). This figure covers all types of schools at the primary education level. As the table shows, the number of students in per teacher is 26.4 and number of students per classroom is 36.9 according to the data for the year 2005 that it has been reached as of the most comprehensive data this year. These figures are quite higher than those of many advanced countries.

Table 1-The Numbers of School, Classroom, Enrolment, Teacher in Primary Education (2004-2005 Education Years)

Type of School	School	Classroom	Enrolment	Teacher
Primary Education (All schools)	35 581	286 290	10 565 389	399 025

(Source: MNE 2005-a)

Table 1, one may come to the conclusion, with a rough comparison in terms of just two parameters (teacher-student and classroom rates), that there is no substantial abnormality in Turkish primary schooling. In addition, the rate of enrolment in primary schooling in Turkey, which reached 95.7 % as at 2003 (ISS 2005-a), underpins this observation.

Primary Schooling and Literacy: The main objective of primary schooling/basic education/ compulsory education is to raise literate and numerate individuals to ensure high quality life in social and global platform. The concept of literacy here refers to the capacity of the student undergoing such a process to exercise his/her knowledge and skill, analyze the underlying reasons and conclusions of events and phenomena, and to bring solution to any problem confronted in life (OECD 2003: p.23). Therefore, it is obvious that the "literacy" concept has a wider and deeper sense than just "reading and writing". Writing is the writer's symbolic expression of his/her purposes in a visual, auditory or oral way shaped in line with his/her own or others' experiences (Kimmel and Segel 1983). Reading, on the other hand, is the decoding of symbolic expression by the reader within the context of his/her purposes shaped in line with his/her own experiences or knowledge acquired from those who experienced. Accordingly, writing is not only a combination of the signs gathered accidentally, nor is reading is articulation of written groups of signs. Literacy ought to be perceived as a basic and vital activity in order to maintain and develop all social and universal values. Employing knowledge as means of communication and development, literacy is an intellectual activity intended to create a peaceful, humanistic and happy world.

Scribner and Cole (1981) have defined literacy a set of socially organized practices, reproduced and disseminated by a symbol system. The Brazilian educator, Paulo Friere, has developed the most explicitly political definition of literacy. He sees literacy as a process of "conscientization" which involves "reading the world" rather than just reading the "word" (Friere and Macedo 1987).

Literacy is affected by all the cognitive, affective and psychomotor characteristics of the child. In other words, all the vital functions of individual are affected by literacy and vice versa (Maudevilla 1994). On the other hand, development of literacy skill in child necessitates for him going through a successful literacy experience (Duffey and Rohler 1993).

Literacy, numeracy and problem solving skills that children acquire or are supposed to acquire during these few years of primary schooling are the minimum prerequisites that they will need later to participate in life. Education helps not only literate and numerate people to deal with the basic codes of life, but also people with the values and behaviours who are required to participate and play a productive role in social life. Different reports indicating the number of new entrants to grade 1 and the dropout before grade four demonstrate that in 1980 36 million, or around one-third of the 103 million children who enrolled in primary schooling,

did not complete grade four (UNESCO 1992). But, literate people are more aware of their health and nutrition status and likely to take the advantage of social services available for them. This may, in turn, reduce child and mortality rates. For example, a research project based at the Alexandra Health Clinic in South Africa discovered a strong correlation between women's literacy and commitment to the immunization of their children (Bown 1990).

Literacy in Turkish Primary Education: According the results of the census in 2000 the population of children within the bracket of 6 and over age is 59,859,243 while the total population is 67,803,927 with 35% (39,076,354) of this population living in villages, and the rest (39,076,354, 65%) in cities. While 12.7 % of the total population is illiterate, % 21.5 is literate yet failed to graduate; the rate of people who graduated from primary school is % 37, from secondary school and its equivalents is % 10.1, from high school and vocational school as its equivalent is % 13.4 and the graduates from higher education is % 5.3. The substantial bulk of the population (37.0%) graduated from primary schools (ISS 2001). It may be said that the "existing" conditions in Turkey is poor even if the literacy is taken only literally. On the other hand, a recently conducted survey on reading habits among the literate seems to support this conclusion. It has been found in the survey (Gönen et. al 2004) that 62% of the primary school graduates read 1-10 books of fiction a year; 10,7% read 20-29 books of fiction a year.

