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Evaluating the Finance of Primary Education in Turkey within the Context of Neo-Liberal Policies^{*}

Huseyin Yolcu^{**}
Kastamonu University

Nejla Kurul^{***}
Ankara University

Abstract

The purpose of the study is to analyze the financing approaches of primary education in Turkey within the context of neo-liberal policies. Therefore the survey model was used to describe the existing situation and data were compiled with the methods of documents reviewing and personal interviews.

The study group is composed of the branch office managers responsible for the budget work and the people who work in National Education Directorates of Central Administrative Districts within Ankara; namely Altindag, Mamak, Kecioren, Yenimahalle and Cankaya. The study group also consists of 15 school administrators, teachers and students' parents in those schools. The schools are located within boundaries of the above-mentioned central districts, having different socio-economic levels (SEL). A total of 62 people are interviewed throughout the research and so-called interviews are recorded on a tape. Besides, the interviews are coded to keep each person's identity information secret.

The proportion of primary education expenditures in the expenditures of Ministry of National Education decreased by 6.2 per cent on average, despite the increase in the number of teachers and students between the years of 1974 and 2003. It is revealed in this study that the primary education has 13 different out budget sources. This structure of multi finances in primary education means that the government has been transferring the public responsibility of presenting and transfers goverment's responsibility of presenting and financing primary education to 'local units' and non-government organizations such as 'civil organizations', 'firms' and 'individuals' through 'localization', 'privatization' and 'good governance' practices.

It is observed that primary schools examined access approximately 60 different sources of income which are outside the Central Government Budget . But the number of those sources is varied with the SEL of the schools. Subject to the budget sources, schools have better facilities or reverse. In the research, the problems that school administrators as well as teachers and parents have faced while performing their duties and the difficulties that they have encountered during the process of finding out budget sources variate with the SEL of the schools.

Keywords: *Neo-liberal policies, primary education, finance of primary education, decentralization in education*

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** Assist.Prof. Huseyin Yolcu is affiliated with Faculty of Education, Department of Education Sciences in Kastamonu University, Turkey. E-mail: hyolcu@kastamonu.edu.tr

*** Prof. Nejla Kurul is affiliated with Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Educational Administration and Policy in Ankara University, Turkey.

Introduction

Neo-liberal policies standing behind globalization prescribes restructuring the capital against economic crisis and demands for expanding the activity area of market economy by eliminating social dimension of the state since early 80s. They have been imposed upon in underdeveloped countries in crisis through “structural adjustment programs” by International Monetary Fund, World Bank, World Trade Organization, including liberalization of capital movements, free trade and foreign direct investments, de-regulation and privatization as well as fiscal discipline.

The principle in the resource allocation through market mechanism which is since qua non of neo-liberals has brought decentralization and localization policies into agenda in education management after 1980s in many countries including Turkey. At this context, localization policies have been used as instrument for increasing the quality in education and at schools on the one hand, and for enabling the legitimacy of privatization in education on the other hand (Unal, 2003a, 43). Developments mentioned have taken effect in Turkey especially after 1990s. Accordingly, public educational expenses in the public state budget dropped from 19,1% in 1990 to 12,3% in 1995, 10,1% in 2000 and 12,8% in 2005 State Planning Organization (Briefly, DPT), 2007, 188).

A remarkable differentiation has been observed in financial resources of educational expenses while the proportion of the educational expenditures in the central budget has dropped dramatically. For example, according to a research conducted by Turkey Statistics Institute (Briefly TÜİK) 64,8% of educational expenditure was central budget expenditure, 0,7% of local administrations, 1,5% of natural and legal person and institution, 32,9% of household and 0,09% international resources in 2002 (TUIK, 2006a). According to these data, one can conclude that two-third of the educational expenses in Turkey are made by the state being interpreted as educational services still having a public nature. Nevertheless, the fact that household educational expenditure equals to one-third of the total shows that families have increasingly the financial burden of the education.

It is also possible to observe this differentiation in primary level which is articulated to be “free of charge and compulsory” in pursuance to Article 42 under the Constitutional Law. Accordingly; 66,0% of primary education expenditure was covered by central budget, 1,8% by special administrations, 0,1% by municipalities, 1,7% by natural and legal agencies and institutions, 30,1% by household and 0,2% by international resources in 2002 (Ministry of National Education (MEB), 2005, 207;

Ministry of Finance Approved Budget for 2002 [Maliye Bakanlığı 2002 Yılı Bütçe Kesin Hesap Cetveli]; TUİK, 2006a). According to these data, more than half of the primary education expenses were covered by the central budget and a little more than 1/3 of that amount was covered by the household. This situation shows that primary education comes the first among the ones mostly affected by neo-liberal policies in Turkey and that a significant part of educational expenses are covered by the families.

