REFORMING EDUCATION IN TURKEY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY:
A HISTORICAL GUIDE AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LEADERS

by
Athena Stanley

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN EDUCATION
AT NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

November 29, 2013

APPROVED BY: Derek L. Anderson, Ed.D.
DATE: December 1, 2013
Abstract

This paper considers North American and Western European educational practices for applications in Middle Eastern countries such as Turkey. The following research questions are considered: How should best practice from North American and Western European countries be modified to produce successful results in a Middle Eastern country such as Turkey? What are the issues an emerging school leader in a Middle Eastern country such as Turkey needs to consider when applying those recommendations?

An overview of research on best educational practices in North America and Western Europe is provided as a foundation. The history of education in Turkey follows, beginning just prior to the onset of the Ottoman Empire and culminating in modern requirements from the Turkish Ministry of Education. Current conditions for education in Turkey are described in relation to citizen demographics. GDP and the Human Development Index (HDI) are related to the education system. Influences upon education including religion and government are presented. Levels of education provided in Turkish schools are described including voluntary preschools and secondary schools, compulsory primary schools (K-8), and private tutoring centers. Modifications of the Westernized education system are discussed as applied to Middle Eastern systems. Eastern and Western cultural values are described including social and independent identities, level of subscribing to social norms, and independent versus collectivist social cultures. Modifications for best practices as applied to multicultural education, child psychology textbooks, moral education, and student- versus teacher-centered classrooms are offered. Financial issues in Turkey and implications for modifying instruction are described.
Acknowledgements

The author would like to acknowledge Dr. Derek Anderson for his support, knowledge and expertise in the field of education. Dr. Anderson’s guidance was essential for this composition.
Table of Contents

Abstract ................................................................................................................................ i
Acknowledgements........................................................................................................... iii
Table of Contents ............................................................................................................... iv
List of Tables ...................................................................................................................... 1
List of Figures ..................................................................................................................... 2
Chapter 1: Introduction ....................................................................................................... 3
Best Practices for Education in North America and Western Europe ......................... 3
Chapter 2: Literature Review .............................................................................................. 6
History of Education in Turkey ................................................................................... 6
Education in Modern Day Turkey. ............................................................................ 12
  Levels of education............................................................................................ 24
  Teaching and Learning in Turkish schools.......................................................... 36
Chapter 3: Modifications of Westernized Education System for Implementation in Turkey
......................................................................................................................................... 38
  Child Psychology Textbooks ............................................................................... 40
  Cultural Values ......................................................................................................... 42
  Multicultural Education ......................................................................................... 45
  Moral Education ....................................................................................................... 47
  Teacher vs. Student Centered Instruction........................................................... 48
  Financial Issues ......................................................................................................... 51
  Key Points .................................................................................................................. 52
Chapter 4: Discussion and Summary

Modifications

Religion

Lack of funding

Closing remarks

Questions for Further Research

Suggested models for future research

Importance of continued research

References
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>HDI - Turkey</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>HDI - Europe and Central Asia</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Gender Inequality Index (GII) – Turkey and Europe and Central Asia</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Percent GDP Spent on Education (by nation)</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Religion-Based Demographics (by nation)</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Teacher/Student Ratio (2011) (by nation)</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Teacher Salary in USD (2011) (by nation)</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Muslim Population in Europe and Central Asia</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Preschool Attendance Ages 3-6 (by nation)</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 1: Introduction

Education is an important issue worldwide. Politicians, parents, and professionals in education must develop notions of best practice for educating youth prepared to meet the demands of functioning as active and productive members of society. Most of the literature on educational leadership is based on research and best practices from North America and Western Europe. This paper serves to answer the research question: What are the issues an emerging school leader in a Middle Eastern country such as Turkey needs to consider when applying those recommendations?

Literature is first reviewed with the aim of defining “best practice” from education systems implemented in North America and Western Europe. The theoretical approach that follows uses scholarly research to define and describe the history of institutionalized education in Turkey. Following the history of education is a description of the current system of education in Turkey and how best practices, as defined according to North American and Western European educational philosophies and theories, apply to schools in modern day Turkey.

Best Practices for Education in North America and Western Europe

Best practices in education are those actions an educator should take to ensure the greatest level of student success. Pre-service educators begin learning how to design and implement instruction in accordance with best practices in their undergraduate training. As teachers continue to grow and develop in the role of educator, teachers must be responsible for furthering their knowledge to keep current on developments regarding best practices.

Best practices for education in North American and Western European cultures are founded on educational psychology. Theories for educational psychology developed by renowned professionals including Piaget, Freud, Erikson, Vygotsky, Dewey, Kohlberg, and
others are utilized to set standards and design frameworks for teaching and learning (Woolfolk, 2010).

Common expectations for teaching and learning have been developed in North America and Western Europe. Concepts widely taught in undergraduate teaching programs in universities and institutions of higher learning throughout the nations comprising North America and Western Europe have become common place in these areas. Not utilizing the concepts referred to as “best practices” is considered poor form for teachers, administrators, schools, and school districts. Best practices for education based upon results of brain research and studies regarding cognitive development include developing a learning climate that is emotionally supportive of students. Students are believed to perform better academically and develop more as individuals when students feel emotionally and physically secure. Best practices for education also include providing opportunities for students at all levels in the same classroom to be successful.

Teachers must be sensitive to learning modalities and differentiate and vary instruction accordingly. Teachers direct instruction according to best practices when providing opportunities for students to make connections. Instructors can help students move information from the working to long term memory by building connections (Woolfolk, 2010). Best practices in today’s classrooms require motivating students by engaging students in meaningful learning activities. Assignments commonly classified as “busy work”, including drill and practice worksheets, are no longer viewed as a valuable use of instructional time. Lecture is also no longer considered the most beneficial mode of instruction in North American and Western European classrooms. Rather, activities promoting problem solving, critical thinking, and collaboration are preferred. Best practices for education favor collaborative group work among students. In reference to an increasingly globalized world, best practices in North American and
Western European classrooms stress the ability to work with individuals from diverse backgrounds.

Cultural differences are valued according to best Western practices. Multicultural instruction is important. Assessments of student learning in accordance with North American and Western European standards for best practices should be authentic and meaningful. Pen and paper assessments are no longer considered the best means for assessing student learning. Assessments designed in accordance with Westernized best practices place less emphasis on rote memorization, and should be designed according to a format which coincides more directly with how information can be applied in real life situations. Similarly, information taught in lessons in North American and Western European schools should be relevant to students’ lives. Students should recognize how information and skills studied will impact their lives and the lives of others. In an increasingly technology dependent world, technology integration and implementation are now considered part of best practices for education (Tileston, 2005).

This paper serves to address the problem of how best practices for education as defined by North American and Western European nations need to be modified in a Middle Eastern country such as Turkey. The history of education in Turkey is considered in conjunction with the current status of education to develop a comprehensive description of the Turkish education system. Demography of Turkey and conditions of school environment and culture provide the context for considering best practices. The research questions for this study are: How should best practice from North American and Western European countries be modified to produce successful results in a Middle Eastern country such as Turkey? What are the issues an emerging school leader in a Middle Eastern country such as Turkey needs to consider when applying those
recommendations?
Chapter 2: Literature Review

To consider how best practices for education as determined in North America and Western Europe should be modified for implementation in a Middle Eastern country such as Turkey, it is first important to understand the context to which the practices are to be applied. Considering the history of education in Turkey provides a framework for understanding present conditions. As in all nations globally, systems of education in Turkey are affected by national demographics. Access to and conditions surrounding education are influenced by the populations educational institutions serve and resources available.

History of Education in Turkey

It is essential to consider the history of education in Turkey to provide a comprehensive description of the current state of education and possibilities for the future. Turkey was an Islamic Empire ruled by Holy Law prior to the westernization of the Ottoman Empire. Every aspect of an Ottoman citizen’s life was directed and regulated by religion including education. Secular subjects such as mathematics and science were not included in the curriculum or were taught only in reference to religious studies (Ünder, 2007).

The history of contemporary education in Turkey is often divided into two periods: pre- and post-World War II. The pre-World War II era of the Turkish education system effectively began in the early 1700s as the influence of Continental European countries increased, and the Ottoman Empire became interested in the success and prosperity of Western nations. Western nations were observed enjoying success and prosperity partly due to the inclusion of secular subjects such as science and technology in educational studies (Nergis, 2011).

“Modern” Galatasaray Sultunisi schools were established in Turkey in 1868 to educate students in a broader range of subjects than in years past. The main language of instruction in
Galatasaray schools was French and the schools were organized according to the French Lycée system. Galatasaray students were educated to be leaders, politicians, and diplomats in the Ottoman Empire. The first Galatasaray institutions were established in 1481 with the aim of educating students from diverse backgrounds within the Ottoman Empire. Founders of the Galatasaray schools believed developing individuals from diverse backgrounds would provide the Ottoman Empire with the best leaders the geographic area had to offer. The goal of developing superb leaders continued as Galatasaray schools evolved to medical academies between 1830 and 1868. As a “window to the West”, Galatasaray schools educated administrators and political leaders throughout the course of the “Modern” period of its existence between the years of 1868 and 1923 and beyond. Galatasaray schools exist today and direct instruction through what has been termed the “integrated education system”. Galatasaray schools are recognized today as highly competitive institutions of learning which continue to build diverse environments for students from many different backgrounds (Ünder, 2007).

Turkey saw the most dramatic shift in educational policy during the Ataturk or Republican Era of the 1920s. Recognized as the “Father” of modern Turkey, Ataturk was a firm believer in the ideals of the Enlightenment and valued science. Ataturk believed for Turkey to become a powerful nation, Turkey must align with Western systems and values, including adopting a more Westernized vision for education. The overarching goal for educational reform during Ataturk’s era was to achieve the same level of economic and technological prosperity as Western nations with as much speed and efficiency as possible. Ataturk took action to westernize Turkey in many ways, among them changing from the Holy Law to European civil law, adopting the Gregorian calendar, changing from the Arabic to the Latin alphabet, prohibiting polygamy, and eliminating the Sultanate (king) (Christensen & Levinson, 2002). Ataturk believed education
was valuable for every Turkish citizen to develop a more westernized Turkish nation. Education was thus secularized and nationalized (Nergis, 2011).

The Village Affairs Commission was established in the 1930s to improve the quality of education for Turkish citizens residing in village communities. During the 1930’s, 80% of the Turkish population was living in villages, including 30,000 of 40,000 villages that had no teachers in the community. The majority of residents in Turkish villages at this time were impoverished, illiterate, and uneducated. Transportation and communication technologies were lacking. Malaria and tuberculosis were common and death rates were high. Two village teacher schools were opened in 1940 to combat the issue of lacking education in village communities. The purpose of the village teacher schools was to train teachers to work and serve in Turkish villages. One school was opened in Izmir the other in Eskisehir. Village primary- and high-school graduates were accepted into the teacher training institutions entitled Village Institutes. Pupils at Village Institutes were taught skills necessary to work in the fields of teaching, medicine, agriculture, and technology upon their return to village communities. Graduates from Village Institutes were expected to become integral members of the village communities they would be serving, teaching and monitoring aspects of life beyond solely the realm of academia (Biris, 2010).

