# Review of one of the education policies: Total quality management in schools

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**ABSTRACT**

This paper reviews one of the policies which have been removed from implementation as a management approach (Total Quality Approach) in education. The main argument is that barrowing policies from abroad without considering to what extend the characteristics of the existing system would suit to the intended approach or to what extend the major needs of it would been met by the existing system are the major issues to take into account before introducing any policies in education. Therefore, Total Quality management approach and requirements of successful implementations are discussed by setting these arguments in Turkey's education.

**Keywords:** Total quality management approach, leadership, culture.

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## INTRODUCTION

Improving the quality of education has been one of major concerns of governments and education authorities in many countries. Because of rapid changes experienced in society, different issues have come on to the agenda. In response to changes in the world, that is the demands of the competitive global economy, countries have looked for new solutions to sort out their economic problems. Given that the major aim of education is to fulfil the demands and needs of society, schools have been faced with new needs and aims.

The questions of competitiveness, efficiency and productivity as a part of public policy have become an important issue in education in response to both the global and domestic needs of the larger economic world. As a consequence, a radical change emerged in the policy of schooling, constructed to favour New Public Management in its varying forms, through changing structures of the education systems of countries as a result of the idea that the restructuring of education will lead to greater efficiency and productivity for better trained students in educational institutions. Some quality strategies have borrowed from the private sector to meet these expectations. One of the strategies employed for providing greater efficiency and productivity Total Quality Management aims to satisfy customer needs. By

accepting schools as a kind of business organizations, the concept of 'school management' has been directly translated from the industrial world to the educational field (Riches and Morgan, 1989).

Turkey could not escape from these global influences, over the last few decades the Turkish Ministry of Education introduced different educational policies to implement several large development projects within national education system. However, in the recent years many of the projects have been cancelled because of loosing its importance in the implementations. One of the project being used in the largest of these, the 'National Education Development Project (NEDP), involves schools being restructured and developed based on the insights of the Total Quality Management approach. To many of its proponents the concepts and practices of total quality management (TQM) in schools was seen as a powerful tool for increasing school effectiveness, hence enhance the quality of education (Cheng, 1996; Greenwood and Gaunt, 1994; Murgatroyd and Morgan, 1993). However, implementation of TQM in education has dynamics as a socio-political process that demand the institutions and also force them of change.

In the light of these arguments, This study focuses on a review of Total Quality Management in education, as,

once, it had been seen a remedy for increasing the quality of education in Turkey. This study also discusses how critical factors would have influenced successful implementation of the approach in practice in Turkey.

## TQM IN THE EDUCATIONAL CONTEX

TQM is an approach to management with roots in industry and is: "…The systematic management of an organization's customer-supplier relationships in such a way as to ensure sustainable, steep-slope improvements in quality performance" (Murgatroyd and Morgan, 1994: 58). The concept of quality as used in education aims: "to improve the quality of teaching and learning, to increase participation, and to improve attainment" (FEU, 1991: 3). TQM relies on a number of the key elements, which define main characteristics of the approach as explained below (Murgatroyd and Morgan, 1993; Greenwood and Gaunt, 1994).

- Leadership of heads
- Empowerment
- Marketization and measuring
- Planning and organization
- Involvement
- Teamwork

### Leadership of heads

The essence of the approach relies on visionary leadership, which requires managing an organization in order to meet the needs of customers consistently and ensuring continued improvement in every activity of the organization (Greenwood and Gaunt, 1994). The underlying role of leaders is to create an appropriate culture, in which the institution can reach its desired goals in an effective way (Schein, 1985; Harris, 2003). What does the concept of culture mean within the context of organizations? Hargreaves (1995) explains the concept of culture in general as a 'way of life': "Most writers employ the anthropological definition – culture as the knowledge, beliefs, values, customs, morals, rituals, symbols and language of a group: some 'way of life' in short" (p. 25).

As indicated above, beliefs, values, customs are determinant factors for people to define reality and to shape their actions and make sense of their environment. Defining reality is seen one of the functions of culture which is also a problem solving function (Hargreaves, 1995). In other words, culture is the assumptions of the group members, which are central to develop their adaptability to coping with problems as well as an important factor for the organizational performance (Schein, 1985).

The question we may raise at this point is that of which dimensions of school culture constitute a response to the adaptability to coping with problems. Stoll (1999) argues that "School culture is most clearly 'seen' in the way people relate to work together; and the extent to which there is a learning focus for both pupils and adults …" (p. 35). In addition, another definition of school culture expresses the importance of common values the organization's members have. "Culture should be reserved for the deeper level of *basic assumptions* and *beliefs* that are shared by members of an organization, that operate unconsciously, and that define in a basic "taken-for-granted" fashion an organization's view of itself and its environment" (Schein, 1985: 6). The argument is the importance of having common values and a climate focusing on the quality of relationships between members of an organization. In case that an organization has a common culture that create a positive force for the improvement of the organization. Hence, it is widely accepted that school culture and, the role of leaders to build that culture, to enhance school improvement is a vital force (Stoll, 1999; Stoll et al., 2002).