Legal frame of financial resources required for primary education was drawn via Primary Education and Education Law No 222. However; it caused for allocations reserved for investment and other appropriations to be limited, because the number of children beginning primary education in Turkey reached over a million, in other words, current expenditures have increased reaching over 90% of the total budget, while educational investment expenditures decreased sharply (Kavak, Ekinci and Gökce, 1997, 27; Ulubag, 1998, 3).

Kavak et al. (1997, 4) state that primary education systems in many countries face with the financing problems, so they are in search for providing supports of local society and/or families in order to resolve these problems. In today's Turkey, the expectations of the society for a better quality education on the one part, and limitations in budgets of primary schools on the other part cause, direct school administrators to search for non-budget resources for financing. It has been suggested in different studies that primary schools have revenue sources ranging from 27 to 39 units which are non-budget (Kavak et al., 1997, 103; Suzuk, 2002, 91-93; Akca , 2002, 95-96; Ozturk, 2002, 144).

The fact that schools in primary education system head towards non-budget sources due to insufficiencies in budget both in investment allocations and other current appropriations result in important outcomes. That firstly means that money is raised from students and parents under 40 different titles and that they are deprived of their rights for having education free of charge at state schools despite the fact that education at state schools should be free of any charge in pursuance to Article 42 under Constitution (Keskin and Demirci, 2003, 15). Secondly, while access opportunities of the wealthy to knowledge and education increase, the idea of future to be gained by the poor with the help of education becomes increasingly vague (Sayilan, 2007, 76). Thirdly, educational experiences of poor students and young are being restricted, school culture is being changed and ways for new practices in education management are also being paved within the relationships of holding "inside / outside" in addition to "new power forms" (Tural, 2006, 244). As a whole, while globalization and neo-liberal policies shift the finance of education from the central to the local, it creates

negative outcomes against worker/labour classes in view of "right for education", "equality" and "quality of education". Furthermore; it lays the burden of new responsibilities to school administrators and teachers like "resource supplying" irrelevant to education.

The purpose of this study is to make analysis of budget sources and out budget sources in primary education and to present the differences and problems of the process of creating out budget sources among primary schools based on the opinions of department managers, school administrators, teachers and parents having the subject of evaluating the finance of primary education in Turkey within the context of globalization and neo-liberal policies

Method

This research aiming to evaluate the finance of primary education in Turkey within the context of globalization and neo-liberal policies is in the model of scanning as it tries to describe the existing situation. In research, data were gathered in two ways; investigation and interview. Quantitative data of the research were obtained via document gathering method and qualitative data were collected by way of interview method. For qualitative data of research, intentional "maximum sampling" method has been used. Within this direction; a study group has been formed consisting of one department manager responsible for budget working at Provincial Directorate of National Education in Ankara, District Directorates of National Education in Altındağ, Mamak, Keçiören, Yenimahalle and Çankaya along with 15 primary schools located in these above-mentioned districts with different socio-economic levels (SEL) and school administrators and teachers working at these schools and parents. Five different half-structured interview forms have been prepared for provincial director, district directorates, school administrators, teachers and parents in this study group. During research, 62 people at total have been interviewed; 3 district directorates, 15 school administrators, 26 teachers and 18 parents. Interviews with district directorates, school administrators, teachers and parents within this study group have been sound-recorded in research. With the aim of hiding identification details of the person interviewed, each interview with these people specified has been coded. Accordingly; while districts in which the interviewers work have been coded as District 1, District 2 etc and schools as School 1, School 2 etc; district directorates interviewed have been coded as DD 1, DD 2 etc; school administrators as Administrator 1, Administrator 2 etc; teachers as Teacher 1, Teacher2 etc and parents as Parent 1, Parent 2 etc.

Results Regarding the Development of Budget Resources of Primary Education

Proportional Development of Primary Education Expenditure within Expenditure of Ministry of National Education

Proportional development of primary expenditure within Ministry of National Education expenses is given in Table 1. As seen in Table 1, the rate of primary education expenditure to the Ministry of National Education's Expenses is 62,3 % in 1974, constituting the highest rate in the period investigated. In addition to this fact; it can be said that the rate of primary education expenses to Ministry of National Education expenditure inclines to decrease continually beginning from the date specified. Accordingly; proportional development of primary expenses is 54,5% in 1990, 53,3% in 1995, 60,4% in 2000 and 56,1% in 2006. It can be seen that there is a difference amounting to 6,2% between the beginning and the end of the year investigated in view of the proportion allocated to primary education within Ministry of National Education's expenditure.