The first official teacher training programs for all Turkish candidates began in 1946 with the establishment of the Gazi Institute of Education in Istanbul, Turkey. Foreign language teaching was one of the tracks of study provided by the institute which offered three-year programs (Nergis, 2011). The training programs provided by Village Institutes were modified in 1946 to reflect the development of nationally available teacher training programs. As teacher training programs and the education system in Turkey continued to develop, Village Institutes
were eventually closed in 1954 (Biris, 2010).

During the Republican era in Turkey, just prior to World War II, the German and French education systems widely influenced education in Turkey. Students were taught to speak French or German as a second language in schools. Talented Turkish students were sent to France and Germany to obtain language and academic skills they could bring back to Turkey (Nergis, 2011). Teachers were hired from Germany and France to teach in Turkey and share and incorporate their philosophies, pedagogy, textbooks, and curricula into the Turkish education system.

After World War II American influence spread globally. Soviets threat against Turkey after World War II led to allied relations between the United States and Turkey. The relationship between the United States and Turkey grew with Turkey’s shift to a multi-party political system in 1946. Turkey’s acceptance to NATO in 1952 further improved relations between Turkey and the United States. During this time Turkish education was influenced by American educational doctrines and polices. In 1949 the United States Educational Commission was established in Turkey. The United States Educational Commission was designed to increase the exchange of professionals and ideas in the field of education between the United States and Turkey.

The Turkish Fulbright Commission was also founded in 1949. In the 1950s professionals in the field of education from the United States were invited to Turkey to offer suggestions for improving village and adult education as well as developing better teacher training programs. Turkish teachers were also sent to the United States during this period to observe the U.S. education system and become trained in U.S. educational policy and teaching methods. The language of instruction at many Turkish schools was changed from French and German to English. The concept of an educational philosophy was recognized and adopted to align the Turkish education system with ideas described in Western fields of philosophy, psychology and
A gap in availability of trained primary educators developed in Turkey in the 1960s. The Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) gained significant control over primary education in 1960 with the passing of Article 97. In accordance with Article 97, high school graduates not having finished college or university studies were provided the right to become Reserve Officers and complete compulsory military service as a primary school teacher. Article 222 of the Primary Education and Training Law passed in 1961 also provided middle school graduates over the age of 18 the option to attend “temporary teacher” courses and become appointed as primary school teachers in Turkey. Such teacher training programs were utilized until teachers were required to obtain a college degree according to Article 1739 of the National Education Basic Law passed in 1973 (Biris, 2010).

The Higher Education Institution (HEI) law was passed in Turkey in 1982. The HEI law through the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) required teacher education programs be offered only through official universities in Turkey (Bilir, 2010). Under HEI all higher education institutions were required to develop Educational Sciences Departments providing certificates for training in pedagogy for education. Pre-service education for teachers was standardized across higher institutions of learning. Required hours of in field training and service for teacher candidates was increased by two-hundred percent under HEI. (Nergis, 2011).

A free market economy and more liberal practices in education were adopted in Turkey
in 1983. More liberal practices in education included teachers earning retirement rights. Teachers having served in poor conditions in schools located in village communities were also granted new positions teaching private courses or instructing in private schools under better working conditions. The described shift eventually led to a decline in the quality of public education in Turkey (Biris, 2010).

To improve the quality of teachers serving public schools and to combat the issue of an increasing employment gap, the In-Service Training (INSET) Chair implemented teacher in-service training programs through regional offices in 1993. The opening of INSET regional programs resulted in teacher candidates no longer needing to leave their home cities and towns to attend teacher training programs. Teacher training programs became accessible to a larger population of potential candidates (Nergis, 2011).

Primary education was made compulsory up until the eighth grade in 1997. Changes in necessary teacher qualifications accompanied the shift to compulsory middle grades education. In contrast to previous policies, four-year programs were also required for primary, foreign language, computers, kindergarten, physical education, and the fine arts teacher candidates (Biris, 2010). MoNE recognized an imbalance between theory and practice in teacher education programs one year after education was made compulsory up until the eighth grade. As a result courses on theory in teacher training programs were cut down and replaced with practicum courses. Through new educational policy entitled Faculties of Education, courses with content grounded in philosophies of education were eliminated in preliminary teacher training courses (Ünder, 2007). With a decreased emphasis on studying theories and philosophies of education and an increased focus on in field training, teacher candidates were no longer required to complete four years of study at an accredited institute of higher learning to receive teaching
certificates. An alternative to receiving a four year degree was developed through a teaching certificate program requiring thirty-one hours of weekly study through one of thirty-four qualified universities (Nergis, 2011).

There exists a history in Turkey of imitating education systems designed by other countries and cultures. The tendency to imitate education systems from other countries and cultures may be attributed to the lack of emphasis given to creative thinking in education in Turkey. The Turkish approach to teaching and learning might be described as more “pragmatic and practical”. In accordance with this model, the Turkish education system requires students to discover and acquire facts solely through the scientific model, a feature which might not foster innovation (Ünder, 2007). The following section takes a closer look at the education system in present day Turkey.

**Education in Modern Day Turkey**

Education is an important issue in modern day Turkey. Turkey has made significant changes in the national education system to more closely align with Western European countries as Turkey vies for acceptance in the European Union (E.U.). Many issues are involved with Turkey’s potential acceptance into the E.U. Those which are related to education include availability of pre-primary and primary education, access to quality education for females, and enforcement of laws regarding mandatory years of educational instruction. It is first important to consider the demographics of Turkey as a Middle Eastern and global nation as a platform for discussing the current and changing state of education in Turkey.

The International Human Development Indicators (IHDI) produced by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) provides significant demographic information for nations across the globe including Turkey. IHDI may be related to areas such as health,
education, income, inequality, poverty, gender, trade, economy, innovation and technology. In 2012 Turkey had a Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.722. Turkey was positioned 90th out of 187 countries. With an increase from the 1980 HDI of 0.474, the HDI for Turkey has been steadily improving by an average annual rate of 1.3%. Important IHDI for Turkey include:

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HDI – Turkey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life expectancy at birth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected years of schooling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean years of schooling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross National Income (GNI) per capita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although Turkish students are expected to complete 12.9 years of schooling, the mean years of schooling completed is only 6.5. The mean years of school completed by Turkish students is nearly half the value for expected years of schooling (Human Development Report, 2013). Many reasons exist for students not completing the expected number of years of schooling. Families living in poverty often cannot afford the expense of sending their children to school. Families facing these conditions often keep children home to work on agricultural projects or send children to work other jobs to earn a wage to support their family. Schools are often located far from small villages, where parents are not always willing to take on the risk and inconvenience of providing or permitting transportation to and from school most days of the week. In traditional families or villages high school aged children, especially girls, might also be responsible for fulfilling domestic roles as a parent and caregiver as opposed to seeking educational opportunities (Somuncu, 2006).

The described HDI values might be compared with the averages for countries in Europe
and Central Asia:

Table 2

HDI – Europe and Central Asia

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Life expectancy at birth</strong></td>
<td>71.5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expected years of schooling</strong></td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean years of schooling</strong></td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gross National Income (GNI) per capita</strong></td>
<td>$12,243 USD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HDI</strong></td>
<td>0.771</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The life expectancy at birth on average for other countries in Europe and Central Asia is less than that of Turkey, 71.5 years as compared to 74.2. The GNI in Turkey also exceeds that of other countries in Europe and Central Asia. Despite these advantages on Turkey’s behalf, the expected and mean years of schooling in Europe and Central Asia exceed those in Turkey. The figures demonstrate students in other countries in Europe and Central Asia are attending school and receiving educational services for longer periods of time than students in Turkey (Human Development Report, 2013).

An important component of HDI is the Gender Inequality Index (GII). The GII reflects inequalities between male and female populations in areas including health, economic activity, and attainment of education. The GII for Turkey can be compared to that of other countries in Europe and Central Asia:
Table 3

Gender Inequality Index (GII) – Turkey and Europe and Central Asia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender Inequality Index (GII) – Turkey and Europe and Central Asia</th>
<th>Turkey</th>
<th>Europe and Central Asia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GII Value</td>
<td>0.366</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GII Rank</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male population with at least secondary education (%)</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>85.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female population with at least secondary education (%)</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>81.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male population labor force participation rate (%)</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female population labor force participation rate (%)</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>49.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Turkey has a higher GII value than the average GII for other countries in Europe and Central Asia. A comparison of GIIs for Turkey and other countries in Europe and Central Asia illustrates that Turkish citizens experience a greater level of gender stratification than those in other European and Central Asian nations. Of the male population in Turkey, 42.2% have at least a secondary education as compared to only 26.7% of the female population, a difference of 15.7%. Other countries in Europe and Central Asia educate 85.8% of the male population and 81.4% of the female population with at least a secondary education. The difference between male and female populations receiving at least a secondary education for other countries in Europe and Asia is 4.4%. A higher percentage of the Turkish male population receives an education than the Turkish female population by a difference almost three times the difference representing percentages of males and females receiving an education in other European and Central Asian countries. Reasons attributing to lack of school attendance by female students will be discussed later in further detail. Not only is the degree of stratification between educated males and females
larger in Turkey than in other European and Central Asian countries, but the number of educated persons in Europe and Central Asia overall is significantly higher than in Turkey.

Of the male population in Turkey, 42.4% receive at least a secondary education. Of the male population in other European and Central Asian countries, 85.5% on average receive at least a secondary education, more than double the percentage of the male population in Turkey. A similar trend is observed comparing female populations. Of the female population in Turkey, 26.7% receives at least a secondary education as compared to the average for other European and Central Asian countries of 81.4%. The percentage of the female population on average in European and Central Asian countries receiving at least a secondary education is more than triple the percentage of the female population in Turkey receiving at least a secondary education (Human Development Report, 2013).

Compulsory primary school enrollment in 2013 was over 95%, a triumph for the Turkish education system. School enrollment is mandatory for children in Turkey in grades kindergarten through eight and from ages six to fourteen. Given that secondary schools are non-compulsory, enrollment was 61% for boys and 56% for girls. Secondary schools in Turkey enroll students in grades eight through twelve, ages 14 to 18 in most cases. Compulsory primary schools have yet to reach 100% enrollment due to factors including gender roles, poverty and child labor (EIU ViewsWire, 2008). Conditions preventing primary school enrollment are especially prevalent in rural eastern Turkish provinces (Somuncu, 2006). The described adverse conditions to education cause more children to drop out of school as the children progress to secondary education. The lack of mandatory enrollment in secondary schools allows students to elect out of continuing education. The Turkish Ministry of Education plans to eventually make secondary education mandatory as higher education also expands, which should have a predicted effect of increasing
student enrollment in secondary educational institutions (Somuncu, 2006). An additional cause of low enrollment in secondary schools for both male and female populations may be a lack of public funding for education. Of the Turkish GDP, 4.2% went to education in 2008 (EIU ViewsWire, 2008). A 4.2% GDP is low compared to GDP expenditures on education in many other European and Central Asian countries in 2008 (The World Bank, 2013):

Table 4
Percent GDP Spent on Education (by nation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>% GDP Spent on Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran Islamic Republic</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Private schools are not funded by Turkish GDP and provide students better educational opportunities. Private schools in Turkey educate approximately 2% of primary and 3% of secondary students (EIU ViewsWire, 2008).