Leaders with culture-building on their minds have an ever-present awareness of…cultural norms to their daily interactions, decisions and plans, thus shaping the way events take place. Because of this dynamic, culture-building occurs simultaneously and through the way school people use their educational, human and technical skills in handling daily events or establishing regular practices (Saphier, and King, 1985: 72).

Leaders, who attach importance to culture-building notion, have constantly cultural norms in their mind in their daily interactions, during making decisions and plans. Therefore, they mold the way events occur. Thanks to this dynamic, culture-building takes place synchronously, and this way, educators employ their human, educational, and technical skills in coping with routine activities or coming up with regular practices (Saphier, and King, 1985: 72).

This argument raises the issue of how culture may effect school people's values and beliefs to contribute to schools' productivity through their mission by developing their capacities. According to the literature, leadership style is central to change the culture of the school (Sammons, 1999), which has important consequences for teacher behavior.

Leadership is, by and large, related to the process of influence. Gronn (1999) defines leaders as influential persons: "Influence means 'significant affecting' (White, 1972: 485), whereby a tangible difference in degree or kind is made to an individual or a group's 'well-being, interests, attitudes, beliefs, intentions, desires, hopes, policies or behaviour' (White, 1972, p. 489)" (p. 5). The idea that is derived from this argument is that effective performance of leaders depends on leadership influence that is results in the followers desire to follow their leader.

By taking account of these arguments, the issue raised is what kind of leadership is needed in TQM and to what

extent headteachers accomplishes its requirements in practice with the skills and management style they apply. TQM appears to require a leadership, which is visionary, in the sense that the leader is supposed to provide empowerment, performance and a strategy aiming at realizing the vision. West-Burnham (1992) for example, defines leadership as "providing and driving the vision" (p. 51). In addition, a key aspect of leadership is to ensure the organization is working in a way that ensures consistently high performance and constant improvement (Murgatroyd and Morgan 1993: 65). Murgatroyd and Morgan (1993) also suggest that effective leaders share characteristics such as creativity, sensitivity, and the capability to manage changes achieved through the practices of trusting the staff as professionals and creating a collegial value frameworks, putting emphasis on teamwork and empowerment, accepting leadership functions as action not position, putting clear and agreed goals, and seeing development, learning and training as critical paths to sustainability.

These ideas are embedded in transformational leadership. Transformational leadership aims to make a commitment to target goals and to empower subordinates in such a way that they are able to accomplish these shared goals. Leithwood et al. (1999) argues that this approach to leadership requires traits such as charisma, vision, culture building and empowerment. This form of leadership is central to influence the member of the organization to ensure their high-level commitment and capacity. To achieve commitment to a shared vision supposedly results in productivity in accomplishing organizational goals (Leithwood et al., 1999). In addition, the other distinctive feature of the approach is that the power of leaders comes not from their given position in the institution, but rather from their performance and success, and this is the central purpose of leadership. As a result, the allocation of the leadership role is not necessarily undertaken by the administrators. As Leithwood et al. (1999) put it: "… power is attributed by organization members to whomever is able to inspire their commitments to collective aspirations and the desire for personal and collective mastery of the capacities needed to accomplish such aspirations"(p. 9). Another issue raising from transformational leadership is the importance of ensuring humanistic values among subordinates. For example, Yukl (1994) argues that transformational leadership seeks to raise a consciousness in followers by appealing to higher ideals and moral values such as liberty, justice, equality, peace, and humanitarianism. Leithwood et al. (1999) have developed a model of transformational leadership in schools combining the above arguments. This model provides seven dimensions of leadership: building school vision; establishing school goals; providing intellectual stimulation; offering individualized support; modeling best practices and important organizational values; demonstrating high

performance expectations; creating a productive school culture; and developing structures to foster participation in school decisions.

However, the requirements of transformational leadership from a headteacher who is to undertake this position appears to be too much job and expectations are too high to fulfill for an individual to transform the schools for their successes (Gronn, 1999). Moreover, this kind of leadership demands structural changes on the role of leadership that may create tension in the organization. For example, one of the features of transformational leadership is to undertake leadership role among the members of the organization to whom she/he is able to able to fulfil the requirements. This implementation is difficult to achieve due to the likely resistance of a person who has legitimate power of leadership in the organization.

Another issue arising out of TQM literature is that leaders are expected to play educator, coaching, mentor, and counseling roles (Greenwood and Gaunt, 1994). The requirement of this ability from leaders rests on the idea that leaders influence the staff of the organization by using expert power. Instructional leadership may respond to the context with providing this kind of trait for the leadership style. As Leithwood et al. (1999) argue, one aspect of the approach provides "…considerable influence through expert knowledge on the part of those occupying such role" (p. 8).