Table 1, Legend: Proportional Development of Primary within Ministry of National Education expenditure (1974 - 2006)

(with current prices of 2006) New Turkish Lira (YTL)

| Years | Ministry of National Education | Primary Education expenditure | (2)/(1) % | Years | Ministry of National Education | Primary Education expenditure | (2)/(1) % |
|-------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------|-------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------|
| 1974 | 11.551 | 7.202 | 62,3 | 2001 | 5.145.076,25 | 3.005.891,86 | 58,4 |
| 1975 | 17.143 | 9.825 | 57,3 | 2002 | 8.889.474,62 | 4.481.920,77 | 50,4 |
| 1980 | 120.915 | 65.854, | 54,5 | 2003 | 10.582.8707 | 5.726.821,66 | 54,1 |
| 1985 | 506.286 | 297.543 | 58,8 | 2004 | 13.015.949,6 | 7.598.313,45 | 58,4 |
| 1990 | 9.988.258 | 5.857.293 | 58,6 | 2005 | 14.862.506,9 | 8.439.898,96 | 56,8 |
| 1995 | 152.612.458 | 81.325.830 | 53,3 | 2006 | 17.677.053,4 | 9.913.908,44 | 56,1 |
| 2000 | 2.083.023,4 | 2.083.023,498 | 60,2 | - | - | - | - |

Resource: 1974-2006 Approved Budget of National Finance Ministry; 1992-2004 Ministry of National Education Draft Law of Final Account (1992-2004 Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Kesin Hesap Kanunu Tasarıları).

Contribution of Special Provincial Administrations to Education

A significant part of educational expenditure to primary education is covered by the special provincial administrations. It includes current expenses directed towards educational transportation and catering in addition to investment expenditure like equipping and repair other than personnel expenses. In Table 2, proportional development of contributions of special provincial administrations to primary education within primary expenditures has been given.

Table 2. Legend: Proportional Development of Contributions of Special Provincial Administrations to Primary Education within Primary Expenditures

| Years | Primary Education Expenditures (1) | Contributions of Special Provincial Administrations (New Turkish Lira) | (2)/(1) % |
|-------|---------------------------------------|---|--------------|
| 1982 | 92.443 | 1.495 | 1,6 |
| 1985 | 297.543 | 5.596 | 1,9 |
| 1990 | 5.857.293 | 65.711 | 1,1 |
| 1995 | 81.325.830 | 1.127.502 | 1,4 |
| 2000 | 2.083.023.498 | 47.041.128 | 2,3 |
| 2005 | 8.439.898.969 | 948.183.585 | 11,2 |
| 2006 | 9.913.908.441 | 1.187.132.414 | 12,0 |

Resource: MEB, 2005, 230; MEB, 2007a, 174.

In Table 2, while the rate of contributions to primary education by special provincial administrations within primary education expenses were 1,6% in 1982, 1,9% in 1985, 1,1% in 1990, 2,3% in 2000 and 3,2% in 2003, it happened to increase to 12% in 2006. As seen in Table 9, this figure represents the highest rate during the period investigated. While expenditures made to primary education by special provincial administrations should be at least 20% pursuant to Law no 222, it is actually far behind this proportion.

Village Budgets

In pursuance to Law No 222, it is regulated that at least 10% of village budgets should be allocated to primary schools in villages. Along with this fact, researches conducted put forth that allocations for village schools are inadequate and that school administrators can not receive the money coming from village administration (Basaran, 1982, 208; Ozben, <http://egitimdergi.pamukkale.edu.tr>).

Results Regarding the Development of Out Budget Resources of Primary Education

It is revealed in this study that primary education has 13 separate sources which are out budget. These are following.

Law No: 4306

Duration of compulsory education has been raised to 8 years in Turkey via Law No 4306. Thus; it has been prescribed that requirement for new classrooms to occur and because of increasing compulsory education to 8 years and resource problem is to emerge accordingly, this shall be resolved with the help of contribution expenses to be obtained via law no 4306. During the period between 1997 when Law No 4306 came into force and October 2005, YTL 2.492.179.000 income was collected in total, YTL 2.483.594.000 by

way of documents and procedures and YTL 8.585.000 in donation and accretion accounts of Ziraat Bankası and Halkbank (MEB, 2005, 229).

Law No: 3418

It has been prescribed via Law No: 3418 that a tax under the name of “education, youth, sports and health services” should be collected from the sales of various drinks, tobacco and tobacco products. 60% of this income collected in pursuance to this law discussed is transferred to Ministry of National Education and % 40 to Ministry of Health. It is viewed that a significant rate of allocations transferred to Ministry of National Educational via law no 3418 is transferred to Basic Education Project. Accordingly; it is observed that YTL 664.735.450 in total was transferred to Basic Education Project; YTL 23.258.637 in 1998, YTL 26.308.100 in 1999, YTL 63.235.007 in 2000, YTL 90.292.249 in 2001 and YTL 461.641.457 in 2002 (Report of State Inspect Board of Presidential [Cumhurbaskanligi Devlet Denetleme Raporu], 2004)

External Source Aided Education Credits and Donations

Results obtained regarding the World Bank, European Investment Bank, European Union and Islamic Development Bank aided education credits within the external sources of primary education are discussed below respectively.