Many factors lead to female absence in educational institutions in Turkey. Gender specific factors preventing females from attending school include fear for young girls traveling
far from their home villages to educational institutions, a preference for prepping females for marriage and childbearing as opposed to education, and traditional religious-based prejudice against educating girls (Somuncu, 2006). Traditional religious values are especially prevalent in eastern regions of Turkey where obedience to parents and elders is expected, and school is sometimes viewed as a luxury or distraction from more important family and community related activities. In traditional communities females are often responsible for taking on domestic responsibilities in their relationships with their husbands and children. Females in traditional communities are also responsible for providing a portion of the household income by performing jobs such as harvesting crops or picking cotton. Child brides are still common in some eastern regions of Turkey today. Child marriage promotes traditional gender roles and female illiteracy (Somuncu, 2006).

In traditional households women are often confined to the home and are permitted to engage in public interactions only wearing modest clothing and under supervision of their husband or other trusted individual. As previously described, this makes the commute from home to school impossible for some Turkish female children living in traditional communities. Females from traditional families often wear a headscarf. Wearing headscarves in public is prohibited under Turkish law. Although the law is often not enforced in many public venues, schools will not allow female students to attend classes wearing a headscarf. Young females whose parents or families prevent removing the headscarf are unable to attend classes in a public school as a result (Levine, 2005).

The Turkish national government has taken strides towards achieving increased school enrollment from females in the public education sector through government programs and campaigns. For example, a 2003 campaign *Off to School, Girls!* was developed by the Ministry
of National Education (MONE) and UNICEF to increase female enrollment in school and eventually eliminate the gender gap between male and female students. Ten rural provinces in eastern Turkey were the focus of the *Off to School, Girls!* campaign. Of Turkish boys in the selected mountain provinces, 25.56% were not attending school at campaign onset. Of Turkish girls in the selected mountain provinces, 73.43% were not attending school at campaign onset. The number of school buildings, classrooms, and buildings for boarding students were increased at schools through the *Off to School, Girls!* campaign. The campaign also improved the bus system and provided additional tools and materials for schools. Of girls not attending school prior to campaign onset, 40,000 enrolled within the first months, increasing female enrollment in selected schools at a rate of 2-20% according to the provinces. Some provinces saw greater gains than others for reasons which might be determined through expanded research. The effects of the program continued in subsequent school years. An additional 120,000 female students enrolled in primary schools in 2004 increasing national primary school attendance for females from 90.21% to 92.16% (Somuncu, 2006). Similar programs may be effective for improving female secondary school attendance in the future, especially in conjunction with initiatives to make secondary school mandatory for all Turkish citizens.

According to the 2013 GII rating for Turkey, a greater percentage of the male population participates in the workforce than the female population. Of Turkish males, 71.4% are part of the labor force as compared to 28.1% of the female population. The difference between the percentages of Turkish males represented in the labor force as compared to females is 43.3%. A lesser percentage of the male population in other European and Central Asian countries are represented in the labor force with a value of 69%. The Turkish male population is represented in the workforce by an increased value of 2.4% as compared to male populations in other European
and Asian Countries. A reverse trend exists for female populations. Of the female population in other European and Central Asian countries, 29.6% are represented in the workforce as compared to only 28.1% of the female population in Turkey. An increase of females in the labor force in European and Central Asian countries as compared to Turkey exists with a difference in participant values of 28.5%. The difference of 28.5% representing females in the labor force in European and Asian countries as compared to Turkey might be compared to the difference of 2.4% for male populations. A larger discrepancy exists between the amounts of females in the workforce than males. Comparing figures for males and females in only Turkey, 71.4% of males and 28.1% of females participating in the labor force represents a difference of 43.3%. The number of males participating in the labor force in Turkey is more than double the number of females. Of males in other countries in Europe and Central Asia, 69% participate in the labor force. Of females in other countries in Europe and Central Asia, 49.6% participate in the labor force. The difference between the numbers of males and females represented in the labor force in other countries in Europe and Central Asia is 19.4%. The difference between the number of males and females participating in the workforce in Turkey is more than double the difference for other European and Central Asian countries. Thus, a significantly greater degree of stratification exists with regard to percentages of the male and female populous represented in the workforce in Turkey and in other European and Central Asian countries (Human Development Report, 2013).

Religious affiliation and beliefs could impact the high degree of stratification that exists in Turkey with regard to percentages of males and females in the workforce. The official religious affiliations of countries in Europe and Central Asia include:
Table 5
Religion-Based Demographics (by nation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Religion-Based Demographics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>Roman Catholic 73.6%, Protestant 4.7%, <strong>Muslim 4.2%</strong>, other 3.5%, unspecified 2%, none 12% (2001 census)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>Roman Catholic 75%, other (includes Protestant) 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>Eastern Orthodox 59.4%, <strong>Muslim (Sunni) 7.4%</strong>, <strong>Muslim (Shia) 0.4%</strong>, other (including Catholic, Protestant, Armenian Apostolic Orthodox, and Judaism) 1.7%, other (unknown) 27.4%, none 3.7% (2011 census)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>Roman Catholic 87.8%, Orthodox 4.4%, other Christian 0.4%, <strong>Muslim 1.3%</strong>, other and unspecified 0.9%, none 5.2% (2001 census)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>Greek Orthodox 78%, <strong>Muslim 18%</strong>, other (includes Maronite and Armenian Apostolic) 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>Roman Catholic 10.3%, Protestant (includes Czech Brethren and Hussite) 0.8%, other and unspecified 54.6%, none 34.2% (2011 census)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>Roman Catholic 83%-88%, Protestant 2%, Jewish 1%, <strong>Muslim 5%-10%</strong>, unaffiliated 4% <strong>overseas departments:</strong> Roman Catholic, Protestant, Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, pagan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>Orthodox Christian (official) 83.9%, <strong>Muslim 9.9%</strong>, Armenian-Gregorian 3.9%, Catholic 0.8%, other 0.8%, none 0.7% (2002 census)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Protestant 34%, Roman Catholic 34%, <strong>Muslim 3.7%</strong>, unaffiliated or other 28.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>Roman Catholic 51.9%, Calvinist 15.9%, Lutheran 3%, Greek Catholic 2.6%, other Christian 1%, other or unspecified 11.1%, unaffiliated 14.5% (2001 census)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran Islamic Republic</td>
<td><strong>Muslim (official) 98%</strong> (Shia 89%, Sunni 9%), other (includes Zoroastrian, Jewish, Christian, and Baha’i) 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Christian 80% (overwhelming Roman Catholic with very small groups of Jehova Witnesses and Protestants), <strong>Muslims NEGL</strong> (about 700,000 but growing), Atheists and Agnostics 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td><strong>Muslim 70.2%</strong>, Christian 26.2% (Russian Orthodox 23.9%, other Christian 2.3%), Buddhist 0.1%, other 0.2%, atheist 2.8%, unspecified 0.5% (2009 Census)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td><strong>Muslim (official) 96.4%</strong> (Sunni 85-90%, Shia 10-15%), other (includes Christian and Hindu) 3.6% (2010 est.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Roman Catholic 89.8% [about 75% practicing], Eastern Orthodox 1.3%, Protestant 0.3%, other 0.3%, unspecified 8.3% (2002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>Roman Catholic 84.5%, other Christian 2.2%, other 0.3%, unknown 9%, none 3.9% (2001 census)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>Catholic 57.8%, <strong>Muslim 2.4%</strong>, Orthodox 2.3%, other Christian 0.9%, unaffiliated 3.5%, other or unspecified 23%, none 10.1% (2002 census)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Roman Catholic 94%, other 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>Roman Catholic 41.8%, Protestant 35.3%, <strong>Muslim 4.3%</strong>, Orthodox 1.8%, other Christian 0.4%, other 1%, unspecified 4.3%, none 11.1% (2000 census)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td><strong>Muslim 99.8% (mostly Sunni)</strong>, other 0.2% (mostly Christians and Jews)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(CIA World Factbook, 2013).
Turkey has the largest Muslim population of the Central Asian and European countries described. Of the Turkish population, 99.8% identify as Muslim with the remaining 0.2% mostly identifying as Christian or Jewish. The Central Asian countries of Iran and Pakistan are the only other countries with exceptionally high Islamic populations. Of the Iranian population, 98% are Muslim. Of the Pakistani population, 96.4% are Muslim. The next country with the greatest Muslim population is Kazakhstan with 70.2% of the population practicing Islam. All populations of other nations described are comprised of less than 20% Muslims, with only Cyprus (18%...
Muslim population) reaching above the 10% population mark (CIA World Factbook, 2013).

The described religious-based demographics are important to consider with relation to school attendance rates. Traditional Islamic families value childrearing. With family as a central focus in life, high school aged children may choose not to attend school in favor of fulfilling domestic roles or complying with familial based responsibilities (Somuncu, 2006).

**Levels of education**

Turkish national and citizen demographics play a significant role in education. Effects are observed as early as pre-school. Pre-school education is delivered to children from birth to age five or six. Pre-school programs are voluntary. Pre-school education has been positively linked to student success in primary school by developing student personalities, language skills, attention, effort, discipline, psychomotor skills, intellectual abilities, socio-emotional competency, attitudes, and physical skills (Baskan, Kılıç, & Sağlam, 2010).

The benefits of pre-school education are valued in many of the countries comprising the European Union (EU). A high level of pre-school attendance has been reached in many countries comprising the EU with enrollment in some countries nearing 100% (Baskan, Kılıç, & Sağlam, 2010). Strides have been taken to improve the quality of education in Turkey as the nation vies for acceptance to the EU.