In addition, instructional leadership is an important form of leadership to respond educational values and capacity building of schools for their improvement by focusing on learning for both pupils and adults (Sergiovanni, 1996). Harris (2003) refers to Sergiovanni (1996) to explain the functions of this type of leadership. Instructional or pedagogical leadership is:

> …a form of leadership which invests in capacity-building by developing social and academic capital for students and intellectual and professional capital for teachers. … this model differs from the existing bureaucratic, visionary and entrepreneurial leadership theories that dominate the literature because it is concerned with adding value by developing various forms of human capital. (p. 21)

Where these issues are ensured by leaders in schools some characteristics of TQM culture may be accomplished. Murgatroyd and Morgan (1993) argue that from a TQM perspective successful organizations have some underlying beliefs and assumptions. These involve the following:

- innovation is valued highly;
- status is secondary to performance and contribution;
- leadership functions as an action, not a position;
- rewards are shared through team work;

- development, learning and training are seen as critical paths to sustainability;
- empowerment to achieve challenging goals are supported by continued development and success provide a climate for self-motivation. (Murgatroyd and Morgan 1993: 65)

A central argument from these discussions may be that school culture is dominated by two complementary forces – leadership and a drive for continuous improvement of schools. It would appear that the capability of headteachers and staff in schools to achieve change would enable the school to become a leaning organization and lead to long term improvement. Further, the factors which define a learning organization aiming for continuous improvement, is determined by the demand of the society. Stoll and her colleagues (2002) put it:

> The demands of leadership for change mean that a leader is likely to need to focus in different ways on different dimensions of their work. On the one hand, they must guide their internal communities towards an evolving common vision of a better future. At the same time, they must continuously assess the demands of the outside world, integrating them where appropriate and holding them at bay where necessary. This is a demanding task. (p.47)

## Empowerment

According to TQM philosophy, empowerment of all stakeholders is seen as one of the major strategies to achieve challenging goals; in other words, to reach high performance in the institution to meet expectations of stakeholders. Within the school context, empowerment of teachers is seen crucial for their commitment to the school vision. Bush (1995) suggests that:

> … teachers as professionals should be able to participate in school or college decision-making because their commitment to the implementation of decisions is essential if the process is to be more than an empty ritual. (p.8)

Sergiovanni (1996) makes a link between High Performance Theory (HPT) and TQM, pointing out that TQM stands for HTP in its principles. According to HTP theory, empowerment relies on the idea that the degree of motivation and satisfaction of teachers will be increased by the way that they are assigned a task. Allowing teachers to make their own decisions for any assigned work will enhance motivation, satisfaction and commitment among teachers (Sergiovanni, 1996). In addition, it is argued that empowerment leads teachers to own their work rather than seeing it as an imposition. As

a result they perform well in their work. The concept of empowerment in the context of TQM is also raised by Kirkpatrick and Martinez-Lucio (1995): "…this approach is potentially empowering for workers, because it is based on the belief that 'quality improvement … can be achieved if all staff are equally involved, committed and given the space and responsibility to make decisions" (p. 355). However, empowerment works within a framework drawn by the leaders. Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994) state:

> Empowerment begins when the vision and goals have already been set, by the school leaders. What a team or an individual is empowered to do is to turn the vision and strategy into reality through achieving those challenging goals set for them by the leadership of the school. Individuals are empowered in terms of how they can achieve the goals set, not in terms of what the goals might be. (p.121)

Two confronting issues are raising from all these arguments. The first implication of TQM in an educational organisation is that it requires autonomy to implement all the professional decisions to achieve desired goals. However, many countries have experiencing external controls framed by different factors through the governments in their educational systems. Encountering these kinds of external forces may create external constraints, which make the leaders less effective in their position to fulfil the requirements of their position to achieve the desired change. For example, educational policies in Britain require school leaders to put action in the direction of their requirements. Successive Governments have introduced certain policies such as the marketization of education, target-setting, and performance monitoring. These have led school leaders to adjust their vision so that it is in accordance with these strategies. Second, the issue of empowerment of teachers in the processes of TQM can be interpreted in a different way; that is, in terms of empowering teachers in the major objectives and decisions of their work. The issue of empowerment may be seen as leading teachers to conform to predetermined decisions, which are imposed by Government policy. These issues can be regarded as external constraints to creating an appropriate school culture that contradict with the professional judgement and decision-making processes of school stakeholders TQM requires. As a result, leaders are likely to face difficulty in accomplishing the expected change.

