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School Quality Assurance Applications for Basic Education Schools*

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Abstract

This study aims to recommend applications of quality assurance for schools of basic education by analysing the school quality assurance applications of some countries which were successful at international tests and by interviewing university lecturers. This current study first analyses the quality assurance applications used in schools in some countries which achieved success at international tests. Thus, the school quality assurance applications in Estonia, Hong Kong and New Zealand were described. In addition to that ten university lecturers were also interviewed within the scope of this study. The data for the countries were collected by the document analysis method, and the views of the faculty members were collected by the interview method. The data were analysed in sub-themes such as the quality assurance applications used in schools in some countries which achieved success at international tests, the stake holders in the applications, how often the applications were used and in what processes they were used. As a result of the interviews, similar themes were classified. It may be recommended in the light of the results obtained that external evaluation should be made for self-evaluation and that national beside international tests should be used as data for school quality assurance applications. In addition, it is revealed how self-evaluation and external evaluation practices can be shaped.

Keywords: External Evaluation, Quality Assurance, Qualitative Research, Self-Evaluation

1. Introduction

Quality is a concept which involves several stakeholders; which needs considering in economic, political and social contexts; which is dynamic and is constantly changing; which is in search of perfection and which is multidimensional. Therefore, it is a term difficult to define (Schnindler, Puls-Elvidge, Welzant & Crawford, 2015). It is difficult to define due to two reasons. Namely, quality is a relative concept and it is also used in various contexts. Quality as a relative concept is the fact that a situation or a product which is considered as of good quality by a person can be considered as of low quality by another person. Besides, each individual can have different perceptions of quality. The word quality can have different meanings owing to the fact that the standards expected to be met in each case differ (Elassy, 2015).

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It is the synthesis of theory and practice. It is not a procedural or linear process, but it contains complicated actions (Holt, 2000). On the other hand, the term can also be defined as perfection, suitability for use, compliance with specifications, compliance with needs, avoidance of faults and as meeting customers' expectations (Elshennawy, 2004).

Quality in education is a multidimensional concept which cannot be considered only in one single indicator. It is the characteristics of the elements of input, process and output available in the educational system which offers services to meet the explicit and implicit expectations of internal and external stakeholders (Cheng, 1995). According to Ng (2015), good quality education lays emphasis on holistic development. Holistic development expresses students' development both in artistic, sportive, non-academic areas and development in their character and interpersonal skills. Good quality education equips students with knowledge and skills directed to the future. What prepares them to life is the acquisition of 21st century skills, of social-emotional skills and of critical and creative thinking. In addition to that, such education also teaches good values such as respect, affection, politeness, honesty and compassion. It also helps students to develop positive attitudes towards learning.

European Commission (2015) defines quality in education as the acquisition of basic efficacies by students, the equalitarian and inclusive schooling systems, performing perfection activities in schools and as enabling students' transition from schools into business markets or into further education.

Quality in education is achieved by carrying out systematic management, supervision, achievement monitoring and quality development activities (Bakioğlu and Baltacı, 2017). On the other hand, quality assurance has different meanings for politicians, educators and stakeholders. While it means providing educations so as to add value to money for politicians, it means focusing on how to conduct better educational activities at school for educators. It is the availability of transparency for stakeholders (Mathews, 2010). In this context, quality can be regarded as a significant indicator for schools.

A system of quality management capable of meeting the expectations of continuously changing conditions should be suggested and the quality of the system rather than the quality of products and services should be focused on so as to be able to assure quality. Quality can be assured only by suggesting a quality management system which constantly improves itself (Ilkay & Aslan, 2012). Quality assurance is defined as a series of integrated policies, activities, procedures, rules, criteria, confirmation instruments and mechanisms designed together in order to provide and improve the quality suggested by educational institutions (European Union, 2015). Quality assurance is the management instrument which can contribute to improving the performance in institutions or in the units of institutions (Doherty, 2008).

Two elements are emphasized in the definitions of quality assurance. Accordingly, it is emphasized in the first element that quality assurance is a series of processes, policies and actions performed in cooperation with quality assurance agents and accreditation bodies externally and by institutions themselves internally whereas it is emphasized in the second that quality assurance is the statement of quality properties related to sustaining continuous development and accountability (Schindler, Puls-Elvidge, Welzant & Crawford, 2015).