The Turkish Ministry of Education is currently collecting data regarding the status of education to determine necessary reforms. The current structure of pre-school education in Turkey is defined by the Pre-School Education Institutions Law passed in 2004 and later amended in 2007. Pre-school teachers in Turkey must complete a four-year training program regarding skills necessary to be successful in the pre-school classroom including obtaining knowledge of pre-school activities. Pre-school activities are classified as “…leisure time,
Turkish language, game and movement, music, science and mathematics, preparation for reading and writing, drama, field trips and artistic works” (Baskan, Kılıç, & Sağlam, 2010, p. 557). Preschool education in Turkey is not mandatory. Pre-school enrollment in Turkey is steadily increasing despite an elective status. Enrollment increased from 5,169 students during the 1994 to 1995 academic year to 26,681 students during the 2009 to 2010 academic year. The increase in pre-school enrollment was partially due to a pilot project developed by the Turkish government to study the effects of mandatory pre-school education. In the 2009 to 2010 school year all five year old students were required to enroll in pre-school programs in thirty-two Turkish provinces. The program led to a greater increase in pre-school enrollment than in years prior. Pre-school student enrollment increased every year from 1994 to 2010 despite the pilot program. Although pre-school enrollment in Turkey has shown consistent growth, pre-school enrollment continues to fall behind enrollment in many other countries holding membership in the EU. The following chart compares enrollment in pre-school programs for children ages three to six:
In addition to comparatively lower pre-school enrollments, Turkey has more students per teacher in preschool classrooms than other EU nations. The Czech Republic, Austria, France, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Spain and Sweden all have less than twenty students per teacher. Some countries have even fewer than fifteen students per teacher on average in preschool classrooms. For example, Hungary has eleven, Greece has twelve, and Sweden has thirteen preschool students per teacher. Turkish pre-schools average twenty-six students per teacher (Baskan, Kılıç, & Sağlam, 2010). A strong relationship exists between class size and student achievement. Students receiving instruction in classrooms with less students experience fewer
disruptions to learning and receive more specialized, individualized instruction. Student learning and achievement increase as a result of the benefits of smaller class sizes (Harris, 2007).

Primary schools in Turkey also face challenges. Primary schools in Turkey provide eight years of continuous and mandatory education for the first through eighth grades. Primary schools in Turkey are designed to teach “core knowledge” to function in society, literacy skills, and basic numbers and mathematics skills. Students completing primary education should obtain the skills necessary for living a high quality life in the social and global communities. As of 2010 there were 35,581 primary schools in Turkey. In the same year the number of students per teacher was 26.4. Different categories exist to define the variety of primary school types offered in Turkey including the following: open primary education, distance education, normal and teaching shift, special schools, private schools, multi-grade schools, transported (mobile) schools, and boarding primary schools. In 2010 the number of students attending the described primary schools totaled 2,189,370 (Toprakci, 2010).

Distance primary education is provided for students who exceed the age for or have failed out of basic primary education. One distance education school exists in Turkey employing twenty-three teachers. The distance education school has an enrollment of 266,743 students. While distance education is an especially good option for individuals who are illiterate in Turkey, the quality of education provided is lacking and often skills gained through social interaction are lost (Toprakci, 2010).

Private schools provide as an alternative to public schools in Turkey. Private schools are costly and thus only accessible to individuals from above average, privileged economic backgrounds in Turkey. There are 676 private primary schools in Turkey. Private primary schools employ 18,003 teachers and educate 172,348 students. The number of students per
classroom in the private sector is greatly reduced from 43.5 students per classroom in cities and
24.4 students per classroom in villages in the public sector in Turkey. There are 13.3 students per
classroom in the private sector in Turkey with a teacher student ratio of one to 9.5. Conditions
for delivering and receiving instruction are thus improved in private schools (Toprakci, 2010).

Special Schools in Turkey are those which serve populations with special needs or
handicaps. Members of the described populations with severe special needs or handicaps are not
generally integrated into the normal classroom setting. There are 122 Special Schools in Turkey
employing 1,493 teachers. Student enrollment in Special Schools is 9,993.

Under Special Education Law 573, students with special needs in Turkey may receive
appropriate services in schools providing general education. The basic principles for special
needs education as defined under Special Education Law 573 include: access from an early age
to an education in line with students’ interests and abilities, special educational services received
in the general classroom environment to the greatest extent possible, cooperation between all
organizations involved in the student’s life to ensure success, individualized education plans
(IEPs), and attention to improved and healthy social relationships. Special Education services
arranged under Special Education Law 573 are carried out by the Special Education Guiding and
Consulting Services Head Office under the Ministry of Education (Cavkaytar, 2006).

Special education services in Turkey are carried out by general classroom teachers as
well as individuals specifically trained in special education services. Prior to 1983, special
education teachers in Turkey were trained in short-term in-service education programs. After
1983 special education teachers in Turkey began to receive career specific training in university
undergraduate programs. There are ten undergraduate special education programs offered
through universities in Turkey. Students complete 143 to 144 credit hours over the course of
eight semesters, including a teaching practicum in the seventh semester (Cavkaytar, 2006).

Combined classroom schools are another type of educational institution in Turkey. Combined classroom schools exist in villages where students from more than one grade level are placed in one classroom under the instruction of the same teacher. Combined classrooms have been utilized since the 1960s in villages where schools cannot afford to pay more than one teacher for multiple grade levels (Toprakci, 2010). Combined classroom schools may be the only opportunity students from villages and of poor socio-economic status have to receive an education (Aksoy, 2008). There are 16,379 combined classroom schools in Turkey. The number of students per classroom in combined schools is 36.9. The number of students per teacher is 21.2 (Toprakci, 2010).

Problems exist for combined classroom schools with relation to teacher training. Teacher training programs for combined classroom schools differ from teacher training programs for other public educational facilities. Teacher training often occurs on a mutable trial and error system and lacks elements of professional and pedagogical knowledge essential for developing knowledgeable teachers. The best teachers in Turkey often opt to teach in types of schools other than those comprised of combined classrooms to avoid challenges of working under low socio-economic conditions. Lack of funding leads to few opportunities for professional development in combined classroom schools. Many combined classroom schools are located in the far eastern regions of Turkey where the political and social culture is more traditional than in other regions. Moving from more liberal locations and cultures is often difficult and considered undesirable for teaching candidates from well-qualified teaching programs and schools in other regions. Teachers in Turkey must complete their first year of teaching service in a location assigned by the Turkish Ministry of Education. The eastern regions of Turkey are labeled as “hardship”
regions, and classified as “obligatory service” regions for pre-service or first year teachers in Turkey. Thus, many of the teachers directing instruction in combined classroom schools are inexperienced. Upon completion of the one year obligatory service period, most teachers opt to leave the regions of Turkey where combined classroom schools are most prevalent (Aksoy, 2008).

In addition to issues regarding teacher training, teachers working in combined classroom schools are often overworked. Teachers in combined classroom schools sometimes teach as many as five grade levels while taking on administrative duties which would otherwise go unperformed. Teachers help manage duties such as cleaning, collecting funds, repairing broken equipment and materials, and providing or purchasing materials. Teachers are responsible for keeping the classrooms heated. Classrooms in combined classroom schools often have a single woodstove. The stoves are insufficient and pose many potential hazards such as fires and burns. The stoves must be consistently monitored and stoked with wood, coal, or animal dung. When children are absent from school on a consistent basis, teachers in combined classroom schools are responsible for visiting families at home and convincing parents to send their children to school. The described duties often lead teachers in combined classroom schools to become overextended and fatigued (Aksoy, 2008).

Language is an issue in combined classroom schools. The main language of instruction is Turkish. Many of the students from poor socio-economic backgrounds attending combined classroom schools do not speak Turkish at home. Rather students may speak and write in Kurdish or Arabic. Teachers in combined classroom schools must be prepared to modify instruction to cater to the needs of Turkish language learners who may not have the language skills necessary for instruction in other academic subject areas (Aksoy, 2008).
Sanitation can be a problem in schools supporting combined classrooms. Some schools have no running water. In some schools there are no toilets, drinking fountains, or sinks for washing. Cross contamination and personal hygiene can become an issue (Aksoy, 2008).

Boarding schools are another option for primary education in Turkey. Boarding schools were first practiced under a pilot program in Turkey from the 1971 to 1972. Boarding schools were officially opened for enrollment in Turkey in 1976 upon success of the pilot program. The number of students per classroom in boarding schools is thirty. The number of students per teacher in boarding schools is 23.3.

Many primary schools in Turkey employ the dual or multiple-shift system. In the multiple-shift system two or more separate groups of students attend school at all grade levels on different shifts during the day. One group of students attends school during the day and another attends during the afternoon. Providing educational services to students in dual or multiple-shifts helps meet the needs of rapidly growing populations in school communities. Members of village communities in Turkey are moving to larger cities for work and advancing economically. Cities are also more socially and culturally liberal which appeals to some members of village populations. Families leave village communities expecting to find schools in cities with a better educated teaching staff, a higher number of teaching professionals, and teaching approaches and methods based on scientific research in education. Multiple shift schools ensure all members of growing city populations receive access to educational services (Toprakci, 2010).

Mobile teaching is practiced in Turkey. Mobile teaching is designed for areas with scattered or low populations. As is practiced in other countries including the United States and Australia, students attending mobile schools are transported daily to a central educational facility. Transporting students to and from educational facilities poses some potential problems
and concerns. One concern includes fatigue due to additional transportation time. Some students sleep on school busses, interrupting regular sleep schedules. In some cases students miss classes due to increment weather or are involved in traffic accidents. Mobile schools serve 3,332,062 students in Turkey (Toprakci, 2010). Mobile teaching may become an alternative for students receiving education in combined classrooms as busing systems improve (Aksoy, 2008).

Many issues are presented in relation to primary education in Turkey. Literacy is an important topic in Turkey where 12.7% of the total population is illiterate. Approximately 37% of the population eligible for primary school graduation has graduated. Of the Turkish population having graduated primary school, only 62% of graduates read one to ten books of fiction per year. On the 2003 PISA examination, Turkish primary students ranked thirty-fourth out of thirty-nine nations for mathematics performance. Achievement in mathematics by students in Turkey was similar to achievement of students in Mexico, Indonesia, Tunisia and Brazil. Turkish students ranked thirty-second out of 39 nations in reading on the same examination (Toprakci, 2010).

The reasons why Turkish students achieve at such low levels compared to students in other nations may be linked to methods for teaching and learning. Students in Turkey are expected to learn the bulk of lesson content by memorizing facts. Turkish students are taught to be passive, unproductive, and unquestioningly compliant. Students in Turkey may perform better on standardized tests if students were more actively engaged in the educational process, participating in dynamic learning experiences (Toprakci, 2010).

Other elements negatively influencing the quality of primary education in Turkey include an excessive number of students and lack of budgetary funding. There are approximately 20 million total students in Turkey. National expenditure per pupil in Turkey is 390 dollars per year,
while national expenditure in most European countries is 4,000 dollars per pupil. A lack of funding leads to less access to adequate educational facilities and materials. The number of students per classroom in public schools is 43.5 in cities and 24.4 in villages. A classroom supporting 43.5 students is generally crowded and not conducive to learning. Some classrooms in public schools located in cities have more than one teacher per room positively affecting the number of students per teacher despite over crowded facilities. The number of students per teacher in cities is 26.2 and 24.8 in villages (Toprakci, 2010). The number of students per teacher in Turkey in is much larger compared to the United States and other countries in Europe:

Table 6

Teacher/Student Ratio (2011) (by nation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Teacher/Student Ratio (2011)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>1:10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>1:10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>1:13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>1:10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>1:11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>1:13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>1:13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1:14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>1:15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>1:11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1:12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>1:10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>1:9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>1:16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>1:10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>1:15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>1:11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>1:11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>1:17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>1:15.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Eurostat, 2013).
In recognition of best practices for education as previously described in relation to class size, Turkey has a long way to go to match the nations of the European Union.