## Marketisation and measuring

Leaders employ strategies for individual competitive survival, and visible and measurable success. These strategies are considered to be the priority for the

performance of the institution (Grace, 1995). The aims of implementation of these concepts are overlapping and inter-related. Visible and measurable success plays an important role in proving the standard of performance achieved in the institution hence providing a better image of a good school. In this way, marketisation is intended to increase the number of customers.

Marketisation of schooling is part of a dual approach. One part of the approach tries to market educational outcomes in the commercial world to compete with other institutions. Davies and Ellison (1997, p. 204) put it in their terms as: "the means by which the school actively communicates and promotes its purpose, values and products to the pupils, parents, staff and wider community". The other form of marketisation is defined as fulfilling customer needs and satisfaction through every process performed in the institution. Even though they are complementary processes, Greenwood and Gaunt (1994) argue that the primary focus of TQM in marketisation is related to the processes for customer satisfaction. Moreover, they argue that the necessity of the marketisation of schools relies on the view that "marketisation is the central future to accountability and responsibility" (p. 32).

On the other hand, a contradictory issue arising from the aims of education is central to criticism of TQM. Learning is the major aim of schooling, and schools have an ultimate goal to prepare students for the world. UNESCO's report for International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century (1996) argues that to meet changing world needs, children should be able to gain different kinds of knowledge. These are: "learning to know, learning to do, learning to live, and learning to be" (Stoll et al, 2002: 47). In addition, other aspects of education such as preparing students for socialisation into a complex society, emphasising the development of individual responsibility, talent, and free expression, teaching students to serve as a good citizens in a democracy are important goals for schools. However, according to TQM, the defining characteristics of success are established by facts proved through statistical processes. These processes aim at accomplishing the measured performance indicators by complementing outcomes and performance through defined strategic mission statements and objectives (Greenwood and Gaunt, 1994). The need to measure the success of a school in quantitative terms has brought new concepts for the aims of education. In the educational context, however, statistical processes are often limited to the measurement of academic achievement because this is easier to measure than the personal and social development of students.

**Planning and organization**

The importance of using planning processes to identify

organizational development is widely accepted by literature (Stoll and Fink, 1996; Bush et al, 1999; Bush et al., 1999) and is the official view of educational authorities in many countries. For example, in Britain, OFSTED states it:

> Strong leadership provides clear educational direction … the school has aims, values and policies which are reflected trough all its work … the school through its development planning, identifies relevant priorities and targets, takes the necessary action, and monitors and evaluates its progress towards them…there is a positive ethos, which reflect the school's commitment to high achievement, an effective learning environment, good relationships, and equality of opportunity for all pupils. (OFSTED, 1995, p. 100)

According to the TQM approach, a well-managed organization is one, which has clear goals to achieve. Planning processes play an important role in the performance of schooling though setting up goals and objectives in order to translate aspirations into action. Levacic et al, (1999) put it: "Objectives are agreed, and then information is obtained on the entire alternative means by which might be attained" (p. 17). Therefore, schools are required to do long-term strategic planning as well as short-term, annual or term planning to set their goals. Strategic planning is set according to the mission statement built by the leaders. To develop a clear long term strategy for TQM, integrated with other business strategies, is one of the major improvement processes. This strategy includes defining an institution's mission, target setting through improvement plans and performance monitoring, to make employees – in the case of a school, teachers - contribute to the restructuring of their work (Greenwood and Gaunt, 1994). In contrast, short-term planning aims to employ temporary measures in the institution. Besides, short-term goals also encourage the teachers to work hard and fast (Murgatroyd and Morgan, 1994).

Designing new structures is seen as essential to achieve the desired objectives. The aim of school structuring is planning the workload according to two functions. Wieringen and Attwell (1999) identify them as production and control. Control of process is accepted as being as important as production. This principle derives from the emphasis of producing 'quality', which is achieved by the prevention of work that does not meet standards (West-Burnham, 1992: 48). Wieringen and Attwell (1999) explain the function of control thus: "The control orientation emphasizes processing, quality, and performance criteria to control the structure" (p. 61). Controls of procedures are carried out in two different ways. One is self-monitoring and the other is mutual monitoring. In addition, TQM requires the institution to

evaluate itself on its quality of performance. When this strategy is applied, it may involve a new change in the policy of the inspection process bringing about a new orientation. Instead of carrying out inspection through 'outside agencies,' TQM requires evaluation to be carried out by internal monitoring through self-regulation (Ball, 1997).