Quality assurance applications differ from country to country in terms of instruments, processes and stakeholders available. Yet, the ultimate purpose of the applications is to secure that students have the best possible opportunities for learning and thus to improve learning and teaching. On the other hand, applications of quality assurance are also used in meeting the standards set in the national qualifications framework, in distributing the resources effectively and fairly, in providing additional support by identifying risky schools and in sharing the good applications to support school development (European Commission, 2018).

This study aims to recommend applications of quality assurance for schools of basic education by analysing the school quality assurance applications of some countries which were successful at international tests and by interviewing university lecturers. The research questions formulated in this context are as in the following:

- 1- What school quality assurance applications are used in schools in some countries which achieve success at international tests?

- 2- What views do university lecturers hold in relation to quality assurance applications that can be used in schools of basic education?
- 3- What recommendations can be made for quality assurance applications that can be used in schools of basic education?

2. Method

2.1 The Subsections of the Research

The data collected within the scope of this study were put to descriptive analysis- which is defined as “summarising and interpreting the collected data according to pre-distinguished themes” (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013:224). The data were analysed in sub-themes such as the quality assurance applications used in schools in some countries which achieved success at international tests, the stake holders in the applications, how often the applications were used and in what processes they were used. The information the themes distinguished for the countries and for the interviews is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: The Themes Distinguished

Themes	Sub-themes
1	The concept of quality in schools
2	Applications available in the model
3	Self-evaluation
	Stake holders
	How often
	Measurement and evaluation instruments
	Requirements
4	External evaluation
	Stake holders
	How often
	Measurement and evaluation instruments
	Requirements
5	National stake holders surveys
6	National test results
7	International test results
8	Sharing the reports
9	Rewarding and certification

Accordingly, the themes distinguished at the end of the interviews are shown in the Table. Thus, views on the concept of quality in schools were obtained and data concerning the applications that should be included in the model and the stake holders in the applications, periods of time, measurement and evaluation instruments and requirements were collected. Besides, it is also apparent from the Table that views on sharing the evaluation reports and on rewarding and certification according to evaluation results were stated.

2.2 The Study Group

This current study first analyses the quality assurance applications used in schools in some countries which achieved success at international tests. Thus, the school quality assurance applications in Estonia, Hong Kong and New Zealand were described. In addition to that 10 university lecturers were also interviewed within the scope of this study. Table 1 below shows the demographic information concerning the lecturers who were interviewed.

Table 1: The Interviewees' Demographic Properties

	Codes	Jobs/Titles	Gender	Place of employment
1	L1	Lecturer- Professor Dr.	Male	Higher education
2	L2	Lecturer- Dr.	Male	Higher education
3	L3	Lecturer- Assoc. Professor Dr.	Male	Higher education

4	L4	Lecturer- Assoc. Professor Dr.	Male	Higher education
5	L5	Lecturer- Assoc. Professor Dr.	Male	Higher education
6	L6	Lecturer- Professor Dr.	Male	Higher education
7	L7	Lecturer- Assoc. Professor Dr.	Male	Higher education
8	L8	Lecturer- Dr.	Female	Higher education
9	L9	Lecturer- Dr.	Female	Higher education
10	L10	Lecturer- Assoc. Professor Dr.	Female	Higher education

As clear from Table 1, 10 lecturers were included in the research. 3 of the participants were professors while 4 of them were associate professors and 3 were doctors. Each participant worked in an institution of higher education and 7 of them were male whereas 3 were female.

2.3 Measures

The research data were collected through interviews with the lecturers and through document analysis. The information on quality assurance applications for countries which constituted the study group in the current study was obtained from printed scientific resources such as books, journals, theses and articles. The websites of international organisations such as OECD and EURYDICE were also consulted for data on important documents. The validity and reliability of the data can be said to be high due to the fact that the data collection tools were the up to date documents on the subject of research which were legal and accessible. On the other hand, the interview texts were analyzed using the descriptive and content analysis technique. In order to ensure internal validity in the study, the opinion of a field expert was taken. The process carried out in order to ensure the external validity of the research was clearly stated and the systematic study was supported by the document. Findings are presented with frequency values. Findings are given using direct quotations without comment.

3. Results

3.1 School Quality Assurance Applications Used in Schools in Some Countries Which Achieve Success at International Tests

School quality assurance applications differ from country to country. While self-evaluation is made for external evaluation in some countries, external evaluation is made for self-evaluation in some countries. And some other countries aim to combine self-evaluation with external evaluation. The school quality assurance applications used by schools in some countries which achieved success at international tests were analysed in this current study.