World Bank Aided Educational Credits.- In a period lasting 23 years beginning from 1985, educational project contracts have been signed by the Ministry and World Bank on six different subjects. Financial magnitude of World Bank aided educational projects is 1.006, 4 million dollars. Among the World Bank aided educational projects, the ones directly related to finance of primary education are 1st and 2nd phase projects of Basic Education Project. Within the scope of Basic Education Project, 600 million dollars of loan has been received from World Bank, 300 million dollars per each phase. The first one has been received in 1998 and corresponds to 11,4% of the expenditure budget in 1998. The latter has been received in 2002 and is equal to 11,8% of the expenditure budget in 2002 (MEB, 2004b, 1)

European Union Aided Project.- 100 million Euro was donated by the European Union in the name of Basic Education Supporting Project (MEB, 2004b, 4).

Educational Frame Project of European Investment Bank.- A loan of 100 million Euro in total was received from the European Investment Bank in 2003 and 2007, 50 million Euro per each (MEB, 2006b, 148-49 ; MEB, 2007b, 74).

Islamic Development Bank Loan Aided Project Directed Towards Re-construction of Primary Schools.- As already known, two earthquakes took place in Turkey on 17th August and 12th November 1999. With the purpose of reconstructing primary school buildings damaged by these earthquakes, an amount of 40 million dollars at total was received from the Islamic Development Bank, 23 million dollars as “exceptional” and 17 million dollars as “loan” (MEB, 2000, 72).

Public Contributions and Comprehensive Education Campaigns

Contributions to education by the public can be in kind or in cash. When proportional development of public contributions within the budget of Ministry of National Education is observed, it is seen that they have a share of 1,7% in 1982, 4,9% in 1985, 1,8% in 1990, 3,0% in 1995, 2,4% in 2000 and 1,3% in 2006. Taking these data into account, it can be articulated that public contributions differ from year to year and that this does not constitute a predictable and regular resource for education planning (MEB, 2005, 230; MEB, 2007a, 207). It is viewed in Turkey that some comprehensive educational campaigns have been conducted in order for increasing contributions of public to education. The leading ones among these campaigns are 100% Support for Education, Aid for Computer Aided Education, Supporting Campaigns of National Education and Education of Young Girls.

Corporate Contribution Projects

Corporate contribution projects involve the projects of public institutions and organizations, private corporations, civil society organizations and municipalities formed in order for increasing participation to finance of education at general level and of primary education at specific level. The outstanding ones among these are “Project of Physical Contribution to Education” (EFIKAP) and “Fellow Organization Project”. In the first one, public agencies and institutes like Istanbul Stock Exchange Market, Housing development Administration and Turkish Telecommunications Incorporated Company other than the Ministry undertake some responsibilities such as constructing and equipping school buildings. In the latter, public agencies and institutions and private organizations are matched with one or some of the schools located in poor areas. The fellow organization to which matching is fulfilled meets various requirements of the related school like equipment, maintenance and repair. Therefore; by rendering momentary and constricted relations of public agencies and institutions along with private organizations with these schools in a protectorate relationship, localization practices in education is demanded to be settled.

Social Responsibility Campaigns and Projects

It is viewed that various campaigns and projects are conducted by several institutions and organizations in the name of social responsibility. The striking point on this subject is that the number of these campaigns and projects mentioned is more than 90. Furthermore; new ones are added to them more and more every day. Social responsibility campaigns and projects arranged in the field of education primarily, reduces the right for education which is required to be provided by the government to everyone in equal conditions, only to the responsibility of people and institutions (www.kurumsalsosyal.com)

Fellow School Project / Support Project Among Schools

Ministry of National Education explains the purpose of fellow school application as improving mutual assistance and cooperation among children and increasing their sensitivity towards societal problems. In addition to this, the application bears an implied intention in view of education financing. Accordingly; it is observed that, within the context of this application, schools in a wealthy situation in the West try to cover the insufficiencies of schools in a poor condition in the East in view of equipment and materials, that schools which are relatively in a good condition located in city center try to cover the insufficiencies of schools located in poor towns and also private schools try to cover the inadequacies in view of equipment and materials at public schools. In Turkey, there are 6430 schools at total within the scope of Fellow School Project. When these schools are taken into consideration with the schools with which they are matched, this number is doubled. Moreover; this number increases more and more considering the fact that some schools are matched with more than one school in this fellow school project (Ministry of National Education General Directorate of Primary Education in the Province, City, and Countries between Sister Schools Unpublished Data [Briefly MEB İlköğretim Genel Müdürlüğü İl İçi, İller Arası ve Ülkelerarası Yayınlananmamış Kardeş Okul Verileri]).

Contributions of Municipalities to Education

Even though it was prescribed via Primary and Education Law No 222 that 5% of municipality budgets should be allocated for primary education services, this provision was abolished later on. Nonetheless, it is observed that in kind and in cash contributions of municipalities to education still continues. The first one is assistance performed directly. Among these direct supports municipalities provide for schools are scientific and artistic studies, book and stationery aids, clothing aids, scholarships and loans. Among the indirect assistance, the latter one, are physical maintenance and repair of school buildings, landscaping, awarding successful students, giving students and teachers the

benefit of discount in transportation by buses and attributing students the benefit of discount in artistic and cultural activities (Public Education Expenditure Report of the Workshop Group [Kamu Harcamalari Calistay Raporu], 2005).