The situation is barely different when we take literacy in its proper meaning. The results of such exams as OECD's (2003) Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS 1999), International Development Projects for Reading Skills (PIRLS 2001), as well as of The Evaluation Exams of National Education Ministry (CSS 1997; MNE 2002) illuminate the matter further. At a press statement of Ministry in regard to the results of the exams in Turkey and of PISA in particular we meet the following facts:

> "Unfortunately, Turkish Education System has not been responsive yet to the scientific and economic facts in the world... The average of Turkey in mathematics is 423, and its ranking is 34. It is situated in a place above countries like Mexico, Indonesia, Tunisia and Brazil. It ranks as the 32nd among 39 countries with a score of 441 in reading. With this point Turkey seems to be no different from Uruguay and Thailand. In the scientific field Turkey is at the 35 order with 443 points, just above that of Mexico, Brazil, Indonesia and Tunisia. The weaknesses our education system have become more conspicuous with the findings of PISA 2003" (MNE 2005-b).

The results of national exams as well as those of international ones indicate deterioration in the quality of education. For example, according to the results of an exam done in 2000 (Evaluation Exam of Student's Achievement / EESA) intended for the evaluation of students (at the grade 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8) the achievement average of Turkey is 42% in Turkish test, 46% in Science test and 41% in Social Knowledge test. The rates are rather low.

Interpret ting the results of PISA 2003 and other international exams as well as those of EESA, we can say that serious problems have been experienced relating to the primary education in Turkish education system. The Ministry of National Education has rightly spotted the "program" as the source of the problems. In this view, the program educates individuals who learn by memorizing, are passive, unproductive, and tend to obey without

questioning. The problems would be surely solved if a program that helps to educate dynamic, patient and hardworking youngsters were to be applied. Turkey, then, would be successful in these exams.

It is important to determine the kind of individuals the programme aims to create. Bearing in mind the fact that primary education all over the world targets mainly "literacy," we ought to admit the necessity of certain arrangements. However, it must be well understood that in the core of these problems in Turkey lie other factors besides the program. These are the kind of problems that could be determined through research as well as through observation. Among these are excessive number of students, the lower share assigned to education and research from the budget, etc.

Turkey has a population of 70,712,000 million (SPO 2005), and the number of students amounts to 20 million. The national income per capita is about 4000 dollars. Educational expenditure per student is 390 dollar whereas in the European Community countries this figure amounts to 4,000 dollars. The number of students who started school in 2004 was over 1,300,000. The location of schools is another important factor with wider differences in terms of socioeconomic, geographical and cultural conditions. Primary education in Turkey has been variously formed by these factors, which led to diverse school types. In addition, there are obvious differences among these forms (types of school) in terms of various points. Students take the same exams in spite of differences, and fail. The only precaution taken to secure success is to develop a common "primary education program" for each school regardless of these differences.

METHOD

The aim of this study is to disclose the fact that the said "primary education program" applied since 2006 is not fruitful enough an arrangement to reach the intended aim on it's own because of the differences of primary schools substantiated, and to point out other measures which might be taken rapidly.

To this end, first, the data relating to the various features of primary schools (number of schools, students and teachers, etc.) have been gathered from the statistics of National Education Ministry. Second, these findings have been taken out of the ones in Table 1 (number of schools, students and teachers, etc.). Finally, the number of schools, teachers and students all over the Turkey which the "program" caters for has been evaluated. The main postulate of the study is that the more students, teachers and schools are addressed by the primary education program the greater success will be gained in the national or international evaluations. Otherwise, Turkey is doomed to failure.