It was found in the theme of applications available in the model that surveys on self-evaluation, external evaluation, centrally held tests and national stake holders' satisfaction were carried out in Estonia (European Commission, 2020a; European Commission, 2020b). On the other hand, self-evaluation and external evaluation came into prominence in Hong Kong and New Zealand (Hong Kong. Education Bureau, 2020a; New Zealand. Education Review Office, 2016).

Sub-themes such as stake holders, how often, measurement and evaluation instruments and requirements were distinguished in the theme of self-evaluation. An examination of stake holders who played roles in the countries' measurement and evaluation process showed that school administrators, teachers, students and parents were available in the process in Estonia, New Zealand and Hong Kong. It was reported that boards of trustees were also available as stake holders in the process of self-evaluation in New Zealand and Estonia (European Commission, 2015; Hong Kong. Education Bureau, 2020b; Nusche, Laveault, MacBeath & Santiago, 2012). On examining how often the countries made self-evaluation, it was found that self-evaluation was made once a year in New Zealand and in Hong Kong whereas it was made at least once in the school development plan in Estonia (Santiago et al., 2016; Hong Kong. Education Bureau, 2020c; New Zealand. Education Review Office, 2021). As to the countries' process of self-evaluation, the process was shaped by school administrators in New Zealand and Estonia (New Zealand. Education Review Office, 2021; European Commission, 2015). It also became apparent that school development plans and action plans were prepared in Estonia and Hong Kong (European Commission, 2015; Hong Kong. Education Bureau, 2020b).

Sub-themes of stake holders, how often, measurement and evaluation instruments and requirements were distinguished in the theme of external evaluation. On examining the stake holders available in the countries' external evaluation applications, it was found that the authorities of the Ministry of Education and Research were prominent in Estonia and that the authorities of the Office of Education were prominent in Hong Kong (Estonia. Ministry of Education and Research, 2016; European Commission, 2020a; Hong Kong. Education Bureau, 2022). School administrators, teachers, students and parents were found to be involved in the process of external evaluation in New Zealand and Hong Kong (Hong Kong. Education Bureau, 2022; New Zealand. Education Review Office, 2021). It was also reported that boards of trustees or units called parent-teacher association took on roles in external evaluation in Estonia (European Commission, 2020a; European Commission, 2020b; Estonia. Ministry of Education and Research, 2016). An examination of how often the countries made external evaluation demonstrated that external evaluation was made every three years by considering the duration of schools' development plans in New Zealand and Hong Kong (Hong Kong. Education Bureau, 2022; New Zealand. Education Review Office, 2021). It was also found that the frequency could change depending on schools (Nusche et al., 2012).

The activities may be classified as pre-evaluation, evaluation and post-evaluation on examining the countries' process of external evaluation. School development plans, annual action plans and school reports are submitted to evaluators and contact meetings are held in Hong Kong during pre-evaluation (Hong Kong. Education Bureau, 2022). The evaluation process lasts eight working days in Estonia (European Commission, 2020b). Classroom observations are made in New Zealand and Hong Kong (New Zealand. Education Review Office, 2016; Hong Kong. Education Bureau, 2022). Students' homework files are also examined in Hong Kong (Hong Kong. Education Bureau, 2022). In New Zealand, on the other hand, guidance activities are done in relation to school development plans (New Zealand. Education Review Office, 2016). As post-evaluation, the draft reports are prepared by evaluators, schools answer the questions available in the draft reports and the reports are given the final shape in Hong Kong (Hong Kong. Education Bureau, 2022).

National stake holders survey is done in Estonia within the scope of school quality assurance applications. Parents, students and teachers are included in the surveys (European Commission, 2020a; European Commission, 2020b). On examining the centrally held tests in the countries, it was found that standard setting tests and state tests were given by the institution of state and youth in Estonia. The test results are used as data in the context of schools' quality assurance (European Commission, 2020a; European Commission, 2020b).

While the reports prepared as a result of the external evaluations made in the countries are shared on the internet sites of the schools in Hong Kong, they are shared on the sites of the Ministry of Education in New Zealand (Hong Kong. Education Bureau, 2022; New Zealand. Education Review Office, 2021). The reports are shared with other schools, the system data are created and the data are broadcast annually in Estonia. The reports prepared as a result of self-evaluations are converted into statistical data in Estonia and are broadcast on schools' internet sites (European Commission, 2020b). In Hong Kong, however, school development plans which are made as a result of self-evaluation reports are broadcast on schools' internet sites (Hong Kong. Education Bureau, 2020b).