Social Aid and Solidarity Promotion Fund of Prime Ministry

Educational support programs within the educational expenses of Social Aid and Solidarity Promotion Fund of Prime Ministry consist of activities like educational materials, dormitory etc support, free books, free lunch, milk (in 4 big cities) higher education scholarship, conditional cash, educational aids. While the rate of expenditures within the context of education support from the fund was 0,3% in 1995, it rose to 21,7% in 2003, 22,9% in 2004, 38,9% in 2005 but it reduced in the rate of 4,6% in 2006 and was 34,3% (General Directorate of Social Assistance and Solidarity [Briefly SYDGM]), 2006, 9).

Contributions to Primary Education from Allocations Transferred from the Budget of Ministry of Interior Affairs to Special Administrations

It is observed that special provincial administrations spent YTL 286.000 for primary education services from the sources allocated for aids from the budget of Ministry of Interior Affairs between the years 2000 – 2005. Expenditures differ from year to year (Ministry of Internal Affairs, the General Directorate of Local Administration, [İçişleri Bakanlığı Mahalli İdareler Genel Müdürlüğü Verileri], Data).

Bank Salary Promotions

MEB announced a circular on 12th of December, 2006. According to the announcement, 30 % of the revenue of schools obtained from bank salary promotions is used for meeting the requirements of schools and institutions and 70% is shared among the personnel .

Parent – Teacher Associations

Ministry of National Education rendered the school-parent associations in a status which may collect in kind and in cash contributions from parents and which can operate or rent places like canteen, open area, saloon etc via an alteration in the Article 16 under Law No 1739 in 11 December, 2004.

Resources Created within School

Public primary schools in Turkey, though it is not acknowledged as legal, have their own resources called out of budget sources. Among these resources, there are registry price,

clothing cost, report card fee etc. As it is stated previously, the number of these out budget sources has been found as 40 approximately in researches conducted before.

Results Regarding the Main Resources of Income of Schools in Surroundings of Different Socio – Economic Levels

It has been put forth that primary schools in the study group of this research have 60 different out budget sources including fellow organization, fellow school, company aids, civil society organizations and public institutions in addition to budget resources created within school like cupboard, board, copying, stationery costs, school-parent association allocations, reference book fee, contributions, registry fee (this sometimes may be transfer fee). Along with this fact, the number of out budget resources schools have may differ in view of the Socio-Economic Level (SEL) of the school location. The numbers of out budget sources schools have at lower SEL ranges from 13 to 26, schools at medium SEL ranges from 18 to 23 and school at upper SEL ranges from 11 to 22.

An increase in the number of sources schools obtain which are out of budget can be expected when we move from schools at lower SEL to ones at upper SEL. Nonetheless, it is seen that the number of out budget sources schools at upper SEL have is much different from what is expected. This situation can be explained with the amount of contributions schools collect through school – parent associations and the amount that may be collected. For instance, in the research it is observed obligatory contributions to schools at lower SEL range between YTL 20 – 40, schools at medium SEL range between YTL 20 – 80 while it ranges between YTL 20 – 150 at schools with upper SEL level. On the other hand; while A14 working at S14 at lower SEL says that they could only collect 10% of the contribution, A7 at S8 says that rate is over 60% at their school. Thus it can be said that schools at upper SEL collect much of their revenue from the contributions of parent-school associations and that these schools are involved in a less search in form for out budget sources compared to schools at lower and medium SELs.

Works Conducted by Schools towards Increasing the Quality of Education via Out Budget Sources

It is possible to gather the strategies of neo-liberal ideology towards providing the quality at two points. The first one is to give prominence to the emphasis upon the idea that private schools are of good quality bearing the difference between public and private in mind. Within the frame of this strategy, while public interest on private schools is rendered

continual on the one hand; and opening new schools is encouraged, on the other hand. Second by encouraging wide masses of people sending their children to public schools to support these schools and in other words; by paving the path for them to be actively involved in educational expenses with the help of some adjustments like user fees, contributions etc, it is provided for children to have a better education. Right at this point, in what sort of works do these schools within the scope of this research conduct towards increasing educational quality via sources which are out of budget and is there any difference among schools on this subject?

School administrators working at schools at lower SEL participating in the research have stated that they use the revenue in meeting the compulsory requirements of the school beyond increasing the educational quality. Among these compulsory expenses are some operational expenditures like salaries and social security expenses of support personnel, cleaning and cleaning agents, stationery, phone, transportation, maintenance and repair expenses.

It was observed that physical structures, educational materials and tools, cleaning of corridors and classroom equipment of schools at medium SEL which were visited with the aim of interview during research were much better than schools at lower SEL and that some of them had security staff and school buses. A5 stated that they had "computers, television, VCD in each classroom and they would have projectors and" that "their school was in a better status in many respects".