FINDINGS

The Turkish Republic's obligation to provide every citizen with primary education through the Ministry of National Education (TC Constitution 1982, Article 42) gave rise to the different applications in primary education as in other countries and at the different school levels due to the country's conditions and infrastructure (Fiquerede and Anzalone 2003). The

applications may be categorized as open primary education, distance (open) education, normal and dual education, special schools, private schools, multigrade schools, transported (mobile) schools and boarding primary schools.

1. The Location of School and Basic Education

One of the important variables which may be related to the quality of primary education or basic education is the location of schools since characteristics of the location have an influence on the quality of the schools. As known well, the schools in villages or in the country have more problems than the ones in cities. However, as it is seen in Table 2, the most striking point is in the number of teacher-school and students, which seems to be in quite good condition in villages. The number of students per classroom is 43.5 in cities and 24.4 in villages; the number of students per teacher is 26.2 in cities and 24.8 in villages.

Table 2-The Data Relating to Primary School in Turkey in Terms of Location

Location of School	School	Classroom	Enrolment	Teacher
Cities	10, 289	172, 496	7, 516, 127	286, 864
Villages	25, 292	113, 794	2,782,519	112, 138
Total	***35. 581***	***286,290***	***10,298,646***	***399, 002***

(Source: MNE 2005-a)

In spite of the numerical difference being in favour of villages, the negative economic, social, cultural and geographical characteristics of the country have an unfavourable influence on teachers, students, schools and education indirectly. Therefore, those who think that difficulties regarding education would be overcome by changing *the programme* should allow for the difference between villages and cities since no matter how flawless it seems *the program* launched would get lost in the labyrinth of the crowd of urban schools and the impossibilities of the country schools. In conclusion, the difference between villages and cities will have to create different alternatives for solving problems.

1.1 Actual Conditions of Urban Primary Schools: Even the figures of school, students, teachers and classrooms shown in Table 2 have striking implications; because, contrary to the common belief, they could not be termed as normal schools. To find out the number of "normal primary schools" in cities, different primary education applications must be deducted from these numbers. Different primary education applications are distance (open) primary education, primary schools of private sector and private education.

1.1.1. Distance Primary Education and Basic Education: Distance primary education has been introduced for the ones who failed to complete fundamental education or the ones who exceed the age for basic education (OCTR 2001). As it is seen in Table 3 there is one distance primary school in Turkey and number of students per teacher is rather high. Although this sort of education can be realized remotely face-to-face education gains greater importance when we consider the necessities in primary education.

Table 3-Data Relating to Distance Primary Education in Turkey

Type of School	School	Enrolment	Teacher
Distance Education – Open Education Primary Schools	1	266,743	23

(Source: MNE 2005-a)

When we take into consideration the numbers of illiterates (7,589,657) and the population who declared that they are literate although they in fact failed to graduate from any school (12,886,331) (ISS 2005-b) the figures may gain an astounding dimension. On the other hand, if the education is not only training (Basic education in particular) then, the right approach would be designing, developing and putting into practice a school defined scientifically in every aspects. Thus, the education applications on the base of "distance or open education" might not be helpful to create the outcome intended since only training can be realized remotely, not education.

1.1.2. Private Schools and Basic Education: Private schools can be considered as an application alleviating the heavy burden for which state is held responsible (OCTR 2000). On the other hand, different types of schools would create grave damages on equality for opportunity in education as giving rise to quality difference between the people who attend private schools and not. The number of students per classroom in private schools is about 13.3 and per teacher is 9.5 according to Table 4. Conditions in these schools are fairly better than those of state schools. The share of the number of private schools out of the number of all primary schools is about % 1.93; whereas in most countries the share of private sector in education is fairly high (Jimenez and Sawada 2001: p.389). On the other hand, this might be considered reassuring for a country where primary education is free according to its Constitution.