Despite mandatory primary school attendance in grades one through eight, not every student attending primary schools in Turkey will graduate. The average period for education in village communities is four years and 5.7 years in cities, making the average duration of school attendance approximately five years (Toprakci, 2010).

There are four types of secondary schools in Turkey. The secondary school types include fine arts, multi-curricula, evening, and private (Aydin, 2012). Statistics for enrollment in secondary school programs in Turkey were previously discussed.

In the second year of attendance to secondary school, high school students are given the option to attend specialized branches for learning. Specialized branches for learning in secondary school include the natural sciences, social sciences, foreign language, literature, and mathematics. Students become eligible for institutions of higher learning after obtaining a high school degree and passing a standardized examination called the University Student Selection Examination (ÖSYS) (Aydin, 2012).

High school students in Turkey may only enter institutions of higher learning after completing the University Student Selection Examination (ÖSYS). The ÖSYS is a standardized examination which determines which university programs and which institutions of higher learning a student candidate may apply to. The ÖSYS is highly competitive and serves to ration the amount of available spaces in university programs. Topics covered on the ÖSYS include Turkish language, mathematics, philosophy, geography, history, religion and culture and morality knowledge, biology, physics, and chemistry. Students are provided 160 minutes to answer 160 total questions. The ÖSYS is administered once a year, generally in April. Results for the ÖSYS
are announced in July. Students must use the ÖSYS test results to mark their university preferences by the first week of August. Students are placed in universities and their courses are announced at the end of August. The number of high school students electing to take the ÖSYS is increasing. An increase in student participation in high stakes testing for university enrollment is evident of more value being placed on education in Turkey. The increase in the number of students completing the ÖSYS is also evident of changing social and economic factors in Turkey providing increased access to educational services for Turkish citizens (Karakaya & Tavşancil, 2008).

Much of educational instruction in Turkey is based on topics covered on the ÖSYS exam. As is true of high stakes testing preparation worldwide, teachers are responsible for preparing students for topics which will appear on the examination. Tutoring centers are an important educational institution in Turkey. Private tutoring centers, or “dersane”, are separate from formal education and provide additional instruction to students outside of regular school hours. Private tutoring centers are for profit institutions. One of the main reasons dersanes exist is to prepare Turkish secondary school students for competitive university entrance exams (Bircan & Tansel, 2006).

The clientele at dersanes is largely comprised of upper-class citizens. Students attending dersanes receive additional, specialized attention with regard to academics. Students able to receive educational services provided by private tutoring centers come from families who value education and tend to perform better on standardized high stakes examinations. Attendance at private tutoring centers statistically increases with level of parent achievement of education. Due to lack of availability of tutoring centers as well as lower economic demographics in rural areas in Turkey, the majority of students enrolled in private tutoring centers live in urban communities.
Social implications of higher class citizens having the most access to dersane services include perpetuating a system in which those in positions of power and authority come from economically advantaged and affluent backgrounds (Bircan & Tansel, 2006).

Three structures for private tutoring exist in Turkey including one-to-one instruction by a private tutor, instruction provided by general education teachers after regular school hours, and for profit organizations with classrooms set-up to resemble schools. One-to-one instruction is the most costly of the three forms as students receive specialized attention and instruction usually at their own or in the instructor’s private home. Hourly rates for one-to-one instruction vary widely depending on the experience of the tutor and the subject taught. Instruction provided by general education teachers after school is most common in the primary grades. The focus of tutoring instruction when provided by general education teachers is often related to helping students gain a better understanding of topics considered in regular lesson instruction.

For-profit tutoring organizations with classrooms set-up similar to schools are facilitated in multi-story buildings in city centers. Large tutoring centers provide instruction in classrooms with fewer students as compared to formal education institutions. The average class size in tutoring centers is eighteen students. The cost of educational services at large for-profit tutoring centers increases as class sizes decrease. The average fee at private tutoring centers in 2002 to prepare students for university entrance exams was 1,300 U.S. dollars. In this same year, private tutoring centers earned a profit of 263 million U.S. dollars during the ÖSYS preparation period accounting for 1.44% of the GDP in 2002 (Bircan & Tansel, 2006).

**Teaching and Learning in Turkish Schools**

Teaching and learning in Turkish schools are affected by the history of education in Turkey, social demographics, and religious culture. Turkey has a long history of being
influenced by education systems in other countries, and incorporating instructional approaches from schools in other nations. A gap exists in current research regarding the effectiveness of incorporated approaches from North American and Western European nations as related to cultural and social dynamics in Turkey. Western models of education may not fully serve to meet the needs of an education system in a Middle Eastern country such as Turkey. The following research question will be considered in further depth in Chapter 3: How should best practice from North American and Western European countries be modified to produce successful results in a Middle Eastern country such as Turkey? What are the issues an emerging school leader in a Middle Eastern country such as Turkey needs to consider when applying those recommendations?
Chapter 3: Modifications of Westernized Education System for Implementation in Turkey

Institutionalized education serves the purpose of shaping society by socializing individuals. Education provides students with skills, knowledge, and tools necessary to act in society. Standards for learning and models of teaching are developed to meet overarching goals for society. Models for teaching are often considered as equally important as, or more important than, topics and materials delivered in instruction (Calhoun, Joyce, & Weil, 2009).

To understand the Turkish system of education it is important to consider the overarching goals and aims. According to the Turkish Ministry of Education a main objective of education in Turkey is to develop good and moral citizens. A second main objective of education in Turkey is to develop student interests and aptitudes which will prepare students for life and higher education (Demir & Paykoç, 2006).

The described goals for education in Turkey coincide with goals for education in North American and Western European countries. Goals for education in Westernized nations are based upon philosophies of education. Many revered intellects have developed popular philosophies of education which have been synthesized to inform modern education systems in North America and Western Europe. For example, Eleanore Roosevelt’s educational philosophy emphasizes encouraging curiosity, fostering an innate interest in learning, supporting nationalism and citizenship, and providing skills to help students see beyond themselves as individuals to meet the needs of the country and world (Roosevelt, 1930). Martin Luther King Jr.'s philosophy of education focuses on two main functions: utility and culture. Dr. King's philosophy supports intensive and critical thinking, and a marriage of intelligence and character (Carlson, Luker, & Russell, 1992). Central to John Dewey's (1909) philosophy of education are morals and character building. It is important to consider whether the same instructional methods are appropriate for
Parents and professionals in education believe certain specific aspects should be focal points for educational instruction in Turkey. Parents and professionals both determined topics related to peace keeping and peaceful relations within Turkey and throughout the world as valuable for the nation’s youth to consider. The environment and related topics such as pollution, energy, and conservation were also noted as a focus for study. Human rights, including tensions between creeds, ethnic groups, and generations, were determined as a final challenge significantly affecting the lives of people in Turkey requiring attention in schools. Further topics related to human rights in Turkey identified as essential areas for study include inequality in educational opportunities, social justice issues, economic disparities, lack of materials and resources in education, a decreasing quality of education, and abuse of human rights and liberties. Also related to human rights issues, the development of the democratic system in Turkey was identified as an essential area of study in schools. Examples of infringements on human rights common in Turkey include police brutality and restrictions regarding cultural expression by minority groups. Censorship is common practice in Turkey where freedom of thought and expression are lacking. Turkey as a nation is no stranger to issues of poverty, injustice, and inequality. Parents and professionals in education view instruction as important for helping eliminate or diminish some negative aspects of Turkish society (Demir & Paykoç, 2006).

Parents and teaching professionals in Turkey view intellectual and life skills as equally important. Intellectual skills are those related to critical and creative thinking, communication, problem solving, Turkish language, and mathematics. While teaching academic subject areas including mathematics, science, language arts, and social studies is essential in schools, other
intellectual skills including problem solving and critical thinking are becoming more important for success in an increasingly global world. Similarly, fostering a desire and ability to achieve life-long learning is necessary for developing citizens able to meet the challenges and demands of modern society. Examples of life skills include obtaining income generating abilities, and being able to solve work related and domestic issues. Obtaining life skills prepares an individual to meet the challenges of everyday life. Although intellectual and life skills were given shared primary importance over other skills to be taught in school, other areas of noted importance for consideration in educational instruction included foreign language and psychomotor skills (Demir & Paykoç, 2006).

Approaches to teaching intellectual and life skills are impacted by instructor knowledge of child psychology. Professional educators are responsible for understanding stages of child development. Professional educators use knowledge of child psychology to design instruction and direct students appropriately and in keeping with developmental competencies. Teacher candidates in Turkey have been required to study child psychology since 1982 (Keklik, 2011).

**Child Psychology Textbooks**

Child psychology textbooks are the most frequented resource and support regarding child development for teachers in Turkey. In 2011 İbrahim Keklik from the Department of Educational Sciences at Hacettepe University in Ankara, Turkey conducted research for the 2010 International Conference on Education and Educational Psychology. Keklik sought to determine the validity of the ten most commonly utilized child psychology textbooks in Turkey. Keklik conducted the study on the premise professionals in the field of education are responsible for encouraging normative development in students and developing a complete understanding of complex processes of child development. Components considered were language use,
epistemology, content, and relevancy of information. The textbooks overall did not use empirical evidence and research to support claims to a satisfactory extent. Most citations in the child psychology textbooks were to earlier textbook publications as opposed to current research. The child psychology textbooks exhibited frequent use of generalizations and introduced classic concepts and theories without relating them to contemporary times (Keklik, 2011).

Some topics included in Western child psychology textbooks were absent from Turkish child psychology textbooks. Sexual orientation and gender were not mentioned in Turkish child psychology textbooks. Topics related to multiculturalism were absent. Some phrases and terms included could be considered discriminatory or judgmental. In some of the textbooks considered, the phrase “opposite sex” was used when describing sexual and romantic relationships. One of the textbooks described relations with the opposite sex as manifesting with the intent of marriage. In one textbook children with Down syndrome were referred to as “handicapped”. In another textbook being overweight was referred to as “fatness”. Erikson’s last stage of development is referred to as the stage in which individuals become more religious and participate in more religious activities in one of the textbooks. The study revealed a necessity for Turkish educational psychology books to be rewritten from a contemporary perspective (Keklik, 2011). Providing pre-service educators with contemporary knowledge of educational psychology is essential for developing effective instructors. Educators in Turkey should be aware of where educational psychology textbooks are lacking in relation to those utilized in North American and Western European countries. Gaps or omissions should be filled and compensated for with supplementary materials to ensure educators are best prepared for working with students in a system designed to achieve a Westernized label. Filling in gaps in educational psychology is important as Turkey seeks acceptance to the E.U.
As previously noted, Turkey aims to develop students in terms of citizenry. Schools in Turkey emphasize patriotism and nationalism. Similar to schools in North America and Western Europe, the school day generally begins and ends with a flag ceremony. Students sing the Turkish national anthem and stand at attention to show respect for their nation and national pride. National Turkish holidays are celebrated in schools such as the Turkish Republic Day. Students wear the national colors red and white on these special days in a display of pride. Wearing red and white on Turkish Republic Day might be compared to wearing red, white, and blue on the Fourth of July in the United States as citizens celebrate their own National Independence Day. An aim of education in Turkey and the countries comprising North America and Western Europe is to generate members of society with a deep sense of devotion to their nation (Demir & Paykoç, 2006). Foreign teachers from abroad living and working in Turkey should be sensitive to Turkish national pride and honor traditions and ceremonial procedures related to this sentiment. Being respectful of Turkish nationalism is important as foreign teachers enjoy “guest” status in their host nation.

