

# **Roles of Principals in the Preparing Students to Life**

HASAN ARSLAN & MURAT BİNGÜL

## **ABSTRACT**

This article explores the impacts of school leaders on the school curriculums of preparing students to life. Even if the school leaders and teachers are expert in their area related to the functions of the schools, it seems that schools are failing in the preparation of the students to life. The school leaders may play an important roles to improve and implement the curriculum. A qualitative research was conducted in this research. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect much of data for this research. Five principals were interviewed. Apparently, the school curriculums are inadequate in developing social skills.

**Key words:** school principals, school curriculums, principal

## **Introduction**

Changes occurring in our age are felt in every field. With the constant renewal of especially scientific and technological knowledge appears an obligation of personnel, management and infrastructure adaptation in almost each and every company.

It should not be hard to reach a conclusion of persons' qualifications having important roles in employing technology in companies (Greenfield, 1986). It has high importance the person's pre-service and in-service education in creating qualified work power (Arends, 1993). In this manner, it is an important issue planning pre-service activities and defining training programs developed upon this manner in the name of helping persons' adaptation to social life.

Development of course curriculum is a different area of expertise; it is a process in which all related experts come together and put forward their knowledge, skills and feelings (Murphy, 1990). Components from inside and outside the schools are taken into consideration; the aims of the centre organization and school are realized and developed; and the content prepared is presented with appropriate methods, techniques and equipments (Bass, 1999, Stoll, and Fink, 1996). With all the

effort the actual target society, the students are prepared to life inside the school organization and are put into the society as useful members.

Considering the subject matters mentioned above and the present applications, it is witnessed that many of the youngsters that begin life after finishing the education given in our country's schools encounter some problems in social life (Moore, George, and Halpin, 2002). Set out on the idea that the aforesaid problems' source may be the inadequacy of the instruction and education activities given at schools and an answer to the question “Does the school curriculums prepare students to life?” is sought in the views of the principal who are an important member of the school organization.

### **A review of related literature**

The general purpose of schooling activities is helping students adapt to the society in a healthy and productive manner (Yukl, 1982). The people born in the deposition of cultural knowledge human beings have brought up to now add their education to that deposition in their school life and answer the expectations of the society and produce new values aimed at future.

Education carries the responsibilities of producing values in moderation and qualification to help continue society's living and progressing; of preventing dissolve the existing values; and of harmonizing old and new values (Yukl, 1989). As education is a concern for all persons from their birth to their death and as it can change all the socio-cultural facts that effect the life of every person, its usage area must be broadened (Murphy,& Hallinger, 1987). It could be said that education is not in its whole sense preparation to education, in one respect it is the life itself. In this direction, education is a fact that directs life, that makes lifestyle earn features (Varış, 1991).

It is possible to interpret the intended behavior change that education causes in the person as development in person. According to acknowledged Bruner (1991) who has led development of education theories, development “is based on the person to adopt the events with a storage system that is in harmony with the environment. Such a system improves the child's ability to go beyond an

information s/he has acquires (Bottery, 1992). The individual can make estimates aimed at future based on the world model s/he has stored.” it is mentioned. In this sense the qualities of course programs that the school organization presents to its students, which will also supply development from within formal education has great importance. (Gürkan, 1991)

In the society, there is an evident duty distribution among individuals. In one aspect, everybody is living a life dependent on the others. Persons, groups or organizations specialized in certain areas act in manners to answers other persons' needs. School is the organization that executes schooling activities for persons. Maybe school undertakes an important responsibility considering other areas of duty by leading the individuals of the society. In this manner, “A school not only gives the traditional values to the individuals of the society, but also comes across the duty of preparing the students to the developing and changing world conditions.” (Özdemir, 2000)

“In our age, schools are defined as a place to learn.” (Şişman, 2002, s.1) Parents expect too much from the school that is working to fulfill the function of learning. In the direction of this expectation, the schools ability to fulfill the learning function gets the needed qualities with the course plan it is applying.

School makes its students earn values, attitudes, aims and approaches with its course plan. This affects our future and what kind of a future we will live in. The values, aims, attitudes and approaches that the society has or must have for its maturation are expected to direct education that will affect the society's future (Sagor& Barnett 1994). These attributes that must interact with education must also take their places in programs that are a layer of education. If programs have not internalized values, attitudes, aims and approaches, it will stay as a schooling activity made up of memorization-based useless data heaps.