Table 4-Data Relating to Private Sector Primary Schools

Type of School	School	Classroom	Enrolment	Teacher
Primary Education (Private)	676	12,939	172,348	18,003

(Source: MNE 2005-a)

The conditions and quality of private primary schools are better than state schools. On the other hand, private primary schools are included in the samples in the national and international evaluations, and they are also subject to failures. However, the same approach to this kind of schools (private and state) may give rise to faulty outcomes.

1.1.3. Special Schools and Basic Education: Special education serves handicapped people with trained stuff and developed training programs and methods. The purpose of special education is to provide the handicapped person who needs special training with general and vocational knowledge and practice in the frame of the main purpose and principles of Turkish National Education (OCTR 1985). The survey done by Turkish State (NTV-MSNBC 2004) indicates that 8,431,937 handicapped people live in Turkey (3,783,197 males, 4, 648, 740 females). The rate of disabled male to the total population is 11.1 %; the rate of disabled female to the total population is 13.4 %.

Table 5-Data Relating to Special Education (Primary Education)

Type of School	School	Enrolment	Classroom	Teacher
Special Education	122	9.993	2.334	1.493

(Source: MNE 2005-a)

Special education is rather insufficient in Turkey when it is compared with number of schools and other findings. Efforts to solve problems on the base of estimations gathered from Table 1 ought to include special educations applications.

1.1.4. Pre-conclusions: The data relating to distance education, private schools and special education schools has to be separated from the efforts aiming at solving the general problems pertaining to primary schools in Turkey. For this reason, the data relating to distance primary education, special school and private schools have been subtracted from the data relating to the state schools in cities indicated in Table 6.

Table 6-Data Relating to Normality in Primary Schools in Cities

Type of School	School	Classroom	Enrolment	Teacher
Primary Education	10,289	172, 496	7, 516, 127	286, 864
Distance Education - Open	1	-	266,743	23
Primary Education	676	12, 939	172,348	18,003
Special Education	122	9,993	2,334	1,493
Public Schools in Cities (Total)	9,490	149,564	7,074,702	267,345

According to Table 6 the estimation on teacher-student in cities is about 26.4 and on classroom-student is 47.3. It is fairly clear that the efforts to solve the problems have to be differentiated because of the different applications in cities as well as difference between villages and cities. There remains 9,490 schools for 7,074,702 students, which means around 3.5 million students have not been taken into consideration.

2. Actual Conditions of Village Primary Schools

Distance primary education, special education and private sector primary education schools are considered as an application of urban primary education, and have not yet spread to rural areas yet. Social, economical, cultural, geographical, demographic, etc. characteristics of country have created differences in the basic education application in villages. These are combined classrooms (multigrade schools) and boarding schools.

2.1. Primary Schools as Combined Classrooms in Villages: Multigrade schools combine students of different ages and abilities in one classroom, under the direction of one teacher (Thomas & Shaw 1992). Multigrade teaching, in which children of two or more ages or grades are taught by one teacher, is one example. The practice has long been a necessity in small village schools that can only afford one teacher, and it was the norm in most rural schools of the industrialized world in the early decades of this century. It tended to be regarded, however, as an inferior model of education until the Escuela Nueva schools in Colombia demonstrated how well-designed lesson plans and teaching materials, bolstered by

the support of the communities, could ensure a positive multigrade experience (UNICEF 1993; p.32).

A number of countries have been inspired by the Colombian model and have adapted it to their own circumstances. Guatemala, for example, employs the Escuela Nueva methodology in its bilingual primary schools for indigenous children. In the Philippines, educational planners launched their own special multigrade demonstration schools after a visit to Colombia. Multigrade schools had, in fact, existed in the nation since the 1960s but had a poor reputation — located in distant, disadvantaged areas, they tended to be staffed by inexperienced, unsupervised teachers and to have inadequate facilities. (UNICEF 1993; p.33)

Multigrade schools application started in Turkey with 1968 programme. Wolfford (1952), who was invited to Turkey from U.S. to survey village schools, reported that to education in village schools would be materialized only through "group system" to be formed by combining more than one classroom. The number of schools with combined classrooms in Turkey is 16,379.