## Involvement

TQM is usually implemented in response to perceived competition through aiming to win and sustain competitive advantage. This is maintained through the development of staff who are seen as assets in the institution: "All available means from suggestion schemes to various forms of teamwork must be considered for achieving broad employee interest, participation and contribution in the process of quality improvement; management must be prepared to share some of their powers and responsibilities" (Dale et al., 1994: 12). The involvement of students and parents in school decision-making processes is seen as an essential principle of schooling (West-Burnham, 1992). Furthermore, TQM places considerable emphasis on students' needs. The aim is to focus on students' (as customers) expectations and needs so that the school can gear all of its activities to meeting them. Cheng (1996) puts it like this: "The critical elements of total quality management in school include strategic constituencies' (for example, parents, students, etc) focus, continuous process improvement, and total involvement and empowerment of school members" (p. 27). He argues that according to the premises of TQM a school is effective in so far as it can involve and consequently empower all its members in the functioning of the school and meet the requirements, needs and expectations of both the school's internal and external stakeholders as part of a dynamic and constantly changing structure. Involvement into the processes is seen as making stakeholders own the change and therefore respond to it positively.

## Teamwork

Teamwork and involvement often go hand in hand in running procedures in schools. Creating teamwork to run a school is based on the idea that teamwork may enable staff participation in the processes. Hence this increases devolution of power and resources to the staff (Bottery, 1992). Wallace and Huckman (1999) make a point that teamwork is a 'collaborative approach to management'. They argue first that having this kind of management style in an institution generates a democratic way of management for staff through participating in work related decision-making processes. Secondly, they also argue participating in the decision making processes for the staff is likely to generate managerial effectiveness in

the institution as highlighted in the following: "More generally, managers are interdependent: whatever their position in the management hierarchy, every member of the staff has a contribution to make since managerial tasks can only be fulfilled with and through other people" (Wallace and Huckman, 1999: 4).

Teamwork is also seen as a kind of tool to increase performance among employees by recognizing their positive performance and achievement. This performance is recognized through success being celebrated and rewarded. When employees see the result of their activities being rewarded in the institution, they are supposedly encouraged towards further success (Dale et al., 1994). However, criticism has arisen that implementation of teamwork in schooling can generate fragmentation among teamwork groups. For example, Ball (1997) argues that implementation of teamwork created a climate in the school where "Competition and fragmentation were driven by a combination of praise and blame and more tangible rewards (resourcing, capitation, facilities, etc) to groups and individuals" (p. 324).

The impetus for TQM in education comes from the global and national changes noted earlier. According to proponents of the approach, it is a powerful tool, which increases school achievement. For example, according to West-Burnham (1992) there is a very direct and natural relationship between the 'search for excellence' and 'education' in the sense that in trying to pursue excellence every single aspect of the process is examined and error may be prevented at the time so as not to risk the overall result. West-Burnham (1992) writes: "It is difficult to conceptualize a situation where anything less than total quality is perceived as being appropriate or acceptable for education" (p. 7). Another reason West-Burnham seems very convinced that TQM is particularly appropriate for schools is that it gives a crucial role to 'personal relationships' in pursuing quality. He claims that "TQM will not work if it is perceived as a series of mechanistic processes. Above everything else, it is about the quality of personal relationships and this is an area where schools should have a significant advantage" (p. 9).

In consequence, according to the arguments in the previous sections TQM is a tool for school performance. School performance is achieved through productivity of processes that school members involved. Further, TQM assumes that school members will adhere to these assumptions if transformation of staff culture, which demands to put into practice radical organizational changes, as well as effective and cognitive adjustments to be made by headteachers and teachers, is ensured. In the next sections, I will relate these arguments to the change literature by taking account of Turkish educational characteristics - especially when NEDP project was implemented - that in order to discuss the likely implications of NEDP project which aims the implementation of TQM in Turkish schools. I will analyse the Turkish TQM change process using the following

questions:

What were the issues in initiating this kind of change in the Turkish system?
What were the issues in implementing of change?
What were the particular change issues being faced by Turkish headteachers?
Did Turkish headteachers see the need for such a change?
Did Turkish headteachers understand what is required of them to implement TQM?
Did Turkish headteachers believe this change is a good idea and are they likely to adapt the change?
What were obstacles to change within the Turkish education system?

## CHANGE FORCES AND PLACİNG CHANGE INTO TURKISH CONTEXT

Having explored TQM, this section set out the change process in terms of implementing it in Turkish schooling by examining the dynamics of the processes through answering questions. As Fullan (2001) puts it: "Educational change is technically simple and socially complex" (p. 69). It is therefore, first important to discuss the characteristics of the Turkish education before considering likely effects on intended change processes.

### Management structure and characteristics of the Turkish education system

When NEDP project implemented the Turkish education system is a highly centralized, resulting in a lack of autonomy in decision making for schools, and even for provincial administrators of education. The National Curriculum and highly regulated inspection system were defining features of the system.