3.2 The Views of University Lecturers Hold in relation to Quality Assurance Applications that can be used in Schools of Basic Education

Table 3 shows the lecturers' views on the concept of quality in schools.

Table 3: Codes for Theme One according to the Lecturers' Views

The concept of quality in schools	The quality of education and instruction (L1)- (L3)- (L10)
	Attaining the goals set in the curriculum (L1)- (L10)
	An environment where students and teachers feel happy (L1)- (L9)
	Displaying the school goals in multi-dimensional form (L2)
	School administrators' and teachers' qualities (L4)- (L8)- (L9)
	Schools having a climate of values (L5)- (L8)- (L9)
	A school which has factors strengthening sense of belonging (L5)

An inviting school (L5)- (L9)
A positive climate (L5)
Building a sense of quality on the school's own values (L6)
A school which has a professional approach (L7)
Schools' ability to activate their managerial and educational instruments functionally (L7)
A school with a culture of consensus (L7)
A school of multivocality (L7)
A school which is in search of standards and which continuously updates its standards (L7)
A school which respects children's rights and which is inclusive (L8)
A school which has adequate and suitable physical possibilities (L4) (L9)

Table 3 shows the views on the concept of quality in schools, on the quality of education and instruction and on the quality of school administrators and teachers. Accordingly, positive climate in schools is also considered important in terms of quality of schools. An example for participants' views is as in the following:

"As to school quality, there should be an atmosphere which will make teachers and students in a school say 'fortunately I am here'" L: 5

On the other hand, a school which is safe is considered as a school of good quality. A participant view illustrative of this is as in the following:

"Quality in schools... is the professional reciprocation of all the processes that an organisation of education puts into use so as to achieve its mission. Institutions which are called schools are the professional institutions. Therefore, each process should progress professionally in all its components when we adopt the approach of system. If we can make sense of the word professionalism, it means that we catch quality." L: 7

The lecturers' views on the order of priority in school quality assurance applications are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Codes for Theme Two according to the Lecturers' Views

School quality assurance applications- order of priority	L1	L2	L3	L4	L5	L6	L7	L8	L9	L10
Self-evaluation	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
External evaluation	2	2	2	-	-	2	2	2	2	2
National stake holders survey	-	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
National test results	3	-	4	-	-	3	3	3	-	3
International test results	4	4	-	-	-	4	4	-	-	4

It is clear from Table 4 that all of the participants give more priority to self-evaluation than to external evaluation. Two participants gave the third priority to national stake holders surveys while five participants gave it to national test results. The fourth priority was given to national test results by one participant while it was given to international test results by five participants. Some of the examples for participant views are as in the following:

"Self-evaluation is very important. there should also be external evaluation. The existing situation should be observed and evaluated externally. Areas of blindness can occur in individuals.... I think that tests given on national scale are important in identifying quality but I don't think they are functional. They only intend to measure the cognitive dimension. They miss affective and psychomotor dimensions. I think, on the other hand, that international tests such as PISA and TIMSS make more multidimensional evaluations. I also consider national stake holders surveys important." L: 2

"I put schools' self-evaluation at the top. I believe that an external observation will be superficial. Applications such as training in coaching can be external. I do not think that evaluations made externally will be effective because the data to be collected by an outsider will not be of good quality, because feedback to be given will not be of good quality and because the criteria to be considered will not measure the teaching quality." L: 4

Table 5 below shows the lecturers' views on the stake holders of self-evaluation.

Table 5: Codes for Theme Three according to the Lecturers' Views

Stake holders of self-evaluation	
School administrators	L1- L2- L3- L4- L5- L6- L7- L8- L9- L10
Teachers	L1- L2- L3- L4- L5- L6- L7- L8- L9- L10
Students	L1- L2- L3- L4- L5- L6- L7- L8- L9- L10
Parents	L1- L2- L3- L5- L6- L7- L8- L9- L10
Support staff	L1- L2- L3- L5- L6- L7- L8- L9- L10
Graduates	L2
Neighbouring public institutions	L2
Non-governmental organisations	L5- L6
Society	L5

According to Table 5, all the participants said that school administrators, teachers and students constituted the stake holders of self-evaluation. Several participants thought that parents and support staff should be included in the process of self-evaluation. It was also pointed out that graduates, neighbouring public institutions and non-governmental organisations can also take on roles in the process of self-evaluation. Some examples for the participants' views in this respect are as in the following:

"School administrators, teachers, parents, students and support staff should be included in the process. On the other hand, neighbouring institutions and individuals in the neighbourhood can also state their thoughts on how they see our school through surveys." L: 2

"They can be performed by educational managers. All the stake holders of school can join. The necessary training should be offered. It should be guaranteed to teachers in particular that it was a job-related process and that it should not be considered personal." L: 8

Table 6 shows the lecturers' views on the frequency of self-evaluation.