Course plans accept that students are a social personality, thus will be influenced by his/her family, school and the persons in his/her surrounding in his/her development, and gives guidance for the child to grow up to adapting to his/her environment, working and living harmoniously in this environment.

As education is responsible in developing democracy, dignity, understanding, fairness, honesty, enterpreneurity, optimism, patience, loyalty, simplicity, tenderness, tolerance, thriftiness, obtaining culture transfer, communication skill, confidence and duty responsibility awareness (Lortie, 1975), programs strive to develop this awareness .

Course programs aim at students' having the knowledge and abilities needed for life, recognizing their countries and the position of their countries in the EU and the world, their development in psychological, ethical, social and cultural matters within their customs. With this aim, the programs try to make them understand and accept how their beliefs, thoughts, intellect and cultures will affect not only themselves but also the others and the society (Leithwood, 1994).

Programs have at hand the future life and needs of the child (Bass, 1985). With this aim, they take measures to meet his/her needs that may appear throughout his/her progress. Programs accept that education throughout life is an unabandonable necessity, and that that passes through enjoying learning in school ages; in this manner takes measures for the student to enjoy learning and learning how to learn (Firestone, 1996).

Forming an individual and a society that can solve his problems effectively is one of the main aims of education (Donaldson, 2001). So, programs give priority to bringing up individuals that can notice and solve their problems. With this aim it strives in the direction of obtaining the skills the student will need to solve problems (Sergiovanni, 1991).

Programs provide every child to enter the education system, every child that entered the system to keep on development, and opening and enriching ways for every individual's potential to increase ( Hodgkinson,1991).

Local languages and cultures become even more important in contrast to what was expected in the globalizing world. On the other hand, globalization “shrink”s the world, make far closer, and eases communication (Hay, 2001). The powerful communication connections being experienced in the world make using foreign language obligatory. So programs aim for at least one foreign language to be used effectively.

The aim of the programs is not to use data technologies but to use data technologies effectively and productively in order to reach a purpose. Programs make systematic arrangements on in which lesson and how to plant data technologies.

Being able to work together and to have a good communication is expected from the individual in the developing world conditions (Bowers, 1990). Programs make arrangements to give individuals these skills and develop habits in this manner.

All that is being drawn with this theoretical roof we come across as components that must exist in ideal course programs (Schlechty, 1990). But that the school can not fulfill the function of preparing students to life, which is its primary function, can parallely be evaluated with our level of development (Leithwood, Leonard, & Sharratt, 1998). With this qualitative research, an answer to the question of how much successful our present course programs are in preparing our students to life will be sought from the viewpoint of primary school administrators.

### **Method**

A qualitative research was administered in this research. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect much of data for this study. The initial interview questions were developed after a review of literature about effectiveness studies with administration. Further interview questions were developed from analyzing the transcripts of the interview with the principals. Five principals were interviewed. In the research, 10 interview questions prepared before principals are asked separately. The subject of the research being extensive, the research being aimed at only primary school level, and data being gathered from only school administratos are seen as the restrictions of the research.

### **The questions and logic guiding the research were:**

1. Do you believe that the students are prepared to life in the light of the concurrent course books?

In the development process of course programs, chiefly an answer to the question of “What shall we teach” is sought. With finding the answer to this question, in one aspect the coverage of the program, in other words its content is designated. For coverage or content to be followed by not only the teacher but also the student are the course books designed and printed. With this in mind, an answer to how much successful exercise and course books are in preparing our students to life is sought.

2. When we look at our society, it is seen that we couldn't internalize enough democracy. Moving on this point, do you believe the students acquire democratic values enough at school?

Unfortunately, we can come across many examples that see democratic values as nothing in social life. Education, on papers, strives for the development of democracy knowledge, which is one of the unabandonable values of society. But when we look at practice, it is clearly seen that this is not the case. If our view is true or not is sought an answer in this question.

3. Do you think the compulsory education period is enough to prepare the students to life? If not, do you think extending the compulsory education period could have a positive affect on preparing students to life? Please explain.

Considering that education produces an outcome in an average of 25 years, an answer is sought to if only 8 years as in the concurrent practice is enough to prepare our students to life.