Cultural Values

People tend to believe the way they see the world is the way others also see the world. This is a false psychological effect (Triandis, 1996). It is important for instructors to remember members of a culture differing from their own native culture may not believe the same things are true or right. The described realization is especially relevant when implementing best practices from Westernized cultures in an Eastern society. Cultural values have a large impact on education systems and structures. Western and Eastern cultures differ on some important cultural aspects (Şahin, 2011).

Western cultures tend to emphasize attitudes, personal needs, individual beliefs and
values, and unique personalities. Eastern cultures focus more on collective needs and values. An individual is defined by his or her relationships and role in the collective. Contrary to Western cultures which focus on developing the internal self, Eastern cultures support development of larger units including villages, work communities, religious groups, and the nation as a whole. Family structures are collaborative and close in Turkey. Parents are more involved in children’s schooling in Turkey than in some Westernized nations as a result (Şahin, 2011). Given the described cultural aspect of collectivism in Eastern countries, teaching professionals may benefit from modifying instructional approaches which center on Westernized self-promoting ideals when teaching in Eastern countries. For example, engaging students in group or whole class work where all members of the unit can work together for success can be motivating for students in Eastern societies. Similarly, competitive team efforts where members of the classroom community divide into sections or groups which must bind together to meet a common goal may be motivating for students in Eastern cultures. Teachers and administrators benefit when administering learning activities by developing close relationships with parents and families of students. Families should be invited to become involved in the educational process.

An example of a collective mindset in Turkey can be witnessed through the way teaching professionals collaborate with one another. Teachers in Turkish schools maintain positive relationships with each other and openly share ideas, views, and opinions. Relationships between teachers are solidified by spending time with each other outside of the work setting. Female teachers may shop or drink tea together, and male teachers may visit cafes or local clubs and restaurants together (Şahin, 2011).

In Western cultures, independence and social identity are separate constructs, whereas in Eastern cultures personal and social identities are interdependent (Şahin, 2011). Students in
Eastern cultures may flourish when engaged in activities where students can exercise and support their collectivist identity. Members of collectivist societies adopt individual goals which are compatible with group goals. The collectivist mindset is one of the reasons differentiated instruction is not widely accepted in Turkey, where “different” is not a welcomed label. In Western cultures where differentiated instruction is considered best practice, individual and group goals are often distinct from one another. When individual and group goals do not agree, members of Western societies favor individual goals for personal gain. In Eastern cultures, collectivist goals are the priority (Şahin, 2011). Although Turkey is a mix of East and West, taking the Eastern notion of collectivism into consideration on a routine basis when developing instruction can provide all students opportunities for success.

Norms and attitudes are another cultural aspect to consider when modifying instruction from North American and Western European countries for implementation in a Middle Eastern country such as Turkey. In Western cultures individual attitudes take precedence over societal norms. Members of Western cultures are often told to “follow their instincts” or “trust their heart” when making decisions which contradict social norms. Members of Eastern cultures favor societal norms over individual attitudes. Members of Eastern cultures will sacrifice individual needs and desires to support the in-group (Şahin, 2011). Teachers in Middle Eastern countries such as Turkey may use the notion of norms and attitudes to support instruction. Rather than engaging students in individually motivating activities, teachers can expect students in Eastern cultures to hold one another accountable for meeting established rules and expectations. For example, rather than developing an individual based merit system for student behavior, the teacher may elect to develop a whole class merit system. In a whole class merit system, all members of the classroom community may gain or lose points according to behavior of all
members of the classroom community. One student’s penalty results in a penalty for the whole. One student’s success is a success for the whole. This approach to collective success and penalty may be beneficial for students in a Middle Eastern country such as Turkey.

Turkey serves as the geographical and cultural bridge between East and West. Turkey is moving in a more Westernized direction, yet elements of both cultures remain. When designing instruction in Turkey it is important educators consider Western cultures tend to be more individualistic while Eastern cultures are more collectivistic (Şahin, 2011).

Multicultural Education

Developing multicultural education has become an important issue as Turkey strives for admittance into the EU. Increased immigration and growing degrees of diversity have made promoting multicultural education important (Aydin, 2012). The ethnic make-up of Turkey consists of 70-75% Turkish, 18% Kurdish and 7-12% other minorities (CIA, 2013). Turkey faces many challenges to promoting multicultural education in schools. Turkey is not religiously diverse. Although Turkey adopts a secular status and individuals are free to practice any religion, 99.8% of the population is Muslim. Language is another factor prohibiting multicultural education from reaching its fullest potential in Turkey. The main language of instruction in Turkey is Turkish. Primary instruction in schools is not delivered in languages other than Turkish despite large numbers of students whose native language differs. For example, 12 to 16 million Turkish citizens speak Kurdish as a first language, yet do not receive primary instruction in Kurdish. Acknowledging languages other than Turkish in schools would help Turkey make positive strides towards developing multicultural education (Aydin, 2012).

The attitudes of school directors and professionals in education impact multicultural education. School administrators and teachers with positive regard for multicultural education
are more willing to incorporate concepts regarding multicultural education into instruction. During the 2009 to 2010 academic year, 209 school directors from Turkey participated in a study regarding attitudes towards multicultural education. School directors from public institutions in Turkey were asked to describe what an administrator’s attitude towards multicultural education should be. Polat (2011) took elements of gender, age, seniority, and level of education of school administrators into consideration to determine whether these variables had a significant impact on attitudes towards multicultural education.

School directors in Turkey believe that knowing student backgrounds and communicating with parents to understand the cultural dynamics of each family is important. School directors value recognizing cultural differences between students in the classroom, and taking cultural differences into consideration when designing instruction. School directors in Turkey partially agree teachers should work directly with students from diverse cultural backgrounds to develop the overall multicultural classroom dynamic. Those directors who believe this approach to be beneficial note the importance of engaging school teachers in courses designed to improve abilities to teach and work in a multicultural setting. Directors who believe teachers should work directly with students from diverse multicultural backgrounds recognize this approach as beneficial for all members of the classroom community. Free from value judgment, directors favoring this approach also believe as classes become more culturally diverse the workload for teachers increases (Polat, 2011).

The majority of school directors are hesitant about topics such as incorporating languages other than Turkish for main instruction. Directors are hesitant about the idea of including multicultural education as a separate area of study in schools. Directors are also hesitant about encouraging or requiring teachers to encourage students to be proud of elements and ideas
produced by students’ respective cultures (Polat, 2011).

Various factors influence attitudes of directors towards multicultural education. Gender of school directors has no significant impact on attitude towards or perception of multi-cultural education. Education level impacts the attitude of directors towards multi-cultural education. Directors with greater levels of education have more positive attitudes towards multi-cultural education. Age of school directors also directly impacts attitude towards multi-cultural education. Directors aged 37 and below have significantly more positive attitudes towards multi-cultural education than directors aged 43 and above. Directors in the age range of 38 to 43 have more positive attitudes towards multicultural education than directors aged 43 and above, though directors in this age group are not as positive as those in the age range of 37 and below. There is an inverse relationship between the age of a director and his or her attitude towards multicultural education. As director age decreases, a positive attitude towards multi-cultural education increases. Seniority of school directors significantly impacts attitudes towards multi-cultural education. As director seniority increases, a positive attitude towards multicultural education decreases (Polat, 2011).

Multicultural education must be developed in Turkey if Turkey is to gain acceptance into the EU. Teachers wishing to direct multicultural education in Turkey should be sensitive to attitudes of parents and professionals in education when designing and implementing instruction. A favorable starting point may be getting to know the cultural backgrounds of students in a school or classroom community. Instruction can then be directed accordingly to incorporate multicultural aspects.
Moral Education

Another topic to consider as Turkey applies for membership in the European Union is moral education. Morals are a controversial topic in schools. What should be taught, how, and to what extent is important for professionals in education to consider. Morals are often unique to the individual and are heavily influenced by other factors such as family and religion. These factors attribute to making morals difficult to teach in schools.

Akar et. al (2011) considered views of teaching professionals in the United States and Turkey towards moral education in each country. Surveys were completed by teachers in nine cities in each country. Those cities representing the United States were located in California. Teachers in both nations were asked to consider how they defined morality, directed instruction regarding morality, and encouraged moral development in students. Teachers responded to open-ended qualitative survey questions and items rated on a Likert scale regarding morality (Akar et. al, 2011).

Teachers in Turkey and the United States agreed morals should be taught in schools. Educational professionals in both nations saw parents and professionals in education as playing an essential role in the moral development of children. Teachers in both countries noted while moral education should be offered in schools, educators should not impose their own morals on children (Akar et. al, 2011).

While teachers in Turkey and the United States agreed on important aspects with regard to moral education, some significant differences in their views emerged. Teachers in the United States were found less likely to link morality to religion or social values. Turkish teachers linked morality to virtues. U.S. teachers specifically linked morality with action such as respecting differences and decision making. Teachers in Turkey had an inclusive view of morality where
morals were linked to religion, social values, equality, and tolerance among other aspects (Akar, et. al 2011). Since the notions of religion and morality are linked in Turkey, it may be beneficial to build instruction regarding morals into religion classes rather than integrating moral instruction into other subject areas.

Teachers in Turkey believed morality could only be gained through experience, while teachers in the United States believed morality could be explicitly taught. Turkish teachers were more likely than teachers in the U.S. to accept moral education as a separate educational course in schools. Many U.S. teachers thought morality was best taught in conjunction with other subject areas. Teachers in general academic classroom settings in Middle Eastern countries such as Turkey may wish to refrain from incorporating instruction regarding morality into instruction in other subject areas. Rather, teachers in Middle Eastern countries might expect morality to be covered in courses specifically geared towards instruction and learning of morals, or in religion courses as previously described.

Teachers in the U.S. focused on more local issues when discussing morality, while Turkish teachers tended to focus more on global issues. The described aspect might be linked to U.S. teachers’ expressed fear of imposing views of morality on members of diverse cultural communities (Akar et. al, 2011). Teachers directing instruction regarding morals in Turkey may benefit from structuring lessons around more global than local issues.