Physical situations and equipment of schools at upper SEL which were visited within the scope of research differ to a great extent compared to schools at lower and medium SELs. Students come to these schools by school buses from the areas outside the service area of schools and besides there are security staff at the entrance of these schools. It was observed that physical situations, equipment, arrangement and cleaning of school garden of the schools at upper SEL were much better. For example; A10 expressed that their school "had successful results in Secondary Education Exam" and that "they spent much of the money raised on education rather than physical environment" and "they had visual materials like projectors, computers, printers, televisions, VCDs in their classrooms". A10 stated that "presentation room at their school was being used for one program, they had all sorts of tools – materials in their laboratories" and that "their sports facilities and areas were great". According to A10, all requirements of their school were fully completed.

As gathered from these interviews, schools differ in their works they conduct towards increasing educational quality based on the SEL of their surroundings. In view of this schools at lower SEL spend the revenues raised directly on obligatory expenses but schools at medium SEL spend money on works for relatively increasing the quality in education besides on obligatory expenditure. However; it is observed that schools at upper SEL orient their incomes raised directly towards works for increasing the educational quality, different from the schools at lower and medium SELs. The fact that physical and technological conditions of these schools are in a quite different status than schools at lower and medium SELs stands out.

Struggles of School Administrators Working at Primary Schools in Surroundings of Different Socio – Economic Levels in Creating Out Budget Sources

Localization in education obliges school administrators to be “enterprising”, to be involved in good relationships with the immediate surrounding and, within this direction, to provide the spiritual and material support of that immediate surrounding. A specific feature of this transformation in politics compels the public school administrators to possess their own sources called as creating “out budget sources”. The first of these struggles is related with legal regulations. In respect of these; school administrators state that the expression “primary education is compulsory and free of any charge at state school” specified under all other related regulations with the Article 42 under the Constitutional Law coming the first of them, renders them in a struggling status. They express that, despite these legal arrangements, they become obliged to raise money from the parents “voluntarily or involuntarily”. Based upon these interviews with school administrator, it can be said that they are the school administrator at lower SEL who experience the struggles in finding and creating resources to a great extent. In spite of the explanations made by executive administrators, the fact that school administrators continue in raising money from parents can be complained by teachers along with parents and an inquiry can be launched on them. A11, A12 and A13 are administrators upon whom an inquiry has been launched. A11 and A13 experienced it once, A12 experienced that twice.

The second one is the bureaucratic difficulty. School administrators state that the explanations of their executives about their not taking any contributions “voluntarily or involuntarily” during registry period or at the beginning of semester render them opposing parts of the dispute with the parents and that parents do not want to make any contribution in such a case. Another bureaucratic struggle school administrators’ face with whom interviews were performed is the pressure executives impose on schools at upper

SELs standing out with their successes in education about registration of their own or other close relatives' children.

Based upon the opinions of school administrators stated above, it can be understood that there are some differences in struggles they face resulting from bureaucracy. While schools at lower and medium SELs having trouble in reaching and creating resources evaluate the explanations of their executives about their not taking any contributions "voluntarily or involuntarily" during registry period or at the beginning of semester as a difficulty on this issue, school administrators working at schools at upper SEL who do not experience any difficulty in resources consider the pressure executives impose on schools at upper SELs standing out with their successes in education about registration of their own or other close relatives' children as a bureaucratic struggle. This case can be evaluated as an indicator of executives' "efforts to use the system on their own benefits".

The third one is the difficulty resulting from the environmental circumstances. Some of the school administrators express that the socio-economic level of the surrounding where their schools are located is lower and families experience financial difficulties and that in such a case, they become obliged to meet the basic requirements like nourishment, housing and yet in these circumstances it would not be right to expect them to support schools/ education. It can be said that economical difficulty stands out as the struggle with which school administrators at schools with lower SEL face much more compared to school administrators working at schools at medium and upper SELs.

The fourth one is the difficulty arising from the parents. According to school administrators, the fact that they have to raise money from the parent of their students during the process of creating sources out budget makes some parents intervene in internal affairs of school management and talking to them in a harsh accusing tone and that, beyond these situations, it leads parents to perceive their roles as "money givers" and administrators' as "money receivers"

As the fifth one, it is the difficulty caused by people and institutions. When people and institutions make contributions to or support schools materially, they especially prefer schools at lower and medium SELs and reject the ones at upper SEL. Theatre and cinema activities in the name of social activities can be given as examples for such a case. For this aim, people / companies arranging these activities visit these schools and meet with the school administrators beforehand. Therefore; as a result of these meetings, these people / companies either meet some requirements of the school (computer, printer,

copying machine etc) or donating some money obligatory (!) to the account of school – parents association. S1, S2, S4, S5, S6, S10, S9, S8, S11 and S12 are the schools obtaining resources out budget. The fact that social activities required to be provided by the school for students as an extension of educational programs within the context of children's social development and their perception of social environment to be acknowledged as activities to bring some out budget sources can be explained with approach of neo-liberal ideology of including anything in economic area which are originally in the social field.