4. Do you find enough the foreign language education given in your school? If negative, can you explain the reasons?

It is an inevitable reality that it is a necessity learning universal languages (especially English, German etc.) in order to be able to keep up with the fast changes occurring in our age. In this manner, it becomes even more important learning/teaching the languages in question in an advanced level. The powerful communication connections being experienced in the world makes it necessary to use foreign languages. It is known that our course programs aim to make use at least

one foreign language effectively; an answer is sought to how successful they are in reaching this goal.

5. How can school administration be of use in preparing students to life?

It is a reality that the school taking its input from the environment processes this input in the schooling process and presents the output back to the environment. We can say that our schools have some problems in getting resources in our centralist understanding of management. School administration is seen as the biggest support against resource problems informally, if not formally. It is thought that school administration support can aid to the students' acquisition thus their preparation to life especially in cultural and sports subjects. In the light of this sight how school administrators can contribute to schools and in what other ways is sought an answer from the viewpoints of schools managers.

6. If you think there is an inadequacy in the preparation of students to life, how would you rate it amongst parents, students, and teachers-management?

We tried to determine how our administrators, who think our base problem is our course programs not actually preparing the students to life, rate responsibilities of the sides that will solve this problem. In this sense it is aimed in this question to determine if the involved sides do what their responsibilities require and to rate the shares of the involved sides proportionally.

7. Do you think the terms respect and understanding both ways is given as it must be and has become a behavior at schools?

Set out on the fact that education is responsible in developing dignity, understandingness, fairness, fairness, honesty, enterpreneurity, optimism, patience, loyalty, simplicity, tenderness, respect, and tolerance consciousness; an answer to how effective course programs are in developing this consciousness is sought in this question.

8. What changes do you think we must make to our course content in the name of preparing our students to life better?

With this question it is tried to make an evaluation of our current curriculum relying on our managers experiences and to learn the synthesis they come up with as a result of this evaluation.

9. Do you think course programs are enough in passing cultural deposition to the students?

Please explain.

It is known that curriculum not only aims to giving students the knowledge and skills needed for life, but also aims to inform them to know their country's place and position in EU and the world, and their development in spiritual, ethical, social and cultural subjects and differences. An answer on how much our schools which are responsible for the passing of our cultural deposition as a society fulfill this function is sought.

10. Which do you think would be more effective to prepare our students to their life, the curriculum being prepared in the centre of the education organization, or, the curriculum being prepared by the school, as management is based at schools? Please explain.

With the truth of school-based administration idea that came out in the reformation and modernization process of education administration, having an important contribution to the preparation of curriculum harmonious with the school's environment, our administrator' view on this subject was sought with this question.

### **The Interviews**

The data in the research is gathered from the interviews with some primary school administrators. The interviews were held in their schools and the interviews were held between 30 to 40 minutes in order not to affect their activities. All the interviews were recorded on an audiocassette recorder. Everything was noted during the conversation to pace the interview and write down a statement. The interviews were held in their rooms separately. Before the interviews, researcher introduced himself and informed the principal about why this research was held, described that the information collected would be kept confidential and tried to motivate the principal to answer as neutral as possible. Eleven questions to be asked in the interviews and nine



questions for demographic purposes had been prepared beforehand. In the preparation of the questions, pre-literature information was employed so as to obtain validity.

### **The Findings**

The interview questions prepared for the research has been applied to five primary school principals, and they will be mentioned as A, B, C, D, E. Before passing on to the analysis of the answers, demographic data will be presented:

Principal A is a 45 to 49 years old male, is married and has two children, is a graduate of Social Sciences Primary School Teacher Training department, has been in the teaching business for more than 21 years. A administrator for more than seven years, he is the administrator of the school for the last two years.

Principal B is a 35 to 39 years old male, is married and has one child, is a graduate of Social Sciences Primary School Teacher Training department, has been in the business 16 to 20 years, has started as a administrator in this school 6 years ago.

Principal C is above 50 male, married and has one child, Social Sciences Primary School Teacher Training department graduate; a teacher for more than 21 years, a administrator for over 7 years, and a administrator in this schools for two years.

Principal D is 45 to 49 male, married with two children, Social Sciences Primary School Teacher Training department graduate; a teacher for more than 21 years, started as a administrator in this school and is a administrator for 12 years.