The described information regarding differing perceptions of moral education for U.S. and Turkish teachers provides a framework for modifying moral education in a Middle Eastern country such as Turkey. Providing moral education in Turkey according to the same framework used in Western nations such as the U.S. would prove ineffective. Sensitivities and preferences for moral instruction in Turkey should be considered by educators when designing instruction.
Teacher vs. Student Centered Instruction

Classrooms in the Turkish education system are generally teacher-centered (Şahin, 2011). Teacher centered classrooms offer expository teaching and direct instruction. Information is presented to students verbally. Students understand ideas and relationships from verbal instruction (Woolfolk, 2010). Instruction in many Turkish schools also favors rote memorization. Students are required to memorize facts and formulas (Şahin, 2011). Rote memorization is not considered a best practice in Westernized nations. Further, teacher-centered classroom are utilized in North American and Western European classrooms, but not emphasized. Student-centered classrooms are becoming increasingly important in Westernized schools. Student-centered classrooms adopt a constructivist approach to learning with an emphasis on social negotiation, multiple perspectives, the process of constructing knowledge, and student ownership of learning. Constructivist perspectives apply to inquiry and problem based learning which are widely implemented as part of best practices for education in Westernized schools (Woolfolk, 2010).

Teachers tend to teach the way they were taught in their own school experience (Saban, 2002). Instructors in Turkey may not have the knowledge and experience from their own years as students to implement student centered instruction. In-service teachers in Turkey endorse a constructivist approach to curriculum design, but are less likely to favor a student centered approach to teaching (Basturk, Isikoglu, Karaca, 2009). Students in Middle Eastern countries such as Turkey may not be familiar with student centered classrooms based upon previous educational experiences. Students may not know how to take ownership for their own learning, and may become intimidated with the freedom of direction an inquiry or problem based lesson provides.
A strong foundation must be developed regarding the basics of the constructivist approach to learning if teachers are to incorporate student centered instruction in schools in Middle Eastern countries such as Turkey. Students must understand goals for learning and processes for achieving those goals. Teachers at any grade level can initiate the constructivist theory by starting with the basics of student centered instruction. Teachers should then provide substantial opportunities for practice. A constructivist approach to learning can be successful in Middle Eastern countries such as Turkey with sufficient preliminary guidance.

**Financial Issues**

Financial support for education is an important issue worldwide. Nations consistently consider how school funding will be generated and allocated. Funding for schools in Turkey is an issue especially in impoverished communities. In poor communities parents are asked to provide additional funds to meet financial needs schools cannot (Şahin, 2011). Due to lack of funding for remodeling, repairs, and new constructions, school facilities in Turkey are poorly designed. Many school structures are not conducive to learning due to lack of equipment, playgrounds, classrooms, meeting rooms, sports centers, theaters, and other services (Şahin, 2011). Adequate facilities contribute to student satisfaction regarding school, and are conducive to a positive learning environment. Teachers in Turkey often face the difficult challenge of instructing students under unsatisfactory conditions for learning. Often too many students are placed into inadequate facilities confounding the issue. Smaller schools are more conducive to student learning. A large school in the United States, for example, might enroll 400 to 600 students, whereas a small school in Turkey consists of 500 to 700 students. A large school in Turkey may enroll over 1,000 students (Şahin, 2011). To accommodate this volume of students, many schools operate on two shifts, a morning and an afternoon shift.
Teachers should be aware of potential modifications for instruction when implementing approaches to learning from North American and Western European countries into instruction in a Middle Eastern country such as Turkey. Facilities may not be adequate to accommodate some learning activities. Materials necessary for certain lessons may not be available or affordable. Classrooms may be too crowded to execute lessons effectively. Instructors must be aware of potential financial obstacles and modify accordingly.

**Key Points**

Best practices for education from North American and Western European countries must be modified for implementation in Middle Eastern countries such as Turkey. Cultural values in Eastern and Western cultures differ. Eastern cultures are collectivist while Western cultures are independent. Social norms and attitudes affect interactions and educational procedures in both cultures. Eastern cultures support the belief social and personal identities are dependent upon one another, and in some cases indistinguishable. Instructors should remember the element of social identity when designing instruction for implementation in Middle Eastern countries.

Multicultural education in Middle Eastern cultures, particularly Turkey, is affected by the level of cultural diversity in the nation. Turkey is becoming increasingly diverse, yet the primary language of instruction remains Turkish. Younger and more educated professionals in education have a positive view of multicultural education. Implementing multicultural education in a Middle Eastern country such as Turkey should be done only after considering student demographics in a classroom or school community. Once student demographics are understood, multicultural education can be designed to meet the unique needs of the population.

Child psychology textbooks in Turkey are not always current, may lack important information, and may include politically incorrect or unprofessional references and terms.
Supplementary materials designed to make up for lacking or incorrect information in educational psychology textbooks should be supplied for pre-service teachers in Turkey. When implementing a Westernized system of education teachers should consider lacking information or misinformation their colleagues may also have received. Gaps in child psychology textbooks should be recognized to ensure best practices are successfully implemented.

Educators view moral education as important in Turkey. Contrary to teachers in North American countries such as the United States, Turkish educators believe morals can only be gained through experience. Turkish educators also believe morals and religion are connected. Educators in Middle Eastern countries such as Turkey may benefit from electing to provide instruction regarding morals in a separate moral education or religion course.

Best practice in Westernized nations includes implementing student centered instruction to the largest possible extent. Many schools in Turkey implement largely teacher centered instruction. Some schools focus on rote memorization. Teachers implementing student centered instruction in Turkey should work to set a strong foundation for student learning. Students must understand the rules and expectations of design for a constructivist approach to learning and have adequate opportunities to practice.

Financial issues impact best practices from North America and Western Europe in Turkey. Poor infrastructure, lack of facilities and materials, and overcrowding make implementing best practices from Westernized nations difficult. Instructors should consider modifications for best practices which will lend to meaningful learning. Best practices from Westernized nations can positively impact instruction in Turkey when modified appropriately.
Chapter 4: Discussion and Summary

Best practices from North American and Western European countries must be modified to produce successful results in a Middle Eastern country such as Turkey. Educators implementing best practices from Westernized nations in a Middle Eastern country such as Turkey should consider past and present elements of the Turkish education system. Turkey has experienced profound change to the education system since Ataturk came into power. Ataturk’s reforms for the Turkish nation encouraged a Westernized approach to life in all areas including education. Turkey has a long history of incorporating philosophies and approaches for education from other nations. Germany, France, and the United States have had a particularly strong influence on the Turkish education system. The history of education in Turkey is essential for understanding the current status. Major historical events in Turkey have lead to important cultural shifts and developments. Modern Turkish culture is a mixture of elements from Eastern and Western cultures. The influence of each culture varies within regions of Turkey, those regions located geographically further East tending to exhibit more elements of Eastern culture. The strong majority of Turkish citizens are Muslim. Islam, in conjunction with qualities of Eastern cultures such as a collectivist mentality, effect school and general culture in Turkey.

The Turkish Ministry of Education requires students attend eight years of compulsory primary schooling. Students may elect to attend pre-school programs prior to the mandatory eight-year period of education. Students may also elect to continue their education into secondary school available free of monetary expense. Upon completion of Secondary school, students may choose to go even further on to institutions of higher learning for the cost of tuition. Tutoring centers are an important part of the Turkish education system, especially in relation to the task of preparing students for the University Student Selection Examination (ÖSYS).
Other differences between the Turkish and Western systems of education exist that make teaching practices in each system incongruent. These differences include the existence of combined classrooms in some Turkish schools where educators face the challenge of teaching students representing multiple ages and grade levels in the same classroom. Large class sizes are another challenge educators face in Turkey. Class sizes in Turkey are often large in comparison to class sizes in Westernized nations, especially in combined classrooms. The multiple shift system in Turkey, a teaching practice incongruent with regular Westernized practices, has been developed to combat large class sizes. Many schools in Turkey have separate student bodies attending classes in morning and afternoon sessions. Despite larger class sizes, student enrollment for pre-schoolers, secondary students, and females at all levels of education are lower in Turkey than in Westernized nations impacting school and community dynamics. National funding allocated to education differs in Turkey and Westernized nations. Teachers working in schools attended by students representing a lower economic demographic in Turkey often take on additional responsibilities teachers in Westernized nations would not normally fulfill. Teachers in poorer schools in Turkey may be expected to take on maintenance and cleaning duties, raise funds, and purchase instructional materials. The language of main instruction also represents an incongruence between the Turkish and Westernized systems of education. Some schools in Westernized nations offer bilingual instruction for students whose native language differs from the national language. Some schools in Westernized nations provide main instruction in another language entirely. Schools in Turkey do not. Turkish is the only language of main instruction in schools allowed by the Turkish Ministry of Education. Other important differences between the Turkish and Westernized systems of education include an emphasis on lecture and memorization, a lack of inquiry learning, and a preference for direct instruction.
Modifications

Modifications must be applied to successfully implement best practices for education from North America and Western Europe in Middle Eastern countries such as Turkey. Many elements impact modifications of the Westernized Education System for implementation in Turkey. Cultural values in Eastern cultures differ from those in Western cultures. As the bridge between East and West, Turkey represents elements of both cultures. Eastern cultures are more collectivist than Western cultures. Western cultures are independent. Best practices for instruction should be modified in keeping with the notion of collectivism. Engaging students in frequent group work is one way of capitalizing on the features of a collectivist society. Students may be asked to complete a task or consider a learning objective in groups where all members are held accountable for participating in the learning process. Students in countries such as Turkey may bind together and support participation of all group members through the pressure of the collective. Those students who do not subscribe to the norms reflected in the collective may be pressured to conform and thus engage in further learning.

Competitive activities in which whole class sections or groups within the general class unit work to meet a goal can also be effective in Middle Eastern countries such as Turkey. Team-based activities in which groups of students work together to reach a common goal capitalize on the collectivist mentality. Students may be motivated to fulfill their duties and work efficiently when aware their performance will effect collective achievement. Students in team or group settings in collectivist societies may also hold each other accountable for meeting behavioral expectations. If the majority of students adopt rules and expectations for classroom behavior, those students not adopting rules and expectations may feel pressure from the collective to assimilate. Classroom behavior in conjunction with a collectivist based approach can be used
with regard to extrinsic rewards. Offering a whole-class, team, or group award may motivate students who might otherwise become distracted, participate at less than satisfactory levels, or engage in disruptive behaviors. The larger the population of students who model classroom rules, routines, and activities, the more likely instruction is to be successful and meaningful.