Table 7-Schools with Combined Classrooms in Villages

		Classroom	Teacher	Enrollment
Schools with Combined Classrooms (Multigrade Schools)		16,017	27, 685	587, 379
Type of Classroom	Together with two classroom	5, 531	11, 062	113, 000
	Together with three classroom	2, 669	8, 007	85, 074
	Together with four classroom	266	1, 065	8, 566
	Together with five classroom	7,551	7,551	73,046

According to Table 7 number of student per classroom is 36.6 and number of student per teacher is 21.2. As it is seen, figures indicate rather crowded classrooms. Having experienced an education formed by combining classrooms would be surely more effective rather than having no education (Simmons and Alexander 1980; Fuller 1987). However, realizing education in more optimized conditions would surely be more effective. For this reason, due attention must be paid to the differences between normal schools and schools with combined classrooms in villages so as to solve primary education problems in Turkey.

2.2. Boarding School Application: Basic/compulsory education in boarding schools started with a pilot study in 1971-1972. When the piloting proved successful the Basic Education Model started in all the regional boarding schools and it lasted until 1976 (Başaran 1994).

The students living in regions without school or one with a school that has been already closed for lack of students, and those who have completed the first grades in a school with combined classrooms are admitted to Regional Boarding Primary Schools-RBPS and to Boarding Primary Education Schools (BPES). The students living in a province without

regional primary school or boarding primary school are transferred to the RBPS or the BPES in other provinces (OCTR 2003).

Table 8-Boarding Schools RBPS+BPES

Type of School	School	Classroom	Enrollment	Teacher
Primary Education (Boarding School RBPS and BPES)	579	9 677	290 420	12 450

(Source: MNE 2005-a)

The number of student per classroom in boarding schools is 30 and number of student per teacher is 23.3. Boarding schools, compared with normal school data in villages, are rather crowded in terms of classroom and teacher. These schools need to have optimum conditions such as building and equipment since students spend the whole day in the school. However, these schools suffer from are in serious and different drawbacks (Erkul 1997; Sönmez 2000; Kılıç 2001). Psychological disturbances like nostalgia, unwillingness, lower ego perception and stress as well as academic failure, lack of controlling of vital functions, playing truancy have been frequently observed among students attending boarding school (Klinekole 1979; Aşıcı 1994; Van and Hansen 1999; Marcus 2002). Accordingly, in order to overcome these drawbacks and difficulties in primary education or basic education, precautionary measures to be taken ought to be considered with an eye on difference between boarding schools.

2.3. Pre-conclusions: The content of Table 9 need to be studied to observe the kind of differences brought about in the applications of multigrade schools and boarding schools and in the numbers of students per classroom in villages.

As stated in Table 2 the number of student per classroom in villages is 24.4 and the number of student per teacher is 24.8. However, some changes due to different applications in villages have been made on these figures. In the current situation the number of student per classroom is 21.6 and number of students per teacher is 26.4. As it is seen, while the number of student per classroom is getting lower the number of student per teacher has increased.

Table 9-Data Relating to Normality in Primary Schools in Villages

Type of School	School	Classroom	Enrollment	Teacher
Village (All Schools)	25, 292	113, 794	2,782,519	112, 138
Boarding School	579	9, 677	290, 420	12, 450
Multigrade teaching	16, 379	16, 017	587,379	27,685
Public Schools in Villages *(normal)*	***8, 334***	***88, 100***	***1, 904, 720***	***72, 003***

The studies that have been done until now indicate that the figures in Table 1 are not sufficient to define clearly the situation of the primary education and basic education in Turkey. Besides, the question whether the tables (placed above) that have been formed later are dependable enough to display the actual state needs to be tackled with. To answer this

question, the actual situations of *pre-conclusion tables* (Table 6 and Table 9) are going to be investigated below.