Principal E is above 50 male, married with one children, Social Sciences Primary School Teacher Training department graduate, a teacher for more than 21 years, started as a administrator in this school 14 years ago.

In this part of the research, the answers to the questions asked in the interviews with the school principals will be analyzed. In the analysis, each principal's answer to each question will be

listed one after another; summaries and comments on the answers will be presented after the answers under each question separately. Questions asked are listed below.

\* The first question was ‘Do you believe that the students are prepared to life in the light of the concurrent course books?’ Principal A said that I can't say I totally agree or disagree with this. No doubt theoretical information will not be enough in preparing students to life. The latest course books have brought some positive improvements in application. Principal B said that I personally think the information and data presented in course books partly load necessary and unnecessary data rather than prepare the students to future. Provides knowledge based on the OKS (High School Etrance Examination) and ÖSS (University Etrance Ezamination) exams at the end of the school rather then prepare to life. Principal C said that Not enough. I think course books must include the daily life of a person more. It would be better if the course books included daily and social life for understanding the subjects. Principal D said that I think the curriculum we started this year is better than the former ones. Some lessons, like home economy and work education also support this. Principal E said that It can't be said that the students are totally prepared to life with today's course books. But the new improvements are positive. Works on changing the books' contents is active.

It is seen that almost all our administrators agree on the course books' insufficiency. Our administrators have especially mentioned that the course books include useless information rather than prepare the students to life, that content is based on the students' continuum of school life and the exams ahead. From the answers our managers gave to the question, what they criticize is mostly that the course books are data- and memory-based. Another point our administrators state all together is that the new books prepared based on the new curriculum may help our students get social skills better considering former books.

\* The second question was ‘When we look at our society, it is seen that we couldn't internalize enough democracy. Moving on this point, do you believe the students acquire democratic values

enough at school?' Principal A said that there is a practice in schools called democracy education. As in every field, we see our inadequacy in this field, too. For example students are not called to each platform and allowed to tell their thoughts. Neither are the persons that can be models to the students. The principal B said that unfortunately I don't believe our students get the democratic values enough at schools. I don't think they can get these values in an environment where the school principal and the teacher in the classroom is the ultimate authority. For example a student that the students don't want can be select class' head student. The principal C said that students are not able to adopt enough to democratic values. I don't believe individuals living in a mother-father-family environment know and live democracy enough. Most families, if asked, would not know what democracy is. The principal D said that studies on this are carried on. Student council elections are held at schools. There are studies in this manner in that council and citizenship and human rights lessons. I believe that will only improve through practice. The principal E said that we grown-ups haven't yet been able to adopt democracy that we can make students have it. We must get rid of our prejudices for that. Each student comes from different sources, equipped with various prejudices. For example, we were unable to make girl and boy students sit together in this school when I was first assigned here. But we resisted and succeeded in changing that. It will open many door to making students get democratic values removing our Ministry of National Education and giving it an autonomous structure.

From the answers given to this question it is understood that our school administrators find democracy education given in our schools; that democracy education is a whole; that in this whole are headmasters, assistant headmasters, all other staff in the school, family and environment; that maybe those that will be teach democracy must first be educated on the subject; that although better than none, the education given and the practices held in our schools is not enough; that the term universal democracy must be totally understood, adopted and applied in this manner; and that students have a problem of finding a role model in democracy education. Understanding of

democracy which is a crucial part of social life being not given planned and programmed in the schooling process in one manner ruins this period in the schools which we could see as an opportunity.

\* The third question was that 'Do you think the compulsory education period (eight years) is enough to prepare the students to life? If not, do you think extending the compulsory education period could have a positive affect on preparing students to life? Please explain.' Principal A said that eight years is a pretty important and enough period as long as the type and quality of the given is good. Unfortunately our education system does not contain any subjects that require anything to meet our students' personal needs. In western countries, for example Switzerland, a person who graduates from compulsory education knows how to cook, how to do first aid, living on his own in nature because he gets the education for that. Principal B said that compulsory education period must be 11 or 12 years but not in this system. Because, in the current system, we raise youngsters with a diploma, but no job and quality. But continuation to schools according to the students' knowledge, ability and aims begin at the fourth year. For example students with an inadequate IQ, concerns or wish could be led to profession schools and get the education that they want and provide them the employment they want. Principal C said that no. Current education must be 12 years compulsory. But I think it is wrong to classify education according to age and keep them together considering student psychology. I think this education system is a combination of past and present, and thus complicated. Our education system must be aimed at profession starting at primary school third grade. Principal D said that it is not enough. It must be longer. Because I know that this period is longer in all the developed countries. Principal E said that compulsory education period is not enough. First of all, one year preschool education must be made compulsory. Primary education must be 9 years with preschool. Also, I think it will have a positive effect having courses like drawing, music, physical training, theatre studies without grading in the weekends considering the students' preferences.