Table 6: Codes for Theme Three according to the Lecturers' Views

The frequency of self-evaluation	Once a month (L1)
	Every day with teachers (L2)
	Once a month with school administrators, teachers, students and representatives (L2)
	Twice an academic year (L2)
	Four times a year including holidays (L3)
	Process evaluation (L4) (L6) (L7) (L9)
	Once a week with teaching staff(L4)
	Once a year (L5) (L8) (L10)

Accordingly, it was stated by the participants that self-evaluation could be made in the form of process evaluation. An example for the participants' views is as in the following:

"It is not an ending process. It is continuous. Therefore, internal supervision action plans should be prepared in following up the process. Both procedural and traditional actions should be taken." L: 6

It was also stated that self-evaluation could be made once or twice an academic year. On the other hand, it was also argued that teachers could participate in the self-evaluation process more frequently. An example for Participants' views is as in the following:

"Self-evaluation is a part of process evaluation. process evaluation is made everyday institutionally. It may be reported occasionally. We evaluate the process, we do not look at the results here. Stake holders can sometimes gather and interpret the data. It may be done every two weeks. It depends on learning output and the domain." L: 4

The lecturers' views on self-evaluation measurement and evaluation instruments are shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Codes for Theme Three according to the Lecturers' Views

Self-evaluation measurement and evaluation instruments	Surveys (L1) (L2) (L6) (L9) Interviews (L1) (L2) (L3) (L5) (L7) (L8) (L9) (L10) Student products (L4) Organisations (L1) (L5) Observations (L1) (L2) (L3) (L4) (L5) (L6) (L7) (L8) (L9) (L10)
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As apparent from Table 7, the participants said that observations and interviews might be included more often in the process of self-evaluation as instruments of measurement and evaluation. An example for participants' views in as in the following:

"We should demand sincere things instead of surveys. We can also make evaluations in the form of a dinner activity. A week should be devoted to it. we can collect the data through interviews." L: 5

It was claimed that surveys could also be used in the process. An example for participants' views was as in the following:

"The data should be collected through various channels. Surveys or interviews are not adequate on their own. Some people are more comfortable during interviews while others are more comfortable during surveys." L: 9

It was also stated that measurement and evaluation could be made with students' products in the process of self-evaluation. An example for participants' views in this respect is as in the following:

"The primary data could be collected through students' products. The things produced by students are the data. The process should be observed." L: 4

Organisations could also be used as the source of data in the process of self-evaluation. The lecturers' views on the requirements of self-evaluation are shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Codes for Theme Three according to the Lecturers' Views

Requirements of self-evaluation	It should not be accusive or in search of errors (L2) The officials in provincial directorate of national education or in district directorate of national education should offer guidance in the process of self-evaluation (L3) People should not pretend (L3) (L5) (L6) (L8) (L9) Stake holders should be shown the benefits of the process (L3) (L8) Stake holders should be encouraged to participate (L1) (L2) (L3) (L4) (L5) (L6) (L7) (L8) (L9) (L10) Stake holders should internalise it (L3) (L4) (L5) (L6) (L7) (L8) (L10) Stake holders should participate in training on making self-evaluation (L8) Process evaluation (L4) (L6) (L7) (L9) A culture of self-evaluation should be created (L4) (L6) Reflective learning environments should be created (L4) (L7) Both procedural and traditional actions should be taken (L6) Reporting should not be considered as a work load (L6) Schools should develop their own models of perfection (L5) (L6) Sincerity should be available (L5) (L7) Objectivity should be secured (L8) (L9) Making use of multiple data collection sources (L9)
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As clear from Table 8, it is considered important for stake holders to participate in and to internalise the process of self-evaluation. An example for participants' views is as in the following:

"The process should not be considered as forced labour. People should not pretend to do. The stake holders should be shown the benefits of the process and thus they should be helped to internalise the process." L: 3

Besides, culture of self-evaluation and environments of reflective learning were also emphasised. It was also stated that regulations might be made so that reporting would be considered as a work load. As illustrative of this, participant said:

“Reporting should not be considered as a work load. It should be made as a value of the institution. Individuals should internalise the process as a part of school culture.” L: 6 Table 9 shows the lecturers’ views on the stake holders of external evaluation.