Struggles of Teachers Working at Primary Schools in Surroundings of Different Socio – Economic Levels in Creating Out Budget Sources

Teachers interviewed in research do not acknowledge collecting money related to teaching profession and besides, they perceive raising money as an obligatory activity. There are several reasons lying behind teachers' feelings themselves obliged to money rising. The first one comes within the respects of regulating an order at school and operational status of school. The second one is the demand for not being indulged in a conflict with the school administrators. The third reason is the fact that there is no parent in proper characteristics to be charged with this job. The fourth one is the obligation they feel to collect money as they do not have a common opinion on this issue. It can be stated that compared to teachers at schools at upper SEL, when teachers working at schools at medium and lower SELs are demanded to collect money from students for any activity or service, they do not perceive it as a task but a compulsory duty considering the negative educational conditions of these schools.

When teachers are demanded to collect some money from students or their parents in the name of various things, for any activity or service or when they are obliged to do so, it is understood that "they feel bad", "they see themselves as officers raising money not teachers", "they are obliged to do that job involuntarily which they never enjoy", "they do not regards money collecting as suitable for a teacher", "it makes them upset", "they see themselves as merchants", "it disregards the teaching profession", "they feel oppressed", "they are not pleased with that job", "they want to see themselves as officers of a social state", "they do not acknowledge it as a right thing to do in religious aspects".

It is observed that teachers' interviewed collecting money from students affect the relationships between the administrator and teacher in one way or another. T3 stated that it slowly caused the idea that "teacher collecting much money is good but the one collecting less is bad or not fulfilling his/her duty" to settle down. T4 expressed that

"though it was not articulated clearly to himself/herself, he/she understood that upon others' looking and felt discomfort though he/she was sure of his/her profession". Contrary to teachers working at schools at lower or medium SELs, it was observed that teachers working at schools at upper SEL do not have any difficulty on this subject.

Teachers stated that raising money in the classrooms led to a decrease in time reserved for education and a conflict between the teacher and students and that, within this direction, the relationship between the teacher and students turned into a relation outside the realms of education.

Struggles of Parents Working at Primary Schools in Surroundings of Different Socio – Economic Levels in Creating Out Budget Sources

It is possible to gather the difficulties parents face at the stage of resource creation which are out of budget in two subjects. The first one is the economical difficulty and the other is the difficulty resulting from the children's are oppressed emotionally. It is understood that economical difficulty is the one mostly faced by the parents at lower SEL compared to those at medium and upper SELs. The results obtained match with the opinions of school administrators at lower SEL participating in the research. In view of this; school administrators working at schools at lower SEL expressed that the environmental circumstances of their schools posed a trouble in the process of creating out budget sources.

Parents interviewed during this research stated that when they did not or could not give the money demanded from themselves for some activity or service, their children became oppressed emotionally. This case differs based upon the SEL of parents. In this respect; P1, P2 and P3 stated that they did not encounter with any negative behaviour and that most of the time teachers covered those expenses when they could not give the money. P7 and P8 expressed that, in such a situation, their children were embarrassed and that it also made them upset. Another parent at lower SEL, P18, said that "his/her child was offended at school and did not want to go to school".

Based upon the opinions of parents stated above, it can be articulated that when parents do not want to give the money demanded for some activity or service because of any reason, parents also become oppressed as well as their children. When the subject at issue is approached especially in view of SEL, it is observed that parents and children at lower SEL are the ones who are mostly affected. In other words; it can be said that when

parents do not want to or could not give the money demanded for some activity or service because of any reason, parents also become oppressed as well as their children, perhaps to a greater extent compared to their children and that they are even offended.

Discussion and Conclusion

A difference in the rate of 6,2% can be viewed between the beginning and the end of the year investigated in the rate reserved for primary education expenditure within the Ministry of National Education expenses in Turkey. In 1974, there were 6.276.515 students and 18.236 teachers (State Statistics Institute-[Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü-DIE], 1981, 104-105). In 2003, these data came out to be 10.318.650 for students with an increase of 39,2% and 367.895 for teachers with an increase of 50,0% (MEB, 2007a, 6). Thus; in parallel with the increase in the number of students and teachers in the period investigated, a decrease in the amount of 6,2% was observed though primary education expenses were required to increase.