3. Other Applications at Village and Urban Primary Schools

In Turkey and in some undeveloped countries, the efforts for expanding basic education gave rise to various applications (e.g. the floating classroom in Cambodia /UNICEF 1993). This effect has brought about multiple-shift system (Dual Education) and transported school (Mobile School) in Turkey as different from the systems underlined above. The findings related to these schools are as follows.

3.1. Dual (Multiple-shift system) Education in Cities and in Villages: In a multiple-shift system, schools cater for two or more entirely separate groups of pupils during a school day (Bray 1989: p.92).teaching shiftis an upshot of such factors as the lack of efficient classroom supply in the face of rapidly growing population; migration from the country to cities due to social, economic, cultural and geographical problems; the poor number of teaching staff; unscientific methods and approaches employed by the Ministry of Education in policy making and problem solving; and a number of various other factors.

One cost-effective mechanism for expanding the number of school places is to introduce double or multiple shifts (Colclough and Lewin 1993). Hence, it has the double advantage of both increasing enrolments and reducing unit costs. If multiple shifts shorten the school day, the school year can be made longer to compensate (World Bank 1990).

According to Table 7, the number of students per classroom in normal schools in cities is 28.6 and the number of student per classroom is 33.4 (The total student number is divided into two groups—those who attend school in the morning and those in the afternoon). The rate of student number per teacher is not calculated since there is no data available about the number of teachers. However it may be surmised that the increase in the other estimations has been realized in this field.

Table 10-School with Teaching shift Villages and Cities

Location of school	**Schools with Normal Education**				**Schools with Dual Education**		
	School	*School*	*Enrollment*	*Classroom*	*School*	*Enrollment*	*Classroom*
City	9, 490	**5, 199**	2 ,189 370	76, 498	4, 291	4, 885, 332	73,066
Village	8, 334	**4, 601**	1, 142, 692	73, 619	3, 733	762, 028	14,481

When the findings connected with villages in Table 10 is examined in the schools with normal education (to what extent they are normal is going to be investigated below) it is seen that the number of students per classroom is 20.3 and the rate in schools with teaching shiftis 26.3. Figures seem to be favourable when compared with the ones in cities. However, teaching shiftprevents students, *inter alia*, from social activities with pedagogical ends. Therefore, students have to wedge in their pastime activities only within five-minute brakes. So much so that students have great difficulties in meeting their toilet needs. As a result,

school is perceived by children as "a boring institution" and they begin to lose their interest in it.

3.2 Mobile Teaching (Transported School) in Cities and Villages: Mobile teaching (mobile primary education practice), a practice already in use in the USA, New Zealand, Philippines and Australia, is designed for students who are in basic education age living in the settlements with lower and scattered population. These students are transported on a daily basis to central education institutions in populated villages and towns (Richard 1972; Males 1977; UNICEF 1993; Büyükkaragöz and Şahin 1995: p.42-45). The purpose of this application in Turkey is to transport students in primary schools with combined classrooms to central primary schools daily to have an efficient education (OCTR 2004).

The number of normal schools in cities in Table 10 is 5199, in villages 4601 and total number of students in these schools is 3,332,062; whereas, as stated above (Table 1), the total number of students is over ten million. On the other hand, Table 11 clearly shows that even the figures in Table 10 are far from explicating the actual situation just because "transported education" is a phenomenon in Turkey.

The figures reveal that 29,145 schools (the number is not related to the ones in Table 1 because they have already been closed) are transported to 6,337 schools. When we take into consideration the fact that the bulk of transportation is realized to the schools with dual educations in cities (urban), we face another fact— that the number of these schools is 4,291 along with the other problems specific to dual education. These are the problems the students face due to social, economic, psychological, cultural, etc. differences, which make it difficult for students to adapt themselves to the school they attend. For example, there are students who come from houses where there is no electricity.

Table 11-Schools Transported to Cities from Villages

Central School	Transported School	Transported Student
6,337	29,145	698,061

(Source: MNE 2005-a)
Note: This is the only data available from MNE related to Transported Education. There exists no other data (such as the number of teachers).