We see that our administrators not only find compulsory education period insufficient, but also that what we can give in the content in the present time is also important. The answers given talk about compulsory education periods like 9, 11, and 12; the administrators who suggested compulsory education to be 9 years also talked about the importance of preschool education. It is understood that our administrators have similar thoughts on facts like social and cultural courses must be employed in the class hours to be earned with the lengthening of compulsory education period; developed countries must be taken as examples in compulsory education.

\* The fourth question was ‘Do you find enough the foreign language education given in your school? If negative, can you explain the reasons?’ Principal A said that throughout our country the foreign language education given in “classical” schools is not enough. It is impossible to advance in level without practice in education. For example we don't have the language laboratory needed for language teaching in our school. Also not knowing the mother language very well affects foreign language education. Principal B said that i totally disagree with foreign language education. And I don't think foreign language education given in our schools is enough. You can't teach foreign language putting foreign language classes for 2 class hours in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades and 4 hours in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. Foreign language can be taught we a really well developed teacher staff and changing foreign language teaching program. In the current conditions, a university graduate student sees many hours of foreign language, but can't speak it. Principal C said that foreign language education is not enough. Foreign language education is not enough in primary schools just like in all other levels. a. Time and sources are not enough. b. Practices for a permanent foreign language are not enough. c. It must also be supported in press (televisions and movies). Principal D said that it is not enough. I have been working in this school for 8 years. I have never seen the classes totally full and also never worked with a permanent government personnel foreign language teacher. This I suppose is realized only in our school, but I don't suppose it is much better in other schools. Practical studies must be held more. Principal E said that foreign language education given in our schools

is not enough. We don't have foreign language teachers even in schools that must legally have a permanent government teacher.

Generally the administrators state that foreign language education given in our schools is not enough, that there are not enough permanent foreign language teachers, that this hole is closed with teachers of other branches or temporary teachers; that the education given can't go beyond theory; that the deficit in appliance is because of the lack of a foreign language laboratory in our schools; that the side materials on this subject (books, cassettes, CDs etc.) are inadequate; and also that there are problems in teaching the mother language, put aside foreign language. What we understand from this is that success can't be achieved with limited means like having problems in mother language, out-of-branch teachers and the like.

\* The fifth question was 'How can local administration be of use in preparing students to life?' Principal A said that local administration should open sports areas (swimming, pools, tennis, ski resorts, football and volleyball fields etc.), must allow students to practice in departments and fields that belong to the local administration, must have cultural places like libraries, and theatres. And we must fight with courage against components and environments that can be harmful to students. Principal B said that local administrations, municipalities and village chiefs must put funds in education activities and schools must be supported in both material and moral fields. Social and cultural activities of schools must be supported. Principal C said that i think the aid of local administrations is partly adequate. There has to be a support to education portion in the budgets of local administrations. I don't consider the current status adequate. Principal D said that they can support the school with establishments and opportunities aimed at social life. There can be playgrounds around school in order to make students more connected with and bound to schools. Principal E said that in preparing students to life, local administrations can assist in creating application areas where students can apply what they have learned. Sports fields, drawing and painting departments, theatre halls and the like.

It is seen that administrators agree on local administrations support activities the school does. It is seen that they mention local administrations to support and give sources to schools, to open fields for applying and intensifying the education given at schools, to open sports areas or allow use of shared fields, and to present areas for students to use in cultural activities.