Table 9: Codes for Theme Four according to the Lecturers’ Views

Stake holders of external evaluation	
Independent external institutions	L4- L6- L8- L9
Educational supervisors	L1- L2- L3
School managers	L1- L2- L3- L4- L5- L6- L7- L8- L9- L10
Teachers	L1- L2- L3- L4- L5- L6- L7- L8- L9- L10
Students	L1- L2- L3- L4- L5- L6- L7- L8- L9- L10
Parents	L1- L2- L3- L5- L6- L7- L8- L9- L10
Support staff	L1- L2- L3- L5- L6- L7- L8- L9- L10
Graduates	L3
Academicians	L3- L6
Non-governmental organisations	L2- L3- L5- L7
Other school managers	L2- L3
Mentors in provincial/district directorates of national education	L5
Society	L5

As clear from Table 9, all of the participants argued that school managers, teachers and students should be available in the process of external evaluation. Apart from that, 9 Participants also stated that parents and support staff beside the above-mentioned stake holders should be included in the process. The participants also argued that external evaluation could be made by external institutions, by educational supervisors and by the mentors in provincial/district directorates of national education. Illustrative of this, a participant said:

“External evaluation should be carried over by independent autonomous institutions and accreditation should be made by them. The independent institutions can be formed with the participation of experts, academicians and research assistants. Those individuals should be guided for such a mission. The data collected should be shared with schools and guidance should be given in creating school perfection models.” L: 6

It was also stated by the participants that graduates, academicians, non-governmental organisations and other school managers could take on roles in the process. A statement made in relation to this by a participant was as in the following:

“The process should be managed by supervisors. Additionally, parents, non-governmental organisations nearby, students, school managers and teachers can also take part in the process. Other school managers can also be consulted in sharing good applications and in solving certain problems after our school is made transparent. Graduates can also participate in the process as stake holders. Graduates can occasionally meet and their opinions and requests can be obtained through those meetings. Cooperation can be made with universities. Support can also be received from academicians.” L: 3

The lecturers’ views on how often external evaluation should be made are shown in Table 10.

Table 10: Codes for Theme Four according to the Lecturers’ Views

The frequency of external evaluation	When needed (L1) (L3) (L4) (L7) (L8) (L9)
	Twice a year (L2) (L3)
	Once a year (L5)
	Every three years (L6) (L10)

It is clear from Table 10 that six participants think external evaluation can be made when needed. Some of the examples for participants’ views are as in the following:

“School external evaluation should last for 15-20 days and it should be made whenever it is needed.” L: 1

“Schools can be supervised when needed. There should not standard time for it.” L: 3

It was also argued that it can be made once or twice a year. A participant's statement representative of this view was as in the following:

“School external evaluations can be made twice a year when considered from the aspect of supervisors.” L: 2

On the other hand, it was also argued that such evaluations could be made every three years. The lecturers' views on external evaluation measurement and evaluation instruments are shown in Table 11.

Table 11: Codes for Theme Four according to the Lecturers' Views

External evaluation measurement and evaluation instruments	Lesson videos (L1) Diaries (L1) Surveys (L1) (L2) (L3) (L4) (L6) Interviews (L1) (L2) (L3) (L4) (L5) (L6) (L10) Graduate meetings (L3) Observations (L1) (L2) (L3) (L4) (L5) (L6) (L7) (L8) (L9) (L10)
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Accordingly, all the participants said that observations could be used as an instrument of measurement and evaluation in external evaluation. In addition to that, it was also stated that interviews and surveys could also be used. Thus, a participant said:

“While surveys can be given to stake holders, focal group interviews and individual interviews can be made with parents and students- who have more ties with the school.” L: 2

Lesson videos, diaries and graduate meetings were also mentioned as instruments which could be used in external evaluation. An example for participants' views was as in the following:

“Views and requests can be obtained by holding graduate meetings occasionally.” L: 3

Table 12 shows the lecturers' views on the requirements for external evaluation.