In the system teachers, school principals, and even provincial level education offices were limited to acting as administrative arms of the central bureaucracy, with no independent autonomy and flexibility in decision-making. According to the OECD, Turkey had the most highly centralized educational system of any OECD member state. Kaya (1999) cites a survey in which educational administrators at various levels were asked to what extent authorization comes from the top. The results indicated that, even at provincial level, an educational administrator is rarely or hardly ever a decision-maker and generally attributes authorization to higher level positions. There was also much evidence that this structure was a major obstacle to the efficient operation of the system and in its responsiveness to changing demand (Kaya, 1999). Educational institutions were mostly passive partners in this relationship – it took a very determined and persevering principal to achieve approval from the centre of innovative actions.

Almost all decision-making was centralized in the Ministry of Education, the only exceptions being with respect to teaching methods and pupil assessment, where schools had some flexibility within central guidelines. The recruitment of administrators and headteachers had tended to be selected from among senior teachers. This created obstacles for headteachers who are expected to fulfil the leadership requirements and to respond to innovation (Kaya, 1999).

According to a World Bank report (2001), the implications of centralized structure are that:

> Currently in Turkey, there is minimal development of school management, given the extreme centralisation of the education system. Effective change in this respect will be difficult to achieve unless a more flexible and achievement-oriented scheme of service for teachers is introduced into the public service. Similarly, appropriate training of principals will also be needed. (2001, p. 10)

Perhaps as a by-product of over centralization, a burdensome bureaucracy was one of the most important problems of the Turkish education system. According to Kaya (1999), in various levels of the education system administrators spend most of their time dealing with daily routine, and hence they can hardly ever spare time to contribute to organizational effectiveness. This is to say that in the system, procedures and objectives were replaced by administrative tasks which an increasing number of staff members are hired to cope with. Bureaucratic inefficiency was a big issue, particularly for managers, and it is the basic obstacle to effective school management.

Unbalanced regional development was another problem. Turkey, a big country with different ethnic roots, has struggled with regional differences that had many educationally important implications. The different educational needs of different communities, differentiated class structure, and east-west developmental differences, resulted in serious difficulties in achieving a total improvement in education. Although in the western part of Turkey one hundred percent of schooling was achieved, in the east it was even less than the national average (Kaya, 1999).

## UNDERSTANDING CHANGE

### What were the issues in initiating this kind of change in the Turkish system?

In this section, it is worth spending some time on the initiation of change as a policy, which influences the intended change's processes. As Fullan (2001) puts it: "change is and will always be initiated from a variety of different sources and combination of sources. This

presents constant opportunity for pursuing innovations or for the imposition of change, depending on the innovation and one's role in the setting" (p. 65).

The Ministry of Education in Turkey played the change agent role in initiating NEDP project. It was a top-down reform, which required new adjustments from management style of the headteachers as we discussed before. However, a reform that is externally developed to transfer an innovation across school context was not easy to achieve. As Miles (1998) argues: "…policy cannot mandate what matters", because "what matters" requires local capacity, will, expertise, resources, support, and discretionary judgment" (p. 39). In addition, the social aspect of a proposed reform is one of the crucial factor for the likely success of it. Datnow and Stringfield's (2000) review of innovative programs highlights the importance of the way a reform policy is introduced:

> In several of our studies, we found that educators adopted reform models without thinking through how the model would suit their school's goals, culture, teachers or student…even when opportunities to gather information were available, educators seldom made well-informed choices about reform designs…
>
> Policy and political decisions at the state and district levels also often influenced schools' adaptation of external reform designs, which also caused some local educators to adopt models quickly and without careful consideration of "fit". (p.191)

As it is argued above, the suitability of a reform context into a change setting covers many factors. The next section will be dealing with the likely success of implementation of TQM reform in the Turkish educational context discussing the social and managerial characteristics of the system and the change characteristics in practice.

## What were the issues in implementation of change?

In order answer this question, I need to clarify first, what a change is? Change is implementation: "the process of putting into practice an idea, program, or set of activities and structures new to the people attempting or expected to change" (Fullan, 2001: 69). In addition, Fullan (2001) argues that it is necessary to identify the "what of change and how of change" (p.8) in the implementation of a change. What, therefore, needed to change first to accomplish reform in Turkey's schools? According to the argument in the previous sections, the essence of TQM rests on the idea that the performance of institutions has been connected with the role of school leadership which is seen as a powerful influence for raising the performance of teachers and hence the standard of

student attainment in schools. In this respect, each school is the setting for bringing about change. Moreover, such "change in practice" involves two levels. First, in leadership management practices, change needs to occur at school level. This means the need to adapt management styles that require leadership skills for the heads as well as those to implement new practices in management of the schools to achieve change in the schools. Second, expected change needs to occur also at classroom level in the practices of teachers for student achievement. The complex issue raised from this argument is that heads play two different roles in change procedures. Heads themselves are subject to change fulfill leadership requirements, as well as they being the agents to implement change processes. I recognize that the change at classroom level is important. However, this section will be dealing with only the change, which occurs at school level. The reasons for this are the focus of the unit context - leadership for learning and limit of the length of essay.