Cultural views of social identity and norms should be considered when modifying Westernized instruction for implementation in Turkey. The notion of individual and public self are dependent upon one another in Eastern cultures. Students in Eastern cultures cannot be expected to truly understand the meaning of phrases regarding personal achievement and growth from Western societies such as “every man for himself” and “follow your heart”. Foreign teachers working in Middle Eastern countries such as Turkey should be aware of this discontinuity between Eastern and Western cultures, and should avoid using self-oriented cliches. Teachers should remember students in Eastern cultures are consciously and subconsciously aware of how their public and private selves reflect one another, and are more likely to act and react in ways that benefit the larger whole as opposed to lead to personal gain.

Multicultural education should be modified in any country in accordance with unique classroom and school demographics. Turkey is becoming increasingly diverse. Schools in different regions of Turkey will have different needs for multicultural education. The only official language of instruction allowed in Turkey is Turkish. Thus, teachers in Turkey often face a difficult challenge of instructing students whose native language is not English, such as those students whose mother tongue is Kurdish or Arabic, in a second language. It would be beneficial for teachers working in school communities with large numbers of students who speak primary languages differing from Turkish to have or acquire knowledge of second language instruction.

While the language of instruction cannot be modified in Turkey, multicultural education
can still have a place in the general classroom. Taking inventory of the level and types of diversity present within the classroom setting can develop a foundation for multicultural instruction. Religion is a sensitive topic in Turkish schools, and the Turkish nation in general and is better left for religion teachers, as opposed to general classroom teachers, to consider. Other elements making student bodies diverse in Turkey may be discussed with reference to multicultural education. In accordance with Westernized models for educational instruction, students representing diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds should not only be tolerated but celebrated in the classroom. Teachers should keep lines of communication open between home and school, and speak with parents or student guardians to gather information regarding the cultures students represent. Teachers should encourage students to share their experiences from their cultural perspective during in class discussions. Teachers might also provide students from diverse cultural backgrounds opportunities to share elements from their native culture with fellow classmates. Forums for sharing might include food festivals, “show and tell” sessions, dance or theater performances, and more. An open and warm atmosphere in which cultural differences are not only tolerated but celebrated could positively affect multicultural education in Turkey.

Gaps and misinformation in child psychology books should be accounted for when designing instruction based on a Westernized model in a Middle Eastern country such as Turkey. Teacher training programs should include supplementary information for teacher candidates regarding philosophies of education, instructional approaches, and curriculum designs. Future instructors must be provided with adequate and relevant information and training in Westernized educational approaches to ensure instructors are able to teach to the best of their ability. The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) provides a website that may help
educators develop their knowledge of educational psychology. Peer-edited journals including Developmental Psychology and the Journal of Experimental Child Psychology could be utilized as supplementary resources.

**Religion.**

Morals and religion are viewed as inseparable entities in many Middle Eastern countries including Turkey. An overwhelming majority of Turkish citizens practice Islam. Religion courses primarily focus on Islam, but the study of world religions is required in all schools by the Turkish Ministry of Education. Students learn Islamic values, traditions, and beliefs in school. Students are expected to live according to Islamic beliefs and values at all times, including during school hours.

Religion courses in Turkey provide instruction on topics including humanism and ethics. Teachers directing moral education in Turkey should take inventory of the belief morals can only be gained through experience and not explicitly taught. Teachers designing lessons in general classrooms in Turkey may prefer to leave instruction regarding morals to religion course instructors. To avoid crossing a line between religion and academia, main course teachers may elect to refrain from instruction involving moral concepts. Foreign teachers from Westernized countries teaching in schools in Middle Eastern countries who might adopt religious beliefs differing from Islam may especially benefit from refraining from offering instruction regarding moral concepts.

Teachers living and working in Turkey whose own religions differ from Islam would benefit from knowing the basic principals of Islam. Understanding fundamental elements of the dominant religion in the region would help educators make informed observations of student behavior and better predict intent for action. An understanding of Islam would help educators
from Westernized nations living and working in Turkey develop a better relationship with their students and working environment.

**Lack of funding.**

Financial issues affecting infrastructure of the learning environment, class size, and availability of materials should be considered when designing instruction in Turkey. Teachers incorporating approaches to learning in accordance with best practices may meet obstacles resulting from financial issues that require modifications. Teachers engaging in Westernized approaches to teaching and learning may have to do so in buildings which are lacking in terms of infrastructure. Teachers may in Turkey deliver lessons in buildings which are very old and run down. Instruction may be delivered in multigrade classrooms which are overcrowded, and work in schools which lack facilities such as a gymnasium, auditorium, cafeteria, music room, art room, or other common areas. Teachers must be flexible when engaging students in activities designed for implementation in the described areas. To manage infrastructure related difficulties teachers may elect to engage half of the class at a time in activities requiring movement or space. Those students not participating in the activity on either turn may serve as the audience. Those students in the role of audience may use rubrics or checklists to monitor the performance and participation of fellow classmates. The described activity provides the opportunity to practice developing and delivering positive and constructive criticism, as well as reflecting. These and other modifications may be utilized by instructors accommodating for poor building infrastructure and school facilities.

Another financial based issue is availability of materials. Many public schools in Turkey lack adequate funding. Often students and teachers go without materials for teaching and learning. Instructors in Turkey sometimes elect to purchase classroom and individual student
materials from personal funds. While purchasing materials from personal funds is one modification teachers in Turkey may use to ensure students have materials necessary for engaging in instruction, purchasing materials is not always a viable option. This is especially true taking into consideration differences in teacher salaries in Turkey and Westernized nations.

Table 7

Teacher Salary in USD (2011) (by nation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Initial Teacher Salary Primary School</th>
<th>Maximum Teacher Salary Primary School</th>
<th>Initial Teacher Salary Secondary School</th>
<th>Maximum Teacher Salary Secondary School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>34,610</td>
<td>48,522</td>
<td>33,398</td>
<td>67,444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>32,095</td>
<td>55,619</td>
<td>40,102</td>
<td>70,430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>35,534</td>
<td>56,349</td>
<td>35,534</td>
<td>56,569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>16,680</td>
<td>22,236</td>
<td>17,244</td>
<td>24,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>30,587</td>
<td>40,160</td>
<td>34,008</td>
<td>45,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>25,646</td>
<td>48,916</td>
<td>28,892</td>
<td>52,352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>47,488</td>
<td>63,286</td>
<td>57,357</td>
<td>79,088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>10,654</td>
<td>17,497</td>
<td>11,642</td>
<td>22,083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>27,288</td>
<td>40,119</td>
<td>29,418</td>
<td>46,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>10,362</td>
<td>17,200</td>
<td>13,181</td>
<td>22,429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>30,946</td>
<td>52,447</td>
<td>30,946</td>
<td>52,447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>35,881</td>
<td>50,770</td>
<td>40,308</td>
<td>56,536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>30,059</td>
<td>39,865</td>
<td>31,978</td>
<td>42,775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>23,494</td>
<td>27,201</td>
<td>24,053</td>
<td>27,758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>37,595</td>
<td>53,180</td>
<td>38,012</td>
<td>56,303</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Education at a Glance 2013: OECD Indicators).

Teachers in Turkey make a lesser wage than eleven of the fourteen Westernized nations for which data regarding teacher salary are provided. Teachers in Turkey make a salary only greater than teachers in Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic. Teachers in Turkey earn significantly less money than teachers in the remaining eleven nations for which data are provided. Teachers making low wages in Turkey cannot afford to allocate personal funds for purchasing classroom
materials. Teachers in Turkey must be creative and think of ways to design or substitute materials. Teachers must modify instruction to incorporate newly designed or substituted materials along with those materials readily available.

**Closing remarks.**

Best practices as defined by Westernized nations must be modified for successful implementation in Middle Eastern countries such as Turkey. Educators in Turkey must be aware of similarities and differences between Eastern and Western cultures. Teachers should also recognize challenges or obstacles to successful implementation of Western approaches to teaching and learning. Educators should be flexible and eliminate the expectation schools in Middle Eastern countries such as Turkey are the same as schools in Westernized nations. Each nation and community is unique. Instruction should be modified in keeping with knowledge of Turkish culture, history, and national demographics to ensure successful implementation.

**Questions for Further Research**

Instruction can be modified in Middle Eastern countries such as Turkey to successfully incorporate best practices in education from North America and Western Europe. Further questions for research regarding this topic which might enrich knowledge of appropriate modification processes include: In what ways and how often do teachers differentiate instruction in Turkey?; How do classroom management and discipline policies from North American and Western European nations compare to classroom management and discipline policies in Turkey?; How do teacher and administrator attitudes regarding parent involvement in schools compare in Turkey and Westernized nations?; How do parent attitudes regarding schools compare in Turkey and Westernized nations?; What is considered a passing grade in North American and Western European nations as compared to in Turkey?; How honest are teachers
when assigning grades in North American and Western European nations as compared to Turkey? Do teachers in North American nations, Western European nations, and Turkey recall ever being asked to change student grades (i.e. How accurate are grade systems?)? Conducting further research regarding the described issues would develop a better understanding of how best practices from North American and Western European countries can be modified for successful implementation in Middle Eastern countries such as Turkey.

**Suggested models for future research.**

Most of the described research questions could be considered through a survey. Quantitative data could be collected from national ministries of education in Middle Eastern and Westernized nations by answering this question: “What is considered a passing grade in North American and Western European nations as compared to in Turkey?”

The remaining research questions would best be considered through an open-ended survey format. The subjects for the following research question should be parents. “How do parent attitudes regarding schools compare in Turkey and Westernized nations?” Parents in Turkey and at least one Westernized nation should be surveyed. The described research question regarding differentiated instruction in Turkey may be provided to only Turkish teachers and administrators for consideration. Data for the remaining questions for further research should be gathered from surveys provided to both teachers and administrators in Turkish schools and schools in at least one Westernized nation.

Participants for all surveys should be carefully selected. It is important to consider the approach to selecting participants when gathering data from two or more nations. If selecting only one school district in each nation from which to gather data, researchers should carefully consider school and community demographics in each area. The districts selected in each nation
should reflect one another in terms of demography to prevent gathering potentially misleading data. It would be most beneficial to gather data from multiple regions in Turkey as well as other nations participating to develop a more comprehensive data set.

Surveys may be administered according to multiple formats including email, social networks (i.e. Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.), online survey websites, and paper mail. Researchers should take turn-around time and availability of technology into consideration when selecting a method for distributing and collecting surveys. For research questions involving data collection from multiple countries an electronic format may be most reliable.

**Importance of continued research.**

We are living in an increasingly global world. Whole nations, markets, and peoples are dependent upon one another for survival. Advances in technology have supported interconnectivity. As professionals in education work to promote today’s youth, it is important to consider best practices for education and how nations and communities can learn from each other. While cultures and contexts vary widely, there is much to be gained from examining research-based best practices and exploring ways to incorporate those practices to improve teaching and learning in each educational setting.
References


Keklik, İ. (2011). A content analysis of developmental psychology sections of educational psychology textbooks used for teachers’ education in Turkey. *Procedia Social and
Running head: EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN TURKEY


Toprakci, E. (2010). The reality of primary schools and basic education in Turkey. E-