\* The sixth question was 'If you think there is an inadequacy in the preparation of students to life, how would you rate it amongst parents, students, and teachers-management?' Principal A said that of course there are inadequacies. The government must prevent places that can lead students to life (for example stopping and shutting down smuggled extract production sites), the parents must tell any kind of problems to the teachers and the administration, the administration must inform the parents about every subject and the teachers must employ make-live-learn more in the lessons. Principal B said that unfortunately we didn't care at least a little about the training part of this in our schools, we only cared about education. The parent does not question if his/her child is being grown up as a good person, as a good citizen, the administrator measures education success with success in education. Principal C said that it would be positive if the schools went well with school-parent-student contract which is newly built. What we complain most in our schools is parents' indifference. Principal D said that we know that school, family and environment are effective in shaping persons. In this case all factors have big shares, but school and family must overcome this. The administrator will prepare the environment, the teacher will work, and the student will get and apply. Principal E said that there are inadequacies in the preparation of students to life. The family has the biggest share in this. Families with a better economical situation have a more democratic structure. Student is trusted. We can share this 60% parent-student, 30% teacher, 10% management. What we must not forget here is the education policy the Ministry of National Education is making use of.

What we learn from the answers our administrators give to this question is that there is a general inadequacy in preparing students to life and that everybody involved is responsible in this inadequacy. There is an obvious heap in the idea that the biggest share belongs to parents. That

local administration also has a share in this subject is explained with the reality that our students may get negatively affected by the surrounding. Attention is drawn to the system being education-based, not training based as the main reason of inadequacy to prepare the students to life. We also see that the managers mention the new school-parent-student contract being a positive step. We understand from the answers that school principals tend to think environment are family more responsible in preparing students to life.

\* The seventh question was 'Do you think the terms respect and understanding both ways is given as it must be and has become a behavior at schools?' Principal A said that not in the intended level. There are studies in increasing the level in our school. We arrange seminars about the principles of ethical behavior, we have correcting studies when we notice negative behaviors. Principal B said that it depends on the teachers' attitudes. But I think we do not give the terms respect and tolerance in our schools. Principal C said that there has to be an absolute respect-love among the persons who educate and who are educated. I wouldn't want to work in an environment with no respect message. Principal D said that there are applications on this in the new curriculum. But I think it is not totally applied as of yet. I think this application will fit in by time. Principal E said that the terms love and tolerance are being tried to be given at schools. It may be not enough. These can become behaviors more easily in low grades. The students must be well observed in ages 13 to 15 when their personalities start changing. Children who are not well guided in these ages can become selfish and intolerant. So there has to be a psychological counselor in schools regardless of the school size.

Our administrators generally state that giving the terms respect and tolerance are given with the self-sacrifices of teachers and principals. It is pointed that especially the course teachers are the main determiners in this subject, and also that seminar on respect and tolerance must be given, that these terms can be more internalized by observing the students and giving warnings when necessary. We saw from the answers that the principals are not too pessimistic about respect and tolerance, that they have hopes on the contrary; and the source of hopes was seen as the new



arrangements in curriculum.

\* The eighth question was ‘What changes do you think we must make to our course content in the name of preparing our students to life better?’ Principal A said that applied education. Principal B said that we must not only educate but also train. For example a student can get a “Thanks” or “Congratulations” certificate no matter how his behaviors are. But it would also be more important for the others if the student's behaviors were evaluated and given certificates. Principal C said that there being more research, see-it-in-its-place, and application in the new curriculum is a positive fact. Permissions and thoughts of the school management must be gotten when teaching. Also schools at the same neighborhood must keep in touch about classes and teachers. Principal D said that there are big leaps in curriculum lately. These are the new curriculum, and a project (Child-Friendly School Project) which is being applied in pilot schools. The main aim in school is preparing an environment where the child enjoys himself, learns, and produces. I believe we can get successful results with these projects. Principal E said that the density of curriculum must be decreased, sports and arts courses must not be evaluated with marks and courses must have application laboratories.

It seems what our administrators all agree is that our schools must focus more on application, training and education. The principals criticize especially the fact that the old curriculum was instruction-centered. Another point noticed is that we lack practice areas where our students can make and live the theoretical knowledge that is wanted to be made gained in the curriculum. Also mentioned is that a curriculum focusing on social, cultural and sports skills must be prepared; and the concurrent curriculum prepared with this in mind will supposedly be successful. What results from this is that the school environment is a great chance for our students' preparation to life. If we aim at making use of this chance, we can give our students many skills and much information about life.