## What were the particular changes issues being faced by Turkish headteachers?

It may also be useful to remember the characteristics of change in practice at different levels to get a more a holistic view of it. Fullan (2001) explains characteristics of change as interactive factors affecting change. These are: "need, clarity, complexity, quality/practicality" (p. 72). Even though the role of teachers as the participants in educational change are crucial for the success of it, due to headteachers' function as dual factor in TQM implementation they play major role for the change. How do the characteristics of change effect and how headteachers respond the change as a participant of the change process? To what extend is an externally imposed policy seen as a need to implement? First, TQM is an approach to management that puts a demand on visionary leadership. The requirements of visionary leadership are: trusting the staff as professionals and create a collegial value frameworks; emphasizing teamwork and empowerment; seeing leadership functions as action not position; providing clear and agreed goals; seeing development, learning and training as essential for the success of the institution through achieving the change. Would all these leadership practices and beliefs be implemented in Turkish schools? In the next sections, I will deal with the issues that headteachers are likely to respond in the proposed reform in Turkish schools.

## Did Turkish headteachers see the need for such a change?

TQM as an approach demands profound changes in concepts and practices, which result in a shift in the role,

purpose and values of teaching and schooling. To achieve that change it is important that headteachers see it as necessary. Fullan (2001) argues that the several large-scale research studies in the US show the importance of relating need to decisions for change. He continues: "The question of determining whether needs are agreed upon is not always straightforward" (p. 75). Moreover, the perception of heads for the change is determined by some factors. For example, culture, school goals, teachers' perceptions, students' needs, local needs, the way putting a reform are the important determinants affecting the change (Fullan, 2001; Datnow et al., 2002).

I interviewed a Turkish policy maker who is applying the TQM model, as part of my early planning for my research inquiry. She commented:

> This [EFQM model] is a structure of self-evaluation related to TQM applications. For instance, when we look at the institutions of performance results, they are estimated by numerical criterion. That is to say like finance and profit we already had trouble in concept there…. During application process, while creating this culture, we had problems persuading people, changing people's mentality. Moreover, of course, they did not like to define a student as a customer.

In addition, there are some other factors that are likely to affect the change. First, Turkish educational culture and characteristics play an important role in the required respond to change. From the standpoint of Turkish culture, the headteachers have been located in a highly hierarchical position, which may create an important obstacle to the chance of the proposed system of change. Turkey is a country where traditional paternalism is still very common especially in non-metropolitan areas. Headteachers have been accustomed to practice their legitimate power to a large extent. However, TQM requires headteachers to meet some leadership requirements such as to see that their power comes not from their given positions in the institution, but rather from their performance and success.

The policy maker I interviewed also reported:

> TQM has problems in both human resources and in expertness. I do not suppose that it can be applied smoothly and easily. This is because there are still many headteachers who are not open to share. They are accustomed to one-person management for 20-25 years. They cannot accept easily that they are ready to share all power and responsibility. For example, to achieve the implementations requires an alteration in that culture firstly. TQM requires a new training of culture. This training cannot

adapt easily to the new culture by leaving the existing one.

In addition, empowerment is one of the strategy headteachers need to employ. Therefore, it is very likely that due to these reasons headteachers see the reform as a way of losing their existing power to share it with subordinates and it is also likely that they resist to the change as accepting it an imposed reform.

## Did Turkish headteachers understand what is required of them to implement TQM?

Clarity of the goals and means are crucial factors for the change (Fullan, 2001). Even though there is agreement that some kind of change is needed, the clarity of change about what headteachers should do is an essential factor of the change:

> Problems related to clarity appear in virtually every study of change, from the early implementation studies … that the majority of [participant] were unable to identify the essential features of the innovation … to present studies of reform in which finding clarity among complexity remains a major problem (Fullan, 2001: 76)

It is essential that headteachers get training to understand the implementation procedures for the reform. Meanwhile, headteachers need to be given support to implement the change in their schools. This strategy should also include giving the tools, strategies and training for the staff to accomplish the implementations for the reform (Datnow et al., 2002).

Where change is not clear, it may be interpreted in an oversimplified way which Fullan (2001) defines this as 'false clarity'. For example, a lot of managerial work appears to be need for TQM implementation. Schools are required to do long-term strategic planning as well as short-term, to set their goals and mission statement built by the leaders. In Turkish context headteachers have no special training for management process to fulfil the managerial requirements. This demands for new management skills that may not be clear for headteachers.

## Did Turkish headteachers believe this change is a good idea and were they likely to adapt the change?

As Fullan (2001) argues "The sources of innovation and the quality of decisions made indicate that change is not necessarily progress. Change must always be viewed in relation to the particular values, goals, and outcomes it serves" (p.9). The question raised by this argument is

what does TQM require to accomplish the change and to what extent this matches the values of headteachers? It puts an over-emphasis on outcomes, which leads schools to be concerned only with 'achievement' and ignore the other dimensions of education.