The practice of Mobile Schools in Turkey harbours serious problems. The problems brought about with transported education present a large scope of negative effects on students such as traffic accidents, missing classes due to the weather conditions and falling asleep due to weariness on the road. The peculiarities of the schools with transported and teaching shiftr is different from the others. The negative effects that they put on other educations—including normal schools—may be considered as peculiarities.

Another thing that cannot be seen in Table 1 is the fact that everyone attending primary schools does not graduate since the average education period in villages is 4,0 years, in cities is 5,7, and the general average education period in Turkey is 5,1 years (ISS 2001). In other words, the average period of school attendance in Turkey is about 5 years. This means that

even the first period of education is barely completed. Such instances are observed only in some undeveloped African countries like Kenya (Ackers et.al 2001: p.372).

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Performance results in education (in terms of national and international exams) in Turkey are rather low, and obviously, this problem cannot be solved simply through a series of changes in the programme. There are 35581 primary schools in Turkey; however the number of normal schools whose problems can be solved by changing programmes—assuming the effect of transported education zero— is only 5199. The number of students attending these schools is only 2,189,370. On the other hand, when the total number of students in Turkey (over ten millions) is considered, it may be said that what have been done so far is not effective. For example, the application of multigrade education—whatever the programme it is based on— is deficient, and therefore, has disadvantages when compared to normal schools just like in Japan, Peru, Sri Lanka and Vietnam (Suzuki, Ames, Vithanapathirana and Vu 2004; McEwan 2001).

As the findings of this study show, the existing conditions (at least the quality of school, the number of teachers and students) are not in the same level in the schools in dual, boarding, multigrading and transported village schools. To develop professional know-how for alternative primary education applications and to attempt to make qualitative and quantitative arrangements (programme compliance) on these schools based on this knowledge as well as the other attempts (such providing all schools with the same human and device equipment) are the necessary precautions. Richly equipped schools with necessary facilities (in terms of all school elements) can bring forth improvements in ordinary program beyond expectations (Benveniste and McEwan 2000). Accordingly, the programme arrangements that have been currently made should also be applied to the programmes for alternative primary schools [e.g., multigrade schools]

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TÜRKİYE'DE TEMEL EĞİTİM VE İLKÖĞRETİM OKULLARI GERÇEĞİ

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Giriş: Günümüzde dünyanın gelişmiş birçok ülkesinde 12 yıl olan temel eğitim, Türkiye'de ilköğretim 7–15 yaşlarındaki çocukların eğitim ve öğretimini kapsar. İlköğretim kız ve erkek bütün yurttaşlar için zorunludur ve Devlet okullarında parasızdır. Türkiye de ilköğretim okullarının sayısı genel toplam olarak 35.581'dir Bu rakama ilköğretimdeki bütün okul türleri dâhildir. Türkiye de 2005 verilerine göre (ki en kapsamlı verilerin olduğu MEB belgesi bu yıla aittir), öğretmen başına düşen öğrenci sayısının 26,4 ve derslik başına düşen öğrenci sayısının ise 36,9 olduğu anlaşılmaktadır. Bu oranlara kabaca bakan biri, gelişmiş birçok ülkenin oranlarından yüksek olduğunu söyleyebilir. Diğer yandan, bu tabloya bakarak, yalnızca bu iki ölçüt temelinde (öğretmen-öğrenci ve derslik oranlamaları) yapılacak bir karşılaştırma, Türkiye ilköğretiminde, herhangi ciddi bir anormalliğin olmadığı sonucuna götürebilir. Oysa ulusal (Öğrenci Başarısını Değerlendirme Sınavları-ÖBDS) ve uluslar arası (PISA, TIMMS, PIRLS) değerlendirme sınavları Türkiye'nin ilköğretimde hiç de başarılı olmadığını göstermektedir. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı bu sorunların özünde uygulanmakta olan "programı" görmüştür. Bu görüşe göre uygulanmakta olan program ezberci, pasif, üretken olmayan ve koşulsuz itaat eden çocuklar yetiştirmektedir. Eğer bu özellikler ortadan kaldırılırsa girişken, sabırlı ve çalışkan çocuklar yetiştiren bir programa geçilirse bu sorun ortadan kalkacaktır. Türkiye bu sınavlarda o zaman başarılı olacaktır.