Despite the increase in the number of students and teachers at primary education, the fact that primary education began taking increasingly low shares from the budget of Ministry of National Education caused the number of out budget sources of primary education having a multi-structure for a very long time to vary. In this research, it has been suggested that primary education has at total 13 different out budget sources like “public contributions”, “Law No 4306”, “Law No 4018”, “external sourced education loans and donations”, “corporate contribution projects”, “public responsibility campaigns and projects”, “fellow school project”, “municipalities”, “Social Aid and Solidarity Promotion Fund”, “Ministry of Interior Affairs”, “bank salary promotions”, “school – parent associations”, “sources created within school” apart from revenues from “the budget”, “special provincial administrations” and “village budget”. These data reveals that the first purpose of localization in education in Turkey is to decrease the financial burden on the central government and to transfer it to various local levels. With this multi-financial structure in primary education, the responsibilities of the social state in the finance and presentation of the primary education is left to the hands of “local units”, “civil society organizations”, “companies” and even to “the responsibility of the individuals” by way of “localization” and “privatization” practices. This case reduces the right for education which is required to be provided by the state for everyone in the same quality and free of charge to the responsibilities of people and institutions. Therefore; education is instrumentalized in

favour of middle – upper middle class but against the working class and the poor as a whole.

There are some essential reasons lying behind the demands of people, institutions, private corporations and civil society organizations to be involved in education to such a great extent. These are material factors, incentives, tax reductions, using the works conducted as advertisements and to gain respect in society and public, to reflect it to sales and customer potential in a way, briefly, it can be said to be the demand for using it in profit making under any circumstances. For instance; it is provided for people, institutions and agencies making in kind or in cash contributions to the campaign of %100 Support for Education to reduce the amount from their taxes showing that contribution as expenditure.

In this research, it has been observed that primary schools have 60 different resources at total along with the fact that it differs based on the SEL of their surrounding. This result has put forth that there is a remarkable increase in the number of out budget resources primary schools have. Thus; it may be articulated that the budget problem with which primary schools face leads the administrators of these schools to a continuous search for sources which are out of budget.

Based on the SEL of the surrounding where the schools are located, variations are seen in works conducted to increase the quality of education. These differences observed in educational qualities at schools may be acknowledged as an indicator of their increasing dependence on environmental circumstances. As Tural states (2006, 246) while this situation allows for students attending to schools at medium and upper SELs to be educated in cleaner areas, in more technological classrooms, more prosperous libraries and laboratories; it causes children of poor parents to be educated in more negative conditions. In consequence; it is necessary to mention that it emerges as a barrier for the children of this section in public against benefiting from the right of education in equal circumstances. As Duru – Bellat (2000, 37) expresses, access to a special education area and selection of such a place by the individuals has been an increasingly critical factor in the creation of social inequalities at schools.

School administrators are obliged to confront with the difficulties resulting from laws, environmental circumstances, bureaucracy, parents, people and institutions in the process of creating out budget sources. The inconveniences with which school administrators face at the stage of creating out budget sources vary according to the SELs of the school

location. Raising money at school for various activities or services render the parents and school administrators opposing parts. Beyond this fact; participation of parents to educational expenses compel these schools and administrators to be more clear, accountable and transparent.

Raising money at primary schools leads the conception about teachers collecting much money to appear as “a good teacher” and the ones collecting less to seem as “a bad teacher” or “a teacher not fulfilling his/her duty” for school administrators. School administrators relate the facts of teachers’ collecting “much” or “less” money with the teachers’ gender, effective communication levels they create with their students and parents and with their persuasiveness. Right at this point, female teachers appear to be the ones having an effective relationship with parents, persuading their students and consequently, the ones providing more resources for school. Beyond this fact, by revealing the amount of money collected in classes and the name of the teacher who collected the money and in what amount, a secret competition is tried to be created among teachers, in a sense. In brief; in the evaluation of teachers, professional criteria has begun to be replaced gradually by market values. Differences were observed on this issue based on the SEL of the schools where teachers work.

The fact that neo-liberal policies force the educational qualities at schools to be dependent on environmental conditions compel the administrators and teachers to attract the supports of immediate surrounding by using their “enterprising characteristics”, “communicative skills” and “persuasiveness”. In other words; primary school administrators and teachers are compelled to have not a “passive” but an “active” role in the process of localization in education.

The first difficulty parents encounter at the stage of creating out budget sources is the economical difficulty and the second one is the children’s being emotionally offended. These difficulties vary according to the SEL of parents.

Two suggestions may be proposed as a result of this research. The first one is allocating funds in sufficient amount in parallel to the increase in the number of students and teachers. Therefore; the obligation in the regulations under the Constitution and other laws stating that education is “free of any charge” shall be accomplished. Neo-liberal policies, while putting emphasis on the quality in education on the one hand, on the other hand, they put some localization policies towards decreasing educational expenses of the state into practice. These policies at question oblige the parents who send their children to

state schools to make contributions to the educational quality of the schools to which their children attend by way of “user fees”. However, as seen in this research, educational qualities of these schools differ noticeably based upon the SEL of the school location. Thus; in order for precluding these variances on the subject of educational quality at schools, an individual budget should be allocated for every school taking the number of students as the basis. Moreover; a positive discrimination should be applied in schools at lower SEL during this practice. Meanwhile, this budget to be allocated for primary schools shall avoid the school administrators and teachers working at these schools to be charged with non-academic tasks or responsibilities.

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