Furthermore, another likely result for the change might be adaptation of the policy by headteachers (Fullan, 2001; Wallace, 1998). There are different features, which may affect the adaptation of the reform processes. However, as I indicated earlier the importance of understanding social aspect of implementations of change is crucial. Datnow *et al* (2002) argue in the same line with this: "…[technical aspect of change does not] help us fully understand educational implementation, which we believe involves a dynamic relationship among structural constraints, the culture of the school, and peoples' actions in many interlocking sites or settings" (p. 11). In addition, the role of perspectives is a central feature to the reform process. The cultural characteristics of participants are likely to influence their perceptions of events which results in different interpretations of realities according to their perspective (Datnow et al., 2002).

In the TQM implementations, it was likely that some headteachers would adopt some aspects of the change process according to their own perception and would ignore the other aspects. For example, instead of fulfilling leadership requirements to create common a culture by devolution of power and participative decision making procedures, they applied only managerial techniques such as planning procedures and statistic processes needed. This resulted in an imposed change on teachers that loses meaning among teachers to share it.

### What were obstacles to change within the Turkish education system?

The Turkish education system itself creates external factors that might have affected the change as creating an obstacle in implementing it. For example, as it discussed in the previous section, Turkey's unbalanced regional development with different educational needs was very likely that to result in responding to change differently at school level and even classroom level. As Fullan (2001) puts it: "The uniqueness of the individual setting is critical factor - what works in one situation may not work in another" (p. 49). Since communities vary and characteristics of school districts differ greatly, different combinations of factors would have resulted in various initiation patterns in understanding change processes. Some communities might have supported innovation, others might have blocked it.

The other factor that likely to create confusion on the processes of change was that Turkey's highly regulated inspection system. TQM requires self-evaluation of the institutions as we discussed before. However, it was likely that self-evaluation processes might have become a treat for schools. For example, schools were asked to conduct their self-evaluation processes to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. The weaknesses that schools find, when they carried out the self-evaluation procedures properly, might have then been reported by inspectors as part of an inspection procedure. Therefore, if headteachers saw self-evaluation as a kind of threat to themselves, they might have likely resist doing this.

Further, TQM implementation has been targeted to apply to all schools in the country. That kind of large scale project implementation needs huge effort to provide support and training. Lack of enough support, training and consultancy was an obstacle to implement the system in schools. In addition, the highly centralized system and unsatisfactory skills for the required management style were likely to create external obstacles to heads' readiness by limiting the ability of their decision-making procedures. These conditions were likely to result in resistance from headteachers and making them see it as unachievable.

The policy maker I interviewed also commented:

> This establishment has approximately 54,000 schools. They [schools] have troubles in such matters as guidance and consultancy, control of the process, regulations of laws. They have serious problems with local administration authorities and the ministry which would need to soften the central structure and regulation of laws of this process…. I do not suppose that it [TQM] can be applied smoothly and easily…. These would not definitely happen in such serious capacity, in such intense …Our education system should give schools enough administration capacity of movement they need.

### CONCLUSION

Changing world circumstances have led governments to introduce reforms to restructure of schooling. These have affected schools and teachers in many countries around the world. TQM has been used as an implementation device to produce efficiency and productivity in schools.

I have focused on what needs to be done inside schools to implement TQM. This has involved explorations of: the changes in the values and practices of schooling; changes in headteachers' activities; the changing nature of professional relations in schools. However, I am aware of the fact that I presented arguments based on the literature review of two different topics – TQM and change which deal mostly with social aspect of it. The limited length of paper constrained the possibility to deal with technical aspect of change more deeply. I am also aware that I have made some suggestions about the likely change processes in TQM implementation; these are based on data that should

need much deeper exploration. I hope to do it for the next study I will be engaging.

The consequence of the discussed issues is increasing demand on headteachers to adopt leadership skills to fulfil the requirements of the approach. On the other hand, some critical factors are influential to achieve a change in educational context. Characteristics of the change and external factors play crucial role on the successful implementations. To implement TQM in schooling, the education system needs to provide support to headteachers who will undertake the demanding task of 'leadership'.

In the Turkish case, this requirement was likely to be blocked by the management structure and characteristics of the Turkish education system. When we consider the literature about TQM, we may conclude that although TQM incorporates mechanisms for 'continuous' or 'incremental' change, the features of the Turkish education system at the time that this project was introduced was unlikely to lead to any substantial or fundamental improvements or developments in TQM. Introducing any policy for raising standards in education, by the influence of globalization, without considering to what extend the characteristics of the existing system would suit to the intended approach or to what extend the major needs of it would have been met by the existing system can be seen as the reason of success or failure for any reform.

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