The ninth question was ‘Do you think course programs are enough in passing cultural deposition to the students? Please explain.’ Principal A said that cultural knowledge and

sciences can be perceived with much prejudice according to political thoughts. This situation is reflected on the curriculum based on the government. I believe our programs will be enough when each and every one of our values are respected in the society. Principal B said that i don't think they are enough. Because a student graduating from high school does not know our painters, poets, and writers, or their works. In history and social knowledge lessons the cultural values and difficulties of the day must also be acknowledged aside from historical events. Principal C said that when we look at today's course subjects, we see that cultural topics are not covered much. The cultural structure of the society we are living in must be told as a separate course. Principal D said that of course there is knowledge about culture and its transfer in our books. But these are mentioned superficially and it can't be said they are enough. If we give an example from the “Child-Friendly School Project”, an exhibition on dressing could be held, ranging samples from the past to the present. Principal E said that i don't believe course curriculum is enough in passing cultural inheritance to the students. We get influenced by foreign cultural before we learn our own geography, history and literature.

It is mentioned by the principals that our course curriculum is inadequate and unsuccessful in passing our own cultural values. Maybe the most important issue here is that we get influenced by foreign cultures before we learn our own. All our administrators state that we must try hard to get rid of the deficiency in passing and teaching our own cultural values which has a vital importance in keeping social integrity.

\* The tenth question was ‘Which do you think would be more effective to prepare our students to their life, the curriculum being prepared in the centre of the education organization, or, the curriculum being prepared by the school, as management is based at schools? Please explain.’ Principal A said that in preparing the curriculum, the school and teacher must be more in control. Curriculum must take into account regional features but must be unifying and completing. Experts of the subject must also add technically. Principal B said that i think it is more appropriate for the curriculum to be prepared by the centre. Because we have a national

education policy and the school educate accordingly. Principal C said that it must be from the central organization for it to be the same all around Turkiye. But the centre must take into account at the end of the year the reports that quote the thoughts of the teachers. Principal D said that i think it would be helpful without disturbing the unity of education taking into account the conditions in the school and its surrounding. Principal E said that it is more appropriate for the center to prepare the course curriculum to hold the unity.

From the answers given to this question, it is seen that thought differ from thesis to anti-thesis and to synthesis. It is seen that some of the principals want the curriculum be prepared by the involved experts considering the conditions in the school and its surrounding; some state that unity can only be kept by the curriculum being prepared by the central organization; some of them on the other hand state that when the centre prepares the curriculum, it must also take into account the realities of the school. It really looks like it must be a synthesis, the center must prepare the course plans in order to keep national unity, but in other components, must also take into consideration the realities based on schools.

### **Conclusion**

We have reached the results in our interviews with the principals in “Does the course curriculum prepare the students to life?” as listed:

Course books are inadequate in content; their content is aimed at abstract development; they habituate the students to memorization with their logic of preparation; the course books prepared according to the new primary school curriculum may help our students develop social skills.

Democracy education given in schools is not enough; no total success in application is achieved as not everybody (principal, teacher, student, parent, and environment) understands exactly the term universal democracy.

The period of compulsory education is not enough; at least one year of pre-school education must be included in compulsory education period; the time that will be gained by making use of

pre-school education must be employed in social and cultural courses for students.

Foreign language education given in schools is not enough; there is difficulty in finding foreign language teachers; and insufficiency of application negatively effects foreign language education.

The biggest share in preparing the students to life is in parents; and local administration, teachers and managers must also contribute to this; there has to be coordination among the related.

Mentoring and training must be given importance at least as much as education in schools; for making use of theoretical information, there must be application fields inside and outside the school.

Course curricula must be prepared at the center organization in the name of achieving national unity, and besides, must employ related experts and must take into account the realities of schools.

## **SUGGESTIONS**

1. The content of course books can be rearranged in the Ministry of National Education with participation of related experts reconsidering the truth of local schools.
2. There can be seminars in our schools in certain periods in order to make principals, teachers, students and even parents internalize democracy.
3. There can be more education faculties with foreign language teacher training programs in our universities for closing the gap of government teachers in foreign language teaching.
4. Current law can be modified in order to make schools easily use socio-cultural fields that are under the control of local administrations.
5. The school-parent-student contracts being applied for the first time with the new primary school curriculum must be made more effective and aimed.

6. Laws can be modified to get support from local administrations in order to help students make use of the theoretical knowledge students learn in schools.
7. Our centralist management mind can be changed into a more flexible structure in order to take into account the school-based realities in preparing course curriculum.

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