Table 12: Codes for Theme Four according to the Lecturers' Views

Requirements for external evaluation	It should not make judgement (L2) School supervisors (L2) (L3) School mentors (L5) Specialised evaluators (L4) (L6) (L8) (L9) (L10) Professional process (L4) (L6) (L7) (L8) (L9) (L10) Accreditation (L6) Cooperation with universities (L3) There should not be evaluation by giving marks (L3) It should not be for a short time (L1) (L2) (L3) Guiding (L3) (L5) (L6) (L8) It can be shaped according to teachers' needs (L1) Appointing measurement and evaluation experts (L2) (L5) Evaluation directed to development (L3) Multi-vocal structure (L7) Objectivity (L9) Evaluation criteria (L9) (L10)
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According to Table 12, participants stated that external evaluation could be made by specialised evaluators in a professional process. They also recommended that school supervisors should be employed in the process. An example for participants' views was as in the following:

“I consider school supervisors important. How many teachers and school managers a supervisor can reach can be found and those supervisors can be in contact with them as people responsible from a school. In the same way, measurement and evaluation experts can be assigned to a certain number of schools. They can analyse the collected data.” L: 2

Participants also said that external evaluation should not be for a short time and that guidance should be considered important. It was also stressed that the process of external evaluation should not make judgement, it should not evaluate by giving marks and that it should be multi-vocal and directed to development. The lecturers' views on national stake holder surveys are shown in Table 13.

Table 13: Codes for Theme Five according to the Lecturers' Views

National stake holder surveys			
They should be included	Reasons	They should not be included	Reasons
L2 - L3 L8- L10	Comparisons can be made (L2) It contributes to determining policies (L2) It informs us of the educational-instructional process of the ministry (L3)	L1- L4- L5- L6- L7- L8- L9	Each school is different from another (L1) Stake holder surveys at the scale of provinces/districts (L1) Data should be collected through qualitative instruments (L4) Sincere responses (L5) (L7) Additional bureaucracy (L6)

While four participants said that national stake holder surveys could be included in quality assurance models, six participants said that they should not be included in the models. They claimed that national stake holder surveys could be made due to the fact that they enabled comparisons and that they could be used as data in the policy determination process. A participant stated their opinion in this respect as in the following:

"Schools and school zones can compare themselves with others through national stake holder surveys. Besides, the results of such surveys can also be used in determining policies." L: 2

However, the participants also stated that those surveys might cause additional bureaucracy, lead to insincere responses and therefore they should not be used in every school and that they should not be included in quality assurance models. A participant's statement representative of the view was as in the following:

"Stake holder surveys at the scale of the provinces or districts could be made instead of national surveys. There are approximately 60,000 schools in our country. Each school is different from another school." L: 1

The participants' views on the results of national tests are shown in Table 14.

Table 14: Codes for Theme Six according to the Lecturers' Views

Results of national tests			
They should be included	Reasons	They should not be included	Reasons
L1- L3 L6- L7 L8- L10	Determining the quality of education and instruction (L1) Indicator (L3) Multiple evaluation (L7) Power tests (L7)	L2- L5 L6- L9	They do not demonstrate quality (L2) Unreliable (L5)

Accordingly, six participants held the view that the results of national tests should be included in quality assurance models because they might be indicators in revealing the quality of education. In this respect, a participant said:

"Nationally given tests should be available in this model. They are significant indicators. But, we should not focus only on the results of the tests." L: 3

"It cannot be said that the results of the tests should not be taken into consideration. There should be multiple evaluation. It is not in the centre, either. You cannot give speed test to individuals in constructivist approach. You can give power test. You should make students solve problems instead of making them do tests." L: 7

Four participants, on the other hand, emphasised that the results of those tests should not be included in quality assurance models since they would not demonstrate the quality of a school and since they were not reliable. A participant stated their view as:

“Tests given at the national scale do not indicate quality. School managers are compared on the basis of how many students won good quality schools in LGS (high school entrance exam).” L: 2

The lecturers’ views on the results of international tests are shown in Table 15.

Table 15: Codes for Theme Seven according to the Lecturers’ Views

Results of international tests			
They should be included	Reasons	They should not be included	Reasons
L1- L2 L6- L7 L10	Comparisons can be made. (L2) They force to work hard (L2)	L3- L4- L5- L8 L9	All schools do not join (L3)

It is apparent on examining Table 15 that five participants believe that the results of international tests should be included in quality assurance models because they enable comparisons and because they trigger hard work. A participant said in this respect:

“The results of international tests should be included. The results force us to work hard. We make efforts to make the teaching-learning process more appropriate.” L: 2

Five other participants, however, stated that the test results should not be included in quality assurance models because some of the schools did not participate in those tests. A participant’s statement illustrative of the view was as in the following:

“International tests should not be included. Not all of the schools join such tests. The results should not be included for unity in education. They should not be included because samples could not be taken from all schools.” L: 3

The lecturers’ views on sharing the evaluation reports are shown in Table 16.