Yöntem: Bu makalenin amacı, geliştirilen ve 2006 yılından beri uygulanan "ilköğretim programı"nın, ilköğretim okullarının sayılarda somutlaşan farklılıkları nedeniyle tek başına sonuç alıcı bir düzenleme olamayacağını ortaya koymak ve süratle alınması gereken başka önlemlere işarette bulunmaktır. Bunun için birinci aşamada, Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın istatistiklerinden yararlanılarak okul ve türleri bazında ilköğretim okullarının çeşitli özellikleri (okul, öğrenci, öğretmen vb.) ile ilgili sayılar bulunmuştur. İkinci aşamada, ilköğretim okulu türlerine göre okul, öğrenci, öğretmen vb. sayıları bulunmuştur. Sonra bu sayılar yukarıda verilen toplam (okul, öğretmen vb. sayısı) sayılardan çıkarılmıştır. Son aşamada da, "MEB'in yeni programın" bütün Türkiye de gerçekte, kaç okul, kaç öğretmen ve kaç öğrenciye hitap ettiği bulunmuştur. Araştırmanın temel varsayımı odur ki, hazırlanmakta olan ilköğretim programı ne kadar çok öğrenci, öğretmen ve okula hitap ederse, Türkiye ulusal ve uluslararası değerlendirmelerde o kadar başarılı, aksi durumda başarısız olacaktır.

Bulgular: Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Devleti'nin, Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı aracılığıyla, herkese temel eğitim vermek zorunda olması, ülkenin koşul ve olanakları bağlamında farklı ilköğretim okulu çeşidi türetmesine yol açmıştır. Bu türler, açık ilköğretim (mektup-radyo-televizyon-internet) okulları, özel ilköğretim okulları, özel eğitim okulları, normal ve ikili eğitim veren okullar, birleştirilmiş sınıflı okullar, taşımalı okullar, yatılı ilköğretim (PİO ve YİBO) okulları şeklinde sınıflandırılabilir. Türkiye'de 35.581 ilköğretim okulu vardır, ama normal nitelikli, yani sadece program değişikliği çözümüyle sorunu giderilebilecek okul sayısı, yalnızca 5 199'dur. Bu okullardaki öğrenci sayısı ise yalnızca 2.189.370'dir. Türkiye'nin öğrenci

sayısının on milyonun üzerinde olduğu göz önüne alındığında çözüm adına yapılanların çok da sonuç alıcı olamayacağı söylenebilir. Okullların farklı özellikleri, bu sonucun en önemli nedeni gibi gözükmektedir. Örneğin birleştirilmiş sınıflı okul türü, temel aldığı program ne olursa olsun, öğretmen sayısı, derslik, laboratuvar ve diğer araç gereçler konusundaki yetersizliği yüzünden, normal okullara göre mutlaka dezavantajlı olacaktır.

Öneriler: Çalışmanın bulgularından da anlaşılabileceği üzere, okulların var olan özellikleri en azından okulun niteliği, öğretmen ve öğrenci sayıları gibi yönleriyle, ne yatılı okullarda ne birleştirilmiş sınıflı okullarda ne taşımalı okullarda ne de ikili ve köy okullarında aynıdır. O zaman alınacak başka önlemlerin (bütün okulları aynı insan ve araç donanımına kavuşturmak gibi) yanında alternatif ilköğretim uygulamaları konusunda bilimsel bilgi geliştirmek ve bu bilgi temelinde bu okullarda başta nicel olmak üzere sonra nitel (program) düzenlemelere gitmektir

Anahtar Kelimeler: Temel eğitim, İlköğretim okulu, Uluslar arası öğrenci değerlendirme sınavları, Kırsal kesim