Table 16: Codes for Theme Eight according to the Lecturers’ Views

Sharing the evaluation reports			
Stake holders who participate in the evaluation	Reasons	Stake holders and society	Reasons
L8	Negative competition (L8) Negative school image (L8)	L1- L2 L3- L4 L5- L6 L7- L9 L10	It is a requirement for being open school. (L2) There should be transparency (L3) (L4) (L7) (L9) Accountability (L4) (L9) Guidance to students who wish to enter the school (L4) They should be open to the public (L6) Constructive criticism (L9)

Accordingly, a participant stated that the reports prepared as a result of evaluations should only be shared with stake holders who took part in the evaluation because the reports could cause negative competition and because they could have negative effects on the school image. A view stated in this respect was as in the following:

“Accusing language should not be used in evaluation reports. In my opinion, they are not so necessary. Negative competition can arise; the school image can be deteriorated.” L: 8

On the other hand, the participants also argued that the results of the evaluation reports could be shared with the society beside the stake holders who took part in the evaluation so that transparency and accountability could be attained as a requirement for being an open school. The view was stated as in the following by a participant:

“Self-evaluation and external evaluation reports should be shared with all the stake holders and with the society. It is a requirement for being an open school. Stake holders should be informed of the results. In fact, the quality of a school is revealed in this way. Why should high quality schools and schools which achieve success abstain from sharing the results?” L: 2

It was also pointed out by the participants that sharing the reports of evaluation results with everybody would guide students who would like to enter the school. A statement representative of the view was as in the following: *“Transparency and accountability are the main principles. The results can, of course, be shared with the society on the condition that the limits are determined by school administration, students and teachers. The students who would prefer to attend that school will need such information.” L: 4*

The lecturers' views on rewarding and certification are shown in Table 17.

Table 17: Codes for Theme Nine according to the Lecturers' Views

Rewarding and certification			
There should be	Reasons	There should not be	Reasons
L1- L2 L3- L4 L6- L8 L9- L10	A motivating power (L1) (L2) (L3) (L4) (L6) A driving force (L8) It should be objective (L8) It should influence emotions (L9)	L5- L7	There should be internal motivation (L5)

It is clear from Table 17 that there are eight participants who think that there should be rewarding and certification according to the results of evaluations. They consider rewarding and certification as motivating and as a driving force and say that the rewards and certificates given should be objective and should appeal to emotions. A view in this respect was stated as:

“There should be rewarding. Rewards should be useful. They should influence receivers' motivation. They activate those individuals' feelings; they affect the individuals. They should, for instance, be given by parents. But they should not be like the ones given on teachers' day. They should be representative rewards but the person who receives them should feel honoured.” L: 9

Two participants stressed the need for internal motivation and said that there should be rewarding and certification. A participant stated their view as:

“In my opinion, rewards and certificates are perfunctory. If I have a target, I am already rewarded. So I do not feel the need for a reward. The situation turns into wrong incentive. If we transform the situation into internal motivation, we do not need an external reward.” L: 5

3.3 Conclusions and Discussion

It may be recommended in the light of the results obtained that external evaluation should be made for self-evaluation and that national beside international tests should be used as data for school quality assurance applications. Boards of self-evaluation could be formed in schools and school administrators, representatives of parent-teacher associations, students, parents, support staff and even the representatives of non-governmental organisations could be included in those boards. Self-evaluation can be made at least once in an academic year. The data can be collected in the process through classroom observations, students' products, surveys to be given to parents and students and through interviews with the members of parent-teacher associations, with teachers and support staff. Evaluation reports can be prepared by analysing the collected qualitative and quantitative data. School development plans can be prepared according to those reports. School self-evaluation boards can be held responsible for preparing, implementing and evaluating the school development plans.

The process can be managed by stake holders available in the team of school self-evaluation by means of educational supervisors. The process of external evaluation can be shaped according to the frequency of school development plans. The data can be collected through classroom observations, students' products, surveys to be given to parents and students and through interviews with school administrators, members of parent-teacher associations, teachers and support staff in external evaluation- as in the case of self-evaluation. the reports prepared on the basis of external evaluation and school development plans can be broadcast on the web pages of schools. Besides, schools with exemplary applications can also be rewarded.

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